**A Firefly Light Show in Appalachia**

**For two to three weeks usually ending in early June, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park "pulsates with light and darkness," said Andrea Sachs in The Washington Post. The wilderness park on the Tennessee-North Carolina border is home to a rare species of firefly that -- like a cousin species in South America -- draws sightseers by the thousands. The bioluminescent beetles are synchronous, meaning they blink in unison during a beautiful mating ritual that ends -- "spoiler alert" -- with the love bugs' death. It's a rare phenomenon made more hypnotizing by the setting: a hardwood Tennessee forest threading by a burbling river. To stop the tourist hordes from stomping on the fireflies' habitat, the park recently instituted a lottery system. Nearly 19,000 people applied for the 1,800 passes up for grabs this year. On the fireflies' best nights, they reward lottery winners with an incandescent performance that "dazzles like a laser show." *(The Week magazine, June 30, 2017)***