



Humpback Rocks - Waynesboro, VA

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
4.0 mls	★	★	★	★	N/A
Hiking Time:	2.5 hours with 1/2 hour for lunch				
Elev. Gain:	1,240 ft				
Parking::	Park at the Humpback Rocks parking area mile post 6.				

Humpback Rocks is a very popular hike due to its proximity to the Blue Ridge Parkway and I-64 near Afton Mountain. Most people do it as a 1.0 mile up and back. We decided to add a few miles for the return trip by following the Appalachian Trail North and a couple of un-named blue-blazed trails.

The 1.0 miles to the Rocks is very tough, gaining about 800'. The views at the Rocks are great looking west onto the Shenandoah Valley and north to Shenandoah National Park.

We parked at the Humpback Rocks parking area (MP6 on the Blue Ridge Parkway). The blue-blazed trail begins to the right of the kiosk. The trail wastes no time ascending with park benches scattered every so often if you need to take a break. Don't be fooled by the 1.0 mile to the top, if you are not used to hiking you will find muscles sore that you forgot you had!!

There will be an intersection on your left in 0.5 miles, ignore it and stay straight on the blue blazed trail. For the next 0.4 miles the trail is very rocky but there are both wooden steps and rock steps for some of the more difficult parts. If it has rained be prepared that the trail can be a little muddy and in some places becomes a temporary stream. At the next intersection bear left on the spur trail to the Rocks and some incredible views. There are multiple places to take photos, just be careful especially if wet. We were a little disappointed in the amount of graffiti at the Rocks but try to ignore it and concentrate on the views.

Return to the intersection with the 'Rocks' sign, ignore references to the A.T. as those are old signs when it ran close to the Rocks before it was re-routed years ago. At the 'Rocks' intersection, go straight on the blue blazed trail towards Humpback Picnic Area and reach the A.T. in less than 0.10 miles.

Turn left onto the white-blazed A.T. North (*for additional views see A.T. South Out and Back directions below). This begins a 2.7 mile gradual descent for most of the trail back to the Parking area. We saw lots of wildlife: eastern newt, deer and tons of chipmunks - they are too fast to get a decent photo. The mountain laurel and rhododendrons were blooming all over this section of the trail. Returning this way made for a very pleasant stroll and we ran in to only a couple of hikers. The next intersection is in 2.7 miles. Bear to the left, onto a blue-blazed trail to return to the Humpback Rocks Parking area.

*A.T. South Out and Back for Additional Views

If you prefer seeing more great views without the crowds take the A.T. South instead of North at the Intersection mentioned in the previous paragraph. If you take in all 3 additional views in this out and back you will add about 4 miles to your trip. In 0.4 miles from the intersection you will come to an unmarked spur trail to take you out to the first view. These rocks are very similar to Humpback Rocks but not as massive. You will see these rocks on your left as you are on the trail and at the top of the hill you will come to the spur trail. Continue south on the A.T. for 0.7 miles to reach the second view on your left looking out to Rockfish Valley on the east and Shenandoah Valley on the west. The last view will be 0.9 miles beyond the second view. About 30 yards before the last view you will pass a great campsite with room for about 6 tents. We actually did this as a short overnight backpack and spent the night at this campsite taking in one of the most beautiful sunsets we have ever seen in Virginia. You will have an almost 180 degree view of Rockfish Valley, Wintergreen Resort, and finally the Shenandoah Valley. This is your turn around point.

Note: If you do camp here, bring plenty of water as there are no water sources on this section of the A.T.