

Northwestern Region

The district manager in Cornplanter State Forest District (Warren, Erie counties) reported that cooler nights have brought a rush of color to northwestern Pennsylvania. Dominant shades so far have been yellows and golds, especially on locust, aspen, and ash. Dogwoods are starting to show their crimson red color, mostly on outer leaves. A sunny, dry week is predicted which should encourage fall colors. Routes to consider for some early fall viewing are Route 59 near Kinzua and Route 6 east toward Coudersport. For an alternative view, consider a fall foliage ride on the Oil Creek and Titusville Railroad or a paddle down the Allegheny. No matter your route, be sure to visit DCNR forests and parks in the region for festivals, fairs, and fun!

Northcentral Region

The district manager in Susquehannock State Forest (Potter, McKean counties) said the area experienced two hard frosts since last report, accelerating the color change. The peak in the maple dominated forest of northern Potter and McKean counties is happening this week through the weekend of October 7-9. Beech, cherry, and aspen have started to turn and will continue to add good color in some areas for about the next two weeks. Oaks should start changing soon and are expected to peak around October 22-29. Brilliant colors vary widely this year probably because of the dry weather and near drought conditions this summer. Some hillsides are yellow and tan, and others are brilliant shades of yellow, orange, and red. Recommended scenic drives include routes 6, 44, 49, and 449.



Fall colors are ramping up along Lyman Run Road. (photo by C. Nicholas)

Foresters in Loyalsock State Forest (Lycoming, Sullivan counties) said fall foliage is nearing peak in the district, with maples showing best color. Peak is expected around October 10 in most areas of the forest although the oaks are lagging well behind. For some good scenery, try a hike on World's End Trail, starting in the state park and ending on Coal Mine Road.

The Tioga County service forester said great colors can be seen in parts of Tioga State Forest. Downtown Wellsboro is beautiful along with the eastern half of the county, and northern hardwoods look great to the west. Northern hardwoods are showing some nice yellows and oranges, with red maples popping vibrant shades of red and scarlet. Overall, fall foliage changes are not consistent throughout the forest, but sights to see are abundant.

Staff in Tiadaghton State Forest indicated that foliage in the region is still quite green. Chilly nighttime temperatures this weekend should spur noticeable changes throughout the district.

The Clinton County service forester (Sproul State Forest) reported good color to be found from the peaks to the valleys, with the best color at higher elevations. Hyner View State Park and the Fish Dam Scenic Overlook offer some excellent views of fall color in the area. Peak fall color may occur in the district by the end of this reporting period.

The Elk County service forester said colors in the northern parts of Elk and Cameron counties (northern hardwood forest) are changing fast. Maples are showing nice color. The southern parts of Elk and Cameron counties (mostly oak forest) are not as vivid, except maples.



Salt Run Vista near Emporium, Cameron County. (photo by T. Herzing)

West-central and Southwestern Regions

The Mercer County (Clear Creek State Forest District) service forester reported that leaves have been quickly changing over the past week, with a lot of yellow and orange on maple, aspen, beech, and grapevine. Virginia creeper and sumac are a beautiful, deep burgundy. Scattered maples are a brilliant bright red or rusty orange, while most are still green (as are the oaks). Along forest edges, dogwoods and goldenrods are past prime, but New England asters are still a vivid purple.

In Forbes State Forest District, recently cool temperatures have brought colorful changes throughout southwestern PA. The ridges are rapidly changing with the best fall color expected throughout the upcoming weekend into next week. Color in lower elevation areas is lagging the ridges and still mostly green with some spotty color. The expected peak for Allegheny, Washington, and Greene counties should occur in two weeks. Black gums, sugar maples, red maples, cucumber magnolias, and witch hazels are rapidly changing at elevation. Depending on location, tree species composition will greatly affect the colors that you see. Red maples and black gums are vibrant red, while the sugar maples, cucumber magnolias, and witch hazels are sporting gold to orange hues. Make sure to check out PA's highest point at Mt. Davis for some awesome color, and most of the Laurel Ridge and portions of Chestnut Ridge will offer lots of bright fall scenery.

Gallitzin State Forest (Blair, Indiana, Cambria counties) staff said the district is still very green except for some spotty but vibrant red maples.



Lake Wilhelm at M.K. Goddard State Park. (photo by D. Cole)



The view from Mt. Davis. (photo by R. Mahony)

Central and Southcentral Regions

In Bald Eagle State Forest District, the Mifflin, Juniata, and Union County service forester said some red maples and black gums are showing red, and birches are displaying yellow. Riansaires Vista is one of the many suggested district overlooks to get a panoramic view of fall foliage. Peak color in the region is expected between 10/15 and 10/20.

Bureau of Forestry staff at the Mira Lloyd Dock Center (near Potters Mills, Centre County, in the Seven Mountains area) reported a bit more color showing now. Species displaying additional color are black gum and black walnut, which are mixing in with previous color from red maple and sumac. Most of the color in the area is found concentrated along the edges of roads. Fall foliage enthusiasts should expect to see a major flush of color in the coming week or two.



Meadow along the Quehanna Highway. (photo by R. Conrad)



Riansares Vista, Bald Eagle State Forest. (photo by J. Osborne)



Poe Valley Road. (photo by C. Neuffer)



Bright sugar maple, Tuscarora State Forest. (photo by L. Book)

The Perry/Juniata County service forester (Tuscarora State Forest District) reported the northern part of the district is starting to exhibit nice color on sugar maples. Black Log Valley's abundant sugar maples are transitioning to vibrant color, with contributions from dogwood and hickory too. Winding through Perry and Juniata counties, Route 850 is a recommended scenic drive.

In Weiser State Forest District, area service foresters said Northumberland, Montour, Schuylkill, and Columbia counties are starting to change. Black gum, Virginia creeper, maple species, walnut, and sumac are showing color while most of the mature forests on the ridges are unchanged. In Dauphin, Lebanon, and Carbon counties, black gum, birch, maple, walnut, tulip poplar, sumac, and sassafras are starting to display yellow and red shades.

In Buchanan State Forest (Franklin, Fulton, Bedford counties) foresters reported that the forest canopy is still mostly green, with black gums dotting the district with shades of red to orange.

Foresters in Michaux State Forest District said green is still the predominant color but fall shades are increasing in some areas. Colder nights ahead will bring more color next week.



Beautiful cabin scene, Jack Dent Road, Moshannon State Forest. (photo by R. Conrad)

The Huntingdon County service forester said oaks are still green, but the rest of the forest has begun to change over the last week. Maples have changed considerably, approaching peak color. Other species contributing color are birch, black gum, and poplar. State forest vistas are recommended for observing large swaths of color across the forest. The northern portion of Rothrock (northern Huntingdon/southern Centre counties) is the best region to see fall color in the district this week.

The Clearfield County service forester in Moshannon State Forest reported that fall color has come a long way since last week. Red maples are a vibrant scarlet and orange and sugar maples and birches are beginning to turn bright yellow. Sassafras and black gum continue their display, turning yellow/orange and deep red, respectively. Oaks are still green, providing a nice contrast with brighter species. The Quehanna Highway from Medix Run to Piper, with side trips on Jack Dent Road and Ardell Road, will show off the beautiful maple and birch color.



Little Medix Road, Moshannon State Forest. (photo by R. Conrad)



Colors are beginning to pop near Potters Mills. (photo by J. Thompson)

Northeastern Region

The Delaware State Forest (Pike, Monroe counties) service forester said cooler temperatures with the possibility of frost at higher elevations will continue to push fall colors. The estimated peak date has been moved up to reflect rapidly changing color progression. Areas north of US 80 are showing the best fall colors. Long Pond, Blakeslee, and the Promised Land areas have the best color now. These areas have a heavy maple component which is currently displaying the most fall color.

Foresters in Pinchot State Forest said Susquehanna County will peak this week. Orange and red seem to be the highlight colors this year. Oaks and beeches will be changing soon, adding more diversity to the array of colors. In Lackawanna and Wyoming counties, more signs of change are evident, with maples, birches, and cherries in full color. Some areas along US 380 are much further along in color transition. Forests in the northern half of Luzerne County are rapidly changing with maples, birches, and cherries standing out.



Bushkill Creek, southern Pike County. (photo by G. Beers)



Fall colors are progressing at Salt Springs State Park. (photo by A. Noguera)

Southeastern Region

Foresters in William Penn State Forest district indicated some foliage changes in the district, especially on red maples, but the region is still very green, overall.