

Appalachian Trail Fall Foliage

A Hiker's Guide to Autumn's Peak Color

This guide is based on average dates of peak color, and is arranged into 10 sections southward from Maine to Georgia. Conditions vary significantly from year to year, and can differ over short distances due to elevation and other factors. Guide compiled by Greg Walter, "The Weathercarrot."

Baxter State Park to Andover, Maine September 20–October 10

Earliest throughout the section above 3,000 feet. Latest in lower elevations near the Kennebec River and in the 100 mile wilderness between Cooper Brook and Wadleigh Stream.

Andover, Maine to Sherburne Pass, Vt. September 20–October 12

Earliest in the higher elevations of the White Mountains and Mahoosuc Range. Around Oct. 1 in the more northern valleys near Gorham and Andover. Latest in the Connecticut River Valley near Hanover, N.H.

Sherburne Pass, Vt. to Cheshire, Mass. September 25–October 15

Earliest in the Killington, Vt., area and above 2,500 feet in the rest of southern Vermont. Latest in lower elevations near North Adams and Cheshire, Mass.

Cheshire, Mass. to Bear Mountain, N.Y. October 1–October 18

Earliest along the October Mountain and Mt. Everett areas in Massachusetts. Latest in the low valleys near RPH Cabin and the Hudson River in New York.

Bear Mountain, N.Y. to Port Clinton, Pa. October 8–October 20

Earliest above 1,200 feet in New York, and near High Point, New Jersey. Around October 15 along Pennsylvania's ridges. Latest in Port Clinton.

Port Clinton, Pa. to Front Royal, Virginia October 15–November 2

Earliest on the ridges south (west) of Port Clinton and highest elevations near Caledonia State Park, Pa. Latest in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.

Front Royal, Va. to Troutville, Va. October 10–November 2

Earliest in areas near 4,000 feet—Big Meadows/Skyland, The Priest, Cold Mountain region, Apple Orchard. Latest at Jennings Creek and the Tye and James river valleys.

Troutville, Va. to Atkins, Va. October 10–October 31

Earliest above 3,800 feet near Mountain Lake, Chestnut Knob and other high ridges north and south of the New River. Around October 25 in Pearisburg and Atkins. Latest in lower elevations near Troutville.

Atkins, Va. to Hot Springs, N.C. September 28–November 6

Earliest on the highest terrain (summits of Mount Rogers, Va., and Roan Mountain, Tenn.). Elevation is an especially evident factor throughout this region. Some general guidelines: Around October 8 near the 5,000 foot level, October 22 at 3,000 feet, and typically after November 1 below 1,700 feet. Latest in Hot Springs.

Hot Springs, N.C. to Springer Mountain, Ga. September 28–November 6

Earliest in the Smokies above 6,000 feet. Around October 15 near 5,000 feet in the Nantahala Mountains, and between October 20 and November 1 through most of Georgia. Latest in Hot Springs, the Pigeon River Valley, Fontana Dam, Wesser, and lower points in Georgia.

For additional info and current fall color updates, check these resources:

Fall Color in the Eastern U.S. www.ncnatural.com/fall-color/index.html

The Foliage Network www.foliagenetwork.com

New England Fall Foliage www.yankeefoliage.com

US Forest Service www.fs.fed.us/fallcolors - Fall Color Hotline: 1-800-354-4595

The Weather Channel www.weather.com/maps/fallfoliage.html

Official Appalachian Trail maps and guides are available from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy at www.appalachiantrail.org/store or by calling 1-888-AT-STORE.