



Hawksbill Loop Hike

- 🔄 2.9-mile circuit ⌚ 2-hours hiking time
⚠️ Moderate ⚡ 860-foot elevation gain

From the north end of the Hawksbill Gap parking area at mile 45.5, take the short connector trail to the Appalachian Trail (A.T.). At the trail post, turn left onto the A.T. south. Continue on the A.T. south to the trail post indicating the Salamander Trail. Go left onto the blue-blazed Salamander Trail and follow it to the summit. Be sure to take the short trail past the shelter to the viewing platform. To return to the parking area be sure to take the blue-blazed Lower (NOT the Upper) Hawksbill Trail

Hawksbill Summit Hike

- 🔄 1.7-mile round trip ⌚ 1.25-hours hiking time
⚠️ Moderate ⚡ 690-foot elevation gain

For a shorter, but steeper, rockier route, from the Hawksbill Gap parking area at mile 45.5, take the Lower Hawksbill Trail to Byrds Nest 2 Shelter and then follow the trail to the viewing platform. Retrace your steps to return to starting point.

Upper Hawksbill to Hawksbill Summit Hike

- 🔄 2.1-mile round trip ⌚ 1.5-hours hiking time
⚠️ Easiest ⚡ 520-foot elevation gain

From the Upper Hawksbill parking area at mile 46.5, take the Upper Hawksbill Trail to Byrds Nest 2 Shelter and then follow the trail to the viewing platform. Retrace your steps to return.

Hiking Difficulty Scale

Easiest: Generally suitable for anyone who enjoys walking. Mostly level or with a slight incline. Generally less than 3 miles.
Moderate: Generally suitable for novice hikers seeking a bit of a challenge. The terrain will involve a moderate incline and may have some steeper sections. Generally 3 to 5 miles.
Moderately Strenuous: Generally challenging for an unconditioned person. The terrain will involve a steady and often steep incline. Generally 5 to 8 miles.
Strenuous: Will challenge most hikers. The hike will generally be longer and steeper, but may be deemed strenuous because of the elevation gain. Generally 7 to 10 miles.
Very Strenuous: Only well-conditioned and well-prepared hikers should attempt. Generally long and steep, and may include rock scrambling, stream crossings, and other challenging terrain. Generally 8 miles and over.

Markers & Blazes

Trail markers are at trailheads and intersections. The metal bands are stamped with directional and mileage information.



Trail blazes are found on trees and rocks throughout the Park. The color identifies the trail type:

- Blue** - Hiking trail
- White** - Appalachian Trail
- Yellow** - Open to horses



Need to Know

- Pets must be on a leash no longer than 6 feet at all times.
- Take plenty of water—at least a quart per hour.
- When you return from your hike, check for ticks.
- Be aware that you are in snake habitat.
- Be sure someone knows where you are and when to expect your return.
- Cell and GPS services are unreliable.

Good to Know

Many of Shenandoah's most popular views are from rocky outcrops like Hawksbill. Did you know that these popular spots are also home to some of the Park's most rare and sensitive vegetation? Look closely to see these tough, yet fragile plants—they look like they are growing right out of the rocks! Constant trampling puts this rare vegetation at risk, so please be aware of these special plants we are working to protect.

Fun to Know

Hawksbill is Shenandoah's highest peak at 4,051 ft. Be sure to see the view from the observation platform just a few feet up the trail from the shelter. How far you can see will depend on a number of factors including the current air quality. It's a great reminder of the simple things we can all do to reduce emissions and improve air quality—not just for the views, but also for our health!

Leave No Trace

- Plan ahead and prepare.
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces.
- Dispose of waste properly.
- Leave what you find.
- Respect wildlife.
- Be considerate of other visitors.