

Parking and Start Point  
N38 35.125 W79 38.538

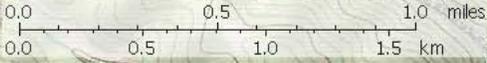
GEORGE WASHINGTON

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The Stamp by [www.HikingUpward.com](http://www.HikingUpward.com)

## Laurel Fork - GWNF, Virginia

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
13.0 mls	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆
<b>Hiking Time:</b>	2 Day Backpack, 8 Hours Total				
<b>Elev. Gain:</b>	1,650 ft				
<b>Parking:</b>	From WV28 turn onto FR106 for 0.4 miles at the sign for Locust Springs Picnic Area, Turn left onto FR60 for 0.3 miles, Turn right onto FR142 for 0.2 miles and park at the Locust Springs Picnic Area.				

With some of the most diverse scenery in the Virginia's; including beaver dams, old growth forest, wetlands, and the magical Laurel Fork, this has to be one of the most beautiful hikes that doesn't have any views. Secluded on the border of Virginia and West Virginia at 4,000ft, the Laurel Fork area can be a break from those hot summer days at lower altitudes.

**Trail Notes:** All the trails in the Laurel Fork area are blue blazed. In conjunction with the USDA Forest Service HikingUpward.com reblazed the Locust Spring Run, Locust Spring Run Spur, and Slabcamp Run trails in June 2007.

From the right bottom of the picnic area start down the the Locust Spring Run Trail as it heads through old growth forest for 1.2 miles before arriving at the Buck Run Connector Trail. Turn right, cross the run, then immediately turn left downhill remaining on the blue blazed Locust Spring Run Trail. Cross over the run two more times before crossing a small side stream and passing an old wooden trail sign in 0.3 miles. In another 0.2 miles cross the run again and arrive at the intersection of the Locust Spring Run Spur Trail.

Turn right very steeply uphill on the Locust Spring Run Spur Trail for 100 yards, then stay right as the trail follows an old forestry road. Pass a beaver dam downhill on the right in 1.1 miles, and in another 0.1 miles turn left uphill following the blues blazes. In 0.1 miles arrive at the ridge, and intersection of the Slabcamp Run Trail and FS106.

Turn left on gravel FS106 and follow it for 2.0 miles to the four way intersection of FS57 and FS58. Stay left on FS106 for another 0.1 miles to the junction of the Bearwallow Run Trail and a forestry gate. Turn left downhill on the Bearwallow Run Trail and in 2.0 miles be alert as the Bearwallow Run Trail turns left downhill staying closer to the stream. Continue along the trail for another 0.7 miles where it ends at the intersection of the Laurel Fork Trail and Laurel Fork.

**Note:** The Laurel Fork Trail is hard to follow in places and there are few blue blazes.

Turn left on the Laurel Fork Trail and immediately cross Bearwallow Run. Turn left uphill for 25 yards where the trail turns back to the right. Continue along the the trail as it follows the left bank of Laurel Fork and passes a small camping area in 1.0 miles. From this point the trail becomes harder to follow before you have to ford Laurel Fork in another 1.2 miles. There will be a large area of rhododendron on the opposite bank, and no blazes marking the crossing point as of July 2006. The crossing point long/lat is: N38 33.165 W79 36.816

After fording Laurel Fork turn left on the trail through a Rhododendron tunnel for 0.1 miles, cross a small stream, then reach the intersection of the Christian Run Trail. Continue straight on the Laurel Fork Trail for another 0.5 miles, and passing a rocky section along the river bank before arriving at the intersection of the Slabcamp Run Trail.

Turn right staying on the Laurel Fork Trail and in 200 yards there is a large campsite. 250 yards past the campsite ford Laurel Fork for the last time, and in another 0.1 miles cross Locust Spring Run before arriving at the intersection of the Locust Spring Run Trail and another large camping area.

Continue straight on the Buck Run Trail as it climbs through the valley. Cross the run in 1.5 miles, then cross back in another 200 yards where someone has set three logs together as a makeshift footbridge. Turn left after crossing the run where a rock cairn marks the trail. The trail makes several switchbacks as it climbs the mountain.

After the last switchback stay right where the trail now follows an old FS road. In 0.9 miles from the last switchback pass a wetland area on the right, then continue through a red pine stand before reaching the intersection of the Buck Run Connector Trail. Turn right on the Buck Run Trail and in 0.4 miles arrive at FR142. Turn left for the remaining 30 yards to the Locust Spring Picnic area and hike start point.