

# TRAILMARKER

The Piedmont Hiking and Outing Club Newsletter

Since 1982

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*Photo courtesy of Joel Deaton*

*PHOC August 2-day Paddle on the  
New River near Blacksburg, VA*

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.

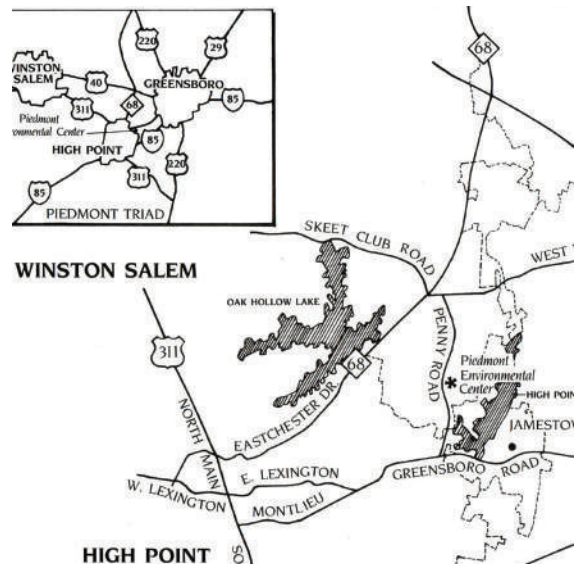
**R40+** These hikes are usually 12 or more miles with 3000 feet or more of elevation gain. They're appropriate only for fit, experienced hikers. Check with hike leader about the trip if you are wanting to do this trip for the first time.



## 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.**

**September 2                      Wednesday Night Walk  
and Dinner**

**September 5    Appalachian Trail at Whitetop  
Saturday                      Mountain-Mount Rogers  
Recreation Area, VA**

This will be a shuttle hike that includes the portion of the Appalachian Trail over the shoulder of Whitetop Mountain from VA 601 to Elk Garden. At Elk Garden where half the cars will be parked, the hikers who wish will continue on the AT to the southern side of Mount Rogers and a beautiful viewing point overlooking a high meadow where ponies often graze. The hike will conclude with a potluck tailgate supper at Elk Garden or a dinner stop in Sparta at a family owned Mexican Restaurant. Bring water, lunch, and rain gear, and a dish to pass and your favorite beverage for the tailgate supper. If interested contact John by noon on Friday before the hike. (To Elk Garden only: 6 miles, 1800 ft. R-24; complete hike 12 miles, 3000 ft. R-43).

**September 6                      Lake Brandt Loop  
Sunday @ 1 pm    Greensboro Watershed Trails**

Let's meet at 1:00 pm at the Wildlife Center in Bur-Mil Park and hike the Piedmont, Nat Greene, and Owls Roost watershed trails that comprise the Lake Brandt Loop. After hiking the Piedmont and Nat Greene trails, once we are at the Owls Roost trailhead, just after passing the Palmetto Trail trailhead, there will be an option to continue on the Greenway back to Bur-Mil Park for those who do not want to do the Owls Roost Trail portion of the hike. Proceed North on 220, past Horse Pen Creek Rd, then right at the traffic light at Owls Roost, and then left into Bur-Mil Park. Bear right at the club house, park in the circular driveway at the bottom of the hill, just below the Wildlife Center. No need to call, but please do if you have questions. [11 mi, R-15].

**September 9                      Wednesday Night Walk  
and Dinner**

**September 10                      PHOC Meeting @ 7:00 pm  
Thursday                      Scuppernong Book Store  
304 S. Elm St  
Greensboro**

In keeping with the "One City, One Book" program, our September meeting will be a book club style discussion of *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson. Please read or re-read the book and come prepared to have fun re-living the hilarious tales of Bill and Katz as they attempt to hike the AT. We'll meet in the rear seating area of the Scuppernong Book Store. Food and beverages, including wine and beer, can be purchased in the café/bar

area in the front of the store. Come early and browse the store.

**September 12**                      **Hanging Rock**  
**Saturday**                              **State Park**

Join me for a nice workout at Hanging Rock — close enough to allow us to be home by late afternoon — in time to watch your favorite college football team. We will begin with an ascent to Moore’s Knob. After leaving Moore’s Knob, we will continue to House Rock, Cooks Wall, and Wolf Rock, returning to the parking area by the Hanging Rock Trail. Bring water, lunch, and rain gear. Call or email for meeting times and places. [+/- 9 miles; 2000 ft. elevation gain; R-29]

**September 12**                      **Doughton Park Loop**  
**Saturday**                              **Doughton Park**

This will be a long, strenuous hike covering trails on Bluff Mountain. Fantastic views from the top of the ridge. Expect a good workout from this hike. Contact me for meeting details but please call if you are contacting me Friday pm. [17 miles – 3500, R-52]

**September 13**    **Nat Greene/Palmetto Trails**  
**Sunday @ 10 am**                      **Lake Brandt Marina**

Meet me at the Nat Greene Trailhead (turn left in Lake Brandt Marina parking lot) at 10 am for a pretty 8-mile walk with views of the lake. Bring water and a snack. Call or email if you have questions. [8 miles, R-11]

**September 16**                      **Wednesday Night Walk**  
     **and Dinner**

**September 17-20**                      **Coastal Kayak Trip**

**TRIP IS CURRENTLY FULL – WAIT LIST AVAILABILITY OPEN.** Join us for a 4-day/3-night rendezvous to one of North Carolina’s most popular paddling destinations. Three separate day trips are planned along freshwater rivers, coastal waterways, and backwater tributaries of the Lower Cape Fear River region. Each day paddle will range from 6-8 miles and include an array of wildlife from snakes and gators to fish and aquatic birds. We’ll kayak on two well-known tributaries and join in for a day-paddle with a local educational and environmental watch group – Cape Fear River Watch. We’ll also pause en route to an uninhabited island to travel up a tidal creek and meander through coastal estuaries and saltwater marshes. Beach lodging is arranged for the group. If you are interested in joining the adventure please call or email me.

**September 19**                      **Dragon’s Tooth**  
**Saturday**                              **Roanoke, VA**

We will start in the parking lot off of 311, follow the AT to Dragon’s Tooth for some great views, and then back down to the Dragon’s Tooth parking lot. Those interested will stop for dinner at a nearby Mexican restaurant on the outskirts of Roanoke. This is a shuttle hike. This is a fairly strenuous hike with a little bit of scrambling on the trail up



to the tooth. Please contact me by noon on Friday prior to the hike. **[Strenuous – R-40; 11 miles, +2900 feet]**

**September 19  
Saturday**

**Dragon’s Tooth  
Roanoke, VA**

This is the same hike as the strenuous hike to Dragon’s Tooth on the same day, except this hike will bypass the difficult climb and scramble up to the tooth, eliminating two miles. This moderate hike will not go to the tooth. It is still a good hike of nine miles on the AT with excellent views and varied terrain. I will encourage the moderate hike group to hike at a slower pace than the hikers doing the more strenuous hike, taking time to “smell the roses” and just enjoy being out in nature. I would hope that the moderate group and strenuous group would finish their hikes at close to the same time so they could enjoy dinner at the Mexican restaurant together. Please contact me by noon on Friday prior to the hike. **[Moderate – R-32; 9 Miles, +2300 feet]**

**September 19  
Saturday**

**Stone Mountain  
State Park**

We will maximize the visual enjoyment of hiking in Stone Mountain Park while avoiding climbing the steep side of Stone Mountain. Starting from the upper parking lot, we will take the Outer Loop Trail directly to the top of the mountain, making use of the relatively gentle grade and switch backs. Along the way we will get our first big views of the Park. We will enjoy a snack at the

top of Stone Mountain, then descend Stone Mountain Trail to Wolfe Rock Trail. This trail takes us up to Wolfe Rock for outstanding views of Doughton Park and the Blue Ridge Mountains. Hiking to Cedar Rock brings several outstanding views of Stone Mountain. We then return to the Outer Loop Trail and hike to the base of Stone Mountain Falls. Finally, a slow walk up the stairs gives several views of Stone Mountain Falls and leads us back to the trailhead. Approximately 8 miles, 1,800 feet change in elevation, R-26.

**September 20  
Sunday**

**Greenway Walk  
Bur-Mil Park**

Let’s walk the Greenway for an out and back 45 min out, 45 min back or longer if you wish at what ever speed you can walk. We will start at the Bur-Mill lower parking lot at 8 am near the Wildlife Education Center.

**September 23**

**Wednesday Night Walk  
and Dinner**

**September 26  
Saturday**

**Heartbreak Ridge to Pinnacle  
Old Fort, NC**

This hike starts near Old Fort, parallels a bubbling creek for a warm up stretch, and then starts climbing up Heartbreak Ridge. The climb is not steep but it is unrelenting. To compensate, there are lots of good views to be had along the way. It then goes up steeply for a relatively short distance to the top of Blue Ridge Pinnacle, with 360 degree views of Mt. Mitchell, Graybeard, Table Rock, etc. After lunch on Pinnacle, we’ll head back

down. Those interested will stop for dinner on the way back. Call or email for meeting times and places. [14 miles; +/- 4000; R-54]

**September 26**                      **Rocky Knob Trail**  
**Saturday**                      **Blue Ridge Parkway, Virginia**

We will start at the Rocky Knob Campground and climb over 700' up to the shelter on Rocky Knob and then continue on the upper part of the Rock Castle Gorge Trail to Grassy Knoll. From there we will cross the Blue Ridge Parkway and take the Black Ridge Trail and Picnic Loop Trail back to the Rock Castle Trail and the campground. This is approximately 7 miles. If we are up to it, we can drive over to Buffalo Mountain and climb 1 mile to the top and enjoy wonderful 360 views. Call Gale for time and place to meet. Bring lunch, snacks, water and rain gear. [R-20]

**September 27**                      **Lake Brandt Loop**  
**Sunday @ 1 pm**   **Greensboro Watershed Trails**

Let's meet at 1:00 pm at the Wildlife Center in Bur-Mil Park and hike the Piedmont, Nat Greene, and Owl's Roost watershed trails that comprise the Lake Brandt Loop. After hiking the Piedmont and Nat Greene trails, once we are at the Owl's Roost trailhead, just after passing the Palmetto Trail trailhead, there will be an option to continue on the Greenway back to Bur-Mil Park for those who do not want to do the Owl's Roost Trail portion of the hike. Proceed North on 220, past Horse Pen Creek Rd, then right at the traffic light at Owl's Roost, and then left into Bur-Mil Park. Bear right at the club house, park in the

circular driveway at the bottom of the hill, just below the Wildlife Center. No need to call, but please do if you have questions. [11 mi, R-15]

**September 30**                      **Wednesday Night Walk**  
**and Dinner**

**October 2-4**                      **Upper James River Water**  
**Friday-Sunday**   **Trail, Paddle & Camping Trip**  
**Buchanan, VA**

This weekend we will head to Buchanan, VA for a complete fun-filled adventure offered to all club members. We will camp at Hopper Creek Group Campsite on Friday and Saturday night. The site will accommodate fifty campers and includes amenities of twelve picnic tables, a duel stand-up BBQ grill, over-sized fire ring, and a "five star" vault toilet.

On Saturday morning, I will be leading a paddling trip on the Upper James River Water Trail from Buchanan to Alpine. This trip is a ten and a half mile float. There are numerous class I and II rapids. The trip should be approximately 6 hours long. For club members who would like to attend but need to rent a vessel, you can contact Twin River Outfitters at 540-261-7334 to make arrangements.

For club members who would like to attend but not paddle, the camping facility is a short distance from Apple Orchard Falls Trail, the Appalachian Trail, or other foot trails in the area. If you would like to attend the outing, please contact me by email.

**October 3  
Saturday**                      **Elk Knob State Park  
near Boone**

Here is an opportunity to hike at a relatively new state park with nice new trails. We'll hike the following three trails for a total of 8.8 miles:

- Summit trail – 3.8 miles total out and back with beautiful panoramic views at the top (1000 feet)
- Back Country trail – 4 miles total out and back. We will pass several backpacking sites (1100 feet)
- Beech Tree Trail – 1 mile loop

I live in Winston-Salem so will meet behind McDonalds at Thruway Shopping Center at 8 am and leave at 8:15. Anyone from Greensboro meet at McDonalds at Rt. 68 and I-40 (Albert Pick Rd.) at 7:45, leave at 8:00 to head over to the McDonalds/Thruway to hook up with me and anyone else from the Winston-Salem area. [R-25 to R-30]

**October 3  
Saturday**                      **Grayson Highlands**

The hike will begin at Massie Gap, follow the northbound Appalachian Trail beyond Scales to the Pine Mtn. Trail, pass through Rhododendron Gap before again intersecting with the AT. At that point hikers can choose to rock scramble on the Wilburn Ridge Trail or continue on the AT back to Massie Gap. The favorite stop for supper is Mis Arados, an excellent family owned Mexican restaurant in Sparta. Bring lunch, water and rain gear. Contact David before noon the Friday before the hike. [12 miles, 2000 feet, R-37]

**October 4  
Sunday @ 12noon**                      **What's in a Backpack? Hike**

We will meet at the trailhead parking lot of the Bill Craft Trail in the Richardson Taylor Preserve on Plainfield Rd. and will hike approximately 6 miles. Halfway through, as part of the One City, One Book events, we will go through a backpack to show what one must carry to hike the Appalachian Trail. Total time for hike and demo is approximately 3 hours. Participants should bring water and a snack if desired. No need to sign up in advance.

Directions: North on N. Church St., crossing over Pisgah Church Rd. Turn left onto Plainfield Rd at Richardson Taylor sign, after crossing Lake Townsend the 2nd time. Trailhead is one mile from intersection on the right.

**October 7**                      **Wednesday Night Walk  
and Dinner**

**October 8  
Thursday**                      **"Potent Potables"  
Jamestown, NC 27282**

"On tap, bottle or canned, you will find a unique variety of craft beers, ciders and meads" at this newest location in Jamestown, NC. Wine is also available in this venue. The feature is the beverage – however, food is available from local sources to be brought in to enjoy with beer or wine. There is a rotation of unique food trucks that offer Mexican and other cuisines that are located in parking area next to Potent Potables.





**Sunday, October 18****Nat Greene Trail  
Lake Brandt**

Let's hike the Nat Greene Trail this morning. Meet at 8 am at the Lake Brandt Marina parking lot up top on the right side of the gate with the trail access on the left. We will do an out & back, 45 min. out and 45 min. back at what ever speed you walk or longer if you wish.

**October 20  
Tuesday****Mythos Dinner Outing**

At its new location at 3900 West Market Street in Greensboro, near the intersection of Holden Road, Mythos Grill continues to offer outstanding food at remarkable prices, in a pristine new and attractive facility. Dinner ranges from \$4.25 to \$8.75 (sandwiches, salads, pasta, souvlaki). Creative wine list—\$4.45 a glass. We will meet at 7:00 p.m. Please notify me by October 19 if you plan to attend so I can give the restaurant a head count.

**October 21****Wednesday Night Walk  
and Dinner****October 22  
Thursday****Fairy Stone State Park  
Virginia**

Today let's drive into Virginia for a 7-mile hike at Fairy Stone State Park. We will take time on this hike and enjoy the beauty of the outdoors and fall scenery. I do not know the elevation gain and loss of this hike and the hike is not rated, but to me this is a moderate

hike. Please meet in the parking lot behind Walgreens at 8:30 A.M. in Summerfield [Hwy. 220 and Hwy. 150 – the address is 4568 US 220 North]. Please let me know if you are hiking with me just in case my wife is sick and can't go to day care and I have to cancel.

**October 24  
Saturday****Saunders Shelter Loop  
AT and VA Creeper Trail**

The hike is about an 11-mile loop with moderate and strenuous sections. My plan is to start at U.S. 58, Damascus, VA at Straight Branch. From the trailhead, we will take the AT north-bound following the Straight Branch, Feathercamp Branch up to Saunders Shelter, and then loop back toward Damascus on the Virginia Creeper trail reconnecting to the AT south-bound back to U.S. 58 and the Straight Branch parking lot. The hikers will have a choice: a) Stay at Damascus for the night sleeping at the Hikers Inn or b) returning to Greensboro. Contact Ernest for more information.

**October 24  
Saturday****Moses Cone Carriage Trail**

October is a great time for hiking. The weather is cool and Autumn colors are beautiful and inspiring. It's a perfect occasion to hike the Moses Cone Carriage trail with its beautiful vistas and distant views of Grandfather Mountain. This is an easy trail suitable for beginners and experienced hikers alike. Afterwards we will visit the beautiful and quaint town of Blowing Rock nearby where we can visit shops for ice cream or even enjoy an early dinner and pizza at the

Mellow Mushroom. Please bring plenty of water and lunch. Call or email for specifics. [8 miles, R-15]

**October 25 New Member Orientation & Hike Sunday @ 1 pm Wildlife Center, Bur-Mil Park Greensboro**

Thinking about joining in PHOC activities but feeling a little nervous? Or do you just need more information? Join Joel for a new member orientation to the club at 1 pm. Joel will give a brief description of club activities, give tips on what you need to join a hike or kayaking outing, talk about the hike ratings, and answer any questions you might have. After the orientation Joel will lead a short hike on the trails and greenway at Bur-Mil, so wear your outdoor clothes and your walking or hiking shoes. Have fun!

**October 25 Pot Luck and Music Jam Sunday @ 5:00 pm**

Our October meeting will be a return to Andy and Joel's home for an evening of fellowship, good food, and music. Bring your best dish to share along with a serving utensil, adult beverage (optional) and a camp chair. We will gather at 5:00 pm for a potluck dinner outside, weather permitting, sitting around a campfire, listening to music. We invite any talented club members to bring your instrument and chair only: no pot luck dish needed as your music is your contribution. The club will provide bottled water, tea, coffee, soft drinks, and utensils/paper products.

**October 28**

**Wednesday Night Walk and Dinner**

**Oct. 30-Nov. 1 Friday-Sunday**

**Paddle & Platform Camping on the Roanoke River Williamston, NC**

This weekend we are going to paddle the Roanoke River from Williamston to Jamesville and celebrate the last hurrah of the paddling season. Friday we will stay the night in the creature comforts of the Econo Lodge Williamston. We will celebrate with another fun-filled evening at the Sunny Side Oyster Bar. It is sure to be great fun and within walking distance of the hotel.

On Saturday morning we will load up our boats and float down the Roanoke River to Devils Gut to stay Halloween night (costumes optional) on the Beaver Lodge and Beaver Tail Camping Platforms. Our return trip on Sunday will be to paddle out to Jamesville and return home that afternoon. The paddle trip will be a total of 12.25 miles. If you would like to attend please contact me for more information.



*Photo courtesy of Joel Deaton*

*PHOC kayakers enjoying the challenges of the New River, Blacksburg, VA*

**October 31**                      **Roan Mountain**  
**Saturday**

Roan Mountain is an ecological wonder, one of the AT's most scenic stretches. This challenging two version hike will be on the Appalachian Trail between Carvers Gap and US 19E. One group will start at 19E climbing 5300 feet, another from Carvers Gap downhill covering the same 15 miles but with a 2600 feet uphill. The groups will meet for lunch along the trail and exchange car keys. This hike is for fit and experienced hikers. Bring water and rain gear as the weather can be unpredictable. Please call for details prior to Friday before the hike [uphill 15 miles, R-68 and downhill, R-41]

**October 31**                      **MST – Eno River State Park**  
**Saturday**                      **Orange and Durham counties**

If we have enough cars for a shuttle we will hike from Pleasant Green Rd. to the Eno River Association HQ using the Mountains-to-Sea Trail. This is about 9 miles. If we can't do a shuttle hike, then we will take the MST from Rivermont Rd. to Pleasant Green Rd. and back which will be about 12 miles. The trail is on moderate terrain with rolling hills and flat sections. Contact me for meeting instructions. [R-20 to R-22 – only an estimate]

**November 1**                      **Nat Greene Trail**  
**Sunday**

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]

***ADVANCE NOTICE***

**November 13**                      **NC Dance Festival -**  
**Friday @ 8 pm**                      **25th Anniversary**  
**Aycock Auditorium-UNCG**

Back by popular demand, I'll once again be leading an outing to the NC Dance Festival. As in the past, we'll meet in front of Aycock Auditorium promptly at 5:45 and eat at one of the many restaurants on Tate Street before the performance. If you want to join us for the performance only you can meet us in the lobby about 7:45. It's a wonderful evening of modern dance showcasing professional North Carolina choreographers and their companies. The performance is usually about an hour long so Saturday hikers can still make it an early evening. This year is the 25th anniversary and should be special.

Let me know if you are interested (non-club members always welcome) and in early November I will confirm the price for group rate tickets and you can pay me at that time. In the past they have been \$8.

Help support the local arts and have a great time doing so.