

The Critter Tour

50 Minutes, Approximately 25 Miles

If you want to take in a little nature, this is a great tour for you. It's especially good for kids! You'll encounter bison, thousands of trout, and llama. You may want to pack a picnic lunch. There are picnic tables in a nice setting at the Reynoldsdale Fish Hatchery.

Begin at the Bison Corral, on Rt. 30, a couple miles west of Schellsburg. You can visit the Bison Corral Gift Shop, (info on p. 22), or just look for the bison in the field along Rt. 30. If there are none visible, drive toward the back pasture. From the gift shop parking area, turn left, drive .4 mile west and turn right onto the first road you come to. Follow this road about .3 mile, checking the fenced pasture to your right. Stay out of the pasture! The bison could hurt you if you go inside the fence. Once you've seen the bison, continue on this road for a short distance. After the bridge, turn right onto Rose Rd. and continue until it intersects again with Rt. 30. Turn left and drive east on Rt. 30 toward Bedford. Just before you come upon Schellsburg, you'll see the Old Log Church to your right built in 1806. The cemetery here is the final resting place for several Revolutionary War Veterans.

Continuing east on Rt. 30, be sure to check your odometer when you pass the traffic light in Schellsburg. Drive 5.4 miles and turn left onto Rt. 56 W. Drive on Rt. 56 for 3.7 Miles. Turn left at the red light to continue on Rt. 56.

Drive 5.7 miles on Rt. 56 and turn right. You'll see a sign for the Fish Culture Station. Drive 100 yards and turn left. Then, make your next right and follow the parking signs.

There are picnic tables near the end of the parking area in a nice setting, most suitable for a relaxed picnic.

You're welcome to walk along the outside areas, just be careful not to fall into the pools! This is a working fish hatchery that also maintains a mini museum in the main building. Inside, you'll see fish, reptile and ecosystem displays and more. There's even a two story tank filled with some mighty big trout. Although their main mission is to raise and stock trout, the staff here is very friendly and if they're free, may be able to answer some questions for you.

After completing your tour at the Fish Hatchery, exit the driveway to the left, then turn right onto the small road, and turn left onto Rt. 56. If you want to see if the llamas are out and maybe grab a birch beer (a non-alcoholic and very Pennsylvanian drink), drive 5.6 miles to the "T" at the traffic light and turn left onto Bus. Rt. 220. Drive 1 mile to Fishers Country Store, on the right side of the road. John Fisher keeps llamas out back, but the store is also a treat to behold. There's usually cold birch beer in the cooler and the old fashioned deli is kept busy by people who come from all around to shop here. Strong Mennonite faith is apparent in the operation and the charm of this wonderful store (see ad p. 33).

When finished with your visit, turn right out of the drive and left onto Rt. 220 S. From here, it's a few miles back to Bedford or to access for Rt. 30, which will get you to Breezewood, Everett or Schellsburg.

* The Fish Hatchery is open from 8am-3:30pm every day. This station raises over 335,000 trout (brown, brook, rainbow and golden) for release per year. Most stocking occurs between March and June. It takes about a ton of feed per day to raise all the trout to an average 10"-11" before release. Organized tours may be available for large groups with advance notice. 814-839-2211