



Blue Ridge Hiking Club Alphabetical Hike List
Updated January, 2023

This list includes 160 different hikes undertaken by BRHC. Some of these hike listings are well described, while some have very little information.. If you choose to do one of these hikes and discover inaccuracies or have more detailed descriptions, please let Bob Heath know your findings so the list can be updated.

The goal of this listing is to provide potential hike leaders with inspiration and information.

Appalachian Trail to Watauga Dam: 5.5 mi. round trip around Lake to dam and back. Mostly wooded, rated easy to moderate. Meet at Watauga Lake parking area across from Shook Branch Rd., Hampton, TN.

Appalachian Trail around Watauga Lk. to Visitor Center – Approx. 7+ mi., rated moderate. Meet at Watauga Lake parking area across from Shook Branch Rd., Hampton, TN.

Appalachian Trail: Damascus, VA and VA Creeper: Begin at the AT trailhead on Rt. 58 in Damascus, VA. Hike 4 miles on the AT and return via the Virginia Creeper. Approximately 8 miles, rated easy to moderate.

Appalachian Trail: Pond Mt. to Laurel Falls. Pond Mountain Trail is 9 miles on the AT from Watauga Lake on 321 where the AT crosses at Shook Branch Rd. (just before Hampton, Tenn.) to Dennis Cove parking lot on Dennis Cove Rd. We will spot cars. Rated moderate to strenuous.

Basin Creek Trail to Caudill Cabin: (Alleghany/Ashe Co.). 9.6 miles, all-day hike. Rated moderate to strenuous. Elevation gain of 1,560 ft., 34 stream crossings, mostly by rock-hopping. Streams are not deep or wide. Chimneys are left standing from cabins washed away in the terrible flood of 1916. The Caudill cabin, however, is newly restored. Dress for the weather, bring 2 quarts of water, flashlight, hiking sticks for stream hopping, a small towel, and lunch.

Beacon Heights to Rough Ridge: 5.1 mi. rated moderate (with some rough, rocky areas). Hike through one of the most spectacular sections of the Tanawha Trail. Stopover at the Viaduct Visitor Center, then on to Rough Ridge. We will spot cars at the Beacon Heights parking area. Meet at Rough Ridge Parking area.

Beacon Heights (MST) past Old House Gap and return. (approx.. 4 hrs). Wooded and steep, the hike goes down the MST toward Little Cove Creek and Gragg Prong Falls and beyond, if desired. Rated moderate to strenuous.

Beech Mountain Upper and Lower Pond Creek: Nice, scenic hike along a beautiful creek with rapids and waterfalls. The first half of this trail is very rugged, slippery, and is NOT recommended for inexperienced hikers. 4 mi. out and back with 689 foot elevation change. We will start at the bottom and get the climb over early. Rated moderate/strenuous. Meet at the Banner Elk Park parking lot next to Bank of America on Hwy. 194 (Main St. E.) to carpool to trailhead.

Big Hump & Little Hump: Hike from Hwy. 19E to Mary's house via Big Hump and Little Hump Mountains. Approximately 8 mi., 4-5 hrs., rated strenuous and beautiful.

Black Mountain hike. Climb the Black Mountain chain including Mt. Mitchell, beginning at the restaurant on Mt. Mitchell Rd., climb the upper part of Mt. Mitchell and all of Mt. Craig, Big Tom, Balsam Cone, Cattail Pk. And Potato Hill, out and back. This is a strenuous 8 mile hike for experienced hikers. Turn off the Blue Ridge Parkway at mile 355 to Mt. Mitchell Rd. and follow it to the restaurant.

Bluff Mountain Trail from Basin Creek Overlook (Doughton Park) – Easy to moderately strenuous, approximately 7 miles round trip and 4 hours. Begin at the Basin Creek Overlook in Doughton Park (mile post 244.7) (about 50 miles from Boone). Easy trail parallels the parkway most of the way. In and out of the woods with beautiful views in open areas and then a moderate ascent up Bluff Mtn. Return on the same trail.

Bluff Mountain Trail from Brinegar Cabin at Doughton Park: The Bluff Mountain Trail runs along the Blue Ridge Parkway just north of Stone Mountain. There is some great scenery, all sorts of different flora and beautiful

views of a number of valleys. There are also some historic cabins and apple trees for those willing to do a little climbing. Total length 7.5 miles. Meet at Brinegar Cabin at mile post 238.5 on the Blue Ridge Parkway. We'll spot cars at the Basin Cove Overlook. Moderate hike that should take about 4 hours.

Boone Greenway lower and upper trails. Meet at the parking lot on Hunting Drive (off State Farm Road) across from the pool complex.

Boone Fork Trail: Meet at the Price Lake picnic ground near MP 296 on the BRP. 5 mile loop, 4 ½ hrs., containing rivers, rapids, waterfalls, meadows, water crossings (easy-difficult, depending on water levels), and rhododendron tunnels. Includes 2 trail ladders. Rated moderately strenuous. Hiking sticks are recommended.

Boone Fork Trl. via Holloway Mtn. Rd./Tanawha Trl.: Meet at the parking area at the halfway point on Holloway Mtn. Rd. Hike the Tanawha to Boone Fork Trl, loop containing rivers, rapids, waterfalls, meadows, water crossings (easy-difficult, depending on water levels), and rhododendron tunnels. Includes 2 trail ladders and back. Moderately strenuous, 8 mi. Hiking sticks strongly recommended for water crossings.

Boone Fork Parking to Rough Ridge: Starting at Boone Fork Parking area mile 299.9 walk steadily but gradually uphill for 4.6 miles on the Tanawha trail with a stop at the top of Rough Ridge. The ¾ mi. Rough Ridge section up to Ship Rock is steep and rocky. (9.2 mi. roundtrip).

Boone United: 2.5-mile loop through a hardwood forest that begins behind the Boone United Methodist Church, rambles halfway up the summit of Howard's Knob and returns to the church. Short but steep. elevation gain 650'. Less than 3 mile loop, rated moderate.

Catawba Falls near Old Fort, NC. Hike to beautiful lower then upper Catawba Falls, approximately 5 mi. round trip and 700 ft. elevation gain. Hike to upper falls is steep, rocky, corroded and slippery with rope assists in places. Along the way we will pass historic stone buildings and a dam used for power in the early 1900s. Return via the ridge with one water crossing near the end.

China Creek Trail: Moderate to strenuous. Significant elevation change - probably 1,800 feet, about 4-5 miles one way. Includes water crossings and rock scrambling. Spot cars at Sandy Flat off 221 and then proceed down the Globe Road where we will start our hike up the trail back to the cars. If it is a pleasant day we may see people doing the sport of "bouldering" near the top.

Colbert's Ridge: Hike Colbert's Ridge off Highway 80 on the way to Mt. Mitchell, and is part of the Black Mountain Crest Trail. The hike is about 8 mi. out and back, with an elev. gain of 2925 ft.; rated moderate/strenuous. There are beautiful views of the Black Mountains and a unique view of Grandfather Mountain. Bring hiking sticks as the trail is steep in some places, and plenty of water.

Cold Prong Pond to Storyteller Rock: This hike will follow the Tanawha Trail from Cold Prong Pond parking area (299 BRP) to the Nuwati Trail and Storyteller Rock. 7 mi. round trip; steady uphill with 1,489' elevation gain. Rated moderate.

CONE MANOR TRAILS

Bass Lake to Cone Manor Loop: 4.6 miles, 465' elevation gain, 3 hrs.. Rated easy. This hike is on carriage trails, circles Bass Lake, climbs through woods up to the Cone manor house and then winds back down to Bass Lake, making a beautiful loop. Meet at Bass Lake parking area off Rte. 221 in Blowing Rock.

Bass Lake to Apple Barn 1.4 mi. Hike is on Cone Manor carriage trails and is rated easy. Bring a snack for rest break at Apple Barn. Meet at Bass Lake Parking area off Hwy. 221.

Bass Lake to Apple Barn & Cone Manor: Hike is on Cone Manor carriage trails and is rated moderate. 4.7 mi. with 465' elevation gain. Meet at Bass Lake Parking area off Hwy. 221.

Bass Lake to Old Camp Catawba Rd: Meet at Bass Lake lower parking area off 221 just south of Blowing Rock. Rated easy.

Carriage Barn to Blowing Rock Stables. 2.75 mi., rated easy. Hike from the Carriage Barn at Cone Manor to the horse stables and back. Meet at Cone Manor House at the Carriage Barn BRP Milepost 294.1. Can add a .5 mi. loop near the stables for great views.

Cone Manor to Flat Top Tower : 5.6 mile out and back on carriage trails. The hike is rated moderate, with approximately 600 ft. elevation gain. At the top, climb a 30' tower for panoramic views of the area.

Cone Manor to Watkin Rd., Black Bottom Rd., Apple Barn and Back: 5 mi., 500' elevation gain. Rated easy. Meet at the carriage barn, hike down Deer Park Rd. (below and to the left to Watkins Rd. At Black Bottom Rd., turn right to go to the Apple Barn. From the Apple Barn, continue to Deer Park Rd., a little above Bass Lake; turn right to go back up to the Carriage Barn.

Bass Lake to the Maze and Apple Barn: Meet at Bass Lake lower parking area off 221 just south of Blowing Rock. 4 mi., 300' elevation gain. Rated easy. We will hike around Bass Lake to the Maze and Apple Barn, then loop back to finish around Bass Lake.

Flannery Fork Rd. to Flat Top Fire Tower: Approximately 6.8 miles up and back, rated moderate, on Cone Manor carriage trails with approximately 650 ft. elevation gain. Meet at Trout Lake Dam on Flannery Fork Rd.

Rich Mountain to Sims Pond: Meet at Sims Pond, BRP Milepost 295.7 and carpool to Trout Lake parking lot. Hike to Rich Mountain, then hike down to the Mountains-to-Sea Trail, cross over Shull's Mill Road and continue down to Old John's River Road. Go left to Sims Pond and the cars. Total about 5.6 moderate miles, mostly downhill from Rich Mountain.

Trout Lake to Carriage House: Meet at Trout Lake parking lot (leave the Parkway at milepost 294.6 and turn onto Shull's Mill Rd. and then right on the one-way road to the parking lot). 2 miles; rated easy.

Trout Lake to Fire Tower . Approximately 7 miles, rated moderate, on Cone Manor carriage trails with approximately 650 ft. elevation gain. Meet at Trout Lake parking area.

Trout Lake to Rich Mountain: 6.5 mi. round trip to the top of Rich Mountain with 585' elevation gain. Begin at Trout Lake on a steady uphill climb on carriage trails with nice views at the top. Approximately 3-4 hrs., rated moderate.

Trout Lake to Alternate Rich Mtn. Loop: 4.0, 5.6, or 7.5 mi. options: 660' elevation gain, rated moderate. Begin at Trout Lake parking area and at 1.9 mi. turn sharp right at a sloping pasture area. Just beyond this, the trail forks and the sign points to the left to Rich Mtn. Take the right fork for this loop, which will merge back into the Rich Mtn. trail at .8 mi. from the top. For the 4 mile option, take the right hand fork (left will take you to the Rich Mtn. summit), then right again to the parking area. On the return from the Rich Mtn. summit, take the Shulls Mill Rd. option (right) for 5.6 mi., or the Trout Lake option (left) for a 7.5 mi. hike.

Crab Orchard Falls: Hike the trails behind the Valley Crucis Conference Center on Hwy. 194 between Valle Crucis and Banner Elk. Includes a beautiful waterfall on Crab Orchard Creek. Meet behind the Episcopalian church at the upper parking lot. Rated moderate; approximately 5 mi.

Crab Orchard Falls & Hermitages: Meet at waterfalls parking behind Holy Cross Episcopal Church at 122 Skiles Way, Banner Elk, near Valle Crucis. Moderate, but somewhat steep, 5-mile hike includes the Field for tree-filtered views of the mountains before heading up the logging road to the Hermitages, back down via the Loop, and on to the beautiful falls.

Crabtree Falls: The hike is located at Crabtree Meadows Campground, mi. 339.5 on the BRP, not far past Little Switzerland. You will see a sign for Crabtree Falls at the entrance. Park near the gift shop and follow the signs to the trailhead. It's a loop hike, 3 mi., rated moderate to strenuous. The hike begins with a steep, sometimes rocky descent to the 70' waterfall. The trail back up the other side starts out with a fairly lengthy, very steep section, then becomes more moderately uphill to the top, looping back to the trailhead. Bring hiking sticks.

Doe River Gorge, Hampton, TN - (5 miles, easy/moderate, 4-5 hrs.). We will experience the changing of the seasons while hiking the old Tweetsie Railroad bed along and above the Doe River. A collection will be taken for the Doe River Christian Camp to show our appreciation for the use of their property. Approximately 5 mi.; rated easy; 4-5 hrs.

Doughton Park Trails: Hike trails chosen will be leaders' choice from more than 30 miles of hiking trails. Length 5-8 miles, easy pace, moderate terrain, views. Meet at the trail access parking just past MM 245 on the BRP.

Elk Knob: 3.8 mi. round trip, with 900 ft. gain in elevation. Moderately strenuous. Spectacular views at the summit. The trails are mostly moderate, but steady incline; steep in some places. 2 ½ - 3 hrs.

Elk River Falls to Jones Falls on the AT: We will travel to the NC/TN line to begin our hike and follow the Elk River to the intersection with the AT, then continue on to Jones Falls and return. 4-5 mi., rated moderate.

Elk Shoals (New River State Park), Ashe County. This is an easy paced hike along the New River (flat) with more effort hiking the trails in the woods. Approximately 5-mile hike on new and indistinct trails where hiking sticks are a must.

Falls and Chestnut Knob at South Mountains State Park. Meet at the trailhead parking lot about 2 miles into the park. (This isn't the ranger station on the right, nor the horse parking area on the left, but is a little further in on the left.) This is easy to moderate.

Flat Rock and Storyteller Rock: From Boone Fork Parking area Milepost 299.9 on the BRP the hike will take the Tanawha to Daniel Boone Scout up to Flat Rock and then down the Cragway and the Nuwati Trail to Storyteller Rock. They afford beautiful vistas of the Boone Bowl and beyond. Approx. 7 mi., some parts strenuous and rocky.

Flat Rock via Daniel Boone Scout Trail: From Boone Fork Parking area (MP 299.9 on the BRP) the hike will take the Tanawha to Daniel Boone Scout up to Flat Rock and then down the Cragway to the Nuwati Trail and Tanwha and back to the parking area. 3.97 mi., 1,060' elevation gain, rated strenuous.

Flat Rock Ridge Trail: (Doughton Park MP 244.7). The hike begins at Basin Cove Overlook and descends to the banks of Basin Cove Creek. The trail offers glimpses of rugged mountain slopes that attracted and challenged early settlers. At some point of the hike there will be a U-turn to return to the start ascending with ups and downs and switchbacks. The maximum distance to be hiked could be 10 miles but can be shortened to any distance depending on the group's dynamics.

Fonta Flora Trail through the county park and the Fonta Flora/MST Connector in the game lands. Start at the trailhead at the intersection of Fish Hatchery Road and NC 126. From there, enter the Fonta Flora State Trail through the park for about 4.5 miles until you reach the Lake James Boat Launch. Hike through the parking lot and head west on NC 126 for a half-mile to Wolf Pit Road. Turn right onto Wolf Pit Road and start looking for the Fonta Flora/MST Connector Trail crossing the road just under a quarter of a mile into this gravel section. Turn right onto the Fonta Flora/MST Connector Trail and follow it back to the trailhead for a total loop of 6.9 miles. 2% average grade and 14% max grade. Section one of a planned trail which will eventually extend from Morganton to Asheville.

Glen Burney: The trail starts at Annie Cannon Gardens parking lot on Laurel Lane in Blowing Rock. The trail meanders down through a gorge past 3 waterfalls (Cascades, Glen Burney and Glen Marie Falls) on the New Years Creek. It is 3.2 miles total. Easy going down but the 700 foot elevation change is a good workout coming back up.

GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN TRAILS

Calloway Peak via Daniel Boone Scout Trail. Hike from Boone Fork Parking area on the BRP. 5 - 6 hrs., approximately 7 mi. round trip. Steady uphill trail with some parts near the top strenuous and rocky with ladders. Elevation gain 2,060 ft. Enjoy beautiful long range views to 3 states from the top of Calloway.

Grandfather Trl. to Calloway Peak and Return: from Black Rock Parking area on Grandfather Mtn. 6 mi. round trip, this hike covers the three highest peaks of the Blue Ridge Mtns. Awesome views throughout the hike. Steep and rocky with ladders and cables, this is a highly strenuous, all-day hike for experienced hikers.

Grandfather Trl. to Boone Fork Parking via Black Rock Parking on Grandfather Mtn. to Boone Fork Parking via Daniel Boone Scout Trl. Strenuous; 6.4 miles of fantastic hiking and mountain viewing. This hike will encompass McRae, Attic Window and Calloway Peaks, then down the Daniel Boone Scout Trl. to the Cragway Trl., to the Nuwati and finally Tanawha trails to Boone Fork Parking. This hike includes cables, ladders, crevasses, and scaling rock slides. This is a challenging hike for experienced hikers with proper equipment. Meet at Boone Fork Parking at MP 299.9 for car pooling.

Profile Trail to Calloway Peak: 7.75 miles, 6 – 7 hrs. Total elevation gain 2,200 - 2500 ft., depending on whether we take the Connector Trl., which cuts out some of the elev. gain. The scenic lower part of the trail is moderate, then there is a steady 3.4 mile uphill climb with rocky terrain near Shanty Springs. Beyond Shanty Springs, the trail has been improved with steps created from the rocks. At the top are amazing 360 degree vistas at 5,946' elevation. Rated strenuous - experienced hikers only. 3 ladders, one of which is a little tricky. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Hiking sticks are highly recommended. Along the way you will find: Foscoe View (2.2 mi.), Profile View (2.8 mi.), Shanty Springs (3.2 mi.) and Calloway Peak at 4 mi.).

Profile Trail (Lower) Wildflower Hike: We will walk along the creek and seek out early spring wildflowers. Bring your cameras and field guides, about 2 moderate miles.

Profile Trail to Calloway Peak and down Daniel Boone Scout Trail to the Parkway, Approx 7.5 miles, estimated 6 hrs. Total climb of over 2,300 ft. The scenic lower part of the trail is easy, then, there is a steady 3.4 mile uphill climb with rocky terrain near Shanty Springs to Calloway Peak where there are 360 degree vistas at 5,964' elevation. Rocky and Strenuous, experienced hikers only. 3 ladders on the ascent, 3 more on the descent, hike down past aircraft wreckage and more overlooks to the Tanawha Trail. No serious water crossings. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Hiking sticks are highly recommended. Spot cars at Boone Fork Parking.

Graybeard Trail: Near Black Mountain/Montreat, the trailhead is on the road behind the Montreat College and Conference Center. The trail is 9.5 mi. out and back, 2400' elevation gain, rated strenuous/difficult. Approx. 6 hrs. The trail offers stunning views of the Black Mountains. Bring hiking sticks, lots of water and lunch.

Grayson Highlands: 4½ mi., rated moderate to strenuous from Massie Gap among huge boulders at Rhododendron Gap plus 2 mi. Cabin Creek Trl. Loop which includes Cabin Creek Falls. Rhododendrons should be in bloom. Considerable sections are rocky and strenuous.

Grayson Highlands to Mount Rogers: At Grayson Highlands State Park in Virginia, join the Appalachian Trail to the summit of Mt. Rogers. The four-mile (one-way) hike passes through open country, and offers sweeping views of the surrounding wilderness as far as the eye can see. This area has, creeks, tough climbs, great vistas, wild ponies, tallest mountain in Virginia and open balds. Moderate to strenuous.

Grayson Highlands State Park to Thomas Knob: 7.2-mile round trip; 4 hours hiking. 360-degree views during most of the hike. You will encounter wild Shetland ponies, wild steer, mountains ranges, open meadows, and rock outcroppings during the trip. Must love rocks; need sticks, good boots. Entrance per car: \$7.

Green Knob: Meet at Sims Pond overlook, milepost 295.7, 2.3 miles, 578' elevation gain, rated moderate; trail begins at Sims Pond with multiple crossings of Sims creek, goes under the BRP and over Green Knob. On the return side, you will find excellent views of Grandfather Mountain before returning to Sims Pond parking area.

Hwy. 221 Pre-Viaduct Parkway Ramp to Rough Ridge: Hike the old roadbed from Hwy. 221 to Rough Ridge via the closed entry ramp to the Parkway at Wilson Creek Overlook, then the Tanawha to Rough Ridge and return. Approximately 5 mi. roundtrip; moderately strenuous, some rock scrambling. Meet at the entry on Hwy. 221.

Hebron Falls from Holloway Mtn. Rd. Parking: Hike the Tanawha from Holloway Mtn. road east to the Boone Fork Trail, then on to Hebron Falls. To get to the top of the falls, hikers can rock-hop up or work your way up through the bushes along the water. After the Falls, finish Boone Fork loop back to the Tanawha and Holloway Mtn. Rd. Rated moderately strenuous. 7½ mi.

Holloway Mtn. Rd. to Cold Prong via the Tanawha Trail or possibly on to Boone Fork bridge and return the same way. 4½ - 7 miles; rated moderate.

Hughes Gap to AT Shelter – About 7+ miles moderate.

Hunt Fish Falls & Harper's Creek Falls: Down and back; steep switchbacks. Approximately 2mi. Then on down to Mortimer to go out and back to Harper's Creek Falls, approximately 3 mi.

Johns River Rd. & Price Lake: Hike begins at the Red Barn just past Sims Pond parking and follows Johns River Rd. toward Hwy. 221, then after 1 mi. turns right through open fields and woods to Price Lake. The hike around Price Lk. is 2.3 mi., then back via Johns R. Rd. Total hike out and back is 6 mi. with 480' elevation gain. Rated easy.

Kings Mountain Military Park, Blacksburg, SC. Orienteering activity (Fee \$8) Use a specially prepared map and compass (provided at the site) to navigate from point to point on gently rolling hilly terrain, in order to find marked spots, called controls. Instructions are available at the site. This is a map hike in conjunction with an activity with the Carolina Orienteering Club. A great activity for all levels of hikers and those who want to learn a new skill.

Latta Plantation Nature Preserve, 5226 Sample Rd., Huntersville, NC. Map orientation activity. Hikers of all levels are welcome. Orienteering involves using a special topo map and compass (provided at the site) to navigate from control to control to identify specific locations. We will car pool.

Laurel Fork Falls: This hike is in the Pond Mountain Wilderness and Cherokee National Forest, and will begin from the trailhead parking area on US 321/TN 67 in Hampton, TN. We will follow the Hampton Blueline Trail to its intersection with the Appalachian Trail, then south on the AT, up the high water route, and down to the falls for a lunch stop. We will then make our way back to the trailhead along the low water route. Total distance approximately 5 mi. Rated moderate. The trailhead is near Hampton, TN on Hwy. 321/67 near the Watauga Lk. swimming area.

LINVILLE GORGE TRAILS (Includes Hawksbill and Table Rock Mountains)

Babel Tower: 3.5 mile out and back on the western side of the Linville gorge. From Old NC 105, the trail descends through hardwoods and rhododendrons, 900' in 1.2 miles over rocky terrain. Babel Tower is a massive rock pinnacle rising over 400 feet above a giant horseshoe curve in the river. This impressive series of rock pulpits and cliffs serves as an unofficial dividing line between the snakelike north end of the gorge and the relatively straight southern course. Many scramble paths lead to outstanding cliff-side views south of Table Rock Mtn. Includes views of the Babel Tower Falls. Elevation gain on trial return is 1515'. Approx. 3 hrs., rated strenuous. Park at the Babel Tower Trailhead on Old NC 105.

Hawksbill Mountain: Meet at Christa's (Christa's Country Corner, Hwy 181, Mile-marker 312 off of the Blue Ridge Parkway) Pineola, NC at 9:00 am and carpool to Hawksbill (due to limited parking). Moderate to strenuous 1.8 miles up and back, with 670 ft. elevation gain; approximately 2 hrs. Bring hiking sticks. Fantastic views of the Gorge.

Linville Falls: Meet at 9:30 am at the Linville Falls Parking lot, BRP, MP 316.5. Moderate to strenuous hike to both the Plunge basin overlook and Plunge Basin lower area depending on conditions, and given time, also part of the Upper falls trails. Expect about a 3.0 hour hike. Snack at one of the overlooks.

Linville Gorge, Babel Tower and Cabin Trails: Descend into Linville Gorge to the river, hiking down Babel Tower Trail to Linville Gorge Trail to River for lunch, then back along Linville Gorge Trail to hike up Cabin Trail. Will spot cars at both trail heads. Rated EXTREMELY rocky and strenuous. Approx. 4 miles. 4-5 hours. Brings lots of water, lunch.

Linville Gorge Chimneys and Shortoff Ridge: Hike MST from Table Rock picnic area through the Chimneys toward Shortoff Mountain. Return to picnic area and take short hike to top of Table Rock for spectacular views of the Linville Gorge. Moderate to strenuous. Rocky and steep in places. Approx. 4-5 hours. Bring lots of water and lunch.

Linville Gorge Trails: we will hike several of the trails around Linville Gorge with views of Linville Falls from the West rim and stop off down at Linville Falls for lunch and to play in the water. Most trails are moderate, with a short, steep, rocky hike to the Falls.

Shortoff Mountain: 7.5 mi., rated moderate-strenuous. Starting from Wolf Pit Road above Lake James the trail gains 1,321 feet in elevation. The first mile of the hike is a strenuous, rocky trail with switchbacks and sweeping views of Lake James. 1 mile up, the trail merges with the Mountain to Sea Trail. The last 1¼ mile is mostly level across the summit at 2883 feet, passing by many panoramic views. We'll lunch at a rock outcropping with the best view of Table Rock Mtn. and the Linville Gorge. Hiking sticks suggested.
http://www.romanticasheville.com/shortoff_mountain.htm#sthash.o5V4sFk7.dpuf

Spence Ridge Trail, Linville River Gorge: The trailhead is the first trailhead on the right after you pass the Hawksbill trailhead. 3 miles round trip, with a 915' elevation loss down to Linville River to the old footbridge that was washed out several years ago. There are beautiful views of rocks and streams on the way down, as well as at the river. Moderately strenuous hike.

Table Rock and Shortoff Mountain: Table Rock is 2 mi. of moderately strenuous hiking roundtrip. After returning to the parking area, hike the Mountains To Sea trail toward Shortoff Mountain which affords many beautiful views of the Linville Gorge. Stop at "The Amphitheater" for lunch then return. Total hike will be approximately 4-5 mi.

Table Rock via Spence Ridge Trail: Table Rock via Spence Ridge Trail and Little Table Rock Trail and return on MST. Very strenuous. Beautiful Views. Meet at Christa's on 181 and we will carpool to trailhead.

Table Rock via Spence Ridge and Little Table Rock Trail and return on MST : First half of trail is very strenuous/steep. Approximately 3.25 mi. roundtrip. Beautiful views from top of Table Rock. Meet at Christa's on 181 and we will carpool to trailhead.

Table Rock from Spence Ridge Parking and Table Rock Gap Trl. : Total hike out and back will be 3.6 mi., 1,037' elevation gain, with mostly steep uphill strenuous sections. At about .4 mi., the trail connects with the MST, then with the Table Rock Trail for the final ascent to the top. Beautiful views of the Linville Gorge and beyond. Approximately 3 hrs.

Upper Creek Falls and Hawksbill Mountain. Upper Creek Falls Loop switchbacks down to the creek just above the top of the falls and crosses. The trail then descends along the falls and crosses again near the bottom of the falls. Moderately difficult 1.6 mile loop. We will then drive to the Hawksbill Mtn. trailhead. The 1.8 mile round-trip hike to the summit of Hawksbill Mountain (elevation 4,009 ft) has panoramic views of Linville Gorge. Strenuous with 670 feet elevation gain. Meet at Christa's on 181 and carpool to trailhead.

Lost Cove Creek : 7 miles, 5 hours. This is a loop trail starting with a moderate climb to the top of the ridge then a steep descent down to Hunt Fish Falls and a large swimming hole. The return has several climbs and follows several tributaries of Lost Creek where there are falls, cascades and swimming holes. 6-8 water crossings (many do not offer rock-hopping options). This beautiful hike is a favorite as it affords the most variety. Meet at the Grandmother Mtn. parking area at mile marker 307.5 on the BRP and carpool to the trailhead on Roseboro Rd.

Lower and Upper Pond Creek Trails, Beech Mountain. A new moderately strenuous 4 mile hike out and back along a beautiful creek with rapids and rocks. Elevation change 689 feet. After the hike, stop at Fred's Backside Deli for lunch on the patio and browsing the old country store. Meet at the Banner Elk Park in the parking lot, located on 194 (Main Street, E), 2 blocks from the stop light in downtown Banner Elk (toward Valle Crucis). Carpool or caravan to the trail head.

Mt. Jefferson: Hike new and old trails to the summit of Mt Jefferson and back. Approximately 6+ miles, rated moderate. Meet at the ranger station.

Mt. Jefferson: We will summit Mt. Jefferson and hike to Luther Rock. Then it is all downhill with views all the way to Mt. Rogers, VA. Approximately 6 mi. on a winding, nicely graded trail with magnificent views. Meet at the Ranger Station of Mt. Jefferson Natural Area, W Jefferson, off Rt 221 after passing Wal-Mart traffic light take a right. Ashe Civic Theater is on the corner and a sign that the Ranger Station is one mile uphill.

Mt Jefferson: Hike the newest trail from one of the overlooks to the peak. Starting place will depend on weather. Moderate to strenuous. We will meet at 10 o'clock at the Sunset Overlook in Mount Jefferson State Park. - the first Overlook on the way up the hill. It is on the left. Your GPS should easily get you to the park. Bring sticks 5-7 mostly moderate miles depending on our trail choices. Bathrooms at the top are closed, but there is a bathroom (entry door on outside of building) at the ranger station when you first enter the park.

Mt. Mitchell to Cattail Peak: The hike will start at the summit of Mt. Mitchell (6684'), continue to Mt. Craig (6648'), Big Tom (6581') Balsam Cone (6566') and Cattail Peak (6584') and return. These are magnificent mountains with spectacular views. Rated moderate to strenuous, the most strenuous part being the climb back up Mt. Tom on the return. Approx 6+ miles. To participate you should be an experienced hiker.

MOUNTAINS TO SEA TRAILS

MST: Aho Gap to Goshen Creek: Out and back along the Mountains-to-Sea trail. Hopefully full of wildflowers. Trail meanders through dense rhododendron forests, over small water crossings to Goshen Creek. About 5 miles round trip. Easy to moderate.

MST: Aho Gap to Greenhill Rd.: Meet at Aho Gap on the Parkway, MP 288. Park beside the road just south of the Aho Gap sign where Sampson Road joins the Parkway on the east side (4 miles north of the Blowing Rock entrance to the Parkway). We will hike south on the MST to Greenhill Road and return. About 5 miles. Rated easy - some pasture, some woods.

MST: Aho Gap to Grandview Overlook: Meet at Aho Gap, MP 288 on the Parkway, and hike to Grandview Overlook, MP 281.4 on the MST. We will park roadside on Sampson Road. Bring plenty of water, snack, lunch, hiking poles and an extra pair of socks. There is one tricky water crossing. Cars will be spotted at the finish. The hike is about 8 miles. Rated moderate - the last half is mostly uphill.

MST: Alder Gap to Alligator Gap: This hike will start at Alder Gap (MP 251.5 on the BRP) ending at Alligator Gap near Doughton Park going south on the MST for approximate 8 mi., The Laurel Fork Viaduct, slated for destruction in 2020 and rebuilt will be seen on our hike. There is not much of an elevation change; just little ups and downs in beautiful forests.

MST: Bluff Mountain Overlook Trail to Brinegar Cabin/Fodder Stack/ Doughton Park: 8.2 miles through forest, pasture, meadows with awesome 360 mountain range views in most parts. Lots of wildflowers. Lunch at The Bluffs on the BRP, about halfway through hike.

MST: Boone's Trace Overlook to Hwy. 421: 9.5 miles, 4 – 5 hours, rated easy. Hike begins at Boone's Trace overlook, MM 385.1 on the BRP. The hike meanders in and out of the forest along/on the BRP on good trails. We will gain and lose about 2000' elevation over gently rolling terrain. Spot cars at 421 ramp.

MST: Cone Manor to Hwy. 321: The trail follows Cone Manor trails, beginning at the Manor parking. From the back of the Manor go left

MST: Elk Mtn. Overlook to Jeffress Pk.: Begin at Elk Mtn. Overlook (MM 275 BRP) to Jeffress Park and beyond. 6-8 mi. round trip. Rated moderate.

MST from 321 to Raven Rocks Overlook: The trailhead is into the woods on the right, heading east on the BRP just after crossing the bridge over US 221/321. 6 mi. out and back; 826' elevation gain, rated moderate. This is a nice hike through woods and pastures which remains fairly close to the BRP. It comes out at the Thunderhill Overlook (MM 290.3) at 1.5 mi., then at Raven Rock Overlook (MM 289.5) at 3 mi. for great views SW and NE.

MST: Hwy. 421 South: Begin at Highway 421 and hike south on the MST past Wildcat Road to the Parkway and return. 4-plus miles. Rated moderate.

MST: Hwy. 421 North: Hike south on the MST beginning at the 421 bridge (MP 277, BRP) and go about 6-8 miles round trip. Moderate. Nice views if it is a clear day.

MST: Hwy. 421 to Elk Mtn. Overlook: Hike north from 421 to Elk Mountain Overlook, and back. About 4-5 miles. Moderate.

MST: Holloway Mtn. Rd. to Shulls Mills Rd. This hike will start on the Tanawha Trail then follow the Boone Fork trail to the new MST bridge crossing Boone Fork Creek and finish on MST trails to up to Shulls Mill Rd.. Bring sticks and lunch and water. 5-6 miles rated moderate. We will spot cars.

MST: Raven Rocks South: Meet at Raven Rocks overlook, MM 289.5; hike south.

MST: Raven Rocks North: Meet at Raven Rocks overlook, MM 289.5; hike north.

MST: Singecat Overlook: 5 mile hike, rated moderate with a few switchbacks, but no water crossings. This part of the MST begins at milepost 344 on the BRP, crosses over the Twin Tunnels and has nice views of Mt. Mitchell and the Black Mtns.

MST: Thunderhill Overlook to Boone's Trace: Meet at Thunderhill Overlook on the BRP milepost 290.4, just north of 321. 6.3 mi., rated easy. Spot cars at Boone's Trace Overlook. The hike follows the BRP through woods, pastures and along streams and on roads with a net elevation loss of about 500'.

MST: Trout Lake to Price Park Picnic ground with lunch/snack on rocks on the shore of the Boone Fork creek. . Moderate 3.5-mile uphill walk from Trout up Rich Mtn trail to MST stile and then all downhill to bridge, lunch and short walk on Boone Fork Trail to the picnic ground. Approx. 6 miles. Moderate.

New River St. Park, US 221 Access: Hike the Hickory Trail and other trails of the park as well as hiking trails at Wagoner Access. Meet at the Ranger Station at the New River State Park, US 221 Access. The ranger station is 7 miles from Jefferson. Rated easy, approximately 6 miles.

New River St. Park Plus Mt. Jefferson Natural Area: Meet at Wagoner Access of the New River State Park for Part 1 of hike. Length 3 miles on the newest trail. Part 2 of the hike will start at p.m. at the MT Jefferson Picnic Shelter which is reached by the paved road of the Mt Jefferson State Natural Area. The hike will start there and goes to Luther Rock, moderate, approx. 2-3 miles long.

North Harper Creek Falls to Little Lost Cove : 4.6 mi., 3-4 hrs., moderate to strenuous loop trail. with 4-5 water crossings which are normally dry. N. Harpers Creek Falls is beautiful. Lost Cove Cliff overlook has great vista views. Meet at Linville Land Harbor parking lot beside the main recreation building.

Old John's River Rd. to Boone Fork: 3.6 mi., 455' elevation gain, rated easy. Meet at Sim's Pond, BRP 295.7. After 1 mi. the trail joins with the MST. Approaching the bridge at the Boone Fork, follow the MST to the left to go under the bridge, then right across the beach, then take the narrow trail at the edge of the water and cross over onto the big rocks in the Boone Fork.

Old John's River Road to Price Lake. Meet at Sim's Pond Overlook, BRP milepost 295.7. Follow OJR Rd. to join up with the MST, then cross the bridge to the Boone Fork Trail. Turn left on the BFT and follow it past the picnic area, staying on the BFT until you see Price Lake and the trail down to it.

Old John's River Rd. and MST: Meet at Sims Pond. Take Old Johns River Rd. 1 mi. to the MST, go right and up to Shulls Mill (250' elev. gain in .8 mi.) then return back down to OJR, turn right and go another .8 mi. down to the bridge at the river. Return 1.8 mi. to Sims Pond.

Old Mitchell Trail at Mt. Mitchell. Hike is 4.8 miles round trip. Rated moderate, very woodsy and nice views. The trail ends at the observation tower at Mt. Mitchell.

Orchard Creek Falls: Valle Crucis Trails, from the Valle Crucis Conference Center to Orchard Creek Falls and beyond. Easy to moderate hike to beautiful waterfall and then hike up to ridge top.

Otter Creek at Seven Devils: New short trail to a beautiful waterfall.

Over Mountain Victory Trail (Revolutionary War) starting in Hampton Creek Nature Area in Roan Mountain hooking into the AT at Yellow Mountain Gap and return same trail after lunch. Approximately 6 miles.

Pinnacle Tower Trail: The trailhead is located at the future site of the Tanasi Arts & Heritage Center next to I-26 at Exit 32. The trail is 4-5' wide with many switchbacks and an average grade of 7%, and is designated for hiking and mountain biking. The summit is the 3540' Pinnacle Mtn., which has one of the last 3 remaining lookout towers in the Cherokee Nat'l Forest. Spectacular views of Unaka Mtn. Round trip 8-9 mi., approximately 4 ½ hrs. Rated easy/moderate. Meet at Roan Mtn. Post Office on 19E.

Price Lake Loop Plus: From the Price Lake Picnic Area take the Boone Fork Trail to the left. The trail to Price Lake branches off to the left, then cross the Parkway to pick up the Price Lake Loop for 2.3 mi. and then back the same way; approximately 3.5 miles; 2 hours. Rated easy.

Quartz Mine Trail. 4 miles - 4 hours. Moderate to strenuous ascent to a beautiful quartz outcropping and long range views on the backside of Grandfather Mountain at approx. 5,200 ft. Trail is not well maintained but the extra effort is worth it. Exposed wall of white quartz about 30 ft. high with many loose quartz rocks at base. Water crossing at bottom, lunch at top. Meet at Lowe's Food parking lot corner of Hwy 105 and Tynecastle Hwy (184) for car pooling.

Railroad Grade Road Loop: Start at Riverside Restaurant on the Railroad Grade, 3.9 mi. south of the town of Todd. Approximate 4 mile loop that includes Seats Road and Todd Island Park. Rated easy.

River Loop Trail: The hike is about 4 miles long near the South Toe River and Black Mountain Campground with nice views of the Black Mtns. There is a small water crossing on the trail, so hiking sticks would be helpful. Meet at the marquis (trail map) at Black Mtn. Campground. Rated moderate. There are additional hikes in the area for those wanting more of a challenge.

ROAN MOUNTAIN TRAILS

Bear Wallow to Moonshiners Run: Roan Mountain State Park, maybe a brief foray up Turkey Trot to connect again with the “Run”. 7-8 miles, moderate. The trail has multiple exits back to the campground parking lot in case someone decides not to continue the hike.

Bear Wallow to Raven Rocks to Visitor Center via Chestnut Ridge, about 5 miles, moderate to strenuous

Carver’s Gap to Grassy Ridge, Roan Mtn. hike, 6 mi., approx. 4 hours, rated moderate to strenuous. Spectacular 360 deg. views along part of the AT that crosses the Balds. Trail is rocky with steep slopes in each direction, reaching 6,000 ft. elevations. Meet at Carver’s Gap parking area on the NC/TN line at the top of NC 261.

Carver’s Gap to Roan High Bluff Overlook: The hike is a moderate climb up the AT to the Rhodo Gardens/Picnic area, then on to the overlook. Spectacular view at the overlook, if we are not in the clouds. On the way back down we will stop at the picnic area for lunch. (there are clean rest rooms at the picnic area). Total distance about 6 miles, 4.5 hours. Meet at Carver’s Gap Parking area.

Hughes Gap to Carver's Gap: Hughes Gap to Carver's Gap on the AT, up the NW part of the Roan Massif, 6.6 miles, moderate to strenuous in parts, 2,220 ft. elevation gain. Beautiful trail, boral spruce pine forest, unlike others in the area. Will spot vehicles.

Hughes Gap to Iron Mountain Gap part of the AT. Approximately 10 miles, easy to moderate. Gentle ascent, trail running at or below ridge line most of the way, a few moderately steep parts, beautiful slopes down ridges, one excellent outcropping with about a 240 degree view. The trail runs mostly along the NC/TN state line as each state wanted it—compromise. End of trail meanders through old apple orchards. Spot cars.

Hughes Gap to Rhododendron Gardens: 8 miles, moderate.

Pond Mountain to Laurel Fork Falls Pond Mountain Trail is 9 miles on the AT from Watauga Lake on 321 where the AT crosses at Shook Branch Rd. (just before Hampton, Tenn.) to Dennis Cove parking lot on Dennis Cove Rd. approx 9+ miles. Moderate.

Raven Rocks via Old Forest Rd. Approximately 6 miles and moderate to very strenuous.

Old Forest Road: From Roan Mtn. Visitors Center to Chestnut Ridge near Old Miller Homestead. Approx. 6-7 mi./ rated moderate/strenuous.

Over Mountain Victory Trail to Yellow Mountain Gap or Little Hump: About 8-10 miles, moderate to strenuous. Historic.

Raven Rock Overlook to the Doe River: Great views. Approx. 4.5 miles, mostly moderate with some strenuous parts.

Raven Rock Overlook Trail to Roan Mtn. Visitor Center: This trail begins across the road from the main entrance to the campground. The steep trail winds up the side of the mountain to Raven Rock Overlook atop Heaton Ridge. From the overlook, you gaze down to the Visitor’s Center and Miller Homestead below (in winter). Then a steep decent to the forest road still in hardwood forest, climbing up Turkey Trot trail and a winding ascent/descent to the Doe River, across 143 to an inexorable climb up to a sign that says "For Experienced hikers Only", and a winding trail through woodlands down to the Visitor Center and the river. Approximately 7 mi., rated moderate/strenuous.

Raven Rocks to Strawberry Bald: (Miller Homestead area) in Roan Mountain State Park, about 6 miles.

Roan Mtn. Visitor Center. to Raven Rocks & Roan Mtn. State Park Campground: Approximately 4 miles, parts of trail narrow, steep. Rated moderate to strenuous. If not hiked out, we can add 3 miles with Fred Behrend Trail in the campground.

Fred Behrend trail (Bear Wallow) moderate 3 miles, to Moonshiners Run, easy 1.5 miles, to Raven Rocks and Roan Mountain Camp Ground, **strenuous** +/- 1.5 miles. Those who choose not to do Raven Rocks can continue on Moonshiners Run for a less than a mile through a beautiful area along the Doe River, then return on that trail to the campground and car park area by the shelter.

Roaring Creek to Humps to 19E – Approx. 8-9 miles, moderate to strenuous. There are steep climbs with magnificent vistas and descents with very rocky conditions at the end--hard on the knees, poles helpful, as well as knee strapping. Bring a hat (no trees) water and lunch.

Rocky Knob Trails: This 185-acre park consists of a series of switchbacks with trails rated easy to moderate. Bring hiking poles. There are bathrooms and a picnic pavilion.

Seats Road/Todd Island Park Easy 4 miles hike.

Sims Pond to Rich Mtn. to Trout Lake: Meet at Trout Lake Parking area, carpool to Sims Pond Overlook, hike Old John's river road to MST and then up to the top of Rich Mountain with a stop for snack/lunch. Then a choice of hiking down to the parking lot at Trout Lake or a return hike to Sims Pond parking. Steady uphill on the MST to Rich Mountain. A fairly good trail, but steep at times. 6-8 miles. Rated moderate-strenuous.

Shulls Mill Rd. to Holloway Mtn. Rd. via the MST, Boone Fork Trl. and Tanawha Trl. The hike will begin on the MST at Shulls Mill Rd., and will join the Boone Fork Trail at the bridge crossing at Boone Fork Creek. From there, follow the BFT around and remain on the Tanawha to Holloway Mountain Road. Meet at Holloway Mtn. Rd., carpool to Shulls Mill Rd. 6 miles, moderately strenuous.

Snake Mountain: The highest mountain between Grandfather Mountain and Mount Rogers, Snake Mountain is part of the amphibolite range of mountains in Watauga and Ashe Counties. Initial climb to the ridge top is very steep and strenuous and rocky. Elevation gain is 1,378'. Once atop the ridge the trail ambles along with great views over to TN, down through an open area and back to the cars. This is a hike for experienced hikers. Distance is about 3.65 mi.

South Toe River Loop and Colbert's Ridge. The first part of the hike is fairly flat along the river--3 miles long with one water crossing. Colbert's Ridge is a great cardio hike. It is steep--3.8 miles round trip.

Stone Mtn. Loop Trail: Stone Mountain State Park. Approximately 3 hrs.; 4.6 miles, 800' elevation gain. This strenuous loop takes us to the summit of 600' granite monad Stone Mountain, then continues to the 400' Stone Mountain Falls. From the falls, the trail leads to the base of Stone Mountain to an old farm settlement.

Stone Mtn. State Park: Garden Creek Hike, Moderate hike, eight to ten miles long, many creek crossings, discovering remains of old homesteads, waterfalls and many photo opportunities during a leisurely hike uphill, returning the same way. Bring hiking sticks for tricky creek crossings.

Story Teller Rock and Flat Rock from Boone Fork Parking area on the BRP. The hike will follow the Nuwati Trail to Storyteller Rock with the return trip via the Cragway, Daniel Boone Scout and Tanawha Trails. Storyteller and Flat Rock afford beautiful vistas of the Boone Bowl and beyond. Approx. 5 mi., some parts strenuous and rocky. ***** NOTE: In Winter when the BRP is closed, this hike can be accessed by way of the Asutsi Trl. from Hwy. 221 7.7 mi. out of Blowing Rock, directly across from the dark grey apt. bldg.**

Tanawha Trail Hikes:

Tanawha Trail: From end to end, 13.5 mi. from Julian Price Park to Beacon Heights, ranges from easy to strenuous, about 8 hrs. Net elevation gain is about 800'. Meet at Beacon Heights. We will spot cars at Julian Price Park.

Tanawha Trail: Beacon Heights to Rough Ridge, 8 mi. out and back; rated moderately strenuous. Rocky terrain among beautiful boulder formations.

Tanawha Trail: Boone Fork Parking to Price Park Picnic Area Parking: 6.2 mi., 3 ½ hrs. Rated easy/moderate. Hike one-way; we will spot cars. This is a beautiful section of the Tanawha Trail with gentle slopes along wooded terrain, crossing several creeks and open pastures with wildflowers.

Tanawha Trail: Holloway Mtn. Rd. to Boone Fork Parking and Return: Round trip from Holloway Mtn. Rd. to Boone Fork Loop and back. 7.4 mi., 4 hrs. Rated moderate. 1,121 elevation gain/loss. Mostly wooded with some pasture land and 2 water crossings.

Tanawha Trail: Price Park to Holloway Mountain Road. Approx. 4 mi. round trip; rated easy. Meet at Boat Ramp Parking at Price Lake BRP Milepost 297.

Tanawha Trail: Rough Ridge Parking to Price Park 9 miles, 5 hrs. Rated easy/moderate (includes 3 easy water crossings). Hike one-way - cars will be parked for shuttle to origin point. This is a beautiful section of the Tanawha Trail with gentle slopes along wooded terrain, crossing several creeks and open pastures with wildflowers.

Tanawha Trail: Rough Ridge to Cold Prong: 4 1/2 to 5 1/2 miles, mostly on a gentle downhill slope, but with much uneven footing from exposed roots and rocks. A few very small water crossings. Moderate. 3-4 hours.

Tanawha Trail: Linn Cove Visitors Center to Boone Fork Parking: 6.8 moderately strenuous miles, with lots of beautiful scenery. Meet at Linn Cove Visitor Center. We will spot cars at Boone Fork Parking Area.

Tanawha Trail: Price Park to Holloway Mtn. Rd. Meet at Boat Ramp Parking at Price Lake. Go to the Tanawha trailhead near the Ranger Station and turn left, following the Tanawha to Holloway Mtn. Rd. The trail will join briefly with the Boone Fork Trl. 4 mi. out and back. Rated easy.

Three Top: 4.1 mile trail out and back. 1400 feet elevation gain. Moderate/difficult hike
Beautiful views from top. To get to the trailhead: Take Hwy. 194 north from New Market Shopping Center in Boone to Todd (about 12 mi.), then left onto 3 Top Rd just past the Todd Volunteer Fire Dept., to a right turn onto Eller Rd near Creston (about 10 mi.). Continue straight onto Hidden Valley Rd (at Ossiriand Forest Products, 106 Hidden Valley Rd), which becomes Oak Trail. Follow signs for "NC Game Lands and Three Top Trailhead" until reaching the end of the road where there is a small parking area.

Thunderhill Loop: Meet at Thunderhill Overlook on the BRP milepost 290.4, just north of 321.

Upper Thunderhole Trail to China Creek Loop: A beautiful hike featuring a wide variety of terrain, near Blowing Rock. Start where the Cone Park carriage trail crosses under 221, walk down past the stables to do Upper Thunderhole, then follow China Creek up to the 221 rest area, and back to the cars. Park across from the Blue Ridge Parkway sign on 221S, 1.2 miles up from Main Street in Blowing Rock. The Hike is 5.8 miles for the full loop. Poles recommended for the Thunderhole descent. Some rock scrambling and significant elevation gain in the second half of the loop.

Virginia Creeper Trail: (Washington Co, VA) 8 mi. 4 hrs. rated easy.. Trail is an old railroad bed that follows a beautiful trout stream on a gentle downhill from Green Cove to Taylor Valley. Start at Green Cove railroad station, cross several railroad bridges and follow Laurel Creek all the way.

Watauga Lake to the dam: Approximately 4 miles round trip. Meet at Shook Branch parking area in front of lake.

Watauga Dam from US 321 (Appalachian Trl.). (Carter/Johnson Co., TN). 5.4 miles, 4 hrs. Rated moderate. Views of Watauga Lake and Dam. Behind the dam spillway one can see an interesting ecological phenomenon: Iron Mountain Fault. Old sediments slid up and over limestone, bending the fault downward so that it

appears as a great diagonal slash in the cliff. Meet at the Texaco Station at intersection of US 19E and US 321 in Hampton, TN.

Wilson Creek area: 4.6 mi., 3-4 hrs., moderate to strenuous loop trail with 4-5 water crossings which are normally dry. N. Harpers Creek Falls are beautiful, and along the way we will stop at the Lost Cove Cliff overlook with great vista views.