

Hiker's Guide



Village Creek State Park



Evidence indicates that a gently rolling plain made of layers of clay, sand, and gravel extended from Little Rock, Ark., to Memphis, Tenn. During the decline of the Ice Age, massive trenches were scoured out by the two major river systems: the Ohio River to the east of the ridge and the Mississippi River to the west. These rivers carried off most of the ancient marine sediments that had been deposited in what is now the Delta. Left standing between the two parallel running rivers was a thin strip of higher land, which became known as Crowley's Ridge.

The unique topsoil capping the ridge is called "loess" and is a wind-blown deposit. This soil was created by glacial rock grinding during the Ice Age and was carried downstream by glacial melt-water. When this fine "rock flour" or silt dried, it was picked up by the westerly winds and deposited here.

Unlike the other ridges and mountains of Arkansas which have a foundation of solid bedrock, Crowley's Ridge has a foundation of clay, sands, and gravel. The erosive nature of the soil creates some unusual terrain. Steep ravines and hog-back ridges as well as sheer-sided bluffs are typical and common sights along the trails.

Remember, the way you care for and use the trails will influence trail management decisions and policies. Thank you.

NOTICE: To preserve scenic beauty and ecology, fences and warning signs have not been installed in some park locations. Caution and supervision of your children are required while visiting these areas.

TO REACH THE PARK: From Interstate 40, take exit 242 (near Forrest City) and travel 12 miles north on Hwy. 284. Follow the signs to the park.



Village Creek State Park
201 CR 754
Wynne, AR 72396
villagecreek@arkansas.com
www.ArkansasStateParks.com

Trail Sections	Distance
Intersection 7 to Intersection 8	.7 miles
Intersection 7 to Intersection 9	.6 miles
Intersection 8 to Intersection 9	490 feet
Intersection 9 to Intersection 10	.5 miles
Intersection 10 to Intersection 11	.4 miles
Intersection 10 to Intersection 16	1.1 miles <i>(crosses creek, no bridge; closed to bicycles)</i>
Intersection 11 to Intersection 12	1.6 miles
Intersection 11 to Intersection 14	.6 miles
Intersection 12 to Intersection 13	1.2 miles <i>(closed to horses)</i>
Intersection 13 to Intersection 14	.6 miles <i>(closed to horses)</i>
Intersection 14 to Intersection 15	.4 miles <i>(crosses creek, no bridge)</i>
Intersection 15 to Intersection 16	1.3 miles <i>(closed to bicycles)</i>
Intersection 15 to Intersection 17	.7 miles <i>(crosses creek, no bridge)</i>
Intersection 15 to Intersection 19	.4 miles <i>(crosses creek, no bridge)</i>
Intersection 16 to Intersection 17	2 miles <i>(crosses seasonal streams, no bridge)</i>
Intersection 17 to Intersection 18	1.5 miles
Intersection 18 to Intersection 19	.3 miles
Intersection 19 to Intersection 20	2 miles <i>(crosses creek, no bridge)</i>

The Story of Crowley's Ridge

To understand the fragile nature of Crowley's Ridge, you must first understand its fascinating geologic past. Most geologists agree that this unique environment owes its origins to the ancient ocean that covered the area we now know as eastern Arkansas around 50 million years ago. Global climate patterns were much different then and the ocean levels were much deeper. An extended arm of the Gulf of Mexico, known as the Mississippi Embayment, covered this entire area. Layers of marine sediments deposited by the ocean slowly formed the foundation of Crowley's Ridge. Eventually the ocean retreated, leaving behind a wealth of marine sediments and fossils.

OLD MILITARY ROAD TRAIL

(Trail of Tears): (2.16 miles)

Originally the Memphis to Little Rock Road, it begins and ends on the Lake Austell dam. From this trail, you can access the Lake Dunn trail, swinging bridge, and the multi-use trails. It features one of the most dramatic remaining portions of the Trail of Tears (1/2 mile from the trailhead). The Memphis to Little Rock Road, completed in 1829, provided the first improved route between the two cities and became a major route of Indian Removal for Creek, Chickasaw, and 600 Cherokee. This trail provides scenic vistas of Lake Austell. Allow two to three hours hiking time; some terrain is moderately rugged.

LAKE DUNN TRAIL: (2.77 miles)

A portion of this trail is open to bicycles (that portion is blazed in white). You can access this trail from the Lake Dunn dam or behind campsite #23. This trail features the popular swinging bridge and follows a portion of the Trail of Tears. This trail also connects to the multi-use trails at intersections #12 and #14.

MULTI-USE TRAILS (BLAZED IN WHITE)

Distance Between Intersections

Trail Sections	Distance
Bicycle entrance to Intersection 13	.7 miles <i>(closed to horses)</i>
Horse parking lot to Intersection 1	1.1 miles <i>(closed to bicycles)</i>
Intersection 1 to Intersection 2	.7 miles
Intersection 1 to Intersection 4	1.6 miles <i>(crosses stream, no bridge)</i>
Intersection 2 to Intersection 3	.1 miles
Intersection 2 to Intersection 6	.5 miles
Intersection 3 to Intersection 4	.7 miles <i>(closed to bicycles)</i>
Intersection 3 to Intersection 5	1.1 miles
Intersection 4 to Intersection 5	1 mile
Intersection 5 to Intersection 8	.4 miles <i>(crosses seasonal stream, no bridge)</i>
Intersection 6 to Intersection 7	.5 miles
Intersection 6 to Intersection 12	.3 miles



This Is Your Park

Welcome to Village Creek State Park. Remember, this is your park. Please treat it carefully so others may enjoy it as you have. State Park lands function as preserves, protecting the plants, animals, and other features for future generations to come.

Most of the multi-use trail system is open to hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians. Because of horses, most of the creeks in these areas do not have bridges. Some areas of the multi-use trails are rugged.

Some of the trails are restricted to hikers only. These trails are constructed with bridges and steps for a more comfortable experience. The trail signs are also lower to the ground for easier reading. All hiking trails are blazed in blue and multi-use trails are blazed in white.

Trail Regulations

- Please leave plants and animals along the trail undisturbed. Removing, defacing, destroying any rock, fossil, or plant or hunting/capturing any wildlife within the park are prohibited.
- Hike on designated trails only. Taking short cuts greatly accelerates soil erosion and destroys both trail and environment.
- Camping or campfires are not permitted on trails.
- When encountering horses, please stop and step off the trail; horses may be frightened by unfamiliar individuals.
- It is crucial to hear others approaching. Wearing earphones can cause serious safety hazards among hikers, bicycles, and equestrians.
- Bicycles are NOT allowed on hiking trails; please use the bicycle entrance to the trails, located across the bridge from the visitor center.

Hiking Suggestions

- Before your trip, calculate the total distance traveled by considering the distances to and from the trailhead, not just the loop mileage.
- Wear footwear appropriate for hiking.
- In the warmer months, insect repellent may be desirable due to mosquitoes, ticks, and chiggers.
- If hiking the longer multi-use trails, take plenty of water and snacks. Other important items you should consider taking are a flashlight, cell phone, compass, whistle, and rain gear.
- Leave No Trace: Leave nothing behind and pick up any litter you see.

HIKING TRAILS (BLAZED IN BLUE)

BIG BEN NATURE TRAIL: (0.5 miles)

The most popular trail for families with small children, this trail begins and ends at the same point. A brochure identifies plants and trees and can help you understand this unique environment. Park interpreters lead guided hikes on this trail throughout the year.

AUSTELL TRAIL: (1.12 miles) Begins at the visitor center and ends at the Lake Austell picnic area. Allow an hour or more for a leisurely hike. The trail takes you along hogback ridges, stream valleys, and alongside Lake Austell. Some areas of the trails are moderately steep. From this trail, you can access the Old Military Road Trail.

ARBORETUM TRAIL: (0.25 miles)

The shortest and easiest of the park's trails, it features signs identifying some of the area's more common trees and shrubs. Benches and picnic tables are provided for your convenience.

Village Creek State Park Multi-Use Trail System

