

Yates Mill, Wake County's oldest grist mill, will be centerpiece for an environmental education park

In an unusual partnership that promises dividends for everyone involved, N.C. State University has joined with Wake County Parks and Recreation and the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to develop a park on the site of Yates Mill, believed to be the county's oldest grist mill.

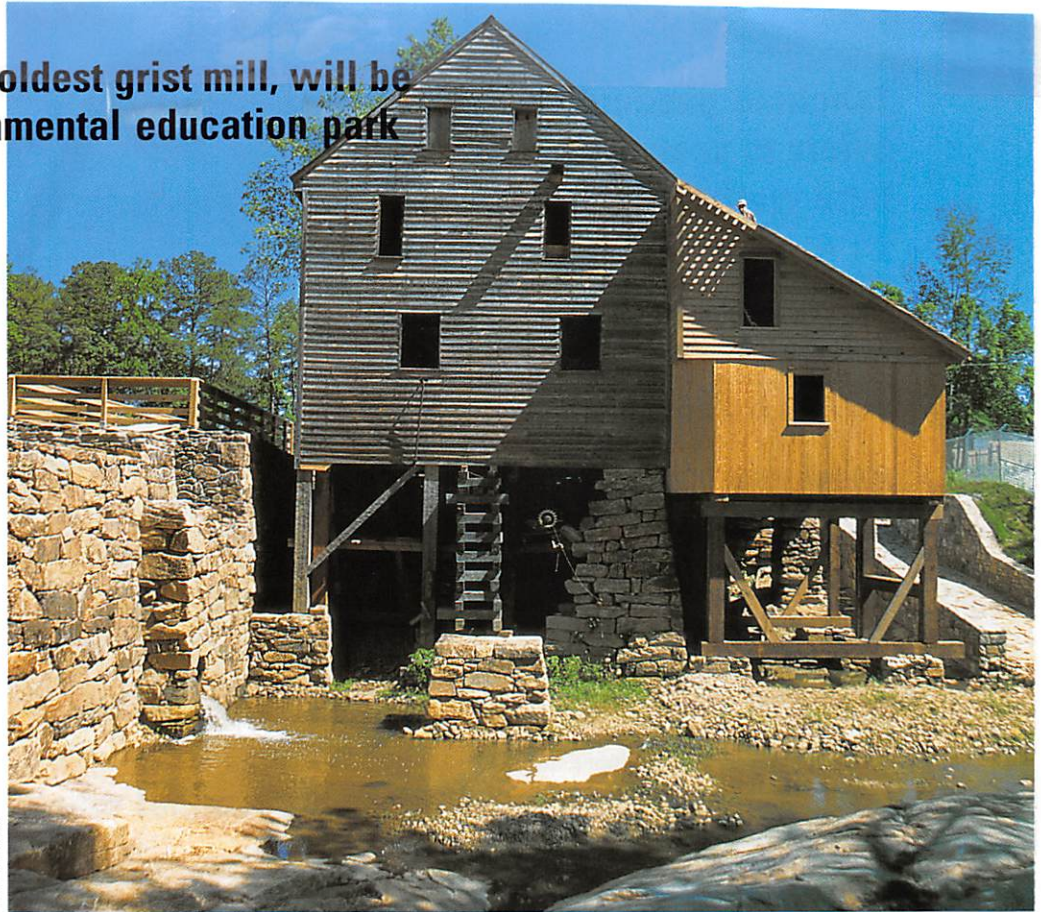
The university owns the mill, which is being restored by Yates Mill Associates, a private group with a longtime interest in the historic structure. Once complete, the park will serve as an educational facility for the university, groups from the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences and Exploris Museum, and the public.

The new park will include a visitors' center, complete with classrooms and laboratories, and a center to house the zoology department's assortment of reptiles and snakes. Since plans for the park were announced more than a year ago, the project has continued to grow. Initial plans called for the county to lease from N.C. State University 212 acres around the mill for the park. Now the NCDA&CS has made available another 400 acres of forest land that can be used for nature trails.

The mill itself, which dates to 1756, is a centerpiece of the park plan.

Yates Mill is believed to be one of Wake County's first commercial mills, and now it is the county's last standing mill. During its 200-year operating life, the mill was used for grinding grain, sawing logs and carding wool. The mill sits adjacent to university field research facilities on Lake Wheeler Road south of Raleigh. The university purchased the land, formerly FinCrest Farms, in 1963.

But there would be no mill left to restore if not for the efforts of Yates Mill Associates, chaired by Dr. John Vandenberg, professor in the department of zoology. Vandenberg has taken zoology students to the site for years to explore the ecological relationships of the mill pond and surrounding area. He noticed how deteriorated the



Karl DeBlaker

Washed away by Hurricane Fran in 1996, the dam (left) at Yates Mill has been restored. The scenic structure, probably the county's last of its kind, and its environs offer opportunities for the study of agroecology.

structure had become and joined with others to form Yates Mill Associates.

The group had made considerable progress toward restoration, but in 1996 ruthless Hurricane Fran dealt the mill a heavy blow, washing away the dam and the pond. The reconstructed shed collapsed, and the supports underneath the mill were further jeopardized.

Now, the dam has been restored, and the steel-and-concrete structure is faced with the stones from the original dam. Work is nearly complete on the exterior of the mill, and the pond will be dredged and filled soon.

Though progress has been made, development of the park remains at least a year away. Plans include educational opportunities for all ages, from school groups to college students to adults

Study topics will range from the history and technology of the mill to environmental studies of the area surrounding the park. Because of its proximity to research farms, the park plans to offer opportunities for the study of

agroecology – the relationship of agriculture to the environment.

The recreated pond will provide a shallow area for wading where groups can study the pond's aquatic life. Boardwalks will allow easy access to wetlands. And monitoring stations across the park will allow groups to observe weather and wildlife and to sample air and water. Several field classrooms will provide sites for outdoor studies.

Vandenberg sees great potential for students from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences to learn at the site, once it is fully restored and the new facilities completed. Students in zoology, botany, plant pathology and wildlife will be able to study a variety of organisms from fungi to beavers.

"You'll be able to take a class out there and take a walk on a boardwalk out over the pond to collect samples," he said. "And you'll have a classroom to study specimens."

– Natalie Hampton

**Open Letter Re: Upchurch Publications
November 24, 1999**

An active program of correspondence on family matters will be continued. We may even get on the Internet - no promises!

Perhaps there will be time to finish the Upchurch Book which is now about one-third done - no promises.

I cannot express adequately the obligation we owe to all who have helped to document our Upchurch heritage and who have made extra financial contributions to speed this work. Continued input and financial support will be appreciated.

We will try this new approach for a year or so and see what happens. In closing I want to express publicly my appreciation for the long standing help of my dear wife, Sallaine, in all pursuits of Upchurch history. She would deserve the Upchurch Croix de guerre if one existed. Finally, let me hear from you all.

**Robert Phillip Upchurch, Editor
UPCHURCH BULLETIN & ENGLANDIA**



Historic Yates Mill County Park



Historic Yates Mill County Park

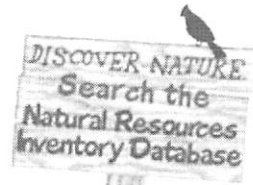
4620 Lake Wheeler Road

Raleigh, NC 27603

[Directions & Hours](#)

Phone: 919-856-6675

Fax: 919-856-6674



[Directions](#)

[Brochure & Trail Maps](#)

[Park Information](#)

[Calendar of Events](#)

[Programs](#)

[History](#)

[Mill Tours](#)

[Volunteers](#)

[Contact Us](#)

 Find us on **Facebook**

ABOUT THE PARK

A day at Historic Yates Mill County Park offers visitors an "Escape from the Daily Grind," with experiences that interpret and preserve our agricultural heritage, environmental resources and history through educational programs, events and exhibits. *The park is a wildlife refuge and an environmental research center, thus dogs (except service animals) and other pets are not allowed.*

FEATURES



Hiking



Agricultural History



Picnic



Cultural History



Fishing *(limited)*



Educational Exhibits



Environmental Education



Educational Gardens



HISTORIC YATES MILL COUNTY PARK



HISTORIC YATES MILL IS THE LAST OPERATING, WATER-POWERED GRISTMILL LEFT IN WAKE COUNTY.



PARK HOURS

GROUNDS:
8:00 A.M. - SUNSET
SEVEN DAYS A WEEK

(contact the park office for seasonal closing times)

PARK CENTER HOURS:
8:30 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

TELEPHONE
(919) 856-6675

WEBSITE
WWW.WAKEGOV.COM/YATESMILL



HISTORIC YATES MILL COUNTY PARK
IS CLOSED
THANKSGIVING DAY
CHRISTMAS EVE
CHRISTMAS DAY
NEW YEAR'S DAY

PARK RULES AND REGULATIONS

Safety and enjoyment go hand in hand at Historic Yates Mill County Park. The following park rules and regulations have been established to ensure a safe and pleasant visit.

- 1. PARK IN DESIGNATED AREAS ONLY.**
Roadside parking is prohibited.
- 2. HIKE ONLY ON DESIGNATED TRAILS.**
Please respect NC State University property.
- 3. FISH ONLY FROM THE TWO BOARDWALKS.**
All North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission rules and regulations apply.
- 4. DUE TO THE SENSITIVE NATURE OF THE PARK, THE FOLLOWING ARE PROHIBITED:**
 - Pets (excluding assistance animals)
 - Bank fishing
 - Smoking
 - Alcoholic beverages
 - Open fires of any kind
 - Firearms and explosives of any kind
 - Amplified music
 - Horses, bicycles and off-road vehicles
 - Geo caches and other off-trail activities
 - Swimming
 - Personal boating
 - Hunting
 - Collection, release, and/or removal of any wildlife and plants
 - Metal detectors and the collection or removal of any park and mill artifacts
 - Walking or climbing on the mill dam

Help keep our parks beautiful. Place trash and recycling in the appropriate containers.

Learn more about other parks operated by Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space. Information is available at the park office, in our brochures, or you can visit us at:
www.wakegov.com

HISTORIC YATES MILL COUNTY PARK
4620 LAKE WHEELER ROAD
RALEIGH, NC 27603
(919) 856-6675

Printed on recycled paper. RJC-06/09

WAKE COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE



REC'D 4 JUN 2012

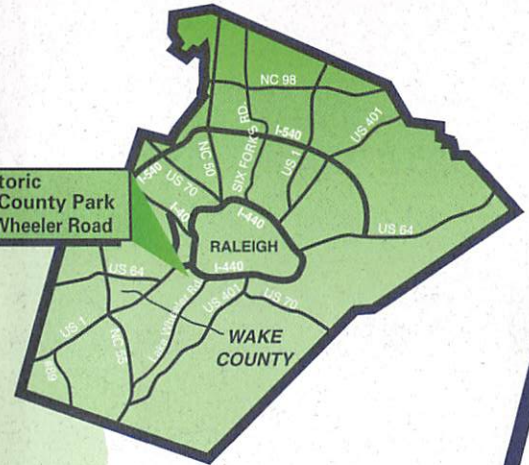
HISTORIC YATES MILL COUNTY PARK



HISTORIC YATES MILL COUNTY PARK

Directions to Historic Yates Mill County Park:
 From I-40/440 south of Raleigh, take exit #297.
 Go south on Lake Wheeler Road for 2.8 miles.
 The entrance is on the right.

Historic
 Yates Mill County Park
 4620 Lake Wheeler Road



Private Property
 No Access Allowed

Private Property
 No Access Allowed



Trail Ends

Creekside Trail

Creekside Trail

High Ridge Trail

Millpond Trail

Park Entrance

LAKE WHEELER ROAD

YATES MILL POND ROAD

PENNY ROAD

Outdoor Amphitheater

Park Center

Historic Yates Mill

Field Classroom

Yates Mill Pond

MAP LEGEND

- MILLPOND TRAIL (1.0 MILES)
- HIGH RIDGE TRAIL (0.78 MILES)
- CREEKSIDE TRAIL (1.0 MILES - ONE WAY)
- PAVED VEHICLE ACCESS
- SERVICE ROAD (AUTHORIZED VEHICLES ONLY)
- POINTS OF INTEREST
- PICNIC AREA
- INFORMATION STATIONS
- OVERLOOK DECK
- FISHING ACCESS
- RESTROOMS

These maps of Historic Yates Mill County Park are not drawn to scale.

A DAY AT HISTORIC YATES MILL

*“Escape the Daily Grind”
through a variety of unique recreational,
cultural, natural, and agricultural experiences.*

Come to the Park any day of the week,
from 8:00 a.m. to Sunset, to:

- Stroll the park grounds
- Picnic and “mill about” with family & friends
- Hike the trails & watch for wildlife
- Fish from the Pond & Wetlands Boardwalks
- Enjoy the views from a rocking chair or bench
- Watch the waterfall at the mill dam; and more

Visit the Park Center any day of the week,
from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., to:

- View the Park Center’s exhibits
- Try out several hands-on, mill-related activities
- Play in the Kids Corner & Dress-Up Area
- Watch mill and park-related videos
- Check out a self-guided discovery box
- Take on a park scavenger hunt activity

Check out the Park Program and Event
Schedule, and then sign up to:

- Visit the mill and participate in a guided tour
- Watch a corn-grinding demonstration
- Attend a hands-on park program or event
- Arrange for a park outreach program
- Enter one of the park’s many contests; and more

PARK FACILITIES & AMENITIES

The 174-acre park features Historic Yates Mill, a fully restored 18th century, water-powered gristmill, which is maintained and operated by the private, non-profit group, Yates Mill Associates. The mill is an excellent example of the evolution of early industries in piedmont N.C. Mill tours are available March through November, with corn-grinding demonstrations by costumed interpreters on the 3rd weekend of each month.

The Park Center - the A.E. Finley Center for Education and Research - serves as the park’s main support facility. The Center’s Education Wing contains a reception desk, 2 classrooms, an auditorium, an exhibit hall, staff offices, and more. The Center is surrounded by boardwalks & a fixed dock, which provide excellent views of the pond, as does the porch area with its rocking chairs. While the Center closes at 5:00 pm each day, the attached restrooms are available each day from 8:00 am to Sunset.

The park is managed as a historic site & wildlife refuge. The 20-acre pond is fed by Steep Hill Creek & its tributaries. Park habitats include pond, creek, wetlands, and several forest types, through which are located several miles of hiking trails, scattered picnic areas, and an Outdoor Field Classroom & Amphitheater. Park grounds feature native landscaping, wildlife habitat features & best management practice demonstration areas.

PARTNERSHIP EFFORTS

The park was developed through a partnership among Wake County, N.C. State University (NCSU), the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and Yates Mill Associates, along with many other supportive individuals, community interest groups, and educational institutions.

The park serves as a field research facility for NCSU’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, as it has since 1963 when the university purchased the mill property. The Park Center’s Research Wing is used for university zoological studies. The park is surrounded by NCSU’s Biological Field Laboratories.



BACK PORCH OF THE A.E. FINLEY CENTER FOR
EDUCATION AND RESEARCH (THE PARK CENTER)

PARK MISSION STATEMENT

To preserve & interpret Wake County’s agricultural heritage, and environmental and historical resources, through educational programs and workshops, internships, events and exhibits, while providing cultural enrichment and a sense of stewardship through public & private partnerships.

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Programs and events focus on the park’s cultural history, ecology & wildlife, and agricultural heritage. Program and event participants can look forward to tours of the fully operational gristmill, guided nature hikes & canoe floats, cane-pole fishing, seasonal activities, guest presenters, and much more. Program and event details are available at the Park Center & at www.wakegov.com/parks/yatesmill/events.

Discovering...

THE TRAILS OF HISTORIC YATES MILL

HIKING TRAILS

All trails close a 1/2-hour before sunset.

Millpond Trail ●

Total Length: 1.0 miles (moderate hike)

This naturally-surfaced trail loops around the pond's edge. From the parking lot, the trail crosses the Pond Boardwalk (an ideal fishing platform), which is equipped with viewing scopes and benches, before heading into the treeline and past the Field Classroom, the old Miller's Residence area, and several picnic areas. The old mill and its stone dam can be viewed from the Mill Overlook Deck, where another viewing scope is located. The trail then heads to a stone staircase and crosses Steep Hill Creek on a low bridge (this area may be closed during flooding). The trail travels past the mill by way of a stone ramp and then heads to the Park Center, before ending back at the parking lot.



CANOE PROGRAMS ARE OFFERED DURING THE SUMMER.

Mill Stone Path:

Length: 0.12 miles (easy to moderate hike)

This accessible gravel path runs from the parking lot to the old mill. (It is part of the longer Millpond Trail.) The distance from the parking lot to the mill yard is approximately 0.12 miles, or 636 feet. There are places to rest along the way. An accessible path to the mill and dam is available on the pond side of the Log Cabin.

Tree Identification Trail:

Length: 0.44 miles (moderate hike)

This self-guided "trail" is located along the Millpond Trail. Numbered posts mark 20 of the park's native trees, which are identified inside the "Tree Identification Trail" brochure (available at the Park Center). A brief description of each tree is provided, along with an interesting tree fact.

High Ridge Trail ●

Total Length: 0.78 miles (strenuous hike)

This naturally-surfaced trail travels along the high ridges above the pond, through mixed old field pine and hardwood forests, and north-facing bluffs. Each of these habitat types supports diverse animal and plant life, including some that are rare. This trail starts at the Pond Boardwalk and finishes on the Millpond Trail, on the south side of the pond. Combined with part of the Millpond Trail to make a loop, the trail length can be extended to a 1.25-mile hike.

Wildlife Identification Stations:

Get to know your "neighbors in nature" while hiking on the trails, by checking out the park's 8 wildlife identification stations. Native species are identified and described for the pond, pond edge, wetlands/marsh, creek, old forest, old field, high bluffs, and old homestead/backyard.

Creekside Trail ●

Total Length: 1.0 miles (moderate to strenuous hike)

This naturally-surfaced, linear trail is accessed from the north end of the Wetlands Boardwalk. This wooded trail travels alongside Steep Hill Creek, where a variety of native plants and animals may be seen. The trail crosses over several creeks and wetlands areas, by way of small footbridges and wooden walk-boards. This trail is not a loop. Once the end of the trail has been reached, hikers will have to retrace their steps on the same trail, back to the Wetlands Boardwalk area (i.e., the trail is 1.0-mile out and 1.0-mile back).



YATES MILL IS A GREAT PLACE TO VIEW WILDLIFE.

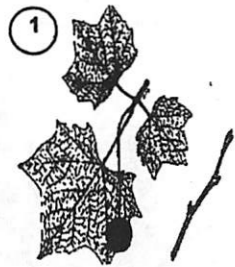


THE POND AND WETLANDS BOARDWALKS PROVIDE ACCESS TO SEVERAL MILES OF HIKING TRAILS AND SUPPORT WILDLIFE VIEWING AND FISHING.

TRAIL USER ETHICS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. BE MINDFUL OF OTHER USERS.** *Respect the rights of all other trail users and obey all park rules and regulations. Show courtesy when passing other trail users, especially large educational groups.*
- 2. PLAN AHEAD.** *Know your ability. Become familiar with Historic Yates Mill and the park's rules before use.*
- 3. USE DESIGNATED TRAILS.** *Please stay on the park's marked trails. Straying off trails tramples vegetation and can cause unwanted erosion.*
- 4. WILDLIFE IS WATCHING YOU.** *In an environmentally friendly, natural setting such as Historic Yates Mill, many wildlife species abound. This is their home. Take care not to disturb or alarm any wildlife living in the park.*
- 5. LEAVE NO TRACE.** *Tread lightly, leaving behind only footprints. Responsible trail users always practice the "take out what is taken in" principle, leaving behind no food wrappers, drink containers, napkins, or other trash. The collection of any plant, animal, rock, or other natural item is prohibited.*
- 6. SET A GOOD EXAMPLE.** *The success of all trails at Historic Yates Mill depends on its users. Practice good trail ethics, immediately reporting any violators or natural hazards to park staff.*
- 7. ALLOW TIME TO FINISH OUTINGS BEFORE PARK CLOSING TIME.** *Remember that as dusk approaches, wooded areas along trails become dark much earlier than trails in open spaces. All park trails close one-half hour before the park closes.*
- 8. BEWARE OF NATURAL HAZARDS.** *Remember that you are in a natural environment. Plants such as poison ivy can cause allergic reactions. There are many wild animals that call Historic Yates Mill home. Please respect these animals and their habitat by admiring them from a distance.*

REC'D
4 JUN
2012



1

Sycamore
(Platanus occidentalis)

Grows 100 feet tall
and 3 to 8 feet in diameter.
Wildlife den tree for birds, squirrels
and raccoons.



6

Water Oak
(Quercus nigra)

Grows 60 to 80 feet tall
and 1 to 2.5 feet in diameter.
Acorns provide food for many wild-
life species.



11

Yellow Poplar
(Liriodendron tulipifera)

Grows 100 feet tall
and 4 to 6 feet in diameter.
The seed is food for small wildlife.



16

River Birch
(Betula nigra)

Grows up to 80 feet tall
and 2 to 3 feet in diameter.
Seeds are eaten by birds.



2

Loblolly Pine
(Pinus taeda)

Grows 80 to 100 feet tall
and 1 to 2 feet in diameter.
Most commercially important tree
species in the south.



7

White Oak
(Quercus alba)

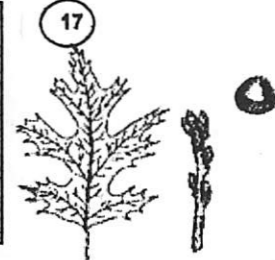
Grows 80 to 100 feet tall
and 3 to 4 feet in diameter.
180 different species of birds and
mammals use acorns as food.



12

Sweetgum
(Liquidambar styraciflua)

Grows 40 to 60 feet tall
and 1 to 3 feet in diameter.
Wood is a favorite food of the
American Beaver.



17

Black Oak
(Quercus velutina)

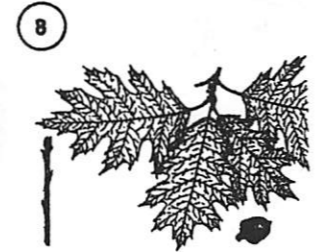
Grows 50 to 80 feet
and 3 feet or more in diameter.
The bark is an important source of
tannic acid used in the tanning
industry.



3

Devils Walkingstick
(Aralia spinosa)

Grows 20 to 30 feet tall
and 18 inches in diameter.
Birds eat fruit, flowers attract bees,
and Swallowtail Butterflies.



8

Northern Red Oak
(Quercus rubra)

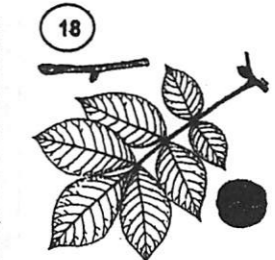
Grows 65 to 98 feet tall
and 2 to 3 feet in diameter.
Acorns are an extremely important
food source for wildlife species.



13

Sourwood
(Oxydendrum arboreum)

Grows 60 feet tall
and 2 feet in diameter.
Multiple flowers produce the
famous Sourwood Honey.



18

Mockernut Hickory
(Carya tomentosa)

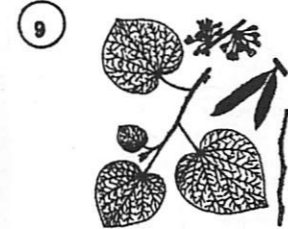
Grows 50 to 80 feet tall
and 1 to 2 feet in diameter.
Hickory nuts are a favorite food of
squirrels and many other wildlife
species.



4

Southern Red Oak
(Quercus falcata)

Grows 60 to 80 feet tall
and 2 to 3 feet in diameter.
Acorns are used as food by many
wildlife species.



9

Red Bud
(Cercis canadensis)

A shrub or small tree seldom reach-
ing 50 feet in height
and 10 to 12 inch in diameter.
Displays very showy purple flowers
in spring.



14

Black Cherry
(Prunus serotina)

Grows 50 to 60 feet tall
and 2 to 3 feet in diameter.
Small cherry fruit is a favorite of
multiple wildlife species.



19

Red Maple
(Acer rubrum)

Grows 40 to 60 feet tall
and 1 to 2.5 feet in diameter.
Buds, flowers and leaves provide
food for many birds and mammals.



5

American Hornbeam
(Carpinus caroliniana)

Grows 20 to 30 feet tall
and 8 to 12 inches in diameter.
Seeds, buds, and catkins are eaten
by numerous wildlife species.



10

Flowering Dogwood
(Cornus florida)

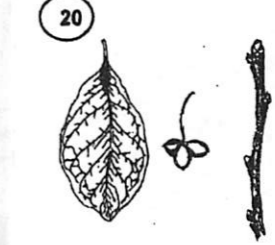
Grows 10 to 20 feet tall
and 4 to 6 inches in diameter.
Has the designation of being the
North Carolina State flower.



15

Pignut Hickory
(Carya glabra)

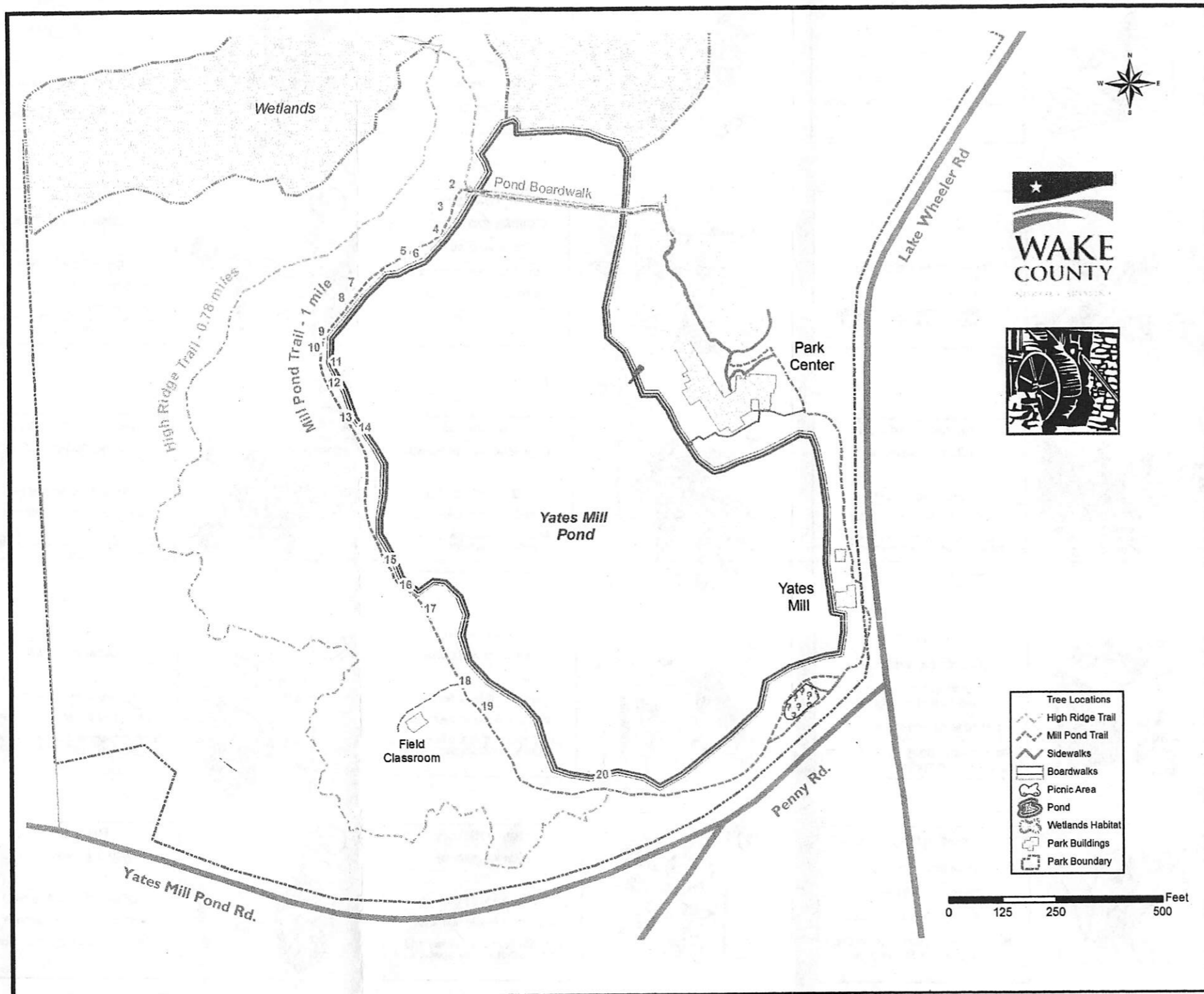
Grows 50 to 75 feet tall
and 1 to 3 feet in diameter.
Favorite food of squirrels and
many other wildlife species.



20

Blackgum
(Nyssa sylvatica)

Grows 30 to 50 feet tall
and up to 5 feet in diameter.
Fruit is relished by many songbirds.



THE TREES AT HISTORIC YATES MILL

This one-way self guided trail will introduce the hiker to twenty of the numerous tree species found at Historic Yates Mill County Park. As you walk this 0.44-mile moderately easy Tree Trail, notice the numbered posts. These posts correspond to numbered tree pictures found inside the brochure, along with numbers shown on the trail map.

A brief description of each tree, along with an interesting fact on each tree, is given to spark your interest and curiosity. More detailed information about trees, and other natural and historical aspects of the park, is available at the park office or from a park staff member. Please feel free to visit the office after your hike.

Once you've completed the tree trail, please note that: (1) you may return by using the same trail, (2) take the 0.78-mile High Ridge Trail, or (3) you may wish to finish the 1-mile Mill Pond Trail. Whatever route you choose, we hope you enjoy your visit to Historic Yates Mill County Park and hope you return again soon. If you choose not to keep this map and guide, please return it to the brochure rack so another visitor may enjoy the trail as we hope you have.

A special note of thanks goes to Miss Rachel Harper of Cary for her research and design of the Trees at Historic Yates Mill Self-Guided Trail.



VOLUNTEER

RECALL 4 JUN 2012

Join our family of volunteers at
Historic Yates Mill
County Park

Engage ~ Preserve ~ Connect



For information about
volunteering, contact the
Volunteer Coordinator at
919.856.6675.

4620 Lake Wheeler Road ~ Raleigh, NC ~ 919.856.6675

www.wakegov.com/parks/yatesmill

Our Volunteers Enjoy:

- ~ Being part of a dedicated volunteer family
- ~ Helping to make the park experience a memorable and rewarding one
- ~ Participating in volunteer appreciation events in celebration of their service

We need VOLUNTEERS who want to become...

Mill Interpreters who are:

- ~ Interested in the history and the operation of our 18th century water-powered gristmill
- ~ Able to communicate with the public
- ~ Energetic and enthusiastic

Trail & Landscape Assistants who are:

- ~ Able to perform physical tasks outdoors
- ~ Have an appreciation for the natural environment of the park

Visitor Service Assistants who are:

- ~ Interested in people having an enjoyable time at the park
- ~ Able to communicate pleasantly and knowledgeably with visitors
- ~ Has enthusiasm and a smiling face



For information about volunteering, contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 919.856.6675.

4620 Lake Wheeler Road ~ Raleigh, NC ~ 919.856.6675

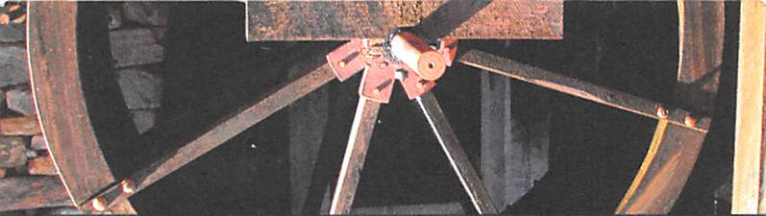
www.wakegov.com/parks/yatesmill

HISTORIC YATES MILL
436 N 2012
Rt 211

GEAR UP!



For the ultimate
learning experience





Historic Yates Mill

Established before the American Revolution, the mill is situated in a rural setting only ten minutes from downtown Raleigh, NC, and is the last operating gristmill in Wake County. A tour of Yates Mill offers visitors and students the opportunity to learn first-hand about North Carolina's Piedmont agricultural heritage, renewable power, and the people that settled the surrounding community centuries ago.

The park also offers field trips, hands-on exhibits, trails, fishing, bird watching, picnicking, and so much more!

PARK OFFICE (919) 856-6675

WEB www.wakegov.com/parks/yatesmill

ADDRESS 4620 Lake Wheeler Road • Raleigh, NC

For field trips and other advance group reservations, please call (919) 856-6675 for more details.

Mill Tours and Corn Grinding Demonstrations are offered March through November. All fees collected from mill tours go to Yates Mill Associates, the non-profit group responsible for the maintenance and operation of the Mill.

To learn more about how you can help support Yates Mill, please visit www.yatesmill.org



Parks, Recreation & Open Space



YATES MILL ASSOCIATES