

## OMH Trail Data / History

### Fordyce Peak (Blowout Mountain)

Hot Springs National Park

Fordyce Peak, more commonly known as "Blowout Mountain", is perhaps the least used trail in Hot Springs National Park. The spur trail takes off from Sunset Trail, in the extreme northeast section of the park. The spur itself is only 1.5 miles long, but is over a mile from any trailhead, making a minimum round trip of 5.5 miles. The long, steep climb up Blowout Mountain is invigorating, ending at the top of the mountain. Nice view during leaf-off.

- Planning notes:**
1. This hike can be started at either the Cedar Glades Road trailhead of Sunset Trail, or at DeSoto Park (hwy 7) trailhead of Sunset Trail.
  2. From Cedar Glades TH, go west on Sunset Trail along the ridge top to the marked spur. Sunset Trail continues downhill to the right, Fordyce spur straight ahead. About a half mile later, the steep climb starts. This is a half-mile longer than the route below, but eliminates one of the two steep climbs.
  3. From DeSoto Park trailhead, proceed up the road, past the water wheel, dam, and lake. Pick up Sunset Trail going into the woods to the right and as it levels out on the ridgetop look for the spur to the right. This route has two steep climbs -- one on Sunset Trail going up to spur; one going up Blowout Mt.. The route is about half-mile shorter than Cedar Glades TH route.
  4. Good in spring (flowers), fall (color), or winter (view).
  5. This is a good local hike during overnights. It can be stretched to almost 9 miles by starting at DeSoto Park, going up to Peak, then back to Cedar Glades TH on Sunset, then return to DeSoto Park.
  6. About 3 hour round trip; no car pools needed.

- Access Notes:**
1. National Park signs now identify this as "Fordyce Mountain".
  2. DeSoto Park is on Park Ave (hwy 7 north) just past Gulpha Gorge Road leaving town. Cross the road and enter Stonebridge area. Trail is about half mile up this road from hwy 7, on right.
  3. Cedar Glades TH is north of town. Take Whittington Ave at Majestic Hotel, turn right on Cedar, then take right fork on Cedar Glades. It is just at top of hill, on right.

**For additional info:** HSNP Trail maps (Information available at HSNP Visitor's center).  
Check with recent hike leaders shown below. Jim Gifford and McMillen's maintained this trail for HSNP.

#### Recent Hikes:

**Dec 27, 2007** Leader: Phil Simpson **10 Hikers** **OMH Thursday**

**Route:** Desoto Park up Sunset Trail to Blowout spur; to mountain top and beyond to vista bench and return

**5.5 miles** Difficulty Rating **3** Scenic Rating **3**

*Cold, foggy morning. No views, but a light dusting of snow was still on the top of the mountain. Small, enthusiastic group had a good time.*

**Dec 31, 2005** Leader: Glenn Wortham **17 Hikers** **OMH Saturday**

**Route:** DeSoto Park past Stonebridge, up Sunset Trail to spur intersection, to Fordyce Peak and return

**5.5 miles** Difficulty Rating **3** Scenic Rating **3**

*Trail conditions were excellent, but difficult because of steepness of trail.*

*Scenery was beautiful on top, with 360 deg panorama. Saw Fordyce home and Stonebridge; a white heron was spotted at pond.*

*Holly and Magnolia trees were green and stood out.*

*Lunch at Mickie's after the hike.*

**sss:** 360 degree view from top of Blowout Mt

**Dec 9, 2004** Leader: Rex Greer **9 Hikers** **OMH Thursday**

**Route:** Desoto Park to Fordyce Peak and return

**5.5 miles** Difficulty Rating **3** Scenic Rating **3**

*Local hike in lieu of overnight.*

**sss:** View from peak at leaf-off

**May 4, 2002** Leader: Mike Moriarty **Hikers** **OMH Saturday**

**Route:** Desoto Park up Sunset Trail to Blowout spur and return

**5.5 miles** Difficulty Rating **3** Scenic Rating **3**

*Two steep climbs. This is an invigorating hike.*