

Ivy Creek - Charlottesville, Virginia

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
4.8 mls	★	★	★	★	N/A
Hiking Time: 2.5 hours plus a half hour for lunch Elev. Gain: 520 ft Note: Dogs are NOT permitted Parking: Parking is located at the main parking area					

This is a nice short family hike with little elevation change. Ivy Creek Natural Area, in Charlottesville VA, is the sister hike to Ragged Mountain. There are multiple trails at Ivy Creek and we put together an outward loop incorporating parts of many of them. We saw lots of wildlife, deer, one huge buck, squirrels, tons of birds, etc. Their website has great information about the flora and fauna.

We crossed many creeks during the hike with small bridges at all of the crossings. Some of the hike also parallel Ivy Creek eventually emptying into the Rivanna River Reservoir. About every .25 to .50 miles there is a bench to rest on. Be sure to do the Peninsula Loop as that is where there are some great views of the creek and reservoir.

We hiked Ivy Creek Natural Area as a clockwise outer-loop. The hike begins at the main parking area, we headed south to the Red Trail that goes through a Native Grass Restoration field, in 0.1 miles turn left onto the Yellow Trail. The trail is well shaded from here until near the end of the hike. In 0.5 miles turn left onto the Red Trail and in 0.1 miles turn left onto the Green Trail. Over the next mile or so are multiple creek crossings. In 0.7 miles pass under a telephone line and in 0.1 miles turn once again onto the Red Trail. In 0.1 miles turn onto the Orange Trail and very quickly turn onto the left branch of the Orange Trail.

In 0.1 miles the Orange Trail will once again bear to the left, keeping you on the outer-loop of the trail system. The next 0.8 miles until the Peninsula Trail has a couple of views through the trees of Ivy Creek. Turn left onto the purple Peninsula Loop Trail which will have some great views of Ivy Creek and the Rivanna Reservoir, the loop is about 0.8 miles long. It was a little over-grown when we hiked it. After completing the loop, take a left onto the Orange Trail, go 0.2 miles and take a left onto the Red Trail.

Stay on the Red Trail for 0.5 miles, many intersections in this section, when in doubt continue to bear left until the Blue Trail with some more good views of the reservoir. Bear left on the Blue Trail for 0.3 miles and bear left onto the Purple Trail reaching the Hydraulic Overlook spur trail on your left very quickly. In the fall without leaves on the trees their may be a better view of the reservoir. Return from the spur trail and bear left back onto the Purple Trail. The next section goes through another native grass restoration area. In 0.2 miles reach the Paved Trail, continue past the education Bldg and information kiosk and reach the parking lot in 0.1 miles.