

Hiking in Floyd County, Virginia

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

Rocky Knob/Rock Castle Gorge Trail

Length: 10.8 miles

Rating: Strenuous

Directions: Blue Ridge Parkway milepost 169.

A visitors center is located north of the parking lot near Rocky Knob picnic area. Check in and park at the visitors center and ask for a trail map. This trail starts easy at the entrance to the Rocky Knob campground around milepost 167. Then the trail descends over three miles into the backcountry camping area in the bottom of the gorge. The rugged nature of the trail reveal part of the reason this pathway was given National Recreational Trail status. Also, in the springtime to early summer, nearly 200 varieties of wildflowers are visible along the trail area. The rest of the trail is a 7.3-mi ascent back out of the gorge on the return trail. You'll see tunnels of rhododendron and other thick mountain foliage, a splashing stream, and high open meadows. The entire loop is 10.8 miles and the elevations range from 1,700 to 3,572 ft. A few small historic structures are visible along the trail, including a Civilian Conservation Corps camp. Allow at least 7 hours or more in order to return to your car before dark.

Picnic Loop Trail

Length: 1.0 miles

Rating: Easy

Directions: Blue Ridge Parkway mile post 169.0

This loop trail from the Rocky Knob Visitor Center and parking lot takes you on a scenic walk around the picnic area.

Black Ridge Trail

Length: 3.1 miles

Rating: Moderate

Directions: Blue Ridge Parkway mile post 169.0.

You will find the head of The Black Ridge Trail near the parking lot at The Rocky Knob Visitor Center. It will lead you to Grassy Knoll and back to Visitor Center. You will see beautiful views and walk deep into the Blue Ridge forest.

Hardwood Cove Nature Trail

Length: 0.8 miles

Rating: Moderate

Directions: Blue Ridge Parkway mile post 167.1.

This trail is part of the Rock Castle Gorge Trail. Park at the Visitor's Center and pick up a self-guided brochure that can be picked up at a wooden box at the foot of the trail. The brochure points out and identifies over 25 trees and a few vines along the trail.

Mabry Mill Trail

Length : 0.5 miles

Rating: Easy

Directions: Blue Ridge Parkway mile post 176.2.

This is a paved and boardwalk trail that takes hikers to the gristmill, sawmill, moonshine display and blacksmith shop. Rustic skills are demonstrated in the summer during the weekends. Parking is available at the Mabry Mill Café.

Smart View Loop Trail

Length: 2.6 miles

Rating: Moderate

Directions: Blue Ridge Parkway mile post 154.5

The Smart View Trail has some spectacular views, it goes into the Blue Ridge back country, crosses over a few primitive bridges, has a mild rock climb. Enter from a large parking lot. On a clear day you can see Philpott Lake 1000 feet below from a 100+ year old cabin.

GENERAL AROUND FLOYD COUNTY

Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve

Trail length: 1 mile

Rating: moderate/strenuous

Directions: At Floyd, go south on **US 221**, and follow it about 6 miles. Turn left (south) on **727 (Union School Road)** and go about 4.5 miles to **Conner Grove Road (VA 799)**. Turn right onto **799**, go about 100 feet and turn left onto **Moles Road (VA 727)**. Go about 1 mile, and turn right to stay on **VA 727**. Go 1 mile to a 3-way fork. Bear to the right and follow the gravel access road to the summit parking area.

Note: From the "End of State Maintenance" sign, it is approximately 1.1 miles to the parking area and trail head. Past the "end of State maintenance" sign, there is a 200' section of road requiring high clearance, all wheel drive vehicles.

Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve encircles Buffalo Mountain, a knob within the Smith Mountains whose shape resembles the hump of a Buffalo. A steep but moderately graded one-mile trail leads explorers to a peak of 3971 feet. This area is unique in that it offers sub-alpine vegetation, magnesium-rich soils, and windswept balds along the summit.

Floyd Family Campground Trails

Various length trails – 1 to 4 miles.

Rating: Moderate

Directions: From the stoplight in Floyd take 221 North for about one mile and go right at Franklin Pike. Follow Franklin Pike for about 5 miles and look for Chantilly Farm on the left.

Woodland trail starts at the rear of the grounds near the natural amphitheater and outdoor stage along with parking areas available. It features educational signage that identifies a variety of plants and trees. Self guided trail brochures are available at the Farm Office.

Riverstone Organic Farm

Length: 1 mile

Rating: Moderate

Directions: From the stoplight in Floyd take 221 North for about one mile and go right at Franklin Pike. Follow Franklin Pike for about 6 miles and turn left on Thompson Rd. The Riverstone Organic Farm entrance is on the left. Follow signs to parking areas and to the trail.

This scenic loop trail takes you through a wooded area and along the Little River.

Thunderstruck Road

Length: 3 miles

Rating: Easy

Directions: From Floyd go north on Rt. 8 for 4.5 miles. Turn right on Slusher Store Rd. and go until road ends at Thunderstruck Rd. Turn left or right on Thunderstruck Road and park along the Little River.

Thunderstruck Road is a very scenic, unpaved road that follows along beside the Little River. This is also a good place to go fishing.

Warren G. Lineberry Memorial Park Trail

Length: 0.5 miles

Rating: Moderate

Directions: From stop light in Floyd go south on Locust St.(Rt. 8) to 284 S. Locust St. The park is on the right next to Dogtown Roadhouse. Parking is available in Downtown parking areas.

This trail starts at the park and winds through the woods. It ends at the Jesse Peterman Memorial Library on W. Main St. Avoid parking at the library as the parking lot is reserves for library staff and visitors.

Dodd Creek Trail

Length: 1.25 miles

Rating: Moderate

Directions: From stoplight in Floyd to North on Rt. 8 about one half mile. On the left, across from the Family Dollar store, take Park Drive to the back of the Floyd County Recreation Park past the ball field. There is an entrance to the trail to the right of the parking lot bordered with a split-rail fence.