

Fall Leaf Change and Tourism on the Blue Ridge Parkway

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Each year the Blue Ridge Parkway receives millions of guests, and typically there is a spike in visitors in October. This spike is likely due to October being when the tree leaves change color each year. The term peak week is often used to describe when the most trees have the most vibrant leaves, which on the Blue Ridge Parkway is typically in mid-October. However, there are many factors that play into when the trees change color every year. This project examines if temperature and precipitation have a role in determining when the trees reach their peak each year and how fall foliage influences tourism on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Using t-Tests, there was determined to be high statistical significance between leaf change and precipitation, leaf change and temperature, and leaf change and tourism. These findings conclude that precipitation and temperature do impact when the leaves change color and that fall foliage does influence tourism on the Blue Ridge Parkway.