

OMH Trail Data / History

Winding Stairs

Winding Stairs is one of the prettiest spots in the Ouachita Mountains. It is a particularly scenic spot on the Little Missouri River, surrounded by high bluffs. The river makes several S-turns past large rock formations, with small waterfalls and swimming holes at each. The area is accessed using the Little Missouri Trail, either from FR 106 (near Albert Pike CG), or from the southern end of the trail. This is a great spot for a hike-and-swim late in the season, or a great lunch spot on longer hikes.

Planning notes:

1. For a Saturday group, the southern starting point is an easier hike, mostly level. From FR 106 there are a couple of good climbs and tricky creek crossings.
2. This hike makes a long day. It is almost two hours from HSV to trailhead.
3. Recommend carpools meet at Rest Area on hwy 70, just east of Glenwood (facilities and parking available). Take as few cars as possible into the trailhead.
4. Rocky Mountain Grill in Percy is a good 'beer & burger' stop on way home. Pizza joint in Glenwood (strip mall on right returning) has ice cream.

Access Notes:

1. Take Highway 70 out of Glenwood to Salem. Turn right on AR 84. Go 26 miles to Langley.
2. There are three trailheads.
3. Albert Pike Campground: Take US 70 W thru Glenwood to Salem. Turn West on AR 84 to Langley; turn right (N) on AR 369; proceed @ 6 miles to Albert Pike Campground. Turn left in the campground on FR 106 and cross the low water bridge. Trailhead is near intersection just across bridge. Lots of parking. Restrooms in campground.
4. FR 106 / Blaylock Creek TH: Proceed as above, but continue on FR 106 about 2 miles to smaller parking lot, on left, marked for "Winding Stairs TH". No facilities; about 3 cars max.
5. Southern end (Musgrave Hole): This is the least developed of the trailheads and hardest to find. Unmarked; limited parking. Stay on 84, 2.7 miles past Langley. Just prior to crossing the Little Missouri River, turn right (N) on FR 10100 [Golden Road]. Go 1.1 miles and turn left (FR 10105). After 0.8 mi, turn left, still on 10105, and continue as far as the rapidly deteriorating road allows (about 1.2 miles). A small parking lot is between the road (to left) and the trail (to right). A yellow iron road gate is about 100 yards down from the parking lot on "trail". About 1/2 mile further, you hit the Little Missouri Trail ("End of Trail" sign).

4.5 miles **Leader:** **Hikers** **OMH Saturday**
Difficulty Rating 2 **Scenic Rating 5**

June 3, 2010 **Leader:** Jim Gifford **10 Hikers** **OMH Thursday**

Route: "In-and-out" Hike and Swim from southern end of Little Missouri Trail

4.5 miles **Difficulty Rating 2** **Scenic Rating 4**

Absolutely beautiful day, but very humid. Lots of folks enjoying Winding Stairs

Six of us went swimming - water was clear, cool and refreshing. Jim tried a rope swing plunge, following the lead of some eight year olds.

Stopped afterwards at Pizza joint in Glenwood for ice cream.

Late Note: The following week a major flash flood hit this area, destroyed Albert Pike campground, took several lives, and all but destroyed this area.

sss: River; rock formations; waterfalls in Winding Stair **Waterfall** Winding Stairs cascade

May 31, 2009 **Leader:** Charline Knight **9 Hikers** **OMH Saturday**

Route: "In-and-out" Hike and Swim from southern end of Little Missouri Trail

4.5 miles **Difficulty Rating 2** **Scenic Rating 4**

Beautiful day; great hike

Three of us went swimming - water was clear and beautiful -- cold, but refreshing.

Stopped at Rocky Mountain Cafe in Percy on way home for beer & burgers

sss: River; rock formations; waterfalls in Winding Stair **Waterfall** Winding Stairs cascade

Jun 15, 2002 **Leader:** Charline Knight **(no data) Hikers** **OMH Saturday**

Route: In-and-out "Hike and Swim" from southern TH of Little Missouri Trail

4.5 miles **Difficulty Rating 2** **Scenic Rating 4**

Beautiful swimming hole (but the water was cold).

Last hike of season

sss: Winding Stairs **Waterfall** Winding Stairs cascade

