



Approaching Blackstock Knob
Photo by Jeff Clark www.internetbrothers.org

The High Peaks and Asheville—MST Segment 3

PISGAH INN TO BLACK MOUNTAIN CAMPGROUND

By Jim Grode

Seventy-one mile long Segment 3 is where Asheville comes to play. It is the most heavily used part of the MST within the mountains, and you are likely to encounter hikers, dog walkers, and trail runners at any time throughout the year. Virtually all of it is easily accessible from the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP), and there are road crossings every few miles for most of the length.

Don't let its accessibility and popularity fool you, however: With elevations ranging from 2,000 feet at the French Broad River to over 6,600 feet

at the summit of Mount Mitchell, this segment is quite rugged. Indeed, the section just west of Asheville hosts the infamous Shut-In Ridge Trail Run, an 18-mile trail run that annually humbles racers from around the country.

Complementing the natural beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains in this area is the vibrancy of Asheville, a city of 80,000 nestled in the French Broad River valley, which regularly makes lists of the top 10 cities in the United States. Crammed with restaurants, shops, art galleries, and breweries, Asheville offers something for nearly everyone and is well worth a layover in your hiking schedule.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- The views atop 6,684-foot Mount Mitchell, the highest point east of the Mississippi River
- The Shut-In Trail, which follows the old bridle trail from the Biltmore House to George Vanderbilt's hunting lodge near the summit of Mount Pisgah (which no longer stands, but a few remnants of which are still visible)
- The cultural and scientific displays at the Blue Ridge Parkway Visitor Center & Headquarters near Asheville
- The fine collection of southern art and crafts at the Folk Art Center also near Asheville. Outside the Folk Art Center, look for the bronze plaque honoring Arch Nichols, who worked tirelessly as a volunteer leader of the Carolina Mountain Club and as a United States Forest Service employee to complete the MST from Mount Pisgah to Mount Mitchell.
- The ruins of Rattlesnake Lodge, a summer lodge built in 1903-4 by Asheville physician Chase Ambler
- In early summer, the azalea and rhododendron displays at Craggy Gardens
- In the fall, brilliant color displays that attract people from all over the country

Total Distance: 71.4 miles (all on trail except incidental stretches on the BRP, mostly on bridges at highway crossings)

Difficulty: Strenuous, with significant elevation changes involving steep climbs and descents and difficult trail tread

Trail Updates

When planning your trip using this guide, take a moment to see whether Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail (Friends) has posted any updates about the trail route by visiting Friends' "Trail Updates" page at MountaintoSeaTrail.org/updates.

Trail Angels

The MST is fortunate to have many Trail Angels: friendly people who have volunteered to provide assistance to long-distance hikers ranging from local information to lodging and food. We greatly appreciate our Trail Angels' willingness to give back to the hiking community and the MST. For information about Trail Angels in Segment 3 and the services they can provide, see MountaintoSeaTrail.org/the-trail/trail-angels.

Special Note Regarding Access

The BRP is often closed in the winter, especially during and after inclement weather, affecting access to the MST. Wintertime hiking in this segment will require careful planning. The National Park Service posts real-time closure information at www.nps.gov/blri/planyourvisit/roadclosures.htm.

Backcountry Camping

Although Segment 3 is entirely on trail, backcountry camping can be difficult because much of the land surrounding the trail is restricted. Camping is prohibited on all BRP property, on the Bent Creek Experimental Forest, and in Mt. Mitchell State Park except in designated campgrounds. Primitive camping is allowed anywhere in the Pisgah National Forest, which surrounds or is near portions of the segment. Before setting up a backcountry camp, please confirm that you are in a legal camping area.

The legal status of backcountry camping along the MST within Segment 3 is as follows:

EB Mile 0.0-1.4; WB Miles 70.0-71.4 (Pisgah Inn to Mt. Pisgah trail-head): The MST is on BRP property and camping is **prohibited**.

EB Miles 1.4-7.8; WB Miles 63.6-70.0 (Mt. Pisgah trailhead to Beaver Dam Gap): The BRP corridor is narrow and surrounded on either side by Pisgah National Forest land where camping is allowed. The MST meanders in and out of the BRP corridor through this stretch, and it can be very hard to tell whether you are in the corridor or not. In general, however, if you are more than about 100-150 yards off the trail on the side opposite the BRP, you are probably in the national forest.

EB Miles 7.8-8.4; WB Miles 62.9-63.6 (Beaver Dam Gap to Ferrin Knob): The trail is on Pisgah National Forest land, and camping is **allowed**.

EB Miles 8.4-42.8; WB Miles 28.6-62.9 (Ferrin Knob to east of Asheville): In this stretch the MST is surrounded by BRP land, the Bent Creek Experimental Forest, or private land, and camping is **prohibited**.

EB Miles 42.8-43.7; WB Miles 27.7-28.6 (roughly a mile east of Rattlesnake Lodge to Rich Knob): The MST is on Pisgah National Forest land, and camping is **allowed**.

EB Miles 43.7-47.4; WB Miles 24.0-27.7 (Rich Knob to Craggy Gardens picnic area): The trail is within or on the BRP boundary, and land to the other side is the Woodfin watershed, where there is no entry. Camping is **not allowed** in this stretch.

EB Miles 47.4-49.3; WB Miles 22.1-24.0 (Craggy Gardens picnic area to roughly 0.5 mile east of Craggy Gardens Visitor Center): The trail is on the north/west of the BRP, and land beyond the boundary (left for an EB hiker) is national forest where camping is **allowed**.

EB Miles 49.3-51.3; WB Miles 20.0-22.1 (roughly 0.5 mile east of Craggy Gardens Visitor Center to paved road and building near Graybeard Mtn. Overlook): The trail is on Pisgah National Forest land where camping is **allowed**.

EB Miles 51.3-55.3; WB Miles 16.1-20.0 (paved road and building near Graybeard Mtn. Overlook to Walker Knob Overlook): The trail crosses the BRP and runs to the south/east of the BRP, within the parkway boundary, where camping is **prohibited**. Land to the south/east of the trail (right for an EB hiker) is the Asheville watershed, where all entry is prohibited.

EB Miles 55.3-60.3; WB Miles 11.1-16.1 (Walker Knob Overlook to NC 128): The trail is on Mt. Mitchell State Park or BRP land, and camping is **prohibited**.

EB Miles 60.3-62.3; WB Miles 9.0-11.1 (NC 128 to two miles east): The trail is on Pisgah National Forest land, and camping is **allowed**.

EB Miles 62.3-63.9; WB Miles 7.5-9.0 (two miles east of NC 128 to Commissary Trail): Here, the MST runs along the border between Mt. Mitchell State Park and the Pisgah National Forest, and camping is **allowed** on the south (right for an EB hiker) side.

EB Miles 63.9-65.8; WB Miles 5.5-7.5 (Commissary Trail to Mt. Mitchell State Park boundary sign): This portion of the trail is in Mt. Mitchell State Park, and camping is **prohibited** except in the campground.

EB Miles 65.8-71.4; WB Miles 0.0-5.5 (Mt. Mitchell State Park boundary sign to Black Mtn. Campground): The trail is in the Pisgah National Forest; camping is **allowed** and several campsites are noted in the directions.

Note that this discussion addresses only whether it is legal to camp in a given location; except as specifically described in the hiking directions below, legality does not imply there are suitable campsites or adequate water sources in these areas. A number of the most obvious backcountry sites are noted in the directions, but there has been no attempt to completely catalog all suitable sites. In the directions, the beginnings of sections where camping is legal are marked with a tent icon but, again, this does not imply there are suitable campsites in these stretches.

Backcountry campers may leave cars at BRP overlooks overnight, but must call the BRP Comm Center (828-298-2491) the day before or the morning they leave to provide details.

Campgrounds and Lodging

Note: All prices listed in this guide are for comparison only and are subject to change at any time.

EB Mile 0.0; WB Mile 71.4

Mt. Pisgah Campground, BRP Milepost (MP) 408.6, 828-648-2644. Open between late April and the end of October, this campground has water, restrooms, and showers, and sites are \$20/night. For online reservations, go to www.recreation.gov and search for Mt. Pisgah Campground.

EB Mile 0.0; WB Mile 71.4

Pisgah Inn, MP 408.6, 828-235-8228; www.pisgahinn.com. The inn is open April 1 to October 31; rooms range from \$180 to \$244/night.

EB Mile 9.7; WB Mile 61.7 or EB Mile 13.3; WB Mile 58.1)

Lake Powhatan Recreation Area Campground, 375 Wesley Branch Rd., Asheville, 28806. This popular campground is near the MST and has drinking water, showers, campfire rings with grills, picnic tables, and a camp store. Campsites are \$22-\$62/night, and reservations are available through www.recreation.gov or (877) 444-6777. With an appropriate map (such as the one at fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fsm8_050251.pdf), the campground can be reached on the Bent Creek Experimental Forest trail system from Sleepy Gap parking area (EB Mile 13.3; WB Mile 58.1); depending on the route chosen, the route is approximately 2-2.5 miles. Alternatively, from Bent Creek Gap (EB Mile 9.7; WB Mile 61.7), simply walk north on Bent Creek Rd. approximately 4 miles.

EB Miles 18.6-31.9; WB Miles 39.5-52.8

Asheville. There are numerous camping and lodging options in Asheville, from small bed-and-breakfasts to large motels and luxury hotels. None are within a mile's walk of the MST, but taxis are readily available. See the "Additional Information" section for this segment for tourism information about Asheville.

EB Mile 64.9; WB Mile 6.5

Mt. Mitchell State Park Campground, 2338 NC 128, Burnsville, 28714. Open May 1-October 31 with full facilities (restrooms and water), year-round with limited facilities. Camping is \$17/night; make reservations at northcarolinastateparks.reserveamerica.com (search for "Mount Mitchell State Park"; "Mt. Mitchell" will not work) or by calling 877-722-6762.

EB Mile 71.4; WB Mile 0.0

Black Mtn. Campground, 50 Black Mtn. Campground Rd., Burnsville, 28714, 828-675-5616. Open April-October, primitive sites, with water, restrooms, and showers. Camping is \$22/night, first come, first serve.

Also check Friends' "Trail Angels" page at MountainstoSeaTrail.org/the-trail/trail-angels for additional camping and lodging options.

Special Note Regarding Bear Activity and Requirements

Because of aggressive bear activity, the US Forest Service requires all backpackers to carry bear canisters in the Shining Rock Wilderness Area and nearby Forest Service lands to the northwest of the BRP. This area encompasses parts of Segments 2 and 3 of the MST. As a practical matter for

MST thru-hikers, this will probably require carrying canisters between Cherokee (Segment 1) and Asheville (Segment 3), as these are the nearest resupply points. For more information, see www.fs.usda.gov/detail/nfsnc/alerts-notices/?cid=stelprd3832543.

Food/Supplies/Post Office

EB Mile 0.0; WB Mile 71.4	Pisgah Inn restaurant and convenience store
EB Miles 18.6-31.9; WB Miles 39.5-52.8	Numerous restaurants and stores in Asheville
EB Mile 24.2; WB Mile 47.2	Commercial development along Hendersonville Rd., mostly 0.5 mile or more from the trail, including a Walmart
EB Mile 31.9; WB Mile 39.5	Commercial development along US 70, mostly 0.5 mile or more from the trail, including an Ingles supermarket
EB Mile 48.8; WB Mile 22.6	Craggy Gardens Visitor Center gift shop
EB Mile 65.1; WB Mile 6.3	Mt. Mitchell summit parking area concession stand open seasonally; restaurant, also open seasonally, is approximately 1.6 miles away on NC 128.
EB Mile 71.4; WB Mile 0.0	Black Mtn. Campground office

Water/Restrooms

Water is generally abundant in this segment, and this guide does not attempt to catalog every potential source, keeping in mind that a decent-sized stream in wet weather may completely stop flowing in dry periods. Only larger, named creeks; those useful for wayfinding; and water sources in areas where they are more widely scattered are listed here. **All surface water should be treated before drinking. Water in the Asheville area may be impacted by urban pollution, and we do not recommend drinking it, even treated.**

In addition to surface water on the trail, water and restrooms are available at a few developed locations:

EB Mile 0.0; WB Mile 74.1	Pisgah Inn restaurant and convenience store  
EB Miles 18.6-31.9; WB Miles 39.5-52.8	Numerous restaurants and stores in Asheville  
EB Mile 29.8; WB Mile 41.5	BRP Visitor Center & Headquarters  
EB Mile 33.3; WB Mile 39.0	Folk Art Center  
EB Mile 47.9; WB Mile 23.4	Craggy Gardens picnic area 
EB Mile 48.8; WB Mile 22.6	Craggy Gardens Visitor Center gift shop  
EB Mile 65.1; WB Mile 6.3	Mt. Mitchell summit  
EB Mile 71.4; WB Mile 0.0	Black Mtn. Campground office  

Hunting

Hunting is allowed throughout the Pisgah National Forest during the hunting season but is prohibited on Blue Ridge Parkway property and in Mt. Mitchell State Park. See www.ncwildlife.org/hunting for information about seasons and licenses.

Signs/Blazing

The MST in Segment 3 is generally well marked with the MST blaze—a 3-inch white circle—either painted on or affixed to trees or signposts. Within Mt. Mitchell State Park, the trails are also blazed for the state park trail system, and there are informative signs at all the major trail junctions.

Dogs

Dogs are allowed on this segment of the MST, but should always be leashed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Friends office: 919-825-0297 or info@MountainstoSeaTrail.org

Walt Weber and “the Gang” for the Carolina Mountain Club have published an excellent, highly detailed, set of maps and profiles for this segment of the MST entitled *Trail Profiles and Maps: From Clingmans Dome to Mount Mitchell and Beyond*. The book, available on Amazon or through a number of outlets in the Asheville area, also includes historical information about, as well as photos and diagrams of, George Vanderbilt’s Buck Spring Lodge and Chase Ambler’s Rattlesnake Lodge; the ruins of both of these sites are on the MST in Segment 3.

Trail Maps

Google map of the entire MST: MountainstoSeaTrail.org/map

BRP map: www.nps.gov/blri/planyourvisit/maps.htm

Mt. Mitchell State Park map: files.nc.gov/ncparks/maps-and-brochures/mount_mitchell_park_map.pdf

National Geographic map 780 (Pisgah Ranger District) and map 779 (Linville Gorge, Mt. Mitchell), available at www.natgeomaps.com/trail-maps/trails-illustrated-maps/north-carolina

State and Federal Land Management Agency Sites

BRP website: www.nps.gov/blri

BRP road and trail closures: www.nps.gov/blri/planyourvisit/roadclosures.htm

National Forests in North Carolina website: www.fs.usda.gov/nfsnc

Mt. Mitchell State Park website: www.ncparks.gov/mount-mitchell-state-park

Links for other points and organizations of interest

Pisgah Inn website: pisgahinn.com

Carolina Mountain Club website (trail maintainers in this segment): www.carolinamountainclub.org

North Carolina High Peaks Trail Association and Friends of Mt. Mitchell State Park website: nchighpeaks.org

Tourism links

Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau website: www.exploreasheville.com

Romantic Asheville website: www.romanticasheville.com

Yancey County Chamber of Commerce website: yanceychamber.com



Pink Turtlehead

Photo by PJ Wetzel, www.pjwetzel.com

PRIMARY PARKING LOCATIONS

Pisgah Inn (BRP Milepost [MP] 408.6)

EB Mile 0.0; WB Mile 71.4



N35.40360, W82.75425

Mills River Valley Overlook (MP 404.5)

EB Mile 4.5; WB Mile 66.9



N35.33595, W82.81510

Stony Bald Overlook (MP 402.6)

EB Mile 6.8; WB Mile 64.6



N35.45386, W82.69384

Sleepy Gap Parking Area (MP 397.3)

EB Mile 13.3; WB Mile 58.1



N35.46580, W82.62940

BRP Access Road at French Broad River (MP 393.7)

EB Mile 18.6; WB Mile 52.8



N35.50060, W82.59353

BRP at Hendersonville Rd. (MP 388.9)

EB Mile 24.0; WB Mile 47.3



N35.51806, W82.52977

BRP at US 74A (MP 384.8)

EB Mile 29.1; WB Mile 42.3



N35.56209, W82.49374

BRP Visitor Center (MP 384)

EB Mile 29.8; WB Mile 41.5



N35.56518, W82.48721

Folk Art Center (MP 382)

EB Mile 32.2; WB Mile 39.1



N35.59293, W82.4810

BRP at Craven Gap (MP 377.4)

EB Mile 37.7; WB Mile 33.6



N35.64802, W82.49166

BRP at Tanbark Ridge Tunnel (MP 374.5)

EB Mile 41.9; WB Mile 29.5



N35.66548, W82.46185

Craggy Gardens Picnic Area (MP 367.6)

EB Mile 47.9; WB Mile 23.4



N35.69960, W82.39166

Craggy Gardens Visitor Center (MP 364.5)

EB Mile 48.8; WB Mile 22.6



N35.69980, W82.37984

PRIMARY PARKING LOCATIONS (Continued)

Graybeard Mtn. Overlook (MP 363.4)

EB Mile 51.6; WB Mile 19.8



N35.71098, W82.36421

Glassmine Falls Overlook (MP 361.2)

EB Mile 53.8; WB Mile 17.5



N35.73425, W82.34431

Walker Knob Overlook (MP 359.8)

EB Mile 55.3; WB Mile 16.1



N35.74842, W82.33403

NC 128 Crossing

EB Mile 60.3; WB Mile 11.1



N35.72585, W82.28309

Mt. Mitchell Summit Parking Area

EB Mile 65.1; WB Mile 6.3



N35.76622, W82.26526

Black Mtn. Campground Trailhead

EB Mile 71.4; WB Mile 0.0



N35.75111, W82.22024



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies

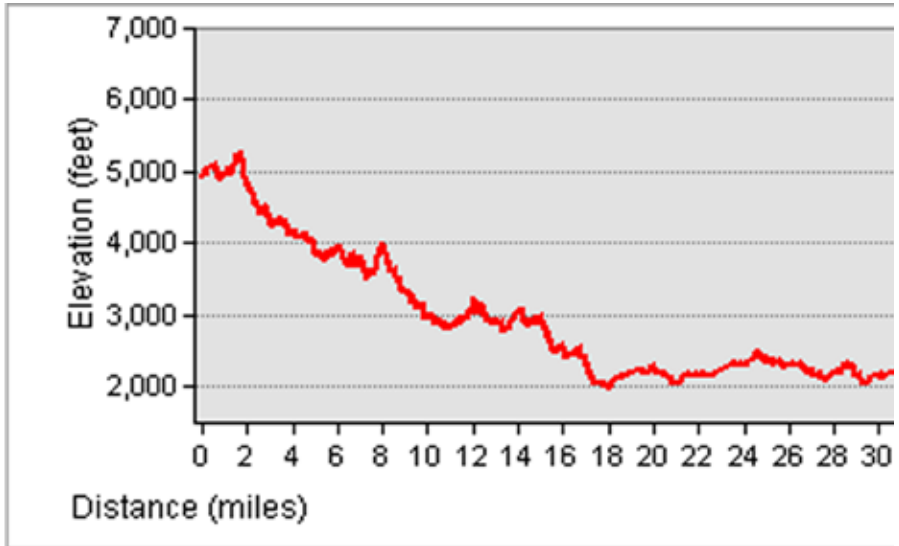


Water



Picnic

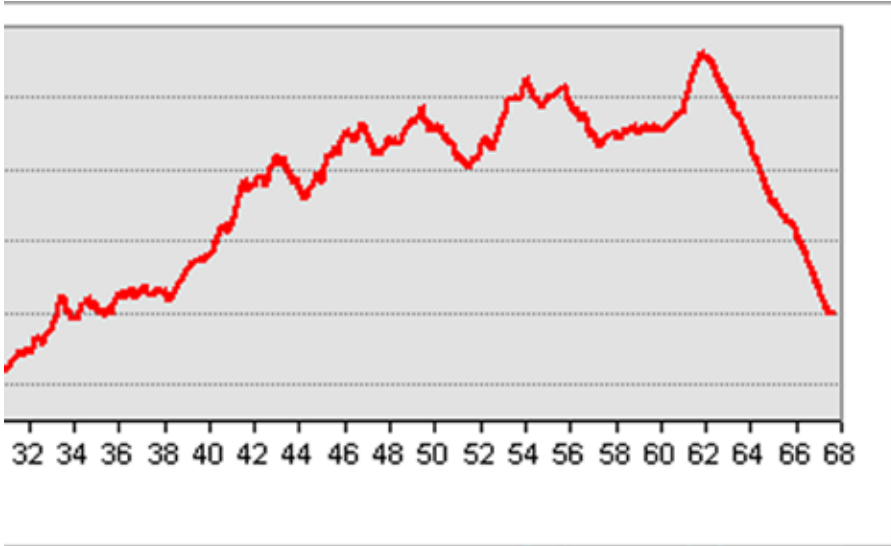
Segment 3 Eastbound








Hiking Directions, Eastbound

- 0.0 Begin Segment 3 at parking lot for the Pisgah Inn (MP 408.6). Continue to the back left corner of the parking lot (as viewed from the BRP), then go up stone stairs at MST signpost and kiosk for Mt. Pisgah trail system. *Note:* The Pisgah Inn, open seasonally, has lodging, a restaurant, and a store with general supplies. The Mt. Pisgah Campground is nearby; to reach it, turn left on the BRP and walk approximately 0.1 mile to the entrance on the right (see the “Campgrounds and Lodging” section for this segment for more information).
- 0.3 Continue straight past side trail on right, which leads to overlook.
- 0.7 Continue straight past junction with Pilot Rock Trail on right.
- 0.8 Continue straight past junction with Laurel Mtn. Trail on right.
- 1.0 Continue through clearing with wooden benches on the right and a spectacular view. *Note:* This is the former site of George Vanderbilt’s Buck Spring Lodge. *Trail Profiles and Maps: From Clingmans Dome to Mount Mitchell and Beyond*, by Walt Weber and “the Gang,” provides an interesting look at the history and current condition of the

Elevation Profile



lodge site. The trail from here to the French Broad River generally follows the path of, and is sometimes on the bed of, the old bridle trail built by George Vanderbilt to connect Biltmore House to Buck Spring Lodge.

- 1.2 Continue straight across parking area at Buck Springs Gap Overlook (MP 407.6). 
- 1.4 Reach road at parking area for Mt. Pisgah trailhead (to your left) and walk along shoulder, then return to trail at stairs and sign for “Shut-In Trail.” *Note:* At this parking area (MP 407.6), you are crossing directly over the BRP’s Buck Springs Tunnel, so the next time you reach the BRP, it will be from the other side. Backcountry camping may be legal from here to Mile 8.4, subject to restrictions described in the “Backcountry Camping” section.  
- 3.3 Reach BRP at its junction with NC 151 and turn left to walk along the shoulder of BRP approximately 75 yards, then cross BRP and return to trail at white-blazed signpost. *Note:* There is a small gravel parking area at this junction (MP 405.5). 
- 4.5 Cross parking area at Mills River Valley Overlook (MP 404.5) and continue on trail at far side of parking area. 



Pink Lady's Slippers
Photo by Sharon McCarthy

- 5.6 Reach clearing and continue up wooden steps toward MST signpost and Big Ridge Overlook (MP 403.6), then cross BRP and continue on trail at white-blazed signpost. **P**
- 6.1 Cross BRP.
- 6.8 Reach Stony Bald Overlook (MP 402.6) and cross BRP at far end of overlook, returning to trail at white-blazed signpost. **P**
- 7.8 Reach Beaver Dam Gap Overlook (MP 401.7) and walk across the back of parking lot to continue on the trail at far side. **P**
- 8.4 Cross 4,064-foot Ferrin Knob just below remains of old fire tower on right.
- 8.8 Bear right where trail comes in from left. *Note:* Just down the other trail is a small stream that could be usable as a water source during high-flow periods. **💧**
- 9.6 At Y-intersection, bear left down steps.



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms











Supplies



Water



Picnic

- 9.7 Cross Bent Creek Rd., a gravel road leading into Bent Creek Experimental Forest. *Note:* The Lake Powhatan Recreation Area Campground is approximately 4 miles to the left on Bent Creek Rd. See the “Campgrounds and Lodging” section for this Segment for more information. 
- 9.8 Continue straight where trail heads uphill on right.
- 12.0 Continue straight past Chestnut Cove Trail on left.
- 12.3 At Y-intersection, take right fork.
- 12.4 At intersection with blue-blazed spur trail to BRP, turn left to stay on the MST. *Note:* The spur trail leads approximately 75 yards to parking at the Chestnut Cove Overlook (MP 398.3). 
- 13.1 Begin descending a series of switchbacks.
- 13.3 Where Sleepy Gap parking area (MP 397.3) is visible on right, continue on marked trail behind parking area. *Note:* With an appropriate map, the Lake Powhatan Recreation Area Campground can be accessed from the parking area using the Bent Creek Experimental Forest trail system. See the “Campgrounds and Lodging” section for this Segment for more information.  
- 13.8 At Y-intersection, take right fork.
- 15.0 Continue straight past short spur trail to BRP on right.
- 16.3 At T-intersection, continue to right on gravel road. *Note:* There is a gravel parking area on the BRP (MP 395) just to the right of this point. 
- 16.4 Turn off gravel road, following white-blazed signpost up a set of concrete-and-wood stairs.
- 18.1 Cross creek, then pass through gate in chain-link fence. *Note:* You are now entering the North Carolina Arboretum property. 
- 18.3 Just before the trail in front of you enters a rhododendron thicket, make a sharp right turn to continue on the MST.
- 18.4 Cross small stream, then go through gate in chain-link fence to leave Arboretum property.
- 18.6 Turn right on BRP access road. *Note:* Parking is available along the shoulder of the access road. 
- 18.7 Turn left on BRP, then cross bridge over French Broad River.
- 18.9 At parking area (MP 393.4), turn right into the woods at MST signpost, then bear left. 



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms








Supplies



Water



Picnic

- 19.4 Continue straight where trail comes in from right.
- 19.6 Continue straight across dirt road that passes under BRP.
- 20.2 Cross BRP.
- 20.5 Turn left on BRP, then cross bridge over I-26.
- 20.6 Just past the bridge, turn right on trail marked with MST signpost.
- 20.9 Continue straight past trail on the right.
- 21.1 Continue straight past intersection with closed trail, then past another trail on the right.
- 21.7 Cross footbridge over small creek, then continue straight across gravel path with padlocked gate just to your right. *Note:* Turn left on blue-blazed spur trail to reach parking 0.2 mile away on BRP (MP 390.9). 
- 21.8 At T-intersection with MST signpost, turn left then bear right and cross footbridge over Dingle Creek.
- 22.9 Continue straight across gravel road.
- 23.5 Cross footbridge over Fourmile Branch, then cross smaller footbridge over swampy area.
- 23.8 Descend stairs, cross trail intersection, then climb stairs on other side.
- 24.0 Bear right at Y-intersection, then turn right on BRP and cross bridge over Hendersonville Rd. *Note:* There is a parking area just across the road from the trail (MP 388.9). 
- 24.2 Turn left onto trail with MST signpost. *Note:* The access road across the BRP leads to Hendersonville Rd., a major thoroughfare in Asheville. Turning left (south) at the bottom of the ramp leads to a number of shopping options, including a Walmart approximately 0.5 mile away. To the right (north) are historic Biltmore Village and downtown Asheville, about 4 and 6 miles away, respectively, along with numerous smaller shopping centers.   
- 24.4 Turn left on BRP, then cross bridge over railroad tracks and turn left onto trail with MST signpost.
- 24.8 Turn left on BRP, then cross bridge over Sweeten Creek Rd.
- 24.9 After the bridge, continue on shoulder of BRP for 50 yards, then turn left onto trail with MST signpost.
- 25.1 Cross footbridge over a small stream.
- 25.4 Continue straight past trail on the right.



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms







Supplies



Water



Picnic

- 25.6 At Y-intersection with fainter trail leading to BRP, bear left.
- 25.8 At T-intersection, turn right and follow MST markings.
- 26.1 Continue straight where larger trail joins from left.
- 26.2 Continue straight past old roadbed on right, then cross two small streams.
- 26.8 Cross a small stream.
- 27.2 Bear right at Y-intersection, then cross small creek.
- 27.6 Continue straight across old road.
- 27.7 Cross a small stream.
- 28.7 Cross a power-line cut.
- 28.8 Cross a small stream.
- 28.9 Continue straight past trail on right.
- 29.1 Turn left on BRP at gravel parking area (MP 384.8), then cross bridge over US 74A. 
- 29.2 Just beyond end of bridge, turn right on trail with white MST signpost.
- 29.6 Continue straight past small unmarked spur trail to BRP on left.
- 29.8 At Y-intersection, take right fork signposted to Folk Art Center. *Note:* The left fork leads 0.3 mile to the BRP Visitor Center & Headquarters (MP 384), which has exhibits about the natural and cultural heritage of the BRP area as well as restrooms and water. It is open from 9 AM to 5 PM daily year-round.   
- 30.6 Continue straight through power-line cut.
- 30.8 Go down a flight of stairs, then turn left on dirt road and immediately go through tunnel under I-40.
- 30.9 After leaving tunnel, cross railroad tracks and continue straight on paved road to cross bridge over Swannanoa River, then at T-intersection continue straight over stile with white blaze and follow white blazes on BRP viaduct across field.
- 31.0 Cross stile at end of field.
- 31.7 Turn left on the shoulder of BRP, then cross bridge over US 70.
- 31.8 After crossing bridge, immediately turn left onto trail marked with MST signpost.
- 31.9 Continue straight across BRP access road. *Note:* The access road leads to US 70, with heavy strip development in both directions,



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



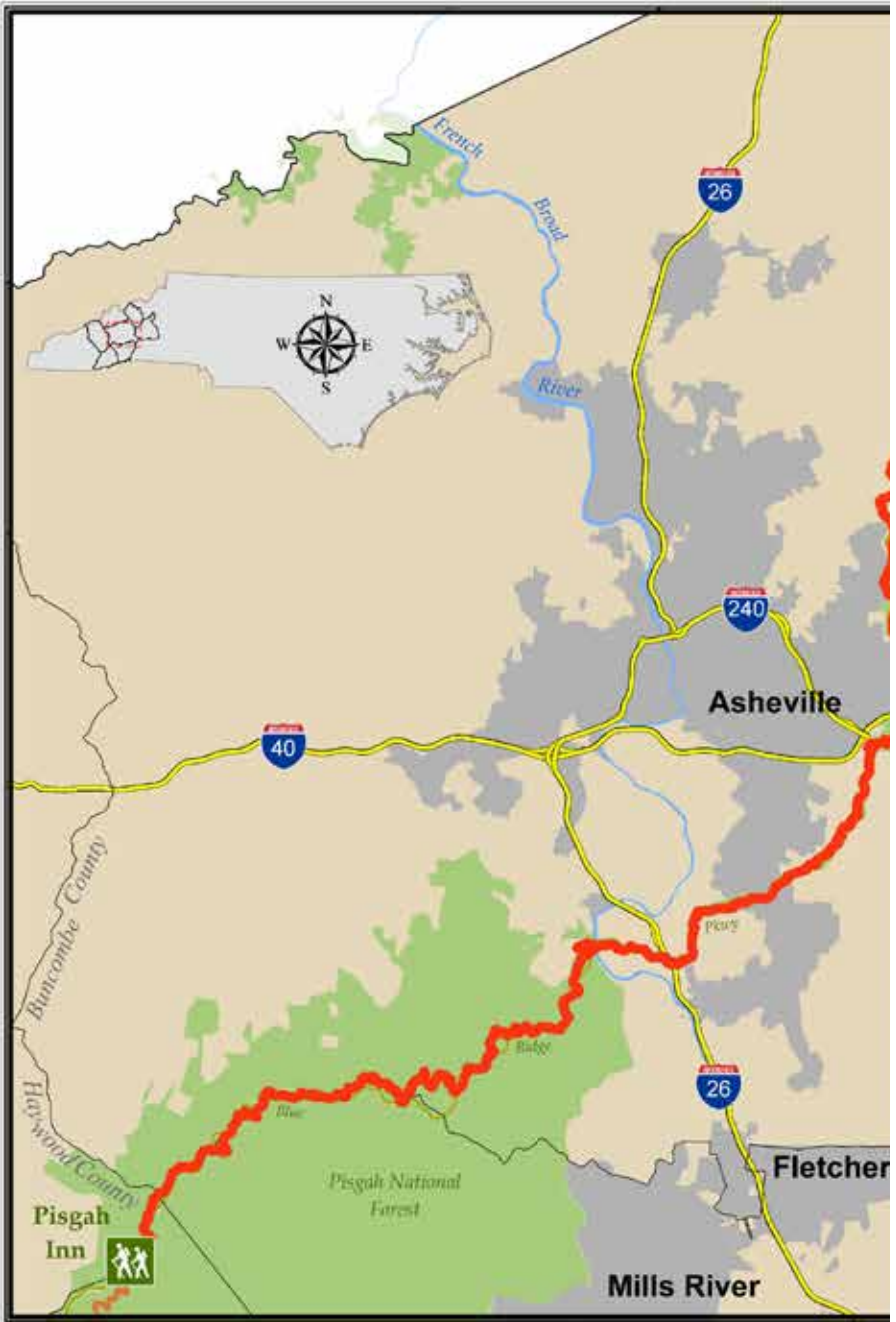
Supplies



Water

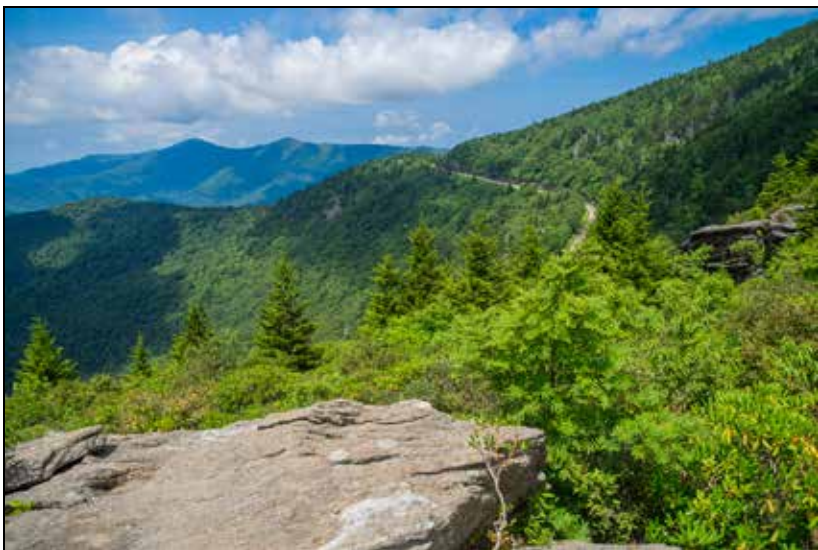


Picnic





Map and elevation profile produced for Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail by Curtis Belyea, 2019.































Hiking in the Black Mountains










Photo by Jeff Clark www.internetbrothers.org













including an Ingles supermarket approximately 0.5 mile to the right (west).  





- 32.0 Pass bench on left.
- 32.1 Cross two footbridges.
- 32.2 Pass bench on left and continue straight on sidewalk at Folk Art Center parking lot (MP 382). 
- 32.3 Pass plaque on left honoring long-time Carolina Mountain Club volunteer Arch Nichols. Then continue to follow MST signs across access road and turn right onto gravel trail (a self-guided nature trail). *Note:* Continue straight instead to reach the Folk Art Center, which exhibits fine art and crafts from around the Southern Appalachians and has restrooms and water. It is open daily from 9 AM to 6 PM April-December and 9 AM to 5 PM January-March.  
- 32.4 Continue straight past trail on left.
- 32.5 Just before a blue blaze on a tree, bear right off nature trail, then cross bridge over Riceville Rd.
- 33.1 Continue straight past trail on left.
- 33.3 Cross BRP at gravel parking lot (MP 381.2). 

- 34.3 Pass blue-blazed spur trail to gravel parking area on BRP on left (MP 380.3). 
- 34.8 Pass spur trail on left leading to rock, known locally as “Lunch Rock,” overlooking Haw Creek Valley.
- 35.7 Continue straight onto old roadbed.
- 35.8 Pass spur trail to gravel parking area on the BRP on the left (MP 379). 
- 36.5 Continue straight past trail on right in sharp curve of MST.
- 37.7 Cross BRP at Craven Gap, then turn right at T-intersection. *Note:* there is parking at the access road a few yards to your left (MP 377.4). 
- 38.4 Ascend a short set of stairs.
- 38.7 Cross stream, then take the left fork at the Y-intersection. 
- 39.1 Continue straight across Elk Mtn. Scenic Hwy. at gravel parking area. 
- 39.5 Pass trail on left, leading to gravel parking area on Ox Creek Rd. 
- 40.2 Continue straight past spur trail on left, leading to Bull Gap gravel parking area on Ox Creek Rd., then begin ascending a series of switchbacks. 
- 41.7 Continue straight past the ruins of Rattlesnake Lodge, a summer home built by Asheville physician Chase Ambler in 1903-4. *Note:* The trail leading down to your right is the first of two trails leading to a parking area on the BRP at Tanbark Ridge Tunnel (MP 374.5) approximately 0.5 mile away. 
- 41.9 At remains of an old fireplace, cross second trail on right leading to BRP parking area approximately 0.5 mile away, then cross small stream. 
- 42.1 Turn left at a hairpin turn.
- 42.5 Cross a small stream—note the springhead on the right—then, at Y-intersection, take right fork (left fork has blue blaze). 
- 42.8 Pass on to Pisgah National Forest land. Backcountry camping may be legal from here to Mile 43.7, subject to restrictions described in the “Backcountry Camping” section. 
- 43.7 Pass just below the summit of Rich Knob.
- 45.2 Descend ladder.
- 45.5 Ascend ladder.

- 46.6 Turn left on BRP and walk along shoulder approximately 100 yards before returning to trail at MST signpost at edge of grassy clearing.
- 47.2 Turn right at T-intersection.
- 47.4 Continue straight across Craggy Gardens picnic area access road (MP 367.6). *Note:* Backcountry camping may be legal from here to Mile 51.2, subject to restrictions described in the “Backcountry Camping” section.  
- 47.9 Continue straight past short spur trail on left leading to Craggy Gardens picnic area, with restrooms, parking and picnic facilities. *Note:* To reach the trail from the top of the parking area, follow the trail marked with a blue blaze and the MST logo, then turn left on the MST.   
- 48.0 Where trail comes in at sharp angle from left, follow white arrow to right.
- 48.5 Continue straight through old CCC shelter.
- 48.8 Turn left where trail is signed to Douglas Falls, then turn right at T-intersection. *Note:* Continuing straight leads about 100 yards to the Craggy Gardens Visitor Center (MP 364.5), with water, restrooms, a gift shop, and parking.    
- 49.9 Pass Douglas Falls Trail on left.
- 51.3 Continue straight onto paved road next to building.
- 51.4 Leave paved road where trail heads into woods on left.
- 51.5 Cross BRP.
- 51.6 Continue straight through Graybeard Mtn. Overlook (MP 363.4). 
- 51.9 Pass wind shelter made of rhododendron branches and fire ring on right.
- 52.5 Pass Lunch Rock on right, with 360 degree views over the heath bald. *Note:* Walk around on side trail to climb up back side of rock.
- 53.6 Reach BRP and walk along shoulder outside guardrail.
- 53.7 Return to woods on trail.
- 53.8 Continue straight through Glassmine Falls Overlook (MP 361.2). 
- 54.0 Descend set of wooden stairs.
- 55.3 Cross BRP at Walker Knob Overlook (MP 359.8), then continue past yellow-blazed trail on left and follow MST sign onto trail

- parallel to and on right of road. You will soon begin ascending a long series of switchbacks. 
- 56.1 Reach summit ridge and turn right.
 - 56.9 Cross 6,320-foot summit of Blackstock Knob. *Note:* The trail tread will become rockier and more difficult soon.
 - 58.6 Begin descending a series of switchbacks.
 - 59.0 Cross a small stream that may not have water during dry seasons. 
 - 59.3 Continue through clearing with nice lunch rock on right overlooking city of Asheville's water supply reservoir, then turn left at T-intersection. *Note:* The trail to the right leads to a rock outcrop with views.
 - 60.3 Pass through stile, then cross NC 128 at gravel parking area (which can be easy to miss in a car), pass by trail on right and merge onto wider trail, which is the Buncombe Horse Range Trail. Backcountry camping may be legal from here to Mile 63.9, subject to restrictions described in the "Backcountry Camping" section.  
 - 60.4 Cross stream, then continue straight at sign toward Camp Alice. 
 - 60.5 Cross Right Prong of South Toe River. 
 - 61.4 Cross South Fork of Upper Creek. 
 - 63.6 Cross Lower Creek. 
 - 63.9 Turn sharply left onto Commissary Trail at the sign marked with orange diamonds as well as MST white circles. Then pass a second sign to enter Mt. Mitchell State Park. *Note:* If you continue straight, which is also the Commissary Trail, you can avoid the 1.2-mile-long, 900-vertical-foot climb to the summit of Mt. Mitchell. If you choose this alternative, walk 0.5 mile then return to the MST at Mile 66.7.
 - 64.2 Continue straight past gravel road on right and cross Lower Creek, then turn right at sign onto Camp Alice Trail. From this point, you will climb steeply through spruce-fir forest on a trail that is marked with blue squares as well as the MST white circles. *Note:* If you continue straight here, the Mt. Mitchell State Park office is 1.2 miles ahead. 
 - 64.7 At sign, pass trail on left and continue on Old Mitchell Trail, marked with yellow circles as well as white circles, then almost immediately take a switchback up the hill. *Note:* The trail to the left is also the Old Mitchell Trail and leads down 1.5 miles to the park office.

- 64.8 Switchback left where the trail straight ahead is blocked with branches, then switchback right.
- 64.9 At T-intersection with sign, turn right to stay on Old Mitchell Trail. *Note:* The trail to the left (the Campground Spur Trail) leads 0.3 mile to the Mt. Mitchell State Park Campground. See the “Campgrounds and Lodging” section for this segment for information about camping here. 
- 65.1 At T-intersection, turn right on paved trail. Pass Mt. Mitchell State Park Environmental Education Center on left, then turn left off paved trail onto Balsam Nature Trail. *Note:* Turn left on the paved trail and walk 100 yards to reach the Mt. Mitchell parking lot, with water, restrooms, and a concession stand. The Mt. Mitchell State Park restaurant is approximately 1.6 miles away on the road from the parking lot. Continue straight on the paved trail for 500 feet to reach the summit of Mt. Mitchell.    
- 65.4 Continue straight past Balsam Nature Trail on left, then pass sign marked “Black Mountain Campground 5.5 miles.”
- 65.8 Pass state park boundary sign and enter Pisgah National Forest. *Note:* Backcountry camping may be legal from here to the end of the segment, subject to restrictions described in the “Backcountry Camping” section. 
- 66.7 Turn left at T-intersection in clearing with power-line cut, turn left to continue on Mt. Mitchell Trail and MST. *Note:* In the next 0.5 mile, you will cross this power-line cut 5 times while descending a long series of switchbacks.
- 66.8 Pass campsite on right, then bear right onto Mt. Mitchell Trail at Y-intersection where Buncombe Horse Range Trail continues to left. 
- 67.2 Cross power-line cut for the last time in this series.
- 67.4 Pass campsite on left. 
- 67.9 Pass campsite on left. 
- 68.1 Bear right at Y-intersection with Mt. Mitchell Trail. *Note:* A few yards down the Mt. Mitchell Trail is Setrock Creek, a good water source. 
- 68.6 Pass campsites on right and left. 
- 68.7 Cross Setrock Creek. 

- 68.8 Cross power-line cut.
- 69.4 Continue straight past Old Mt. Mitchell Trail on left (this is a different trail than the Old Mitchell Trail you followed a few miles ago).
- 71.0 Cross wooden bridge over Little Mtn. Creek.
- 71.1 Continue straight across road, turn left at T-intersection, then bear right at Y-intersection.
- 71.2 At T-intersection, turn right on road.
- 71.4 Turn right at camp office, cross bridge over South Toe River, and reach parking area on South Toe River Rd. near Black Mtn. Campground and end of Segment 3. *Note:* To reach the parking area by car from the BRP, take NC 80 (at MP 344) toward Burnsville. After the small community of Busick, turn left onto South Toe River Rd. This road will eventually turn to gravel and follow the river. At the gravel road intersection, turn right and continue to follow the road right. The parking area is on your left just before a bridge and the entrance to the Black Mtn. Campground on the right. See the “Campgrounds and Lodging” section for this segment for information about camping at the Black Mtn. Campground.    



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies












Water




Picnic





Hiking Directions, Westbound

- 0.0 Turn left out of the parking area on South Toe River Rd. near Black Mtn. Campground to begin Segment 3, then cross bridge over South Toe River and turn left at sign pointing to Mt. Mitchell. *Note:* To reach the parking area by car from the BRP, take NC 80 (at MP 344) toward Burnsville. After the small community of Busick, turn left onto South Toe River Rd. This road will eventually turn to gravel and follow the river. At the gravel road intersection, turn right and continue to follow the road right. The parking area is on your left just before a bridge and the entrance to the Black Mtn. Campground on the right. See the “Campgrounds and Lodging” section for this segment for information about camping at the Black Mtn. Campground. Backcountry camping may be legal from here to Mile 5.5, subject to restrictions described in the “Backcountry Camping” section.    
- 0.1 Bear left at Y-intersection with trail to Briar Bottom Group Camping.
- 0.3 Continue straight past trail on right, turn right at signpost for Mt. Mitchell Trail, then continue straight across road.
- 0.4 Cross wooden bridge over Little Mtn. Creek.
- 2.0 Bear left at Y-intersection to follow Higgins Bald Trail.
- 2.5 Cross power-line cut.
- 2.7 Cross Setrock Creek. 
- 2.8 Pass campsites on right and left. 
- 3.3 Continue straight past Mt. Mitchell Trail on right. *Note:* A few yards down the Mt. Mitchell Trail is Setrock Creek, a good water source. 
- 3.5 Pass campsite on right. 
- 4.0 Pass campsite on right and begin ascending a long series of switchbacks. 
- 4.2 Cross power-line cut. *Note:* In the next 0.5 mile, you will cross this power-line cut 5 times.
- 4.6 Continue straight past trail on right marked Buncombe Horse Range (the trail you are continuing on is also called the Buncombe Horse Range Trail), then pass campsite on left. Reach the power-line cut for the last time at a well-marked junction and turn right onto the



Sunlight filtering through clouds over Asheville
Photo by Matt Mutel

Mt. Mitchell Trail, which is marked with blue diamonds as well as the MST white circles. *Note:* If you continue straight, you will be on the Commissary Trail, which avoids the 1.6-mile-long, 900-vertical-foot climb to the summit of Mt. Mitchell. If you choose this alternative, walk 0.5 mile then return to the MST at Mile 7.5. 

- 5.5 Pass state park boundary sign and enter Mt. Mitchell State Park.
- 6.0 Pass sign marked “Black Mountain Campground 5.5 miles” (in the other direction), then pass Balsam Nature Trail on right.
- 6.2 Continue straight onto paved trail then pass Mt. Mitchell State Park Environmental Education Center on right. *Note:* Turn left on the paved trail and walk 500 feet to reach the summit of Mt. Mitchell.
- 6.3 Turn left onto Old Mitchell Trail at sign. *Note:* Continuing straight on the paved trail for 100 yards leads to the Mt. Mitchell parking lot, with water, restrooms, and a concession stand. The Mt. Mitchell State Park restaurant is approximately 1.6 miles away on the road from the parking lot.    
- 6.5 Turn left at sign to stay on Old Mitchell Trail. Make two quick switchbacks, left then right. At the second one, a trail from the left is blocked. *Note:* The trail straight ahead at the sign (the Campground Spur Trail) leads 0.3 mile to the Mt. Mitchell State Park



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms













Supplies














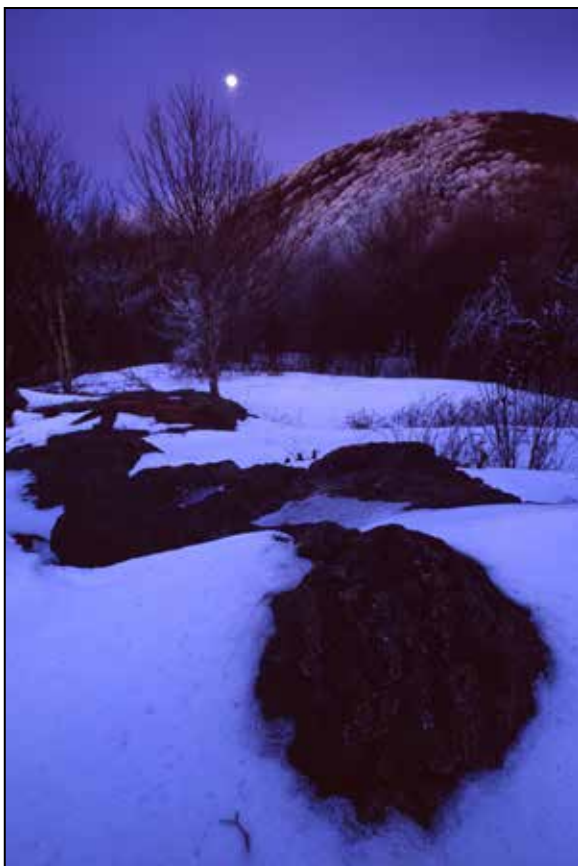
Water



Picnic













- Campground. See the “Campgrounds and Lodging” section for this segment for information about camping here. 
- 6.7 At sign, pass trail on right and continue on Camp Alice Trail, marked with blue squares as well as white circles. *Note:* The trail to the right is the continuation of the Old Mitchell Trail and leads down 1.5 miles to the park office.
 - 7.1 Turn left on gravel road, then cross Lower Creek. *Note:* If you turn right here, the Mt. Mitchell State Park office is 1.2 miles ahead. 
 - 7.2 Continue straight past gravel road on left.
 - 7.5 Pass sign to leave Mt. Mitchell State Park, then make a sharp right turn onto the Buncombe Horse Range Trail just before a small stream. *Note:* Backcountry camping may be legal from here to Mile 11.1, subject to restrictions described in the “Backcountry Camping” section. 
 - 7.7 Cross Lower Creek. 
 - 9.9 Cross South Fork of Upper Creek. 
 - 10.8 Cross Right Prong of South Toe River. 
 - 10.9 Continue straight past sign marked for Buncombe Horse Range Trail, South Toe River Rd., and Camp Alice, then cross stream. 
 - 11.1 At Y-intersection, take right fork with white marker, then cross NC 128 at gravel parking area (which can be easy to miss in a car) and pass through a stile. *Note:* If you continue straight until you reach the road, you went too far but can turn right on the road and go 100 yards to the correct crossing, marked with MST signs. 
 - 12.1 At Y-intersection, take right fork then continue through clearing with nice lunch rock on left overlooking city of Asheville’s water-supply reservoir. *Note:* The left fork leads to a rock outcrop with views. The trail tread will become rockier and more difficult soon.
 - 12.3 Cross a small stream that may not have water during dry seasons, then begin ascending a series of switchbacks. 
 - 14.5 Cross 6,320-foot summit of Blackstock Knob.
 - 15.3 Just before trail straight ahead almost disappears, turn left and head down a steep hill. You soon begin descending a long series of switchbacks.
 - 16.1 Continue past yellow-blazed trail on right, then cross BRP at Walker Knob Overlook (MP 359.8). 







- 17.4 Ascend set of wooden stairs.
- 17.5 Continue straight through Glassmine Falls Overlook (MP 361.2). 
- 17.6 Reach BRP and walk along shoulder outside guardrail.
- 17.7 Return to woods on trail.
- 18.8 Pass Lunch Rock on left, with 360 degree views over the heath bald.
Note: Walk around on side trail to climb up back side of rock.
- 19.4 Pass wind shelter made of rhododendron branches and fire ring on left.
- 19.8 Continue straight through Graybeard Mtn. Overlook (MP 363.4). 
- 19.9 Cross BRP.
- 20.0 Bear right on paved road, then continue straight onto trail at building on your right. *Note:* Backcountry camping may be legal from here to Mile 24.0, subject to restrictions described in the “Backcountry Camping” section. 
- 21.5 Pass Douglas Falls Trail on right.
- 22.6 Turn left, then right at T-intersection. *Note:* Going left at the second turn will take you about 100 yards to the Craggy Gardens Visitor Center (MP 364.5), with water, restrooms, a gift shop, and parking.    
- 22.8 Continue straight through old CCC shelter.
- 23.3 At Y-intersection, take left fork.
- 23.4 Continue straight past short spur trail on right leading to Craggy Gardens picnic area (MP 367.6), with restrooms, parking and picnic facilities. The unmarked trail is between two signs noting that the MST is closed to horses and bicycles. *Note:* To reach the trail from the top of the parking area, follow the trail marked with a blue blaze and the MST logo, then turn right on the MST.   
- 24.0 Continue straight across Craggy Gardens picnic area access road, continuing on trail to left of gravel road. 
- 24.1 At Y-intersection, take left fork.
- 24.7 Turn right on BRP and walk along shoulder approximately 100 yards before returning to trail at MST signpost.
- 25.9 Descend ladder.
- 26.1 Ascend ladder.



Evening at Bee Tree Gap, Great Craggy Mountains
Photo by Stephen Schoof

- 27.7 Pass just below the summit of Rich Knob. *Note:* Backcountry camping may be legal from here to Mile 28.6, subject to restrictions described in the “Backcountry Camping” section. ▲
- 28.9 Pass blue-blazed trail on right, then cross a small stream—note the springhead on the left. 💧
- 29.3 Turn right at a hairpin turn.
- 29.5 Cross a small stream, then, at remains of old chimney, cross trail marked with blue blaze. The trail to the left is the first of two trails leading to the parking area on the BRP at Tanbark Ridge Tunnel (MP 374.5) approximately 0.5 mile away. 🅅

- 29.7 Continue straight past second trail to BRP parking area and ruins of Rattlesnake Lodge, a summer home built by Asheville physician Chase Ambler in 1903-4. 
- 31.0 Begin descending a series of switchbacks.
- 31.2 At Y-intersection, take left fork. *Note:* The right fork leads to Bull Gap gravel parking area on Ox Creek Rd. 
- 31.9 Pass trail on right leading to gravel parking area on Ox Creek Rd. 
- 32.2 Continue straight across Elk Mtn. Scenic Hwy. at gravel parking area. 
- 32.7 Cross stream. 
- 33.0 Descend a short set of stairs.
- 33.6 Just before a Y-intersection, where the left trail passes a blue-blazed tree, take steps down and to the left as shown by a white arrow, then cross the BRP. *Note:* Continuing straight leads to parking area at Craven Gap (MP 377.4). 
- 34.9 Continue straight past trail on left in sharp curve of MST.
- 35.6 Pass spur trail to gravel parking area on the BRP on the right (MP 379). Where roadbed is blocked by brush pile, bear right up wooden steps. 
- 36.5 Pass spur trail on right leading to rock, known locally as “Lunch Rock,” overlooking Haw Creek Valley.
- 37.0 Pass blue-blazed spur trail to gravel parking area on BRP on right (MP 380.3). 
- 38.1 Cross BRP at gravel parking lot (MP 381.2). 
- 38.3 Continue straight past trail on right.
- 38.9 Cross bridge over Riceville Rd., then, at T-intersection where tree on the left has a double white blaze, turn left. This is beginning of the Folk Art Center’s self-guided nature trail.
- 39.0 Continue straight past trail on left.
- 39.1 At sidewalk, turn left and cross access road to pick up sidewalk around parking lot. Then pass plaque on right honoring long-time Carolina Mountain Club volunteer Arch Nichols. *Note:* The Folk Art Center (MP 382), on the right, exhibits fine art and crafts from around the Southern Appalachians and has restrooms and water. It is open daily from 9 AM to 6 PM April-December and 9 AM to 5 PM January-March.   

- 39.2 Pass bench on right, then cross two footbridges.
- 39.4 Pass bench on right.
- 39.5 Continue straight across BRP access road. *Note:* The access road leads to US 70, with heavy strip development in both directions, including an Ingles supermarket approximately 0.5 mile to the right (west).  
- 39.6 Turn right onto BRP shoulder and immediately cross bridge over US 70.
- 39.7 Turn right into the woods at MST signpost.
- 40.4 Cross stile with white blaze, then follow white blazes under BRP viaduct across field.
- 40.5 Cross stile at end of field, continue straight on bridge over Swananoa River towards railroad tracks, then cross railroad tracks and pass through tunnel under I-40.
- 40.6 At end of tunnel, turn right on white-blazed trail, then go up stairs.
- 40.8 Continue straight through power-line cut.
- 41.5 Where trail to the BRP Visitor Center comes in from right, bear left towards US 74. *Note:* The BRP Visitor Center & Headquarters (MP 384) is 0.3 mile down the trail on the right. It has exhibits about the natural and cultural heritage of the BRP area as well as restrooms and water. It is open from 9 AM to 5 PM daily year-round.   
- 41.8 Continue straight past small unmarked spur trail to BRP on right.
- 42.2 Turn left on BRP, then cross bridge over US 74A.
- 42.3 At parking area at end of bridge (MP 384.8), turn right onto trail marked with MST signpost. 
- 42.4 Continue straight past trail on left.
- 42.5 Cross a small stream.
- 42.6 Cross power-line cut.
- 43.6 Cross a small stream.
- 43.8 Continue straight across old road.
- 44.2 Cross small creek, then continue straight past trail on right.
- 44.6 Cross a small stream.
- 45.1 Cross two small streams then continue straight past old roadbed on left.
- 45.3 At Y-intersection where larger trail continues down to the right, bear left on smaller trail.



Mt. Mitchell summit
Photo by Jake Blood

- 45.5 Bear left at Y-intersection.
- 45.8 Continue straight past fainter trail leading to BRP on left.
- 45.9 Continue straight past trail on the left.
- 46.2 Cross footbridge over a small stream.
- 46.5 Turn right on BRP, then cross bridge over Sweeten Creek Rd.
- 46.6 At end of bridge, turn right onto trail with MST signpost.
- 46.9 Turn right on BRP, then cross bridge over railroad tracks.
- 47.0 Cross bridge over railroad tracks, then turn right on trail with MST signpost.
- 47.2 Turn right onto BRP, then cross bridge over Hendersonville Rd.
Note: The access road across the BRP leads to Hendersonville Rd., a major thoroughfare in Asheville. Turning left (south) at the bottom of the ramp leads to a number of shopping options, including a Walmart approximately 0.5 mile away. To the right (north) are



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms










Supplies


















Water



Picnic

- historic Biltmore Village and downtown Asheville, about 4 and 6 miles away, respectively, along with numerous smaller shopping centers.   
- 47.3 After passing access road, and just before gate, turn left on trail marked with MST signpost. *Note:* There is a parking area just across the road from the trail (MP 388.9). 
- 47.4 Continue straight past trail coming in from right.
- 47.6 Descend stairs, cross trail intersection, then climb stairs on other side.
- 47.9 Cross small footbridge over swampy area, then larger footbridge over Fourmile Branch.
- 48.5 Continue straight across gravel road.
- 49.5 Cross footbridge over Dingle Creek, bear left and slightly uphill, then turn right at MST signpost.
- 49.7 Cross gravel path with padlocked gate just to your left, then cross footbridge over small creek. *Note:* Turn right on blue-blazed spur trail to reach parking 0.2 mile away on BRP (MP 390.9). 
- 50.3 At Y-intersection, bear right, then continue straight past intersection with closed trail.
- 50.4 Continue straight past trail on the left.
- 50.7 Turn left on BRP, then cross bridge over I-26.
- 50.9 Just past the bridge, turn right on trail marked with MST signpost.
- 51.1 Cross BRP.
- 51.8 Continue straight across dirt road that passes under BRP.
- 51.9 At Y-intersection, where left trail is marked with a blue diamond with an arrow, continue straight as shown on MST signpost.
- 52.4 Bear right at a Y-intersection, come out to parking area (MP 393.4), then turn left on BRP and cross bridge over French Broad River. 
- 52.6 Just after crossing bridge, turn right on BRP access road.
- 52.8 Just past road gate, turn left on trail marked with white-blazed signpost and informational sign titled “Shut-In Trail.” The trail beginning here generally follows the path of, and is sometimes on the bed of, the old bridle trail built by George Vanderbilt to connect Biltmore House to Buck Spring Lodge, his hunting lodge near the summit of Mt. Pisgah. *Note:* Parking is available along the shoulder of the access road. 

- 53.0 Pass through gate in chain-link fence, then cross small stream. You are now entering the North Carolina Arboretum property.
- 53.1 At T-intersection, turn left.
- 53.2 Pass through gate in chain-link fence to leave the Arboretum property.
- 53.3 Cross creek. 
- 55.0 Turn left on an old gravel road.
- 55.1 At open area showing signs of erosion, leave gravel road to the left and follow white-blazed signpost up the trail. *Note:* There is a gravel parking area on the BRP (MP 395) just to the left of this point. 
- 56.3 Continue straight past short spur trail to BRP on left.
- 57.5 Where a trail comes in at a sharp angle from below on the right, continue straight on MST.
- 58.1 Where Sleepy Gap parking area is visible on right, continue on marked trail behind parking area, then begin climbing a series of switchbacks. *Note:* With an appropriate map, the Lake Powhatan Recreation Area Campground can be accessed from the parking area using the Bent Creek Experimental Forest trail system. See the “Campgrounds and Lodging” section for this Segment for more information.  
- 59.0 At intersection with blue-blazed spur trail to BRP, turn right towards MST signpost. *Note:* The spur trail leads approximately 75 yards to parking at the Chestnut Cove Overlook (MP 398.3). 
- 59.1 Continue straight where trail comes in at sharp angle from right.
- 59.4 Continue straight past Chestnut Cove Trail on right.
- 61.6 Continue straight where trail heads uphill on left.
- 61.7 Cross Bent Creek Rd., a gravel road leading into Bent Creek Experimental Forest, then turn left at T-intersection. *Note:* The Lake Powhatan Recreation Area Campground is approximately 4 miles to the right on Bent Creek Rd. See the “Campgrounds and Lodging” section for this Segment for more information. 
- 62.6 At Y-intersection, bear left up trail marked “Shut-In Trail.” *Note:* Just down the other trail is a small stream that could be usable as a water source during high-flow periods. 
- 62.9 Cross 4,064-foot Ferrin Knob just below remains of old fire tower on left. *Note:* Backcountry camping may be legal from here to Mile

- 70.0, subject to restrictions described in the “Backcountry Camping” section. 
- 63.6 Reach Beaver Dam Gap Overlook (MP 401.7) and walk across the back of parking lot to continue on the trail at far side. 
- 64.6 Cross BRP, then walk through Stony Bald Overlook (MP 402.6) and return to trail at far right corner of parking area. 
- 65.2 Cross BRP.
- 65.8 Cross BRP at Big Ridge Overlook (MP 403.6), then turn right at MST signpost at far right corner of parking area and follow trail down wooden stairs and into the woods. 
- 66.9 Cross parking area at Mills River Valley Overlook (MP 404.5) and continue on trail at far side of parking area. 
- 68.1 Turn left to walk on shoulder of BRP approximately 75 yards, then cross at the junction with NC 151 and enter woods on trail marked with white blazes and wooden vehicle barriers. *Note:* There is a small gravel parking area at this junction (MP 405.5). 
- 70.0 Reach road at parking area for Mt. Pisgah trailhead (to your right) and walk along shoulder approximately 50 yards, returning to the trail at white-blazed signpost. *Note:* At this parking area (MP 407.6), you are crossing directly over the BRP’s Buck Springs Tunnel, so the next time you reach the BRP, it will be from the other side. 
- 70.2 Continue straight across parking area at Buck Springs Gap Overlook (MP 407.6). 
- 70.3 Continue through clearing with wooden benches on the left and a spectacular view. *Note:* This is the former site of George Vanderbilt’s Buck Spring Lodge. *Trail Profiles and Maps: From Clingmans Dome to Mount Mitchell and Beyond*, by Walt Weber and “the Gang,” provides an interesting look at the history and current condition of the lodge site.
- 70.5 Continue straight past junction with Laurel Mtn. Trail on left.
- 70.7 Continue straight past junction with Pilot Rock Trail on left.
- 71.0 Continue straight past side trail on left, which leads to overlook.
- 71.4 Come down stone stairs to parking lot at the Pisgah Inn (MP 408.6) and the western end of Segment 3. *Note:* The Pisgah Inn, open seasonally, has lodging, a restaurant, and a store with general supplies. The Mt. Pisgah Campground is nearby; to reach it, turn left on the



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water



Picnic

BRP and walk approximately 0.1 mile to the entrance on the right (see the “Campgrounds and Lodging” section for this segment for more information). 