



# Hooper Bald

2012

George McLellan







## Introduced European Wild Boar

### Thriving and digging up the woods

While the other exotic animals from the Hooper Bald Shooting Preserve disappeared, descendants of escaped wild boars multiplied. Some hunters see the boar as a desirable game species, but some biologists want to reduce the population of wild boar to protect native wildlife and fragile plants.

Wild boar eat almost anything—roots, wildflowers, amphibians, reptiles, fruit, nuts, eggs, even newborn fawns. Their habit of rooting to find food digs up the soil. Since wild boar have no sweat glands, they wallow in wet areas to cool down and further damage vegetation.



Unlike domestic pigs that are the same species as wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), the wild variant has razor-sharp tusks, long legs, and stiff black hair. "...as the heady-eyed 'huckers' introduced from the crato, some of the mountaineers were

shinning up trees like scared squirrels. They'd been used to wild mountain rear-back and screw-splitter wild hogs all their lives, but these wild pigs from abroad were something different."

## Hooper Bald Project



Members of the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society, members of the Vaseyi Chapter of the Azalea Society of America along with other individuals and groups are working on the restoration of Hooper Bald. Their goal is to preserve and maintain the unique flora found here, especially the large stand of native Flame azaleas (*Rhododendron calendulaceum*). Large forms of the flame Azalea's grow on Hooper Bald, blossoms can exceed 3 inches across.

*National Forest — Land of Many Uses*



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Calendulaceum



Cumberlandense

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Pollinating





Finding seedlings planted last Spring





Pure red *Calendulaceum*





Pure red *Calendulaceum*





Hooper Copper





Hooper Copper

























Finding seedlings planted last Spring





Finding seedlings planted last Spring