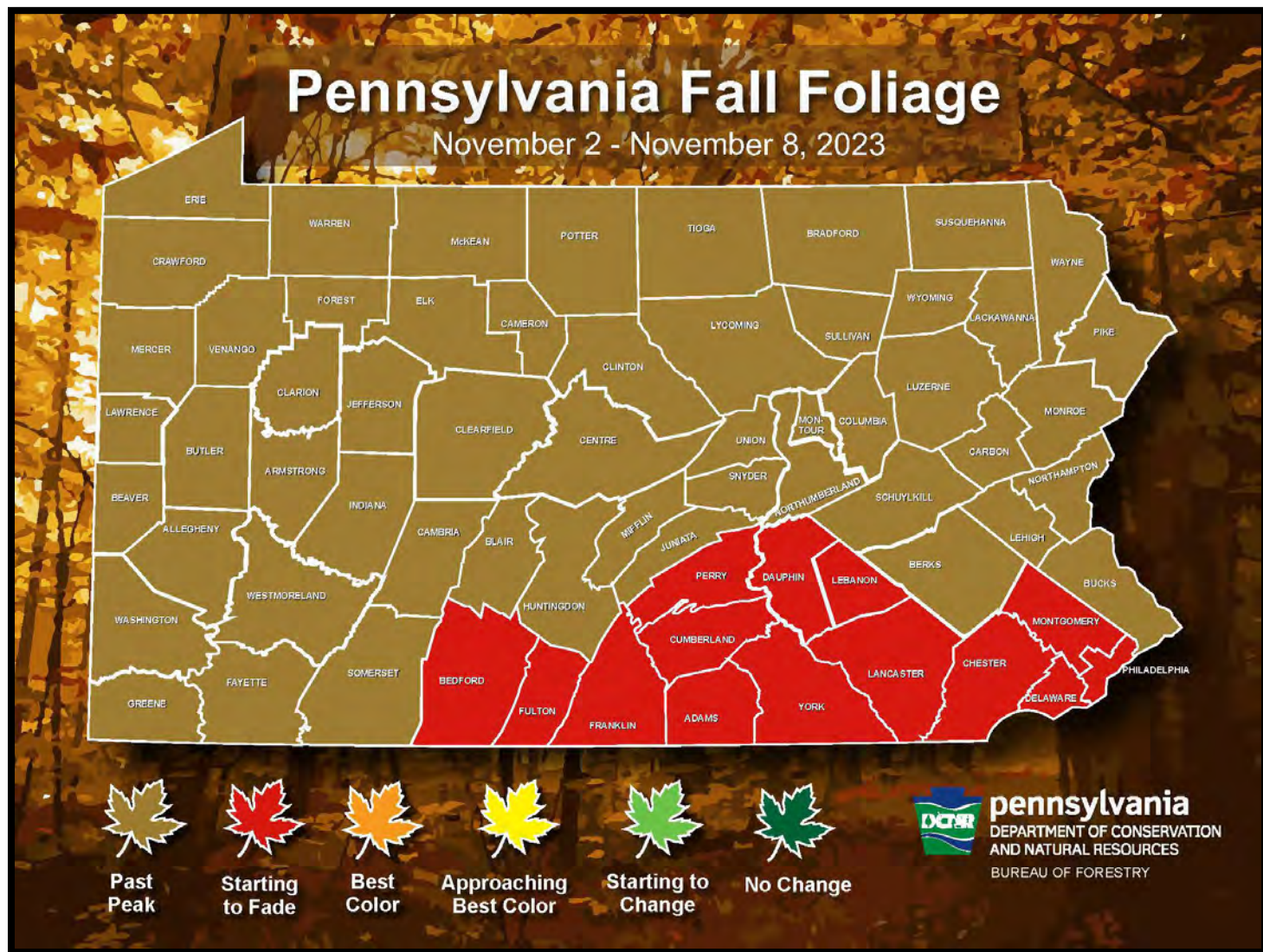


Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Bureau of Forestry

PENNSYLVANIA WEEKLY FALL FOLIAGE REPORT

November 2 – November 8, 2023



To predict peak season from the colors, use these guidelines:

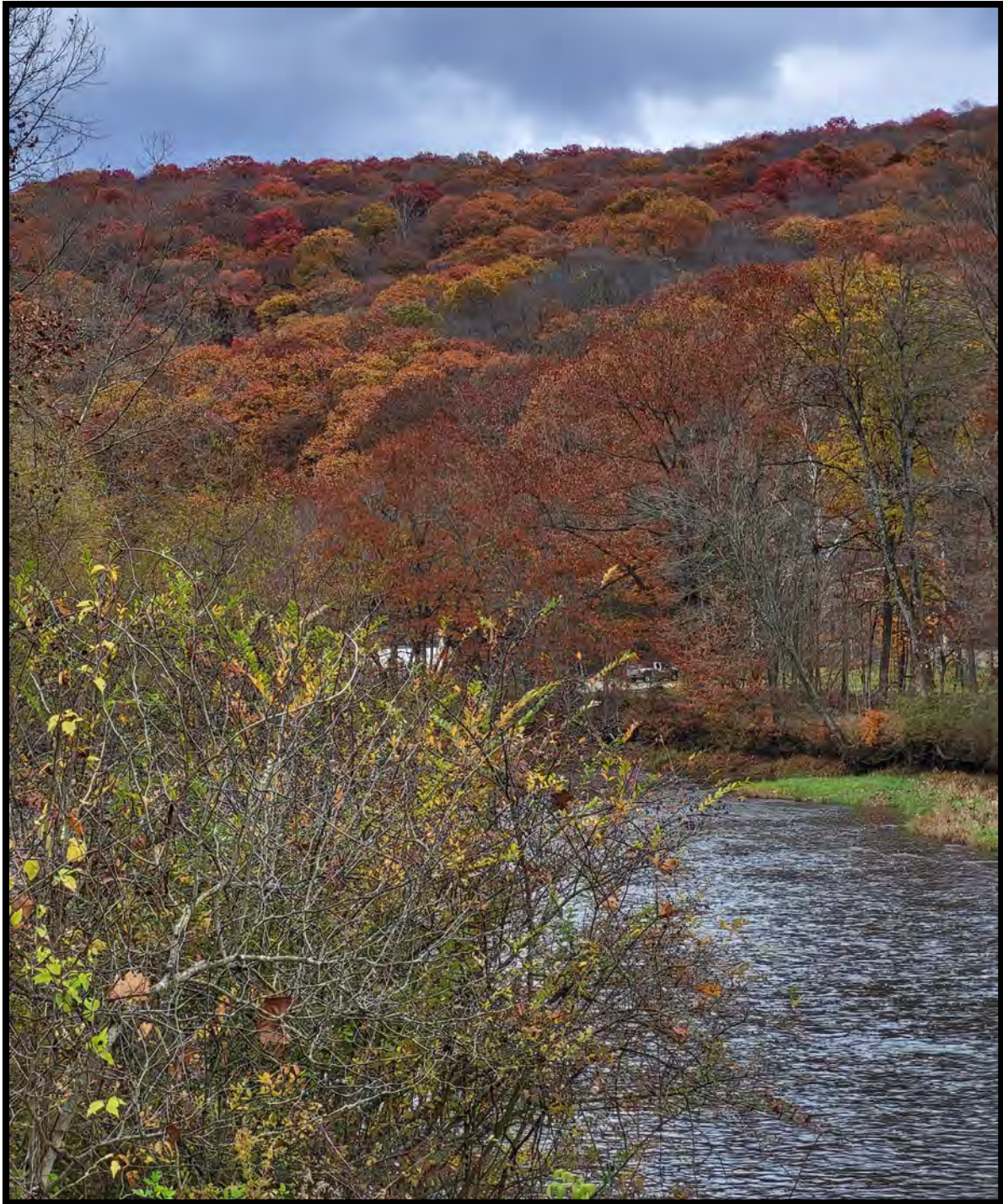
- Dark Green/Little to No Change= peak is *three weeks to a month* away
- Light Green/Starting to Change= peak is *approximately two to three weeks* away
- Yellow/Approaching Best Color= peak is *approximately one week* away
- Orange/Best Color= foliage is *peaking this week*
- Red/Starting to Fade= still some nice color but won't last more than *a few more days*
- Brown/Past Peak= all or nearly all color is *gone*

Statewide Fall Foliage Overview

After an extended period of phenomenal color across vast expanses of Penn's Woods, rain, wind, and snow have stripped many trees of their fall best. Despite this fact and recent heavy frosts and freezes, pleasant color should persist in the southern reaches of the Keystone State, particularly in southcentral and southeastern PA. Please read on for details in the sixth (and final) Pennsylvania Fall Foliage Report of 2023.

Northwestern Region

The district manager in Cornplanter State Forest (based in Warren County) said recent snow will likely be a “season-ending event” for fall color in northwestern PA. Many trees have lost their leaves as the 2023 fall foliage season draws to a close. A scattering of bright gold and burnt orange from oak and maple still decorates the hillsides, providing the last glimpses of fall. The transition into early winter is fast approaching with shorter days and colder temperatures, hastening the remaining color changes. Late fall conditions have arrived, but opportunities to enjoy a fall woods walk or romp in a big pile of leaves are still quite plentiful.



Late fall color at Oil Creek State Park. (photo by T. Ryen)

Northcentral Region

Staff in Tioga State Forest said the region is past peak, and aside from some stands of oak, fall foliage season is over.

Foresters in Susquehannock State Forest (Potter, McKean counties) said the fall foliage season is essentially over in the district, aside from some nice oak color in southern Potter County. Pleasant color can still be found near Cross Fork on Route 144, and south of Oleona on Route 44.

Forestry staff in Elk State Forest said wind and rain brought down most remaining maple leaves along with many of the oaks. Some hillsides are now completely free of leaves. Oak dominated sites are still holding a significant number of leaves and are showing one last push of color. Tulip poplar is adding splashes of yellow to the landscape. The Bucktail Overlook is a great place to see a nearly 360-degree view of oak hillsides. Ridge Road and its many vistas are worth a drive, as well.



Whitehead Vista, Elk State Forest. (photo by S. Johnson)

Forestry staff in Tiadaghton State Forest (district mostly occupies western half of Lycoming County) said most of the color has vanished from the region. After a few days of rainfall, deep orange, amber, and brown colors remain on some pockets of oak and beech still clinging to their leaves.



The final wisps of color from Shanerburg Road, Loyalsock State Forest District. (photo by J. Jordan)

The Bradford/Sullivan County (Loyalsock State Forest District) service forester reported that foliage is now past peak and coming to an end. Very few trees have leaves remaining after the wind and rain over the weekend. Some orange and yellows from birch, beech, and understory species can still be observed. A visit to Bear Wallow Pond or a hike on the Old Loggers Path will provide that fall feeling with freshly fallen leaves on the forest floor.

The Clinton County (Sproul State Forest) service forester indicated color in the region is ending, with leaves of most deciduous species on the ground. Oak leaves still hanging on are shades of brown, with occasionally colorful crowns. The hills are grey and brown, with valleys presenting the most color.



Current view at Leonard Harrison State Park. (photo by V. Curtis)



Sparse color remains along Pine Creek at the Slate Run bridge. (photo by V. Curtis)



Pretty oak in Pine Creek Township along the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. (photo by L. Greenaway)

West-central and Southwestern Regions

The Lawrence/Butler County service forester (Clear Creek Forest District) reported the area is well past peak foliage for this year. Maple leaves are mostly down, as are most other species. Oaks are presenting shades of gold and bronze, but started to fall with yesterday's snow. There is still color in the region, but the best show has passed.

Foresters in Forbes State Forest reported a large volume of leaves were shed across southwestern Pennsylvania last week, abruptly ending the fall foliage viewing season across most of the region. Visitors to the Laurel Highlands will notice hiking trails covered with freshly fallen oak and maple leaves. Some oak, a few yellow poplar, and American beech are the only remaining trees presenting colorful splashes of yellows and browns. West of the Laurel Highlands in parts of Allegheny, Fayette, Greene, Washington, and Westmoreland counties, visitors should expect to see many leaves falling this week. A visit to an oak forest, which retain their leaves later than many other species, is the best opportunity to view the last beautiful colors of late fall. Visit Ryerson Station State Park in southwestern Greene County or take a drive along the winding country roads of Greene and Washington counties to observe beautiful hillsides of maples, hickories, and oaks in late fall color.

Central and Southcentral Regions

The Perry/Juniata County service forester (Tuscarora State Forest District) said leaves are falling fast but some color can still be seen in Tuscarora State Forest. Winding through Perry and Juniata counties, Route 850 is still a scenic drive. Route 274 is also beautiful from New Germantown to the Big Spring Picnic Area, where maples and hickories are vibrant.



Vista from Hemlock Road, Tuscarora State Forest. (photo by L. Book)

The Huntingdon County (Rothrock State Forest District) service forester said the ridges are looking barer every day, but a few oaks, hickories, and poplars are retaining colorful leaves. These species are quickly changing from yellow and bronze to brown and dropping rapidly. The lower elevations across Rothrock State Forest are displaying the last remaining color, which is not expected to last long into the forecast period.

Forestry staff in Bald Eagle State Forest said Union, Snyder, and Mifflin counties are past peak and have lost most leaves. Wind, rain, and frost have brought the curtain down on a great season of color, but oak ridgetops still offer some colorful, late autumn scenery.



Last whispers of fall color at Trough Creek State Park. (photo by J. Thompson)

The Clearfield County (Moshannon State Forest District) service forester reported recent wind, rain, snow, and frost have brought about marked change in the area, which is well past peak. However, American beech is still showing vivid yellow and gold. Most red oaks have lost their leaves, but those remaining are muted yellow, burnt orange, and brown. A recommended drive through oak country is Route 322 between Dubois and Clearfield and Route 153 between Clearfield and Houtzdale. While passing through, a hike on the Rockton Mountain Trail System at Greenwood Road is recommended. Please wear orange for your safety. Another recommended drive is Route 504 between Philipsburg and Unionville through the Black Moshannon Division of Moshannon State Forest.

Forestry staff in Weiser State Forest said Carbon County is past peak foliage with heavy rain over the weekend dramatically affecting foliage. Color in neighboring counties is declining but nice in many areas. White and scarlet oaks are still showing bright red, but rust tones and browns are dominating oak foliage. Poplar and some hickories are displaying bright yellows. The Roaring Creek and the Haldeman tracts are good places to see some interesting, late hues.

Forestry staff in Michaux State Forest (Adams, Franklin, Cumberland counties) said foliage is fading throughout the district. Almost all species have turned color and some are starting to fade and fall, but patches of color can still be seen. Recommended places to visit include Dark Hollow Vista and Buzzard's Rocks (drivable), Pole Steeple Trail and Vista, Sunset Rocks Trail, and Beaver Trail.



Pleasant roadside view, US 322 near Rockton, Clearfield County. (photo by R. Conrad)



Pretty urban forest at the Capitol Complex on 10/31. (photo by R. Reed)

Foresters in Buchanan State Forest (serving Bedford, Fulton, Franklin counties) reported the season is winding down and currently fading. Wind has blown many leaves off the trees, and in some cases, faster than they could change color. Oaks are finally turning, and a few maple and hickory trees are holding onto their yellow and gold leaves. Pleasant color continues to hang on in the Bear Valley Division of Buchanan State Forest, Franklin County.



Tower Road Vista, Bear Valley Division, Buchanan State Forest in Franklin Co. (photo by B. O'Donnell)

Foresters at Penn Nursery near Spring Mills said they witnessed a major shift in foliage in the Seven Mountains region, which is now past peak. A large sum of leaves was lost from the canopy with recent rain and snow.

Gallitzin State Forest staff reported that most leaves are down in the Blair, Cambria, and Indiana County region. Recent snow stripped most of the remaining leaves and the 2023 fall foliage season is effectively over.

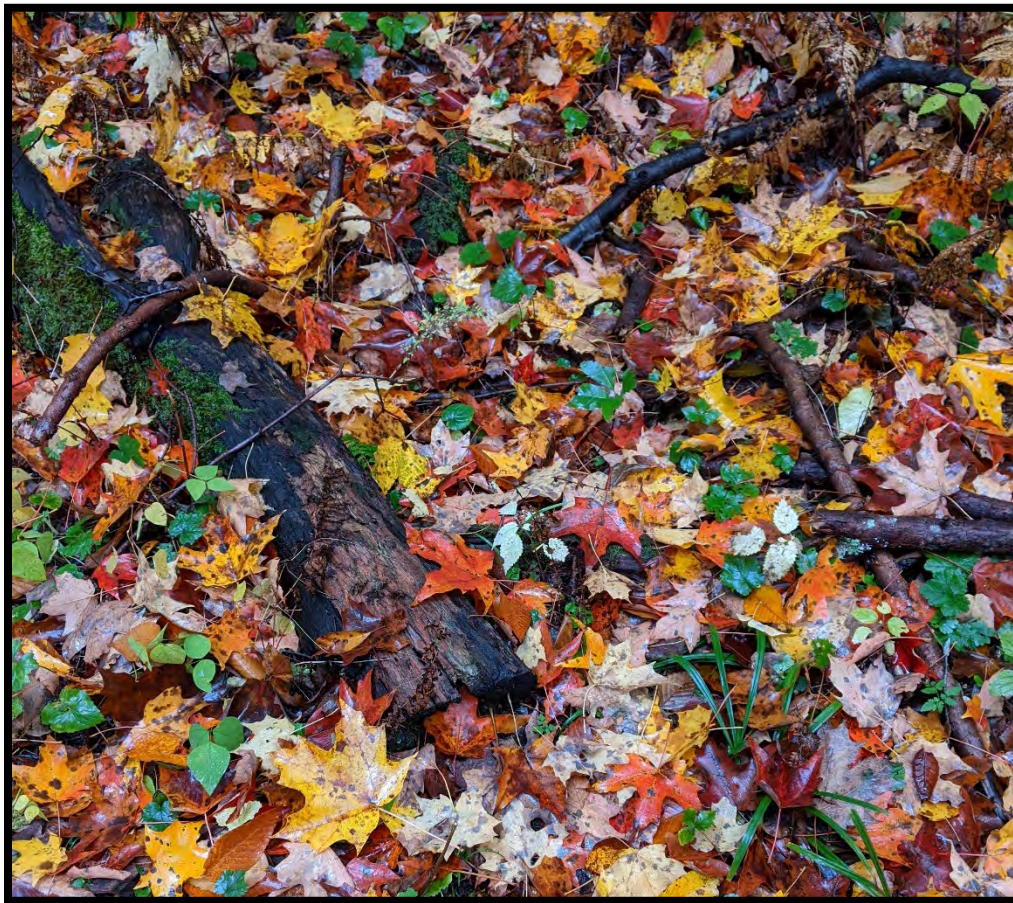
Northeastern Region

Foresters in Pinchot State Forest District reported Susquehanna, Wyoming, Wayne, and Lackawanna County foliage is past peak; almost all the leaves are down after recent rain and cold. To the south in Luzerne, leaves are fading and dropping fast.

The Pike/Monroe County (Delaware State Forest District) service forester indicated the region is fading but still offering a few pleasant viewing opportunities. Oaks are still showing relatively bright colors, especially in low-lying areas. Thunder Swamp and the Dixon Miller Recreation Area are suggested locations to observe some of the last of the fall colors.

Southeastern Region

The Bucks/Lehigh County service forester (William Penn State Forest District) said district foliage peaked quickly for a few days at the end of the last forecast period and quickly faded due to rain/wind and the pronounced shift in temperature. Bucks, Lehigh, Berks, and Northampton counties are past peak, and the south Philly, Delaware, Montgomery, Chester, and Lancaster areas are fading fast. Oaks, hickory, poplar, paw paws, and a few maples are displaying bright tones. Visitors to southeastern PA should target the Goat Hill Serpentine Barrens in southwestern Chester County or the Ruth Zimmerman Natural Area in Berks County, where observers can see late color on several species of oaks.



*Although more color may be on the ground in southeastern PA, it's still a pleasure to experience the sights and smells of late fall.
(photo by D. Stiffler)*