

# Virginia Creeper Trail.

10/2/2024

The Virginia Creeper trail is an offroad cycling trail about twenty miles long from near the top of White Oak Mountain, back down to the village of Damascus in Virginia.

It passes through woods, alongside a fine river, and along the prepared bed of an old railroad. It is a steady downhill for most of the way, along a reasonably good fine-gravel surface although there are occasional small bumps from buried stones.

Along the way are numerous places where you can rest. There is a comfortable small restaurant for simple meals with a toilet stop about two-thirds of the way down, and several restaurants and an excellent ice cream shop in the village.

You can rent, or take your own off-the-road bike. The Bike shop arranges to ferry you and the bike by shuttle to the starting point. They also provide helmets and a bottle of water for each participant.

**The price to the White Oak start point including the bike and the shuttle is \$39.95, or \$ 24.95 for just the shuttle, but no bike.**

If we have more than 10 riders, we get a 10% discount.

October is their peak time and they are packed. They advise us to book at least a couple of days in advance so that they can guarantee spaces. I plan to reserve rather than turn up cold. We **will** be committed to the payment even if we should opt to cancel for whatever reason, such as bad weather.

**We plan to go on Wednesday Oct. 3, and will meet at 'The Bicycle Junction', 425 Douglas Dr, Damascus, at 10 AM.**

To get there take NC 421 from Boone to Mountain City TN. Once there, take route 91 to Damascus. I suggest you continue on 421 around the town and pick 91 up on the other side. If you are confident about the way, you can go through the village to pick up 91 further along its way.

The Bicycle Junction is the first cycle shop in Damascus, on the left-hand side of the road. They have some parking spaces. It is easy to find, with a bike on the roof

My daughter Lara and I did the whole thing recently. The weather was kind and we had a great time without problems.

The journey from Blowing Rock to Damascus took me 2.5 hours with snacks and rest stops. If you push, you could make it in 2 hours.

Note, Gas was inexpensive in Mtn. City.

A few fallen leaves already speckled the trail. By early October we should expect more, but I don't think there will be enough to cause a hazard yet, although, later in the season piles of leaves, both wet or dry, could pose a skidding problem. But that is normal for the Virginia Trail!

I am not in great cycling shape, but I survived our trip well on a rental bike. You should assess your own physical and cycling capabilities.

**Please advise me if you wish to come by Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> with information about whether you want to rent the bike, or only take the shuttle.**

**You will be committed to the cost even if we are rained out since I will book to guarantee us a spot.**

If you have your own bike (and the energy,) you may decide not to use the shuttle but ride up the trail as far as you wish (to the probable consternation of the many inexperienced folks cycling down this fairly narrow track on this busy day.)

**Bill Baker**