Lake James State Park

Established: 1987
Landmark: Paddy’s Creek bridge, a wooden, arched bridge with great views of the sunrise
You can find...bald eagles: Lake James hosts a healthy population of eagles throughout the year, including a nest site that has been active for more than a decade.

Trails: 14 trails
› 1 Kids TRACK trail – Overmountain Victory Trail
› 32.6 miles of hiking
› 20 miles of biking
Accesses: Paddy’s Creek, Catawba River and Fonta Flora State Trail

Swimming is permitted in the Paddy’s Creek Area within the designated swimming area. The swimming area is open May 1 through Sept. 30, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., daily. A fee is charged for adults and children.
Boating: Stand-up paddleboards, canoes and kayaks may be rented for a fee from the concession stand in the Paddy’s Creek Area, which is open seasonally. Two boat ramps, Hidden Cove and Canal Bridge, offer boater access to Lake James. The Hidden Cove boat ramp is operated according to park hours and must be vacated by closing time and is closed during the winter months. The boat ramp at Canal Bridge is open 24 hours a day, throughout the year.
Fishing: The cool flow into the depths of Lake James, creating a perfect environment for the many game fish that swim here. Cast your line in the cool mountain waters of the Linville and Catawba rivers to catch largemouth and smallmouth bass, walleye, white bass, crappie, bluegill, redbreast sunfish, muskellunge, carp and perch. A fishing license is required, and all anglers must adhere to the regulations of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission.

Lake James State Park offers three tent camping areas. The Catawba River Area has 20 walk-in campsites, many of which offer lake views. The Paddy’s Creek Area has 33 drive-to campsites. The remote boat-in campground on the Long Arm Peninsula offers a true outdoor adventure for those willing to paddle or steer their canoes, kayaks or powerboats to their own slice of heaven. Visit the website or contact the park office for more information about amenities, facilities, and accessible campsites.

You bring the food and we’ll supply the atmosphere. There are picnic areas available on a first-come, first-served basis at both the Catawba River and Paddy’s Creek areas of Lake James State Park. Picnic sites include tables, outdoor grills and trash and recycling receptacles. Drinking water and restrooms are located within a short walk of all picnic sites. Three large picnic shelters can accommodate up to 100 people and are available by reservation or first-come, first-serve.

FLORA AND FAUNA
• Deer
• Flying squirrel
• Red fox
• Rabbit
• Muskrat
• Mink
• Eastern box turtle
• Red salamander
• Tree frogs
• Fence lizard
• Green heron
• Belted kingfisher
• Pileated woodpecker
• Bald eagle
• Pink lady slipper
• Jack-in-the-pulpit
• Passion flower
• Indian pipe
• Mountain laurel
• Flame azalea