



Fall Color

Sawtooth Mtn Driving Tours



"Delicious autumn! My very soul is wedded to it, and if I were a bird I would fly about the earth seeking the successive autumns."

- George Eliot

Summer is over and our short spectacular season of fall is upon us. Autumn is a season of change, get out as often as you can and learn to enjoy all of its moods. We are often asked when peak fall color occurs, but seeking the peak of fall color is as futile as searching for the end of the rainbow. From the time that the first reds and yellows appear on the forest floor in the leaves of bush honeysuckle and sarsaparilla, through the red flame of the maples and the painfully bright yellows of birch, and on to the final rustle of color on the ground contrasting with the black webbing of twigs against a sky promising snow, fall is a continual show. Every day is a peak in its own right. Enjoy the day you get to spend in the woods rather than wondering if it was better yesterday, or will be better tomorrow.

Superior National Forest covers a lot of ground, and autumn progresses in a ragged wave down from the north. In general, the more north and the more inland from Lake Superior you are, the farther along the season will be. The progress of fall is far from even though. Hills, lakes, even uprooted trees can create small pocket microclimates that can be a week or more ahead or behind the surrounding woodlands. If you are coming from the south, you will be able to "fast forward" autumn as you drive north. Even better, you can temporarily reverse time and "rewind" the season as you head back south. Duluth to Grand Marais may be only two and a half hours apart, but they can be three weeks apart in terms of fall colors.

Let's go for a drive!

Enjoy the fall colors on one of our tour routes, but keep in mind some safety tips.

- ⌘ Stop only in areas with good visibility and where you can pull over and leave adequate passing space.
- ⌘ Watch for logging trucks.
- ⌘ Driving very slowly is fine for enjoying the leaves, but it can aggravate following cars into making poor decisions. Let them pass you by pulling over and stopping completely where there is good visibility. If there is no safe place to pull over, resume a safe faster pace until you can let them by.
- ⌘ If you are a following car, be patient.
- ⌘ Remember, winding gravel roads may have washboarding, loose gravel, and other hazards.
- ⌘ Deer and other wildlife are best viewed in the woods, not on your bumper. Slow down.
- ⌘ Be aware that hunting seasons are in progress, so wear bright colors in the woods, and watch for pedestrians on the roads.

**Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, and I --
I took the one less traveled by,
and that has made all the difference**

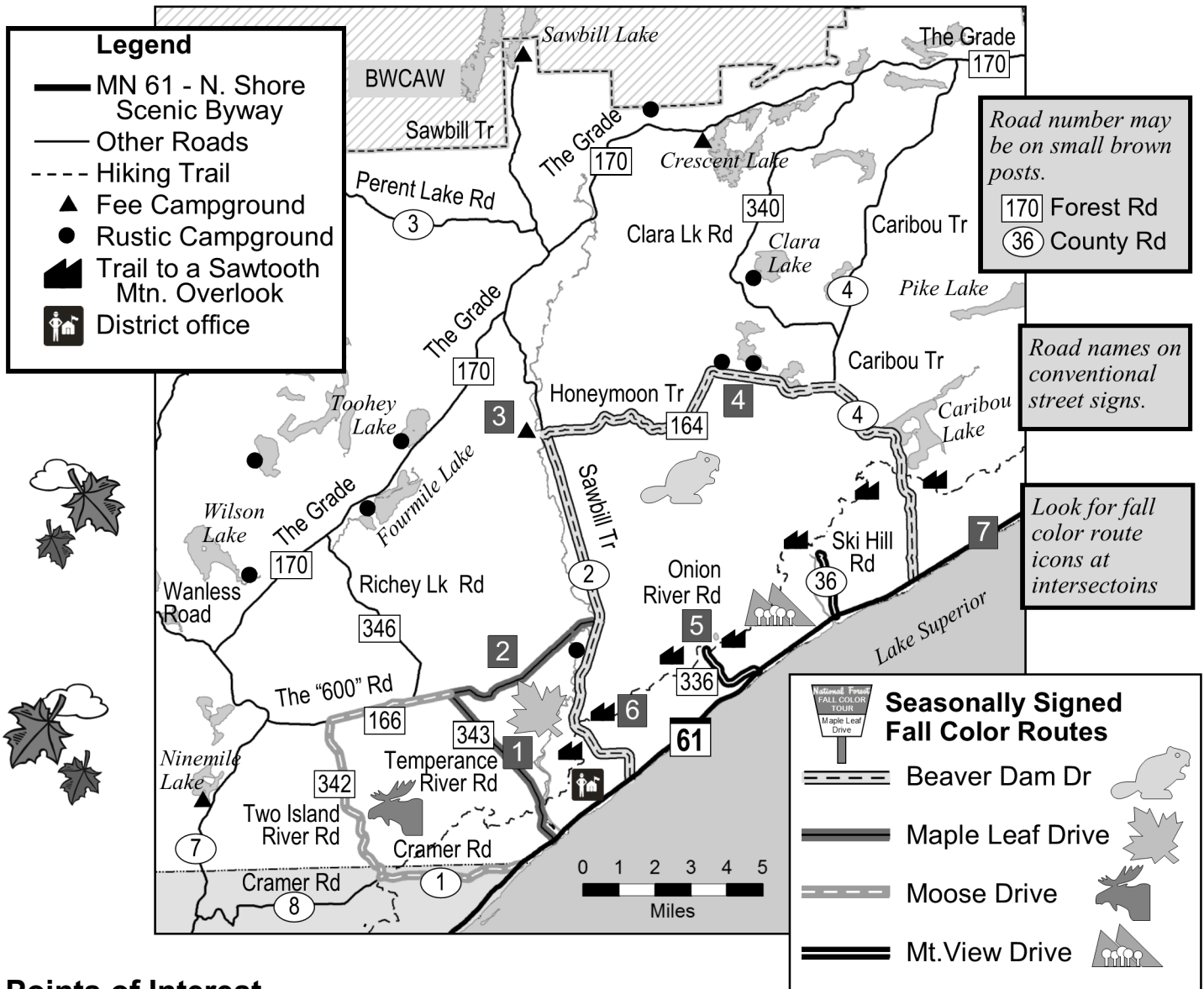
- Robert Frost



You may buy a Forest map at a Forest Service office if you are interested in exploring areas off the marked tour routes.



Superior National Forest - Fall Colors



Points of Interest

- 1 Temperance River Vista** View of the Temperance River, its valley, and Carlton Peak which rises 900 ft above Lake Superior.
- 2 Heartbreak Ridge** When horses were used for logging, this steep ridge broke many a logger's heart because during the winter he could not haul up or down the rise.
- 3 Temperance River Campground** Camping, picnicking, toilets, and well.
- 4 Poplar River and White Pine Campgrounds** Camping, picnicking, toilets.
- 5 Oberg and LeVeaux Hiking Trails** Some of the best fall vistas are from these trails. There are steep cliffs, so keep children close. Round trip: Oberg, 2 ¼ miles; LeVeaux, 3 ½ miles. Parking for both is 2 miles up the Onion River Rd (336).
- 6 Britton Peak Trail** This short 5 minute trail provides a great view from the top.
- 7 Scenic Drives** There are three designated Scenic Byways to explore in the area. The North Shore Scenic Byway (MN 61) follows the birch filled shore of Lake Superior. The Gunflint Trail (Co 12) and Superior National Forest (Forest Hwy 11) Scenic Byways travel into the Forest from the shore and can be found on other maps.

Gunflint Ranger District
2020 W Hwy 61
Grand Marais, MN 55604
218-387-1750

Need more information?

on the web at:
www.fs.usda.gov/superior

Tofte Ranger District
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