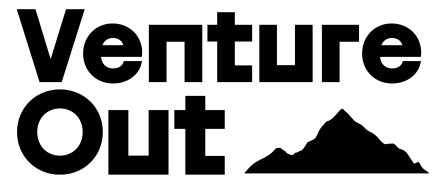


10 Great Hikes Near Virginia Tech



Angel's Rest

This hike in nearby Pearisburg climbs Pearis Mountain to two scenic overlooks of the surrounding valleys. This is a popular hike on the Appalachian Trail so plan to share the trail with other hikers. The climb up the mountain is strenuous, gaining 1,833 feet in elevation. This hike is an out and back hike totaling 6 miles. We recommend parking at the AT parking lot off of Route 100 then walking south on the AT through town. Some websites recommend parking along Cross Avenue, but there is only parking for 3-4 cars. This hike is 32 minutes from Blacksburg.

Barney's Wall - [read more](#)

Located at the popular Cascades Day Use Area, the Barney's Wall hike passes the Cascades waterfall climbing to an overlook for a total of 7.4 miles round trip. People consider this out and back hike challenging due to its length. The US Forest Service charges a parking fee for the Cascade Day Use Area. Be prepared to pay this fee as you park. This hike is 31 minutes from Blacksburg.

Black Ridge Trail - [read more](#)

A moderate loop hike in Floyd, VA, the Black Ridge Trail is 3 miles long. The trail passes through forested areas and pastures, offering fantastic views. This hike explores a section of the Blue Ridge Parkway which is managed by the National Park Service. The trail passes by an old Appalachian Trail shelter and the Saddle Overlook with views to the east and west. The 51 minute drive from Blacksburg is well worth it. Parking is located near the Rocky Knob Visitor Center. If you are looking for a longer hike consider combining this hike with the Picnic Loop Trail or Rock Castle Gorge Trail.

Coal Mining Heritage Park Loop Trail - [read more](#)

This trail is located in Montgomery County's Coal Mining Heritage Park. The park is only 11 minutes from downtown Blacksburg just outside of town limits. The 1.5 mile loop trail traverses the plot of land formerly the site of the Merrimac mining community. The trail is a dirt single track surface that follows the creek and climbs up and down a nearby hill. It is designed to International Mountain Bike Association standards for bikers, joggers, walkers and trail users. The first ¼ mile of the trail is an accessible wooden boardwalk. The park includes interpretive signs and displays about the community's mining history. There is a bathroom in the park located along the Huckleberry Trail, a paved multi-use trail that runs through the park.

Fenwick Mines - [read more](#)

The Fenwick Mines Day Use Area is 56 minutes from Blacksburg in New Castle, VA. The US Forest Service site features picnic shelters, fishing ponds, a wetland, and a one mile wheelchair accessible hiking trail. The trail crosses through forests, streams, a wetland, and finishes with a view of a waterfall. There is a large parking lot with bathrooms at the trailhead. The wetlands and ponds feature wooden boardwalks and benches that are perfect for wildlife viewing. This area was once home to the town of Fenwick and

its iron ore mines. Interpretive signs around the area tell of its history and the lives of the people who lived there.

Keffer Oak on the Appalachian Trail

The humble 300 year old Keffer Oak is the second largest on the entire Appalachian Trail. This out and back hike is 1 mile in total. Park at the AT parking lot on Route 630 (Northside Road) and head half a mile north to the Keffer Oak. There is an open area under the tree to relax and take it in. Please respect this aging tree by doing no harm to it during your visit. To explore the area more, it is possible to head south on the AT from the parking area to see Sinking Creek. The trail crosses the road then heads along the creek for a tenth of a mile. This hike is 27 minutes from Blacksburg in Newport, VA.

New River Trail - [read more](#)

New River Trail State Park is a 57-mile linear park running from Pulaski County along the New River to Fries, VA and over the mountain to Galax, VA. It is possible to access the trail at trailheads in Pulaski, Draper, and Hiwassee, which are 35 to 40 minute drives from Blacksburg. The Draper section crosses through rolling farmland with a large parking area and bathrooms near the historic Draper Mercantile. The Hiwassee section features a beautiful bridge over the New River. Once the trail reaches the river in Hiwassee it has a gentle slope making it more accessible to various users. This is a wide cinder path great for hiking, bicycling, running, and horseback riding.

Mill Creek Falls - [read more](#)

This is a 1 mile single track loop to a waterfall. The hike is located at Mill Creek Nature Park in Narrows, VA, 40 minutes from Blacksburg. There are many trails on this property that can be combined into longer hikes. Spots along Mill Creek offer ample opportunities for fishing and swimming.

Poverty Creek Trail - [read more](#)

Pandapas Pond Day Use Area is 12 minutes from Blacksburg and offers a great location for afternoon adventures. The Poverty Creek Trail runs the length of the area and is 7.1 miles long. It would be easy to shorten this out and back hike by turning around before the end. The trail follows Poverty Creek, a small mountain stream. Be aware that this is a popular area for mountain bikers. Stay alert as you hike listening for bikes. There are two large parking lots and bathrooms located near the pond.

Stiles Falls - [read more](#)

Located 36 minutes from Blacksburg, Stiles Falls is a beautiful waterfall located at Alta Mons, a local summer camp and retreat center. This hike is located on private property that is open to the public outside of the summer camping season. Check their website before going and be respectful of the land. The hike is 3 miles round trip and crosses Purgatory Creek 3 times (each way) as it meanders to the 40 foot waterfall. There are ample parking spots and bathrooms at the trailhead.

Learn more about Venture Out on our [website](#) or contact us at ventureout@vt.edu or 540-231-4982.