

Catoctin Trail

<http://www.nps.gov/cato/>

Families and individuals can catch a glimpse of Maryland's history and folklore while they enjoy hiking on the Catoctin Trail. The 27-mile trail runs from Gambrill State Park through the Frederick City Watershed and ends in Catoctin Mountain Park. Nine miles of the trail crisscrosses through Cunningham Falls State Park. Earn a certificate and patch by hiking each of the four sections in the series at least once within a three-year period.

CAT # 1 - Gambrills State Park to Mountindale Road

Pass an old springhouse, view panoramas of Frederick County and cross winding streams. Moderately difficult terrain; 8 miles

CAT # 2 - Mountindale Road to Hunting Creek

Look for signs of deer and wild turkey along this wooded trail that crosses Steep Creek. Survey the scenery at White Rocks. Moderately difficult terrain; 7 miles

CAT # 3 - Hunting Creek to Houck Area

Pass the Manor picnic area and hardwood forest and enjoy the scenic view from Bob's Hill Overlook. Steep terrain; 6 miles

CAT # 4 - Houck Area to Mount Zion Road

Follow the Cunningham Falls State Park trail into the wooded National Park horse trails. Pass hemlock groves, fresh springs, and creeks. Enjoy a spectacular lunch-break at the top of the falls. Moderately difficult terrain; 7 miles

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal

<http://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/hikingandbiking.htm>

or <http://www.nps.gov/choh/index.htm>

Completed in 1850, the towpath along the 184.5 mile C&O Canal parallels the Potomac River from Cumberland to Georgetown. Earn a certificate and patch by hiking each of the 13 sections in the series at least once within a six-year period. Sneakers or light-weight hiking shoes are recommended.

C&O Canal Series # 1 (section's 1-5)

C&O # 1 - Georgetown to Carderock

Discover the Rock Creek tide lock in Georgetown and hike through urban D.C. into Maryland's countryside. Pass Dam #1, Fletcher's Boat House and Clara Barton's home. Flat Terrain; 10 miles

C&O # 2 - Carderock to Pennyfield Locks

Watch rock climbers on the banks of the Potomac. Have lunch at beautiful Great Falls. Continue on the Pennyfield Locks. Flat terrain; 9.1 miles

C&O # 3 – Pennyfield Lock to Edwards Ferry

Hike along the Potomac River past Seneca Creek Aqueduct. Enjoy the serenity of the McKee Beshar Wildlife Management Area along the way. Flat terrain; 11 miles.

C&O # 4 - Edwards Ferry to Dickerson Regional Park

At Whites Ferry, see the only remaining ferry operating across the Potomac River. Pass the Olympic kayak course and the PEPCO power plant at Dickerson. Flat terrain; 9 miles

C&O # 5 - Dickerson Regional Park to Lander

Cross the mouth of the Monocacy River and see the aqueduct built of white sandstone quarried on Sugarloaf Mountain. Pass the picturesque Point of Rocks Railroad Station where the C&O Canal Company and rival B&O Railroad disputed rights-of-ways. Flat terrain; 10 miles.

C&O Canal Series # 2 (section's 5-10)

C&O # 6 – Lander to Harpers Ferry

Begin at Lander or Catoctin Station, and pass the lock at Catoctin Creek Aqueduct and the town of Brunswick, and important Potomac crossing during the Civil War. Finish the hike along the AT and the C&O towpath. Flat terrain; 9 miles.

C&O # 7 – Harpers Ferry to Antietam Creek

Start on the C&O Canal opposite Harpers Ferry. View the Potomac River and West Virginia shore for most of the hike. Finish at the mouth of Antietam Creek, which runs through the Antietam Battlefield. If the weather is good, wade in Antietam Creek at the end of the hike. Flat terrain; 7.8 miles

C&O # 8 – Antietam Creek to Snyders Landing

Discover the history of the bloodiest battle of the Civil War at Antietam National Battlefield. Hike into Shepherdstown for lunch. Flat terrain; 7.5 miles.

C&O # 9 – Snyders Landing to Dam #5

Start on the C&O Canal at Snyders Landing. Pass Through Mercersville. The canal shipped grain from nearby farms and brought supplies to the local inhabitants at these settlements. See a cave on the opposite side of the canal. End at Dam #5 which once provided water to the canal. Flat terrain; 8 miles.

C&O # 10 – Williamsport to Charles Mill

Pass a hiker-biker overnight camp and Falling Waters, a pivotal bridge site during the Civil War. Visit Williamsport, a town George Washington considered for the nation's capital. Flat terrain; 11.2 miles.

C&O Canal Overnights (Sections A-D)

Williamsport to Ft. Frederick to Little Pool – Section A

Hike from Williamsport to Ft. Frederick on day one, then hike from Ft. Frederick to Little Pool on day two; camp along the way. Bring food and camping equipment; tents are available for borrowing by calling 410-313-4719. Carpool from Recreation and Parks Hdqrs. Information will be mailed. Flat Terrain.

Little Pool to Cohill Station to Little Orleans – Section B

Hike from Little Pool to Cohill Station and end up in Little Orleans; camp along the way. Bring food and camping equipment; tents are available for borrowing by calling 410-313-4719. Carpool from Recreation and Parks Hdqrs. Information will be mailed. Flat Terrain.

Little Orleans to Paw Paw Tunnel to Town Creek – Section C

Hike from Town Creek to Paw Paw on day one, then hike from Paw Paw to Little Orleans on day two; camp along the way. Bring food and camping equipment; tents are available for borrow by calling 410-313-4719. Carpool from Recreation and Parks Hdqrs. If you would like to participant in the hike but prefer to make your own lodging accommodations rather then camp, register at the hike only fee. Information will be mailed. Flat terrain.

Town Creek to North Branch to Cumberland – Section D

Hike from Cumberland to North Branch and end at Town Creek. Bring food and camping equipment; tents are available for borrow by calling 410-313-4719. Carpool from Recreation and Parks Hdqrs. If you would like to participant in the hike but prefer to make your own lodging accommodations rather then camp, register at the hike only fee. Information will be mailed. Flat terrain.

Appalachian Trail

<http://www.nps.gov/appa/>

Earn a certificate and patch by hiking each of the seven sections in the Maryland Appalachian Trail series at least once in within a three-year period. Earn a 100 mile certificate and patch by hiking additional miles on the Pennsylvania and Virginia sections of the Appalachian Trail.

Maryland Appalachian Trail (Sections 1-7 = 46.5 miles)

Families and individuals can catch a glimpse of Maryland's history and folklore while enjoying these outings. Trip leaders interpret points of interest along the way. Participants must be able to hike two miles over rocky hills without a break and to complete the distance indicated. Fee includes van or school bus transportation from the Park and Ride lot at Rte. 100 and Long Gate Pkwy, Ellicott City.

Section # 1 - High Rock to Rte. 16

Begin at the panoramic view at High Rock cross the Mason Dixon line and pass the 92 st milestone, laid in 1776. Hike through a hemlock forest and finish at a fresh-water spring. Moderately difficult terrain; 6 miles

Section #2 - Hemlock Shelter to High Rock

See the outcroppings at Buzzards Knob, scramble over Devils Racecourse rock formations, eat lunch at Little Antietam Creek, and pass a spruce forest. Moderate terrain with one extended climb and hills; 6.2miles.

Section # 3 - Hemlock Shelter to Rte. 40

See the remains of the Black Rock Hotel, a 1900's gambling house. Have lunch at Black Rock, and then hike to the panoramic view and fresh-water springs at Annapolis Rocks. Moderately difficult terrain; 8.4 miles

Section # 4 - Rte 40 to Reno Monument

Cross the backpacker's bridge over I-70 and hike through rolling forest to the milk-bottle-shaped George Washington National Monument. End at a South Mountain, Civil War battle site. Moderate terrain; 6.5 miles.

Section # 5 - Gathland State Park to Reno Monument

Explore the state park's 50-foot-high arch monument built as a tribute to Civil War newspaper correspondents. Hike along the wooded mountain ridge, eat lunch at scenic White's Rock Overlook, pass Crampton Gap shelter and end at a granite monument dedicated to a general who perished during the battle at South Mountain. Moderately difficult terrain; 6.5 miles.

Section # 6 - Gathland State Park to Weverton Cliffs

Start at a unique monument dedicated to Civil War correspondents and site of several Union and Confederate battles. Hike through picturesque forests, catch a glimpse of the panoramic view at Pleasant Valley overlook and enjoy lunch at cliffs overlooking the Potomac River and the three states. Moderate terrain; 7 miles

Section # 7 - Weverton to Harpers Ferry

Hike along the C&O Canal next to the Potomac's rapids, stop for lunch at Maryland Heights overlooking the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers, and visit the site of John Brown's raid in historic Harpers Ferry. Flat terrain; 5.5 miles

Pennsylvania Appalachian Trail (5 Sections =44.4 miles)

Trip leaders interpret points of interest along the way. Participants must be able to hike two miles over rocky hills without a break and to complete the distance indicated. Fee includes van or school bus transportation from the Park and Ride lot at Rte. 100 and Long Gate Pkwy, Ellicott City.

Section #1 - Snowy Mountain Road to PA SR 16

Start at the intersection of Appalachian Trail and Snowy Mountain Road. Hike south for 9.5 miles to State Road 16. Eat a relaxing lunch at the Old Forge Picnic Area. There are two climbs and two descents. Moderate terrain; 9.5miles

Section # 2 Snowy Mountain Rd to Caledonia State Park

Start at the intersection of the AT and Snowy Mountain Road. Hike North for 6.3 miles to end at Caledonia State Park. Lunch at the Rocky Mountain Shelter. The hike is generally downhill. Moderate; 6.3 miles

Section # 3 – Arendtsville Rd to Caledonia State Park

Start at the intersection of the AT and Arendtsville Road. Hike South for 9.8 miles to end at Caledonia State Park. Lunch along the trail near the Milesburn Cabin. The hike is generally downhill with a steep descent and climb at Milesburn Hollow. Moderate; 9.8 miles

Section # 4 - Arendtsville Rd to Pine Grove Furnace State Park

Start at the intersection of the AT and Arendtsville Road. Hike North for 7.7 miles to end at Pine Grove Furnace State Park. Lunch at Toms Run Shelter. Pass by the ruins of Camp Michaux, where German prisoners were held during World War II. The hike is generally downhill. Moderate; 7.7 miles

Section # 5 – PA SR 34 to Pine Grove Furnace State Park

Start at the intersection of the AT and PA SR 34. Hike South for 8.1 miles to end at Pine Grove Furnace State Park. Lunch at the top of Piney Mountain. The hike consists of the ascent up Piney Mountain and the descent into Pine Grove Furnace. Moderate; 8.1 miles

Virginia Appalachian Trail (7 sections =52.5 miles)

Trip leaders interpret points of interest along the way. Participants must be able to hike two miles over rocky hills without a break and to complete the distance indicated. Fee includes van or school bus transportation from the Park and Ride lot at Rte. 100 and Long Gate Pkwy, Ellicott City.

Section # 1 – Shannondale Road to Harpers Ferry

Start at Shannondale Rd. and hike North to Harpers Ferry for a distance of 10.2 miles. Hike is generally downhill except for the climb to Loudoun Heights. Lunch at an overlook on Loudoun Heights. Several views of mountains and valleys. Moderate; 10.2 miles

Section # 2 – Shannondale Road to Snickers Gap

Start at Shannondale Rd. and hike South to Snickers Gap on VA 9 for a distance 8.4 miles. Hike is generally downhill except for a climb at Devils Racecourse. Lunch at an overlook. Several views of mountains and valleys. Moderate; 8.4 miles

Section # 3 – Ashby Hollow to Snickers Gap

Start near Ashby Hollow and hike North to Snickers Gap on Va 9 for a distance of 6.8 miles. Climb four hills and cross four streams. Lunch at the Sam Moore AT Shelter. Several views of mountains and valleys. Moderately difficult; 6.8 miles

Section # 4 – Ashby Hollow to Ashby Gap

Start near Ashby Hollow and hike South to Ashby Gap on US 50 for a distance of 7.8 miles. Climb four hills and cross five streams. Lunch at the Rod Hollow AT Shelter. Several views of mountains and valleys. Moderate; 7.8 miles

Section # 5 – G.Richard Thompson Area to Ashby Gap

Start at Lot #7 in the G. Richard Thompson Area and hike North to Ashby Gap on US 50 for a distance of 6.8 miles. Hike is generally downhill. Climb one hill and cross several streams. Lunch at Sky Meadows State Park. Moderate Terrain; 6.8 miles

Section # 6 – G. Richard Thompson Area to Manassas Gap

Start at Lot # 7 in the G. Richard Thompson Area and hike South to Manassas Gap on VA 55 for a distance of 5.5 miles. Hike is generally downhill. Cross several streams. Lunch at Manassas Gap AT Shelter. Moderate terrain; 5.5 miles.

Section # 7 – Manassas Gap to Chester Gap

Start at Manassas Gap on VA 55 and hike South to Chester Gap on US 522 towards near Front Royal, VA climb two hills and cross several streams. Moderate terrain; 7 miles.

Additional Trail Hikes

Dark Hollows Trail - This scenic figure-eight circuit begins in Caledonia State Park, passes rhododendrons, cathedral pines, and hemlocks, and joins the Appalachian Trail to follow the rocky gorge of Dark Hollow. Moderately difficult terrain; 8 miles

Rock Run Grist Mill Trail – Discover agricultural history as you hike by a manor, miller's carriage and toll houses. Pass a pumping station, canal and mill race. After lunch, see corn ground into flour using a water-powered grist mill. Moderate terrain; 5.5 miles

Tri State Spectacular - Hike from Harpers Ferry, MD, (on the Appalachian Trail) across the Shenandoah River to the VA-WV junction. Return via the Loudon Heights trail, Rte 340 bridges and the C&O Canal. Moderately strenuous terrain; 5 mile circuit hike.