

Mt Rogers/Grayson Highlands - Damascus, Virginia

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
39.6 mls	5	3	5	3	5
Hiking Time: 3 Days Elev. Gain: 6,600 ft Parking: Park at Mount Rogers Outfitters Hostel in Damascus VA for a nominal fee.					

DAY 1 – 15.5 miles

- ▶ **Mile 0.0** – Start at the Mount Rogers Outfitters Hostel and followed the white blazed Appalachian Trail (A.T.) through Damascus. The A.T. will bear off to the left just outside of town after you have been on the Virginia Creeper Trail for a little while. Stay on the Virginia Creeper Trail for the next 7.4 miles enjoying the many beautiful views of the creek and fields.
- ▶ **Mile 7.4** – Taylor's Valley (Route 725). You will see the Creeper Trail Cafe on the right on the other side of the bridge. Continue 4.9 miles to the Creek Junction Trestle.
- ▶ **Mile 12.3** – Cross the Creek Junction Trestle, the tallest trestle on the Virginia Creeper Trail. Bear to the left onto the A.T. after crossing the trestle, continue for 1.9 miles to the Lost Mountain Shelter. Take a look at the trestle construction, really cool.
- ▶ **Mile 14.2** – Lost Mountain Shelter. Continue north to Route 58 crossing, Summit Cut, in 1.1 miles, this will be mostly down.
- ▶ **Mile 15.3** – Route 58, Summit Cut. Fill up on water just before crossing Route 58. Campsite is in 0.2 miles after Route 58
- ▶ **Mile 15.5** – Day 1 Campsite on left at pine grove, no water here. Walk in just a little ways for enough flat spots for 4-5 tents.

DAY 2 – 16.4 miles

Continue north from the campsite, going through fields, and reach the Route 601 Parking in 1.2 miles.

- ▶ **Mile 16.7** – Route 601 Parking, room for 4-5 cars, gravel road. Coordinates: 36.6373 -81.6404. Be prepared for some exertion on the next 2.6 miles, gaining almost 1700' and not many switchbacks.
- ▶ **Mile 19.3** – Reach Buzzard Rock (5096') after a nice steady climb up the side of Beech Mountain. There are some awesome views here. Go through a section of woods and quickly come out into the open again reaching a spring in 0.8 miles below Whitetop Mtn.
- ▶ **Mile 20.1** – Spring. The next section is mostly in the woods and downhill to the Parking area on Route 600
- ▶ **Mile 22.6** – Route 600 Parking, coordinates: 36.6465, -81.5832. Cross Route 600 and go through the gate into the open field, be sure to look back over your shoulder on occasion to view Whitetop Mtn. Continue the climb towards Mt Rogers Spur Trail, reaching it in 4 miles. This section is mostly in the woods until just before the spur trail. Some of these woods will make you think you are in Canada.
- ▶ **Mile 26.6** – Mt Rogers Spur Trail, tallest Mountain in VA, 5729'. You are there, go to the summit but don't expect any views, the summit is covered with trees. Continue 0.2 miles to the Thomas Knob Shelter.
- ▶ **Mile 26.8** – Thomas Knob Shelter. Great place for lunch and to fill up with water about 150 yards behind the shelter where there are also great views. The next 5.1 miles through Grayson Highlands have some of the best views you will find in Virginia. You may also be fortunate enough to see some of the wild ponies.
- ▶ **Mile 31.0** – Quebec Branch creek crossing, could fill up here or at Big Wilson Creek near the shelter.
- ▶ **Mile 31.9** – Wise Shelter. Plentiful campsites near the shelter. Water source is Big Wilson Creek, about 0.1 miles north on the AT from the shelter.

DAY 3 – 7.7 miles

Continue north on the AT from the campsite, through the Little Wilson Creek Wilderness, reaching the Scales Campground in 3 miles. We hiked this early in the morning, great views even with clouds blowing through .

- ▶ **Mile 34.9** – Scales Campground. Clean pit toilets located here. You will be pretty much in the woods for the hike down to Route 603 parking area.
- ▶ **Mile 37.9** – Old Orchard Shelter.
- ▶ **Mile 39.6** – Route 603 parking area. Shuttle ride back to Damascus.

Alternate 2 Day Version – 24.3 miles

Day 1 – (11.5 miles) Skip the VA Creeper Trail and have the shuttle take you to Route 58 (Summit Cut). Hike to Thomas Knob Shelter and spend the night near there, tons of campsites just after the shelter.

Day 2 – (12.8 miles) Thomas Knob Shelter to Route 603 have shuttle pick you up around 3 or 4 depending on your pace