

Collector's Journal

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2014 Shenandoah National Park Quarter - Virginia

Twenty-Second in the America the Beautiful Quarters Collection

Shenandoah National Park in Virginia is featured on the second of five America the Beautiful Quarters issued in 2014. The coin is also the twenty-second coin in the overall collection. The series was a follow-up to the popular State Quarters series, which was issued from 1999 to 2009.

While many America the Beautiful Quarters honor National Parks, few states east of the Mississippi River are home to National Parks. Virginia, with Shenandoah, is one of the exceptions. For those states without National Parks, their coins highlight National Forests, National Monuments, National Historical Parks, and other national sites instead.

The America the Beautiful Quarters series started in 2010, and coins are issued at the rate of five per year. Each coin is a limited edition of about 10 weeks, and coins are released in the order in which the sites were set aside by the federal government. Each coin in the series is struck for circulation at both the Philadelphia and Denver Mints; they are identified by a small "P" (Philadelphia) or "D" (Denver) mint mark under "In God We Trust."

Shenandoah National Park protects nearly 200,000 acres along the ridge of the Blue Ridge Mountains, just 75 miles from Washington, D.C. It is notable for its spectacular mountain views, along with thick forests and cascading waterfalls.

When Congress authorized Shenandoah National Park in 1926, much of the land that now makes up the park was inhabited and had been turned into farmland. More than 450 families were evicted, and the park formally opened in 1935. The farmland was returned to nature, and the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps built visitor facilities and made the park accessible to the public.



The most famous part of Shenandoah National Park is Skyline Drive, which runs 105 miles through the park and roughly parallels the mountain ridge. Other attractions include Hawksbill Mountain and Little Stony Man, which are the highest point in the park at more than 4,000 feet, and Overall Run, which is the park's highest waterfall at 93 feet. Hikers can take the Appalachian National Scenic Trail through the entire length of the park, in addition to other trails that extend into the wilderness.

The design of the Shenandoah National Park Quarter features a hiker enjoying the scenery from Little Stony Man summit. The background shows the surrounding Blue Ridge Mountains, as well as a sliver of Skyline Drive on the far left side; the hiker symbolizes the many opportunities for outdoor activities in the park.

Before selecting this design, the U.S. Mint prepared several prospective designs for the Shenandoah coin. Two other designs also depicted a hiker at Little Stony Man, but from different angles and with slightly different backgrounds. Another design featured a hiker in a different location, and the final design was a black bear in the foreground with mountain scenery in the background. All five proposed designs included a section of Skyline Drive in the distance.

The Shenandoah National Park Quarter was released by the U.S. Mint in March, 2014.

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