

OMH Trail Data / History

Ouachita National Recreation Trail / Sect 7

Ouachita National Forest (AR)

Section 7 of the 223-mile Ouachita National Recreation Trail is 21.6 miles long, with about 1200' of vertical variance. This section runs from the AR Hwy 298 trailhead (mile 138.8) in the west to AR Hwy 7 (mile 160.4) in the east. There are several steep climbs in this section, including a climb over Ouachita Pinnacle on Blue Ouachita Mountain. The highway 7 end of the trail connects with Hunt's Loop Trail. There are three shelters in this section: Blue Mountain Shelter (m 143.2), Big Bear Shelter (m 150.8), and Moonshine Shelter (mile 158.4). Section 7 lies completely within the Jessieville Ranger District.

Planning notes: The best way to do this hike from 298 to Ouachita Pinnacle is to go "both ways" and swap cars; trailheads are too far apart (almost an hour shuttle between 298 & O Pinnacle)
There is a waterfall on creek below trail between m. 148 and 149; it is a steep descent down to falls and back up again but worth it.
Contrary to popular myth, it is not all uphill from 298 to Pinnacle (but is probably 7 of 8 miles); it is a long hard pull.

Access Notes: Hwy 7 TH is 6 miles north of Jessieville Visitor's Center (Ranger station); just after entering Perry County. Large, paved parking lot.
FR 122 TH (mile 157): Not really a trailhead; wide spot on FR; park 2 cars max. From Hwy 7, turn West on FR 107 about a mile south of Iron Springs, just across from the "Herbs Plus" place. Follow it for about three miles until it (sort of) dead ends into FR 122. (107 used to continue, but is now closed/gated). Go right on FR 122 about a mile. Total distance from hwy 7 to TH is 4.4mi. You can also come in from North, using FR 11 to FR 122; about same distance from 7.
Ouachita Pinnacle Trailhead: Small parking lot at Pinnacle for 8 - 10 cars. Don't believe Tim Ernst 2nd or 3rd edition on how to get there (4th edition is OK). From Hwy 7 just North of TH, turn West on FR 11 (across from Winona Scenic Dr). Proceed 6.5 miles to FR 154 (unmarked); turn LEFT. Go 0.5 miles, cross low water bridge, to FR 779 (unmarked); turn RIGHT. Go 0.5 miles to FR J60 (marked); turn LEFT. Go 4.6 miles to Pinnacle. (note: J60 merges into FR 107, but there is no turn involved). You can NOT get there from 298.
Hwy 298 TH: On the highway; 17 miles from hwy 7 to the east; 11 miles from Story (US 27) to the west. Parking for 8 - 10 cars.

For additional info: Tim Ernst: Ouachita Trail Guide (Fourth Edition).
USFS Detailed Segment map of the Ouachita Trail (map TR-1/det). Available at USFS offices or at www.fs.fed.us/r8/ouachita/maps/
For current trail conditions, see: Friends of the Ouachita Trail (www.friendsOT.org)

Recent Hikes:

Jan 11, 2007 Leader: Marv Weitzenfeld **? Hikers** *OMH Thursday*

Route: Hwy 298 to Ouachita Pinnacle (138.8 - 147.0) [and vice versa]

8.2 miles **Difficulty Rating 4** **Scenic Rating 3**

*This was a replan from prior week, which was cancelled due to weather.
No hike report received*

sss: Views above N. Fork Ouachita River (~139.5)
View of Lake Ouachita across from Blue Mountain Shelter (143.2)

Dec. 7, 2006 Leader: Marv Weitzenfeld **20 Hikers** *OMH Thursday*

Route: FR 122 west to Ouachita Pinnacle (157.0 - 147.0)

10.0 miles **Difficulty Rating 4** **Scenic Rating 3**

*Cold, clear day, with outstanding views. We could see Hot Springs tower.
Marv split the group. Ken schultz and Dan brought a group downhill from the Pinnacle; rest of us went up from FR 122 to the Pinnacle. Tough hike.
Lunch at Big Bear Shelter; The Shack after hike.*

sss: View from outcropping at 155.6;
View from pipeline at 152.6;
Big Bear shelter and creek;
View from Ouachita Pinnacle.

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- Mar 4, 2004** Leader: Jim Gifford **9 Hikers** *OMH Thursday*
Route: Hwy 298 to Ouachita Pinnacle (138.8 - 147.0) [and vice versa]
8.2 miles **Difficulty Rating 4** **Scenic Rating 3**
Dire weather reports caused us to shorten this hike from ten miles (FR 78 South cross) to 8 miles (hwy 298). Storms never did show up and three hikers completed the last 2 + miles after the rest of us were done (Rex Greer showed up late providing additional car to make this possible).
sss: Views above N. Fork Ouachita river (~139.5)
View of Lake Ouachita across from Blue Mountain Shelter (143.2)
- Feb 19, 2004** Leader: Martha Doty, Task Master **12 Hikers** *Trail Maintenance*
Route: General trail maintenance; cleared lots of debris; (147.0 - @ 144)
2.5 miles **Difficulty Rating 4 hours** **Scenic Rating 3**
Worked from Ouachita Pinnacle westward (except Ben, Mike, Phil, went 1.0 mile east)
Tried to use new Hsqvarna Brush cutter, but couldnt get it working right
- Feb 12, 2004** Leader: Jim Gifford **13 Hikers** *OMH Thursday*
Route: FR 122 west to Ouachita Pinnacle [157.0 - 147.0]
10.0 miles **Difficulty Rating 4** **Scenic Rating 3**
Weather: Overcast and cold at begining; light coat of snow; cleared baout noon. Deeper snow (few inches) and ice on top. Clear and sunny on top.
Lunch at Big Bear Shelter (m 150.8) beside running creek
Ben, Charline, Billy did partial hike; shuttled cars; and did trail maintenance
sss: Rock outcrops @ mile 151 **Waterfall** Un-named (see planning notes)
View from pinnacle (all of Lake Ouachita)
- Nov 20, 2003** Leader: Martha Doty, Task Master **12 Hikers** *Trail Maintenance*
Route: General trail maintenance; cleared lots of large debris; (157.0 - 158.4)
2.5 miles **Difficulty Rating 3 hours** **Scenic Rating 3**
Ernie, Dan, Jim cleared from Moonshine shelter spur ddown to FR 122.
Others worked from shelter to hwy 7.
- Nov 1, 2001** Leader: Mike Zeller **Hikers** *OMH schedule*
Route: Hwy 298 to Ouachita Pinnacle [138.8 - 147.0]
8.2 miles **Difficulty Rating 4** **Scenic Rating 3**
Eight mile uphill pull; steady with no breaks. Half the group was coming down with back packs (including Polar). Lunch at Blue Mt. Shelter, with combined group.
Pinnacle was completely enshrouded in fog - no view at all.
- Oct 19, 2000** Leader: Ben Glazer **Hikers** *OMH bonus*
Route: Hwy 7 to Moonshine shelter [160.4 - 158.4]; return via Hunt's Loop
4.5 miles **Difficulty Rating 3** **Scenic Rating 3**
Special trip to stage firewood at Moonshine shelter for subsequent Halloweenie roast. We each carried two pieces of firewood up the mountain. Nelson complained the whole way.

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Recent Hikes:

Jan 8, 2004

Leader: Jim Gifford

20 Hikers

OMH Thursday

Route: FR 124 to FR 122 [168.8 - 157.0]

11.8 miles

Difficulty Rating 2

Scenic Rating 3

*Cold, damp day; walking in the clouds. Beautiful walk down to Sugar Creek.
Big crowd, so split the group and went opposite directions.*

sss: Sugar Creek