



## Town Of Cary Parks System

Hemlock Bluffs Nature Preserve, located in south Cary, is a unique site of approximately 150 acres situated along Swift Creek. The site features two miles of trails, on several adjacent properties, some of which are owned by the Town of Cary and others by the State of North Carolina. The Cary Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department is responsible for the development and management of the entire preserve.

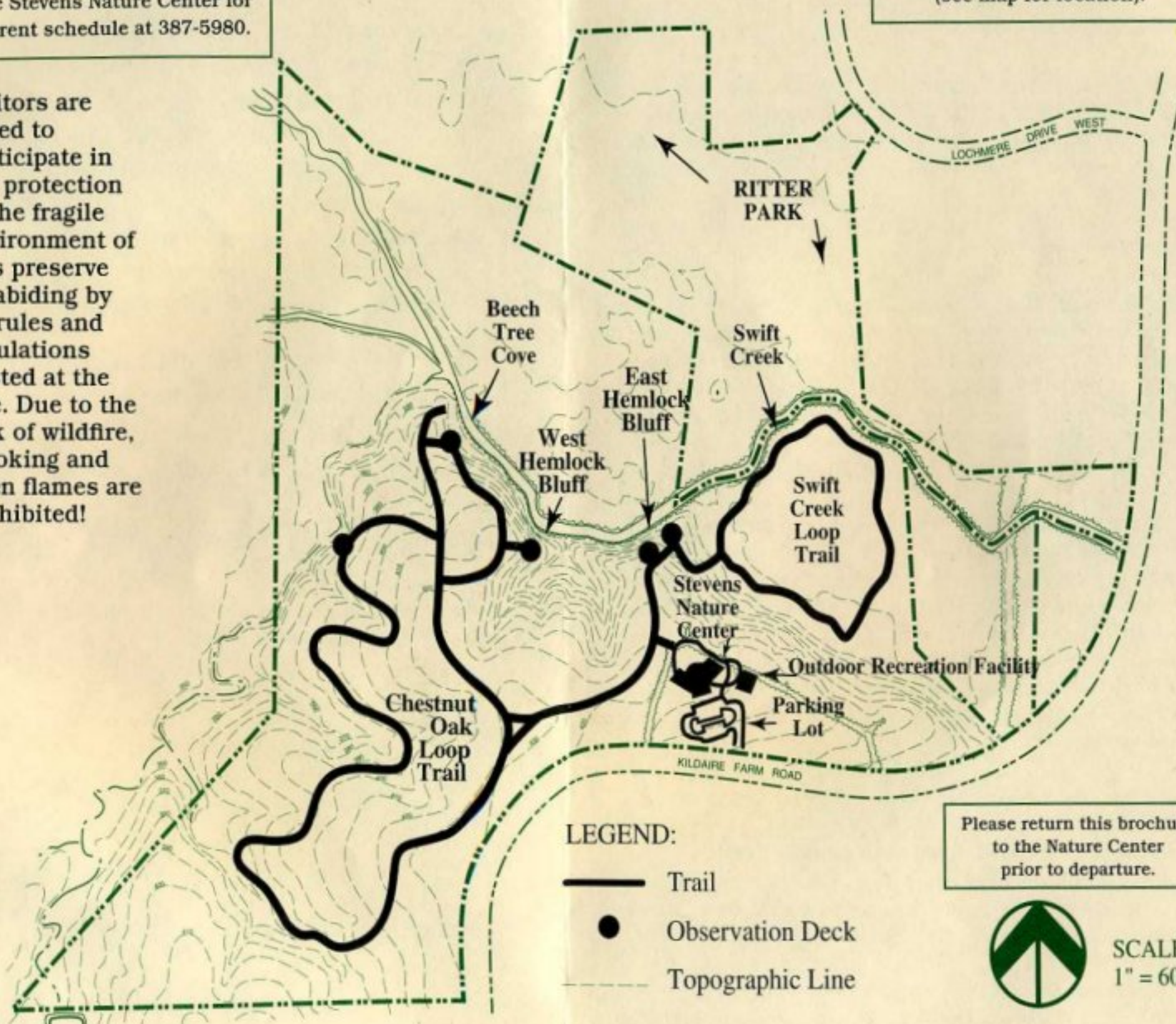
A system of north-facing bluffs along Swift Creek supports a population of Eastern Hemlocks and other vegetation which are unusual to this area, thriving more than 200 miles from their typical habitat in the Appalachian Mountains. The origin of this phenomenon can be traced back roughly 10,000 years to the last glacial period during an era when average temperatures for this region were significantly cooler than those of today. Fossil evidence indicates that during that period, plant species now typically found in the mountain region were once widespread throughout the piedmont of North Carolina. Following the glacial recession from the northern United States a warming trend began which evidently caused these plant communities to gradually disappear in the Piedmont, with the exception of a few rare isolated groupings. The disjunct plant communities of Hemlock Bluffs are believed to be one of these unique relics of the ancient past, surviving in this particular location due to the protective nature of the north-facing bluffs which provide a relatively cool, moist environment for the plants.

### Nature Programs

Guided nature walks and activities are available throughout the year. Call the Stevens Nature Center for the current schedule at 387-5980.

Visitors are urged to participate in the protection of the fragile environment of this preserve by abiding by all rules and regulations posted at the site. Due to the risk of wildfire, smoking and open flames are prohibited!

Picnicking is discouraged in the preserve. Ritter Park is available for this use (see map for location).



### LEGEND:

- Trail
- Observation Deck
- Topographic Line

Please return this brochure to the Nature Center prior to departure.



SCALE:  
1" = 600'

Group visits for educational or scientific purposes are encouraged, previous arrangement with preserve management is required. Call 387-5980.

## HEMLOCK BLUFFS TRAIL SYSTEM