





Elk Garden to Buzzard Rock – Konnarock, VA

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
7.2 mls		N/A			
Hiking Time: 4 hours with 30 minutes of breaks Elev. Gain: 1,095 ft Parking: Park on Whitetop Rd VA600 at Elk Garden. 36.64627, -81.58335					

[Click Here For Detailed Location](#)



By Trail Contributors: Christine and Adam Anderson

This section of the Appalachian Trail gives you some of the best views of the highest peaks in Virginia. From Buzzard Rock you can see Mt. Rogers and nearby Whitetop Mountain. The trail is a moderate steady climb through woods and high meadows. Enjoy it on a clear day, but expect some cooler temperatures at this high elevation. Start this hike from the Elk Garden parking lot. The main hike to and from Buzzard

Rock is 6.6 miles. Since it was so close, when we got back to the car, we added another .6 miles to go the opposite way on the Appalachian Trail from the parking lot to enjoy the views from the summit of Elk Garden.

For more detailed information, go to Virginia Trail Guide's site

- ▶ **Mile 0.0** – From the back of the parking lot, head directly into the woods heading south on the white-blazed Appalachian Trail
- ▶ **Mile 1.7** – Pass over a small trickle of a stream that crosses over the trail.
- ▶ **Mile 2.4** – Pass by several campsites on the left of the trail before crossing over Whitetop Road. After crossing the road, you walk into an open meadow. On a clear day, you will have some nice views of miles of farmlands and mountains.
- ▶ **Mile 2.5** – A spring is marked on the left side of the trail and is a reliable water source. Shortly after the spring, the trail dips down into the woods and starts to ascend again.
- ▶ **Mile 3.2** – The trail emerges out of the woods into a large open bald [BR7] on the top of the mountain. Expansive views are all around.
- ▶ **Mile 3.3** – Arrive at Buzzard Rock, a small outcropping steered to directly from the trail with the best views from the meadow. From here, you will see the white-blazed Appalachian Trail continues south. Approaching Buzzard Rock you will also see a trail to the right that leads to a higher part on Whitetop Road that connects to Whitetop Mountain. From Buzzard Rock, you can see Mount Rogers, the highest peak in Virginia. Return the way you came, heading north on the white-blazed Appalachian Trail.
- ▶ **Mile 3.4** – Go back into the woods.
- ▶ **Mile 4.1** – Arrive back at the spring and continue on to Whitetop Road.
- ▶ **Mile 4.2** – Cross Whitetop Road and go back into the woods.
- ▶ **Mile 6.6** – Return to the Elk Garden parking lot. Cross the road and head north on the white-blazed Appalachian Trail to make your approach to Elk Garden peak. The climb is short but quite steep.
- ▶ **Mile 6.9** – Reach the summit of Elk Garden. More expansive views are all around you. Return down the hill and back to your car.
- ▶ **Mile 7.2.** – Reach the parking lot to end your hike.