



Campbell Creek and Lanier Falls – Raven Rock State Park, NC

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
5.3 mls	★	★	N/A	★	★
Hiking Time:	2 hours and 30 minutes with 30 minutes of breaks				
Elev. Gain:	260 ft				
Parking:	Park at the visitors center parking area. 35.46397, -78.91422				

[Click Here For Detailed Location](#)



By Trail Contributor: Zach Robbins

Beauty and tranquility are often discovered when you least expect them. Sitting amongst countless farms in the Eastern Piedmont, Raven Rock State Park is probably not at the top of many people's hiking wish lists. But maybe it should be. The park's namesake attraction, Raven Rock, is a massive 150-foot bluff above the mighty Cape Fear River.

While hordes of visitors hike to Raven Rock, you should go west on the Campbell Creek Loop Trail. This trail is not only much quieter, it features small streams hidden between ridges, an impressive river-wide drop called Lanier Falls, and the crystal clear water of Campbell Creek. If the water level is up, Lanier Falls is a surprising site this far east of the mountains. The 2-foot shelf drop spans the entire river, more than 200 feet of roiling brown water. Campbell Creek is the highlight of this trip with its clear water, pebble shoals, and rocky bluffs. The trail rarely strays more than 10 feet away from the creek providing an intimate hike as it flows downstream to the Cape Fear River. This hike is perfect for kids as it allows them to explore the creek with very minimal risk.

- ▶ **Mile 0.0** – The Campbell Creek Loop Trail (*blue circle blaze*) starts on the left side of the visitors center parking lot. Immediately you'll reach a T-junction, turn right on the trail. The left trail is a connection to the Raven Rock Loop Trail. You'll begin descending moderately through pine and hardwood forest.
- ▶ **Mile 0.5** – Cross an elaborate wood bridge over Campbell Creek. On the other side the loop trail begins. Turn right to hike the lower end of the loop trail first.
- ▶ **Mile 0.7** – The trail begins to intimately follow Campbell Creek as it weaves its way towards the Cape Fear River. You'll first encounter numerous sand and pebble shoals beside the creek.
- ▶ **Mile 1.0** – Campbell Creek splits in two around a large island.
- ▶ **Mile 1.5** – A short section of rapids in the creek with an interesting rock formation beyond.
- ▶ **Mile 2.1** – Where the loop trail turns left follow a short spur trail to the spot where Campbell Creek flows into the Cape Fear River.
- ▶ **Mile 2.5** – T-junction with the Lanier Falls Trail (*orange triangle blaze*). Turn right and begin descending the bluffs towards the river.
- ▶ **Mile 2.7** – Trail ends at Lanier Falls, a powerful Class II rapid across the entire length of the Cape Fear River.
- ▶ **Mile 3.0** – Turn right on the Campbell Creek Loop Trail to hike the upper portion back to the parking lot.
- ▶ **Mile 3.2** – Family Wilderness Campground on the right for backpackers.
- ▶ **Mile 3.4** – Junction with service road on the right. For the next 1.8 miles the trail climbs up and down ridges that separate many small tributaries that feed into Campbell Creek.
- ▶ **Mile 4.8** – At the loop junction turn right and cross the bridge over Campbell Creek.
- ▶ **Mile 5.3** – Hike ends at the visitors center.