

Sunday, July 29, 2012

Tour Departs Knoxville Convention Center at 8:30 a.m. and will arrive back by 4:30 p.m.

Freshwater Snorkeling Ecotour. Explore Citico Creek, a pristine river that runs through the Cherokee National Forest. A knowledgeable guide from the US Forest Service will help you to identify freshwater fishes in Citico Creek. Wetsuits (optional), changing tents, and lunches will be provided. Underwater photography is encouraged. **Limit: 20 participants, minimum age 12, the cost is \$42/person.**

On this 95 degree summer day there was no better place to be than Citico Creek, a mountain stream in the Cherokee National Forest that's famous for its clean water and diverse assemblage of fish.

Since 2000 the U.S. Forest Service has been offering guided snorkeling trips, first on the Conasauga River at the southern end of the Cherokee National Forest, and more recently on Citico Creek in the Monroe County, Tennessee portion of the forest just south of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

The abundance of aquatic life in Citico Creek is evident the moment the face mask goes underwater. In summer, expect to see lots of tadpoles (green frogs and bullfrogs) as well as striped-neck musk turtles and schools of Tennessee shiners whose streamlined bodies sparkle like tiny mirrors.

Bobbing facedown in the water, snorkelers will explore the deep pools as well as the rocky shoals. In strong current you will make your way upstream by grabbing rocks and pulling yourselves along hand-over-hand. Learning to identify aquatic insects, and before the end of the day you'll know how to tell a rock bass from a river chub.

Bottled Water, Lunch, Snacks, Snorkeling fees and Van transportation are included in the \$42 per person cost.

The Snorkeling Tour is limited to 20 participants, so please register early.

To learn more about the Snorkeling Tour please visit: <http://webfooted.net/snorkelers-explore-a-hillbilly-barrier-reef-in-cherokee-national-forest/>