

OMH Trail Data / History

Ouachita National Recreation Trail / Sect 5

Ouachita National Forest (AR)

Section 5 of the 223-mile Ouachita National Recreation Trail is 27.2 miles long, with about 700' of vertical variance. This section runs from Big Brushy campground (mile 94.5) in the west to US Hwy 27 (mile 121.7) in the east. This is a long, tedious section of the trail, crossing Blowout Mountain and Suck Mountain enroute to Muddy Creek and Hwy 27. There are several major climbs, and several major creeks (Fiddlers Creek, Rainey Creek, Story Creek, and Muddy Creek). There are five access points in addition to Big Brushy and Hwy 27 crossing. At Round Top Trail, access is via a steep one mile climb up to the OT. Northern end of Womble Trail intersects the OT at mile 117.5. There are no shelters in this section, but good camping at Big brushy. Section 5 lies completely within the Odin Ranger District.

Planning notes:

1. West end / Muddy Creek / Round Top area: Separate carpools from HS and HSV meet at Story (about 45 minutes). Use 100 mile round trip for carpool estimate.
2. East end (Big Brushy): Separate carpools meet at Pencil Bluff, then go on to Big Brushy (one hour). Use 60 mile round trip for carpool estimate.

Access Notes:

1. Big Brushy campground: Off hwy 270 W, approx 5 miles west of Pencil Bluff. Well marked; turn is at bottom of long hill (headed east). Large parking lot.
2. FR 33 (m. 96.0): Going east on 270, at top of hill about a mile before Big Brushy, FR 33 angles sharply up hill to the right. Trail is about a mile up the hill.
3. Fiddler's Creek / FR 274: Take AR 88 from Sims toward Pencil Bluff. About half way (about 1 mi), take FR 274 to right (west). Trail is 4 -5 miles up 274. This is an access point; not a trailhead. Can also be reached by continuing on FR 33 (see above) another 4 miles or so; then turn right (south) on FR 274.
4. Rainy Creek/FR149: Reach FR 149 off Sims Loop Road (FR 2262) from either direction. About 25 minutes from Story. S on US 27 to AR 88. Go Right/West. Proceed six miles to FR 2262 (Sims Loop Rd). Turn Right/North; proceed 3.6 miles to FR 149 (Rainy Creek Rd). Turn Right/North; proceed 1.4 miles to TH. TH is just beyond low water bridge and immediately prior to road intersection. 'Y' intersection has room for parking. TH westbound is about 1/3 mile back down (south) on FR 149. You can also approach this from the west (Pencil Bluff) by taking FR 2262 (Sims Loop Road) out of Sims until it intersects with FR 149, then proceeding as above.
5. Round Top Trail: TH is off FR D75A @ 10 minutes from Story. N on US27 about a mile to FR 231 (Emery Lane). Turn Left/West; proceed @ 2 miles. Go PAST D75D to D75A (another 0.1 mi; across low water bridge). Turn Right/North on D75A. Go to end of road and TH. Trail sign in box about 100 yds into woods at juncture of Womble Trail and Round Top Trail. Sign and maps at junction. Take left fork, up a creek bed; it is about 1.0 miles steeply UP Round Top Trail to OT (mile 114.1). Womble Trail goes in both directions from here. Don't get confused.
6. Muddy Creek / FR 149: Go North from story about three miles; turn West on FR 149 (sign to Muddy Creek). Go 2.4 miles on FR 149 to Muddy Creek bridge. Trailhead is adjacent to the low water bridge; LIMITED parking is available about 50 yards past low water bridge. Confusing: Trail eastbound takes off to north on west side of bridge; trail westbound to south on east side of bridge.
7. Hwy 27 Trailhead: On the highway, about five miles north of Story, AR at the crest of a hill.

For additional info: Tim Ernst: "Ouachita Trail Guide" (p. 68 - 78, in 4th edition). Book is pretty accurate on access points. USFS Detailed Segment map of the Ouachita Trail (map TR-1/det). Available at USFS offices or free download at www.fs.fed.us/r8/ouachita/maps/
For current trail conditions, see: Friends of the Ouachita Trail (www.friendsOT.org)

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Oct 4, 2007

Leader: Jim Gifford

19 Hikers

OMH schedule

Route: Rainy Creek (FR 149) to Big Brushy [105.5 - 94.5]

11.0 miles

Difficulty Rating 4

Scenic Rating 3

This was a tough hike. It was very hot and extra humid. Many hikers went through twice normal amount of water. Dan and Glenn shuttled, so we could all walk together, east to west. They also met us with cold water at Big Brushy.

sss: A few views through the trees

May 3, 2007

Leader: Marv Weitzenfeld

Hikers

OMH Thursday

Route: Rainy Creek to FR 149 / Muddy Creek (118.7 - 105.5)

13.2 miles

Difficulty Rating 4

Scenic Rating 3

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- Dec 2, 2004** Leader: Don Haase **19 Hikers** OMH Thursday
Route: Rainy Creek (FR 149) to Big Brushy CG [105.5 - 94.5]
11.0 miles **Difficulty Rating 3** **Scenic Rating 3**
Beautiful day; good crowd. Ben provided shuttle service. Jim and Ernie helped move cars; Ben inserted them at Fiddler's Creek to catch up with group.
sss: first good leaf-off vistas of season
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- Nov 4, 2004** Leader: Marv Weitzenfeld **15 Hikers** OMH Thursday
Route: Hiked west to east from Muddy Creek (Mile 118.7) to FR 736 (mile 130.0); crossed hwy 27 and Irons Fork Creek.
11.3 miles **Difficulty Rating 4** **Scenic Rating 3**
This was a long hike, with a tough climb - but there are worse.
Dropped off cars at 736 enroute to Story; all hiked same direction.
FR 736 was so bad, that Jim had to empty his car of all passengers to get across the creek.
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- Oct 7, 2004** Leader: Jim Gifford **14 Hikers** OMH Thursday
Route: Round Top Trail (114.1) to Rainy Creek/FR 149 (105.6)
10.0 miles **Difficulty Rating 3** **Scenic Rating 2**
Split group; Glenn Wortham led west to east group.
Trail in Horrible condition; over half the hike in high weeds; difficult to follow trail in places.
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- May 6, 2004** Leader: Rex Greer **11 Hikers** OMH Thursday
Route: FR 148 to Round Top Trail (114.1 - 124.2) [plus 1.5 mi walk-in]
11.6 miles **Difficulty Rating 3** **Scenic Rating 3**
Trail was overgrown, but passable.
For additional info: Tim Ernst: Trail Guide to the Ouachita Trail
Ben Glazer
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- Mar 28, 2002** Leader: Mike Zeller **?? Hikers** OMH Thursday
Route: FR 76 E to Big Brushy campground to FR 33 [87.7 - 96.0]
8.3 miles **Difficulty Rating 3** **Scenic Rating 3**
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- Mar 21, 2002** Leader: Martha Doty, Task Master **?? Hikers** Trail Maintenance
Route: East of Big Brushy [96.0 - 101.1]
8.0 miles **Difficulty Rating 4 hours**
General trail clearing on a section that we had recently hiked. Belated clean up of obvious ice storm damage. Four mile hike + four miles of maintenance
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- Mar 7, 2002** Leader: Mike Zeller **?? Hikers** OMH Thursday
Route: FR149 to FR33 (Blowout Mountain) [105.5 - 96.0] + walkout
10.4 miles **Difficulty Rating 4** **Scenic Rating 3**
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- Feb 7, 2002** Leader: Mike Zeller **@ 10 Hikers** OMH Thursday
Route: Round Top Trail to Rainy Creek / FR 149 [114.1 - 105.6] + walk-in on Round Top Mt trail
9.5 miles **Difficulty Rating 4** **Scenic Rating 3** p.
Hiked in snow. Lunch on top of Suck Mountain; where Kay built a snowman and others had a snowball fight. Jim's first use of boot "chains".

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Jan 3, 2002

Leader: Mike Zeller

?? Hikers

OMH Thursday

Route: FR148 west across US27 to Round Top Trail [124.2 - 114.1] + walk-out

11.1 miles

Difficulty Rating 3

Scenic Rating 3