



## Virginia Trails



A journey on the Blue Ridge Parkway offers motorists spectacular views of southern Appalachia's diverse beauty. The Parkway, for 469 uninterrupted miles, displays blue-misted mountains, cascading waterfalls, rolling pasture, and gorges banked with wildflowers. The Parkway offers hikers of all skill levels the opportunity to explore more than 100 varied and intriguing trails in North Carolina and Virginia.

Meandering alongside and crossing the scenic motor road, the trails provide a close-up look at some of the most beautiful wilderness in the country. Many trails wind their way through unique biological and geological environments. Others lead to historic sites with stories of how people have shaped our heritage.

Many Parkway trails continue onto Forest Service and private land. Please respect all these lands and treat them with care. A list of Blue Ridge Parkway hiking trails in Virginia follows. Also included is important information designed to protect both the environment and the visitors who come to enjoy it.

We hope you have an enjoyable and safe trail experience.

### IMPORTANT ADVICE

- Lock valuables in the trunk of your car or take them with you.
- Hiking shoes or boots are recommended for most trails, especially for the more strenuous ones. Steep and rocky areas and slippery stream crossings require extra attention and careful footing. Even for trails marked "easy," it is advisable to wear flat or rubber-soled shoes for comfort and good traction. Wearing sandals, "flip-flops," or high heels can result in accidents.
- Sudden changes in weather are common in these mountains. Even in mild seasons, rapid dips in temperature and unexpected thunderstorms frequently occur, and at higher elevations the wind and temperature can carry a surprising chill. Be prepared for weather changes by bringing along suitable clothing.
- For your safety and the protection of the resources, stay on established trails. Shortcutting at switchbacks causes soil erosion, disfigures the trail, and makes it difficult for other hikers to find

their way. Take advantage of log walkways, steps, or other trail construction. They are there to minimize human impact on the natural environment.

- Do not drink the water in streams or springs. Bacterial diseases can be contracted by drinking untreated "wild" waters.
- Lost and found articles should be reported to a Park Ranger.

### REGULATIONS

- Parking is limited to designated parking areas or road shoulders. All four wheels must be off the pavement.
- Bicycles and motorized vehicles are not permitted on Parkway trails
- Camping is permitted only in park campgrounds or designated back-country sites.
- Dogs and other pets must be on a leash or under physical restraint at all times while in the park. The territorial instinct of dogs can lead to fights with other dogs on the trail. Dogs also frighten hikers and chase wildlife. If a pet cannot be kept under control, it should be left at home.
- Deposit all litter in trash cans provided or recycling bins.
- Metal detectors are prohibited.
- Natural resources are protected by Federal law. Do not disturb animal and plant life in any way. Hunting, trapping, and carrying weapons are prohibited. Do not interfere with animals by feeding, touching, or frightening them. Do not cut, deface or damage trees. Leave wildflowers and other vege-

tation in their natural condition for other hikers to enjoy.

- Historic resources are protected by Federal law. Do not damage, deface, or remove any of these structures, furnishings, or exhibits.



**Help protect and preserve  
the Blue Ridge Parkway.  
Be alert for uncontrolled fire,  
safety hazards, accidents,  
and emergencies.**

**Please report such  
conditions by calling:  
1-800-PARKWATCH**

(1-800-727-5928)

*For general parkway  
information call (828) 298-0398  
or visit [www.nps.gov/blri](http://www.nps.gov/blri)  
on the Internet.*

## Virginia Trails

Milepost	Trail	Mileage*	Difficulty
5.9	Farm Museum Trail ( <i>self-guiding, from Humpback Visitor Center to farm</i> )	0.25	Easy
6.0	Appalachian Trail ( <i>Humpback Gap parking area to Humpback Elevation—3650 feet</i> )	2.0	Strenuous
8.4	Catoctin Loop Trail ( <i>leg stretcher</i> )	0.3	Moderate
8.8	Greenstone Trail ( <i>self-guiding; Greenstone geology formation; oak hickory forest</i> ) - Round Trip	0.2	Moderate
17.6	The Priest (view)	0.1	Easy
18.5	White Rock Falls Trail Connection	2.9	Moderate
20.0	White Rock Falls Trail ( <i>follows stream to small falls</i> )	0.9	Moderate
26.3	Big Spy Mountain ( <i>view into Shenandoah Valley; good for sky watching</i> ) - Round Trip	0.1	Moderate
34.4	Yankee Horse ( <i>to logging RR exhibit &amp; small waterfall</i> ) - Round Trip	0.2	Moderate
38.8	Boston Knob ( <i>leg stretcher</i> )	0.1	Easy
47.5	Indian Gap ( <i>to Indian Rocks; good seasonal rhododendron display</i> )	0.3	Moderate
55.2	White Oak Flats ( <i>leg stretcher</i> )	0.1	Easy
60.8	Otter Creek Trail ( <i>begin at Otter Creek Campground</i> )	3.5	Moderate
63.1	Otter Lake Trail ( <i>around Otter Lake</i> )	0.8	Moderate
63.6	James River Trail ( <i>self-guiding to canal locks</i> )	0.2	Easy
63.6	Trail of Trees Trail ( <i>self-guiding to James River Overlook</i> ) - Round Trip	0.5	Moderate
74.7	Thunder Ridge Trail ( <i>leg stretcher loop to view of Arnold Valley</i> )	0.1	Easy
78.4	Apple Orchard Falls Trail ( <i>Sunset Field Overlook to view of Apple Orchard Falls; National Recreation Trail</i> )	1.2	Strenuous
79.7	Onion Mountain Loop Trail ( <i>leg stretcher through Appalachian deciduous forest with rhododendron display</i> )	0.1	Easy
83.1	Fallingwater Cascades Trail ( <i>National Recreation Trail; loop to view of cascades</i> )	1.6	Moderate
83.5	Flat Top Trail ( <i>leads to highest of three prominent peaks in area</i> )	4.4	Strenuous
	• Cross Rock Trail ( <i>spur off Flat Top Trail; unique geological features</i> )	0.1	Moderate
85.7	Abbott Lake Trail ( <i>loop around Abbott Lake</i> )	1.0	Easy
85.9	Elk Run Trail ( <i>self-guiding loop nature trail from Visitor Center</i> )	0.8	Moderate
85.9	Johnson Farm Loop Trail ( <i>loop to restored farm</i> )	2.1	Moderate
85.9	Harkening Hill Trail ( <i>elevation-3375 feet; begin at Peaks Visitor Center</i> )	3.3	Moderate
	• Balance Rock ( <i>spur trail off Harkening Hill Trail; unique geological formations</i> )		
86.0	Sharp Top Trail ( <i>from camp store to summit of Sharp Top Mtn.; elevation-3875 feet; 360-degree panoramic view</i> )	1.5	Strenuous
	• Sharp Top Summit Loop Trail ( <i>loop; accessible by bus seasonally</i> )	0.5	Strenuous
91.0	Appalachian Trail ( <i>VA 695 to Sharp Top Mtn. Overlook</i> )		
92.5	Appalachian Trail ( <i>Sharp Top Mtn. Overlook to Harvey's Knob Overlook</i> )	2.9	Moderate
95.4	Appalachian Trail ( <i>Harvey's Knob Overlook to Montvale Overlook</i> )	0.6	Moderate
95.9	Appalachian Trail ( <i>Montcale Overlook to Taylor's Mountain Overlook</i> )	1.0	Moderate
96.0	Spec Mine Trail ( <i>USFS Trail begins near Montvale Overlook, to State Rt. 645 in Botetourt County</i> )	2.8	Strenuous
97.0	Appalachian Trail ( <i>Taylor's Mtn. Overlook to Blackhorse Gap</i> )	0.8	Moderate
110.6	Stewart Knob Trail ( <i>view</i> )	1.2	Moderate
114.9	Roanoke River Trail	0.35	Easy
120.4	Roanoke Mountain Summit Trail ( <i>view</i> )	0.11	Moderate
120.5	Chestnut Ridge Trail ( <i>adjacent to Roanoke Mtn. campground</i> )	5.4	Moderate
121.4	Roanoke Valley Horse Trail ( <i>begins at U.S Hwy 220 and parallels Parkway to Milepost 115.7</i> ) ( <i>no access across Roanoke River</i> )	5.9	Moderate
123.2	Buck Mountain Trail ( <i>to summit view</i> )	0.53	Moderate
154.5	Smart View Loop Trail ( <i>around picnic area</i> )	2.6	Moderate
167.1	Rock Castle Gorge Trail ( <i>loop from campground along ridge over Rocky Knob and into gorge for a strenuous uphill 7-mile return to campground</i> )	10.8	Strenuous
169.0	Black Ridge Trail ( <i>Rocky Knob Visitor Center to Black Ridge to Grassy Knoll and back to Visitor Center</i> )	3.1	Moderate
169.0	Rocky Knob Picnic Loop Trail ( <i>leg stretcher around picnic area</i> )	1.0	Easy
176.2	Mabry Mill Trail ( <i>to Mill, log cabin, other outdoor exhibits</i> ) - Round Trip	0.5	Easy
179.2	Round Meadow Creek Loop Trail ( <i>walk through a stream bottom forest</i> )	0.5	Moderate

\* Mileage indicates length of trail one-way unless otherwise noted.