

# ARKANSAS

Kayak fishing tips

<http://www.bradwiegmann.com/kayak-fishing.html>

## Kings River

Carry Walkie-Talkies for loops

**Info** at southwestpaddler.com

**Fishing reports** on anglersfishinginfo.com

**Extended forecast** at accuweather.com for Berryville,AR

**Best fishing gauge height is < 3.0.**

**Water flow & gage height** at [waterdata.usgs.gov/ar/nwis/current/?type=flow](http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ar/nwis/current/?type=flow)

Look at river location gage heights or click on station number!

Once at the river website, enter 365 days to get a history of the river levels & character of the river.

High in the Boston Mountains of Madison County lie the beginnings of the Kings River. From this steep country the stream twists its way northward to the White River and finally flows into southern Missouri's Table Rock Lake. In its upper reaches, the Kings cuts a narrow gorge through sandstone, shale, and limestone. On downstream the surrounding countryside is not quite so precipitous, but the water is the same--clear and cool.

The Kings' most attractive features are found along the rocky banks and bluffs where floaters will notice wild azaleas, ferns, umbrella magnolias, and other fascinating plants. In addition, observant visitors can view a great many signs of wildlife--beaver cuttings and deer and raccoon tracks, for instance--and may even spot some of the local creatures.

**SECTION DESCRIBED:** Headwaters to the Arkansas-Missouri border, a distance of approximately 90 miles.

### Characteristics

The headwaters area is, of course, no place for Kings River rafting, canoeing or kayaking, but it does offer some hiking opportunities. One good place in particular is the Kings River Falls Natural Area, a preserve of the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission. In addition to observing the falls themselves (which drop about 6 feet over a water-sculpted ledge), visitors can inspect a great many interesting plants in the area, and history buffs might try to envision the grist mill which was once located at the site. To get there, travel to the community of Boston, located on Arkansas 16. At Boston, go north on the county road for about 2 miles until the road forks. Keep to the right and continue north for another 2.5 miles or so, at which point the road again forks. Take the left fork, ford the creek, and then park your car to the right. A trail--about three-quarters of a mile along and paralleling the river--will lead downstream to the falls.

While some floating takes place in the Kingston area, Marble is a traditional starting-off place for many Kings River rafting, kayaking and canoeing visitors (note: the put-in is northwest of Marble at a county road crossing). After eleven miles of deep pools, overhanging trees, occasional rapids, and several large bluffs, floaters will arrive at Marshall Ford, an access point northeast of Alabam.

The second Kings River rafting and floating stretch is the Marshall Ford to Rockhouse run, a 15-mile trip through quiet and attractive country. Access to the river at Rockhouse is a little out-of-the-ordinary; floaters must navigate a feeder stream (Warm Fork Creek) for a few hundred yards before entering or exiting the Kings.

A seven-mile stretch from Rockhouse to Trigger Gap is the third in the series, and offers a peaceful float. The take-out point is a low-water bridge on Arkansas Highway 221 about 9 miles southwest of Berryville.

The next section--Trigger Gap to the U.S. Highway 62 crossing--is a favorite of Kings River rafting, kayaking and canoeing veterans. The 12-mile trip combines good scenery with good fishing. Osage Creek, the Kings River's largest tributary and a float stream in its own right early in the year, enters on the right about a quarter of a mile above the U.S. 62 bridge.

A 12-mile float from the 62 crossing to Summers Ford (off Arkansas 143) is another memorable Kings River rafting run, and a popular choice for fishermen. Some fine gravel bars are found in this stretch of the river.

The last Kings River trip begins at Summers Ford and concludes eight miles later in Missouri at the Highway 86 bridge. Halfway into the trip floaters will encounter backwaters of Table Rock Lake.

### Seasons

Upstream from U.S. 62, the April-June period is considered best for Kings River camping and floating, although fall rains, if sufficient, can make for good canoeing. Below 62, floating extends into early summer.

### Access Points

General Highway Maps for Carroll and Madison counties will help floaters locate the entry points listed in earlier paragraphs. (Note: Visitors are advised that access is not recommended at the U.S. Highway 412 bridge east of Marble.)

### Scenery

Overhanging hardwood forests, fine gravel bars, and rugged bluffs give the Kings River good marks in the scenery department. Also attesting to the stream's beauty is the fact that in 1971 the General Assembly passed legislation to protect that portion of the river in Madison County, noting that it "possesses unique scenic, recreational, and other characteristics in a natural, unpolluted and wild state." Thus, the Kings River was the state's first stream to receive governmental protection.

### Fishing

A float on Kings River is a return to fishing in its purest form--no motors, no loaded bass boat, only your partner quietly paddling as you both absorb the untainted outdoor grandeur. The

Kings has countless rock bass and hefty channel cats, but when fishing this stream, first and foremost on the minds of most anglers are the big smallmouth bass.

If you want to catch the real Kings River lunkers, take along heavy tackle. Some people expect bass from this smallish stream to be small, too, and that can cost trophy fish which commonly reach four to six pounds. A baitcasting reel, a medium-action rod, and 10- to 12-pound line are appropriate.

Two sportfish often overlooked by Kings River anglers are the walleye and white bass. Both species are common in the portion of the river near Table Rock Lake during the spring spawning runs in March, April and early May. White bass will hit a variety of shad-imitation lures and minnows, while walleyes are usually taken on live baits such as minnows, crayfish and worms or artificial lures, particularly deep-running crank-baits and jigs.

#### Services Available

Berryville and Eureka Springs are both located near the Kings River and can meet the needs of most visitors and provide supplies for Kings River camping trips. In addition, several outfitters have operations in the area for those wishing to experience the stream.

#### Other Information

Folks who enjoy floating the Kings River will be equally delighted by its sister stream, War Eagle Creek. War Eagle, which flows west of the Kings and parallel to it, is chiefly a springtime float offering good scenery and fine fishing. Canoes may be rented at Withrow Springs State Park which borders the stream north of Huntsville.

The Kings runs north east to the White River & into Table Rock Lake. It begins on the north slope of the Boston Mountains in Ozark National Forest north of Fallsville, in Madison & Carroll Counties, northwestern AR, just west of Boxley & Ponca, near the Buffalo River headwaters. The entire run is 82.5 miles from Rt 74, Rt 412, Rt 62 between Eureka Springs & Berryville & into Table Rock Lake at Rt 86 in southwest MO. It is whitewater the first 11 miles between Dripping Springs & Rt 74 (Upper Kings River), then Class I for 82.5 miles into MO & the Mark Twain National Forest (Lower Kings River.)

With most of seasonal rainfall in the **winter / early spring**, flow is best from **late-April / early-August**. If the Upper Buffalo is flowing, then the Kings is probably flowing, also. The water is clear & cool. It has rock bass, channel cats & big smallmouth. Walleye & white bass are in the river near Table Rock Lake during spring spawning **March / early May**.

<http://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2011/feb/20/outdoors-arkansas-great-winter-smallmouth-fishing/> for winter fishing.

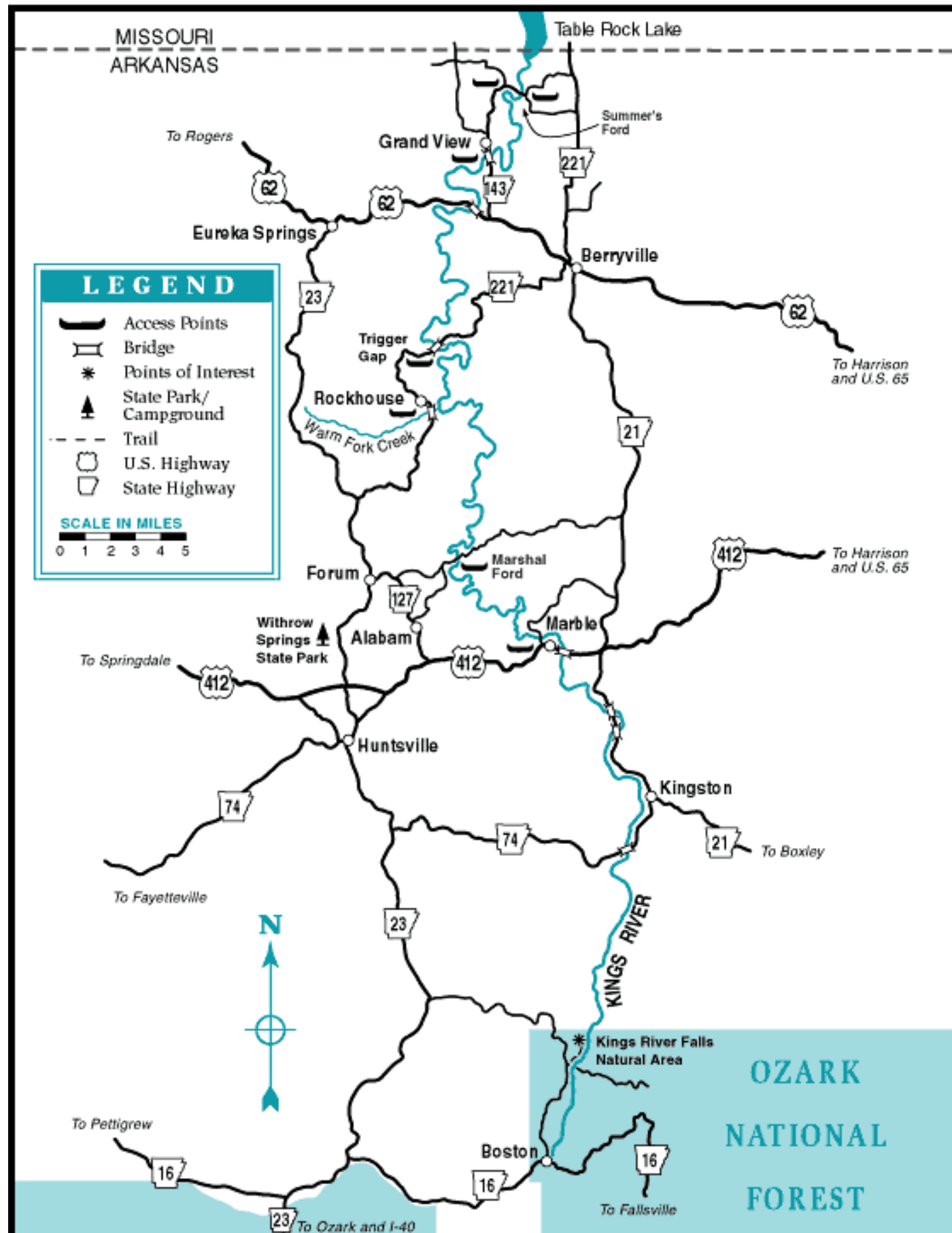
#### **Motel 6 or Expedia or Priceline or Trivago or Tripadvisor, then call hotel**

Shamrock Inn **Berryville** (870) 423-2489 & Sunrise Motel (870) 423-2067 at 36.36534 -93.56782. India owns both, reservations 423-7990 \$35+ \$45+.

Family Budget Inn **Harrison** \$48>\$55, S Main Street 866-599-6674. Days Inn \$49, N Hwy 62-65 855-799-6859.

# KING RIVER & VICINITY

Arkansas  
THE NATURAL STATE



# Kings River Access Points Map



River Right means access is located on your right looking downstream.  
The Kings River flows from South to North.  
River mileage indicates miles starting from AR Hwy 74 bridge.  
The Kings River Access Points Map is not intended for navigation purposes.



## Kings River Outfitters

Canoes, Shuttles & Guide Service

P.O. Box 483, Eureka Springs, AR 72632

**479-253-8954**

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Camgrounds & Accommodations

Withrow Springs State Park a few miles west off Rt 23 north of Rt 412 offers excellent campsites with water, restrooms & other amenities. Other campgrounds are available including the Upper Buffalo at Ponca, the Mulberry River & Big Piney Creek.

### Some Floats

Marble to Marshall Fords 11-miles

Marshall Fords to Rockhouse 15 miles

Rockhouse to Trigger Gap Landing (Kings River Outfitters) 7-miles

Trigger Gap Landing to U.S. Hwy 62 crossing 12-miles

U.S. Hwy 62 crossing to Summers Ford 12-miles

Stoney Point/Summers Ford to U.S. Hwy 86 Bridge 8-miles

### **Access Points south to north**

Carry some bug repellent with DEET.

Kings 0 Rt 74 Bridge 36.01808 -93.54083 at 0.0 miles. Park around here or a little north & walk.

### **Kings 1 Side Creek**

**36.04027 -93.51893**

Kings 0 Ask Permission 36.05108 -93.51854 to drive down to creek & fish in Kingston.

### **Kings 2 Campground Cemetery**

**36.06236 -93.53294**

Kings 3 Rt 21 Bridge/Boatright Creek 36.10089 -93.54445 at 7.6 miles. Tough access.

### **Kings 3 Hwy 412 Bridge**

**36.13660 -93.57935**

Walk along northside of Hwy & fish in pasture.

### **Kings 4 Marble Access/Big Onion Creek**

**36.14387 -93.59422**

Parking area 13.4 miles.

### **Kings 5 Marshall Ford Public Access**

**36.18922 -93.65220**

Off road parking at 24.7 miles..

### **Kings 6 Rockhouse Public Access**

**36.28198 -93.66437**

Parking area at 40.4 miles. Confluence of Warm Fork Creek. Good access.

### **Kings 7 Trigger Gap Landing**

**36.31718 -93.67132**

at 48.1 miles. Back up what looks like driveways, but It's a road to the parking lot. \$5 fee to park and fish.

**Kings River Outfitters, Ernie.** 479 253-8954. All services. Kingsriveroutfitters.com.

**36.31494 -93.66681**

### **Kings 8 CR 306 Ford**

**36.39008 -93.65885** South of #8, take Rt 306 west to the Kings.

There is a 1.3 mile loop north & east. The walk across the neck is .28 miles. Half that if I meet you at the driveway fork. The loop has lots of sand & gravel bars. Drop 1 or 2 guys at fork to reverse fish loop. Could be great.

**Kings 9 Rt 62 Bridge** 36.39492 -93.63518 at 61.0 miles. Graded gravel for 200-300 yards. Looks good up & down. Gravel trail north to a handicapped deck.

US 62 Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Access?? Riverside Resort, 3031 US-62Berryville, riversideresortandcanoes.com, 870 423-3116

**Kings 10 Rt 143 Grandview Bridge** 36.42189 -93.62173. Turn east & drive down to river at 36.42646 -93.62218 at 66.3 miles. N-U Guns parking lot. Good up & down.

**Kings 11 Stoney Point Branch/Summers Ford Public Access** 36.46261 -93.59628 at 73.6 miles.

Parking lot. Looks good up & down. Has a big rock that resembles Oklahoma. Great east bank.

2/3 mile south is a 1.25 mile loop north & west. Go up & around loop. It's only 140 yds across at loop neck back to original spot, then back north to truck. 2 guys, walk to loop & fish 1 reverses loop. Other 2 fish up or down from truck. Fish ½ day. Lunch. Switch guys.

**Kings 12 Romp Hole Public Access** 36.48321 -93.58198 at 78.5 miles. Parking lot. 3 mile loop w/ ½ mile neck. 1 mile south of MO/AR border. River starts getting bigger.

**86 Bridge, Shell Knob, MO** 36.50265 -93.60040

Anyone floated the Kings lately? A group of us are going up on Thursday in May. Last year we floated down to Kings River Outfitters. Is there a better area to float or should we stick with that stretch? Just a 1 day.

Ty McCoy We floated two weekends ago. We floated from **rockhouse to the outfitters** the first day but the second day we floated the four mile stretch from the **outfitters to the farm**. That's the trophy area, a lot better for fishing, slower float and deeper holes to fish, saw a lot of fish on beds.

Brandon Ward Looking for good fishing so the second option seems best.

Ty McCoy Call kings river outfitters, they are super helpful and are eager to answer any questions you have about shuttling or anything else.

Brandon Ward I talked to them this morning. Just seeing what time they'd be around on Thursday. Last year when we went they were very nice people.

Josh Howard I would 2nd Ty on the Outfitters to the farm. You'll have to pay but the fishing is better.

Brandon Ward Just paying for the shuttle correct? I think last year is was like \$10 a boat.

Josh Sherrill I believe it's another \$5 per boat to take out at the farm. It's privately owned John Caire Yesterday afternoon about halfway between Rockhouse and KRO. Waters going down now and should be perfect for fishing on Thursday. We saw lots of bass jumping.

Brandon Ward It's a little high there lol. Thursday should be great.

John Caire About 2,500cfs and 7' on the gauge. Was easier floating than when the river is at normal floating levels. There were no channels or obstacles aside from the one spot past mason bend that always is a portage around two trees.

Greg Hall Fishing is better up river but if u want to pay \$2 float that's on your ticket  
Samuel R Philip I am in. Been talking to Brandon Ward and I used to guide on the kings. It  
hasn't been the same river in the last 15 years but there are still sections that are solid gold.  
Going to put together a float that will put us on the big fish. We don't need to use KRO, even  
though they are great folks, we can shuttle ourselves and make it a free trip.  
Samuel R Philip Does everyone going have a MO licence or willing to spend 7 bucks on a one  
day? No biggie if you don't or don't want to. I just want to make sure we take out before the  
boarder if anyone doesn't, or doesn't want to. Thank ya!!