

TRAILMARKER

The Piedmont Hiking and Outing Club Newsletter

Since 1982

November-December 2015

Volume 33 Number 6



Long time PHOC Members plus Two Newbies Enjoy a Food Break by the Stream on the Boone Fork Trail

Visit us on the Web <http://www.PiedmontHikingandOutingClub.org>

About our Hike Rating System

Our rating system provides a useful, general gauge of a hike's difficulty. It factors in distance and elevation gain and is intended to help you choose hikes that you will find most enjoyable.

R0-R10 These are more walks than hikes. They're usually close to home, the trails are flat, and distances are generally short. An after-dinner walk around the block would be rated R1 or R2. Our Wednesday Night Walks are R5.

R10-R20 Most of these hikes will be in the lower mountains and foothills. Distances will be about 5-8 miles, with vertical ranging from 500-1000 feet...not easy if you're new to hiking! Trails will be dirt and rock. As long as you're in moderately good shape, you should be able to enjoy the outing.

R20-R30 Hikes in the low end of this range will be too hard and overly stressful for many new members. Plan on an all-day trip, with at least 4 hours of continuous hiking in rugged and steep terrain. At a minimum, be sure to pack two quarts of water, lunch, a snack, and rain gear.

R30-R40 These are strenuous hikes. They will usually be 10+ miles, with climbs of 2000+ feet. They're appropriate only for those who have done a number of lower rated hikes.

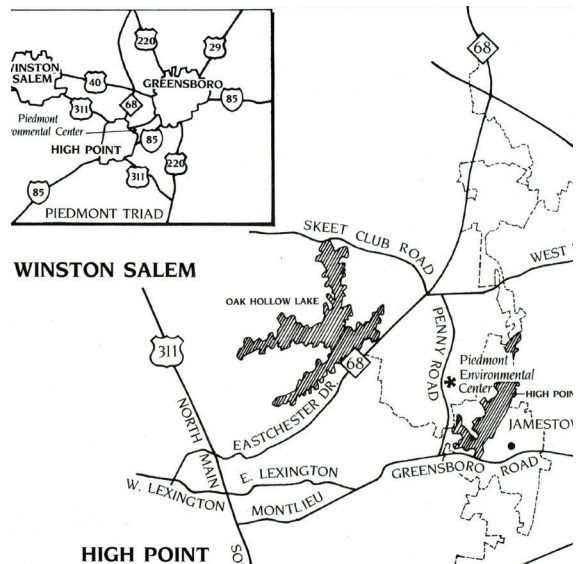
R40+ These hikes are usually 12 or more miles with 3000 feet or more of elevation gain. They're appropriate only for fit, experienced hikers. Check with hike leader about the trip if you are wanting to do this trip for the first time.



Outings Protocol

- Inform the outing leader you are going to attend. Arrive early for the outing.
- If you carpool, reimburse your driver for driving costs. A suggested amount is \$4.00 for each hour of driving.
- Always take snacks, lunch, water and rain gear.
- Bring extra clothes to change into after the outing.
- To keep vehicles clean and the air fresh, always carry something to hold muddy boots and sweaty clothes for the ride back from a hike.
- Your participation is at your own risk.

Piedmont Environmental Center Map



Outings

Wednesday Night Walkers will meet every Wednesday evening in the parking lot beside Tex & Shirley's at the Friendly Shopping Center at 6:30 pm for a brisk walk before dinner. The group will have rotating leaders. The leaders are Carol Hamley, John Hanson, Barbara Kennedy and Lana Regan. The group will go to dinner after the walk. If bad weather cancels the walk, the group will still meet at 6:30 and go to dinner.

**November 1
Sunday**

**Nat Greene Trail
Lake Brandt**

Let's meet at the Lake Brandt Marina at 1:30 pm for a hike on the Nat Greene Trail. We will do an out and back from the Marina to the Greenway. Call or email if there are questions. 5.4 miles [R-6]

November 4

**Wednesday Night Walk
and Dinner**

**November 5
Thursday**

**Pho Hien Vuong
4109-A Spring Garden St**

Let's meet for dinner at 7 pm at the Vietnamese restaurant, Pho Hien Vuong on Spring Garden St. This is an informal, casual atmosphere restaurant with outstanding

food. Please call or email me before Thursday so I can let them know how many will be attending.

**November 7
Saturday**

**Linville Gorge Wolf Pit
Trailhead to Chimneys
along the MST**

Join me for a Linville Gorge experience. This hike goes over one of the most Prominent Rock Faces in NC, Shortoff Mountain. The hike will start at the Wolf Pit Trailhead, pass many landmarks including views of Lake James, South Mountains, Black Mountains, Goodman Bottoms, many spectacular views into the Gorge and head up to the Chimneys and back mostly the same way via the MST for a total of 13 miles and 4000 Vertical Feet. Hopefully we will be able to see the last remnants of Fall Foliage at the lower elevations.

Wilderness regulations limit the number of people per group to 10 persons. Photos are from many different trips to the location [R-58+].

Photos: <http://tinyurl.com/pwz7zne>

**November 7
Saturday**

**Hanging Rock State Park
Indian Creek Trail and
Hanging Rock**

This hike will cover a round trip hike on the Indian Creek trail followed by a climb up Hanging Rock. We will hike at a brisk pace. This is not a good hike for people who like to hike at a slow pace. Contact me for meeting details. 10 miles [R-25]

**November 14
Saturday**

**Pinnacles of Dan
near Claudville, VA**

This hike to the Pinnacles of the Dan and on to the Great Falls of the Dan River is a vigorous hike that I estimate is about 6 miles which is deceiving. The hike starts with a 1,000 ft climb and scramble at the top of the 2nd Pinnacle over 1 ¼ miles. There are neat views of the valley and Primland. We'll then hike over to the pipeline that feeds the hydroelectric plant, then bushwhack down to the Great Falls of the Dan which is a jumble of quite large rocks that the river pinches through. We'll then continue downstream along the river off-trail for ½ mile or more and bushwhack up to a section of trail that we had been on earlier. This is a pristine, remote area with beautiful features. The hike goes up and down steeply. Those interested should be comfortable off-trail. This is a hike appropriate for those who are used to hiking Primitive or Heart Break Ridge although those distances are greater. Hard to estimate the R rating.

Directions: From Greensboro, go north on Battleground/220 to the NC 770/Stoneville exit. Go left (west) on 770 which joins NC 704 (go right) and later intersects Route 8. Go right on 8 into VA to VA 103 and go left. Go 9 miles to the tiny community of Claudville. We'll meet at a closed store on the right at a top of hill just before RT 773. I estimate about this to be about a 1 ½ hour drive.

From W-S area: Make your way to Mt. Airy and find 103 going NE into VA. Once crossing

the VA line, it's about 4-5 miles. You'll pass over the Dan River. Just past Rt 773 on left, turn left into the old store. (Can't estimate time.) Meet at 9:00 am to leave promptly. Please let me know if you are coming.

**November 14
Saturday**

**Rocky Knob on the Blue
Ridge Parkway**

This is a club favorite that compliments Jon's Rock Castle Gorge hike. This a moderate 7-mile loop that parallels the Blue Ridge Parkway near Floyd, VA. There are excellent views with an elevation gain of 1250 feet. Please email for departure times or if you have any questions. [R-20]

**November 15
Sunday at 1:30**

**Lake Townsend Trail
Greensboro Watershed Trails**

Let's meet at 1:30 pm for an easy, scenic hike along the wooded southern edge of Lake Townsend. From Battleground Ave or Lawndale, proceed east on Pisgah Church, continue east on Lees Chapel, bear left at Brightwood School, turn left at the T at Rudd Station Road, cross over the RR tracks and keep straight on South Shore Road for about 1/3 of a mile. Park in the gravel parking lot on your left. Allow about fifteen minutes drive time from Battleground. No need to call. [8 mi., R-8]

November 18

**Wednesday Night Walk
and Dinner**

November 21
Saturday

Shortoff Mtn.
Linville Gorge Area

I recently read an online article on the 10 most scenic hikes in America and Shortoff Mountain was the only one listed in the Southeast. This hike provides excellent viewing of Linville Gorge, Lake James, Mt. Mitchell. It is one of the best kept hiking secrets in the free world. If you have never hiked Shortoff, make an effort to come. If you have hiked Shortoff, you should come also. (Will be limited to 30 hikers). 11 miles about 2500 ft. gain [R-39ish]. Call or email for info.

November 21
Saturday

Brinegar Cabin
Doughton Park

Let's hike up the Cedar Ridge trail in Blue Ridge Doughton Park to Brinegar Cabin, sit on or with our backs to the wall, or on the grass by the cabin, and talk, have a nice lunch, and then hike back down Cedar Ridge again to the cars. The trail up to Brinegar Cabin is a steady pull for 4 miles, but this is an out-and-back and all reasonable paces will be accommodated. Please call for time and place. [R-35, 9 miles].

November 21
Saturday

Pilot Mountain Loop
Pilot Mountain State Park

Join me for a nine mile hike at Pilot Mountain. We will start at the Ranger Station at the entrance and follow the Grassy Ridge Trail to Pinnacle Hotel Road. Here we pick

up Mountain Trail, which leads us to the base of the Mountain to Ledge Spring Trail. From Ledge Springs we will continue on to the Jomeokee Trail around the knob. We finish the hike, after a stop at the top of the mountain, down the Grindstone Trail, back to the Ranger Station where we started. The pace won't be a race, but more of a moderate pace. I understand some of these trails may have been rerouted since I was here last. Please call or email for meeting place and time. [Approx 9 miles, R-25]

November 22

Bald Eagle Trail
Sunday, 1:30 pm Lake Higgins Watershed Trail

Let's meet at 1:30 pm at the Lake Higgins watershed trailhead for an out and back total of 8 easy miles. Proceed North on 220 (aka Battleground Ave), past the turnoff at Owls Roost Road to Bur-Mil Park, past the spillway at the bottom of the hill, and then left onto Hamburg Mill Road. Proceed past the Marina entrance gate at the top of the hill, and park in the gravel parking lot on the left just past the fence. [R-7]

November 25

Wednesday Night Walk
and Dinner

November 28
Saturday

South Mountains State Park
Outer Loop

The best time of year to hike what I call the "outer loop" of the South Mountains State Park is in on a mild winter day when the bare deciduous trees afford unobstructed

panoramic views of the many peaks we like to hike and the heat of the sun brings out the lovely scent of the evergreens lining long stretches of the trail meandering up the ridge This is a relatively new addition to the PHOC's Saturday hikes portfolio (having been offered only once before), a variant on the park's inner loop with which many of you are familiar. We will hike some familiar trails (such as Horseridge, Possum, and Upper Falls), but will venture further out on the Horseridge trail and along Lower CCC, Fox, and Jacob's Branch trails.

A great portion of the hike will be on a soft, wide trail, gentle to the feet, and conducive to socializing. If the weather is right, we will take our lunch at a picnic table, basking in the sun that shines through the gentle sway of the tall evergreens that line the trail and taking in the view We will also go through rhododendron groves, cross a stream a few times over rocks and over bridges, and experience a couple of steeper but shorter climbs. And just imagine the beauty if snow joins the party. This hike has been GPSed to be 11 miles and 2400 feet of elevation gain [R-35]. Call or email for meeting times and places.

November 28 **Moore's Knob**
Saturday **Hanging Rock State Park**

We will meet at the Visitors Center parking lot at 10 am, hike around the lake and up the steps, then enjoy lunch and/or Thanksgiving leftovers on the knob, and complete the loop. Carpooling from Winston or Greensboro may be possible. [5 miles, R-14]

November 29 **MST and Laurel Ridge Trail**
Sunday 10:00 am **Eno River State Park**
Durham Co.

Here is a chance to burn off some post-Thanksgiving calories by participating in a scenic hike along the Eno River using the Mountains-to-Sea/Laurel Ridge Trail. This is a shuttle hike that will begin at the Pleasant Green Rd. parking area and end at West Point on the Eno City Park. Initially, we will meet at West Point on the Eno off Roxboro Road, Durham at 10 am and take another car to the Pleasant Green Road access. From there we will hike about 10 miles along the Eno at a moderate pace, enjoying scenic views of the river, possibly some late fall foliage, laurel bluffs and long-abandoned homesteads and mill sites. While the elevation is minimal, the trail does have some hilly sections and is often rocky with exposed tree roots in places, so appropriate footwear is advised. Please email in advance to let me know if you plan to participate. About [R-15]

December 2 **Wednesday Night Walk**
and Dinner

December 3, **Dinner at CharBar No.7**
Thursday, 7:00 p.m. **3724 Lawndale Dr.**
(the Fresh Market strip)

Char Bar is casual and has a varied menu at moderate prices. Please RSVP to Dot Mason by Tuesday, Dec. 1. See you there!

network is approximately 7 miles, out and back. It would be absolutely stunning on a snowy day; so I have placed my request with the higher ups. Do plan to bring a snack, as we will take a break, before returning back to the cars, on benches that overlook a magnificent construction of beaver dams. We will meet at the Plainfield Road parking lot at 10:00 am and should be done by 1:00 pm or shortly thereafter. From Church Street: Driving north from town, turn left on Plainfield after you cross Lake Townsend the 2nd time. The parking lot will be on your right less than one mile down the road. From Lake Brandt Road: Driving north from town, make a right on Plainfield Road a few miles after you pass the Lake Brandt Marina. The intersection is at the Summerfield City Limit sign. The parking lot will be on your left a few miles down Plainfield Road. Please call or email if you plan to join the hike (contact info above). 7 miles, [R-11]

**December 12 Hanging Rock State Park
Saturday Wolf Rock to Cook's Wall
 & Moore's Knob Trail**

Warm up for the PHOC holiday party at Hanging Rock. We will begin at the Visitor Center and proceed to Wolf Rock. From there we will continue to Cook's Wall out and back, and eventually make our way to the Moore's Knob Trail. Those needing to get back earlier can proceed along the lake to the parking lot. Stalwarts will hike up to the fire tower where the views can be magnificent. From Moore's Knob, we will descend by the stairs, making our way back to the visitor center. Bring water, lunch, and rain gear. Call or email for meeting times and places. +/- 9 miles, 2000 ft. elevation gain, [R-29].

Annual Holiday Party



Saturday, December 12 • 6 pm

**Northeast Park Event Center
3421 Northeast Park Drive
Gibsonville, NC 27249**

Online Party Reservations:

http://PiedmontHikingandOutingClub.org/PHOC_holiday.html

Come on out and join the PHOC Holiday fun at our new location this year – Northeast Park's spacious Event Center. This new location has lots of space for mingling, eating and dancing! The party starts at 6:00 pm. The catered dinner will be at 6:30 pm. *Visions of High Point* will once again prepare a meal to tantalize our taste buds! A complete dinner, soft drinks and hot coffee/tea after dinner will be provided. Bring an adult beverage if you like and a dessert to share.

DJ Ryan Short will be spinning tunes for our listening pleasure before and during dinner, and for our dancing pleasure after dinner. Our goal is music that has everyone feeling compelled to get up and "shake your groove thing". Please suggest your favorite holiday tunes during dinner and dance tunes, slow and fast, from any year or music genre to guide our DJ's selections. We can't promise to get to everyone's request, but Ryan will do his best to accommodate as many people as possible. Please send music selections to: Social@PiedmontHikingandOutingclub.org

Non-refundable cost of \$15 per PHOC member or non-member guests (both guests and PHOC members both pay the holiday party fee). Pay online with your credit card or Paypal account!

Visit: http://PiedmontHikingandOutingClub.org/PHOC_holiday.html. Alternately, send your payment (check or money order) of \$15 per member (and guest) non-member to: **Piedmont Hiking & Outing Club, P.O. Box 10613, Greensboro, NC 27404-0613**

**December 13 Greenway Bike Ride
Sunday Bur-Mill to Greensboro**

Let's burn some of the calories from the PHOC Saturday night Christmas party. Join us at Bur-Mill Park at 1:00 in the parking lot beside the pool. We will ride the paved greenway to the Target shopping center on Lawndale Dr. in Greensboro; 7.5 miles. We will stop at one of the stores there for refreshments. On returning, we will add laps around Country Park and Guilford Battleground Park adding a couple of miles. Total mileage will be about 17 miles. This is a moderate ride at moderate speed. Let me know if you plan to join us or have any questions.

**December 13 Piedmont Watershed Trail
Sunday at 1:30 Lake Brandt**

Let's meet at 1:30 PM and hike the Piedmont watershed trail out and back for a total of 6 easy miles. Proceed north on Lake Brandt Road past the Marina on the left, cross over the bridge at the dam, and park in the gravel parking lot on the left. [6 mi, R-7]

**December 16 Wednesday Night Walk
and Dinner**

**December 19 Rock Castle Gorge
Saturday Stuart, VA**

This trail in the Blue Ridge Highlands is similar to those in Doughton Park. It is a club favorite, perhaps the finest hike we do. Starting at the old CCC Camp off Route 8, it has a relatively strenuous ascent up onto the grassy meadows of the Blue Ridge Parkway, where we will have lunch at an old AT shelter. After lunch we will pass over more grassy meadows and then descend into the gorge where we will pass through a maze of large boulders and then cross over and follow Rock Castle Creek back to our cars. Please email me for meeting time and place. [R-40, 10 Miles]. Directions: Route 68 North, 220 North, 770 West, 704 West, 8 North thru Stuart (Hardees), Woolwine.

**December 19 Pilot Mountain
Saturday State Park**

Today we will do a moderate hike from the ranger station up and around the knob and back by the ledges (a lollipop) to the station. Contact me for time and place to meet. Bring water, rain gear and lunch/snack. We will be back at a reasonable hour

**December 20 Lake Townsend Trail
Sunday @ 1:00pm Greensboro**

Let's meet at the Osprey parking lot on Yanceyville Road at 1:00 pm. We'll hike the tail end of Osprey to connect with the Townsend Trail. We'll walk out to Bryan Park and back for a total of about 8 miles.

**December 23 Wednesday Night Walk
and Dinner**

**December 26 MST from Park Vista Inn
Saturday to Jumping Rocks Overlook**

This hike follows the Blue Ridge Parkway. This trail is well maintained by the Friends of the MST. It undulates for 8.5 miles with 1300 feet of elevation gain. Several excellent views and no extended up hill hiking although there are a couple of climbs [R-22]. This will be a shuttle hike.

Please email for departure details. Here is a link to the actual hike, <http://www.ncmst.org/the-trail/mst-day-hikes/sections13-17/day-hikes-blue-ridge-parkway-north/13-17-dayhike-9-2/>

**December 27 Birkhead Wilderness Loop
Sunday @ 9:30 am Uwharrie Nat'l Forest
Asheboro, NC**

This lollipop loop hike is appropriate for all hikers. We'll begin at the Thornburg trailhead, hiking on the Thornburg Trail, Robbin's Branch Trail and a loop to Camp 3 and Fern Valley. We'll pass old homesites, Rush's Mine and the Doud Mines. Bring lunch and the usual winter weather items. Contact Jim for car pool and other arrangements. Hike starts at 9:30 am. 9.8 miles, 1600 feet elevation gain. [R-26]

**December 27 National Greene Trail
Sunday Watershed Trails - Greensboro**

Join me for an early winter walk on the Nat Greene Trail at 10 am. We will meet at the Lake Brandt Marina to start on this gently rolling out and back trail. Call or email if you have questions. 7 miles [R-9]

**December 30 Wednesday Night Walk
and Dinner**

**January 1, 2016 New Year's Day Hike
Friday @ 10:30 am Hanging Rock State park**

Join us for our annual New Year's Day hike at Hanging Rock State Park. There will be 3 separate versions of this hike: strenuous, moderate, and easy. We will meet at 10:30 AM in the upper parking lot in front of the visitor center. At this point, we will "divide" up groups based on the participant's preferred hike. Departure times will be staggered. The longer hike will be around 9 miles— encompassing Wolf Rock, House Rock, Cooks Wall, and Moores Knob. Alma Holland will lead this version. 2000 ft. elevation gain; [R-29].

The moderate hike will cover around 6-7 miles to Wolf Rock, House Rock, Cook's Wall, and then back to the parking lot by way of the Magnolia Springs trail. Ruth Moss will lead this version. 900 ft. elevation gain; [R16-18].

The short hike will ascend Hanging Rock and will cover around 3 miles. This will be led by Mickey Walker. 600 ft. elevation gain; [R-9].