






Hawksbill Franklin Cliffs - SNP, Virginia

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
9.2 mls					
Hiking Time: 5.5 hours plus a half hour for lunch Elev. Gain: 1980 ft Parking: Park at Hawksbill Gap on Skyline Drive at mile 45.5					

The first half of this circuit is a forest walk that passes 2 feeder streams for Rose River, and the second is vista after vista from both the Appalachian Trail and Hawksbill Summit. The views from Franklin Cliffs look out on the Massanutten range to the west, and there is a spectacular 270 degree panorama from the Hawksbill Summit with a view of Old Rag.

From the parking area start down the Cedar Run Trail for 50 yards to the intersection of the Big Meadows Horse Trail. Turn right on the yellow blazed Big Meadows Horse Trail and in 1.0 miles pass under the Old Rag overlook on Skyline Drive, then in 0.1 miles there is a campsite on the left. 0.2 miles after the campsite the trail will meet the intersection of a blue blazed connector trail that leads to parking on Skyline Drive.

Stay left on the yellow blazed Big Meadows Trail as it now heads downhill before turning back to the right and crossing the first of two streams in 1.7 miles. In another 0.4 miles cross the second and final stream. The Big Meadows Trail now continues for 0.7 miles to the intersection of the blue blazed Rose River Loop Trail. Turn right uphill remaining on the yellow blazed Big Meadows Trail for 0.5 miles to the intersection of a fire road.

Turn right on the fire road passing a chain gate and crossing Skyline Drive. Continue down the fire road for 100 yards to the intersection of the white blazed Appalachian Trail (A.T.).

Turn right on the A.T. and in 0.1 miles reach the first of several spectacular westerly vistas. Pass underneath Franklin Cliffs, then in 1.4 miles there is a side trail to a Skyline Drive parking area. From this point it's 1.0 miles to the Hawksbill Summit blue blazed trail.

Turn right on the blue blazed Hawksbill Summit Trail for 0.6 miles to a westerly vista. Shortly thereafter the trail turns left on a fire road on its way to the summit. Pass the shelter then in 50 yards reach Hawksbill Summit where there is 270 degree vista.

From the summit go back past the shelter for 25 yards, and turn left downhill on the continuation of the Hawksbill Summit Trail for the remaining 0.8 miles back to the Hawksbill Gap parking area.