

## OMH Trail Data / History

### Womble Trail

#### Ouachita National Forest (AR)

The 43-mile Womble Trail is the third longest trail in Arkansas, offering a variety of terrain. The trail runs mostly north-south, starting at Muddy Creek, where it intersects the Ouachita Trail (at mile 117.2). It comes steeply off the mountain from the OT, levels out and crosses hwy 88. The trail then comes out to US 27 at the tip of Lake Ouachita. It turns westerly along the Ouachita River to a scenic spot called River Bluff. The trail then proceeds southerly past hwy 298 to the southern trailhead, at North Fork Lake. The Womble is well-marked; blazed in White; mile markers run north to south. It is usually well-maintained because it is a popular mountain bike trail for riders from all over the southeast.

**Planning notes:**

1. Can be broken up into four or five hikes, of 8 - 10 miles each. Southern end is flatter; it gets progressively steeper as it approaches the OT in the north.
2. CAUTION: Due to numerous re-routes, the distances for southern segment are WRONG (overstated by perhaps 2 miles) in both Tim Ernst and USFS maps. Biggest difference may be in section between Hwy 270 and Hwy 298.
3. Leaf off periods are best season for this trail.
4. About an hour drive from HSV or HS. Story or Mt. Ida are good meeting places. In Mt. Ida, be careful to designate which US 27 / US 270 intersection (there are 2; each with a Ph 66). Use the one where 27 goes North.
5. After hike, the Dairyyette in Mt. Ida is good for ice cream.

**Access Notes:**

1. Northern TH: Trail begins at Mile 117.2 on OT (signed intersection). Hike in 1.5 miles on OT, from mile 118.7 at FR 149 /Muddy Creek. Take US 27 north out of Story 2 miles. Turn west on FR 149. Go 2.5 miles to bridge over Muddy Creek. Park on far side.
2. TH/ FR D75A: Take FR 231 west off US 27 ("Emery Road"), about a mile N of Story. Go three or four miles to FR D75A. Go to end of road and find trail. (Caution: go past D75D; not the same road).
3. TH/ AR hwy 88 crossing: 2 -3 mi west of Washita (US 27) on AR 88.
4. TH/ US hwy 27: At tip of Lake Ouachita, between Story and Mt Ida. Signed parking lot, about 1/4 mi into woods, just south of where highway 27 crosses the Lake.
5. River Bluff TH: River Bluff access is at end of FR 59. Take FR 59 off US 27 about a mile N of Mt Ida (US 270). FR 59 is second dirt road to left after passing a feed mill on left. FR 59 comes off US 27, a couple miles north of Mt Ida near a feed mill. It is about a five mile drive in. Limited parking.
6. FR/CR 61 crossing. No parking, but a good take out point if you have a shuttle driver. Approx Trail mi 22.5. Take FR 37 north off of hwy 270 for a couple miles. Turn right and then quickly right again onto FR 61. Trail crossing is a couple miles up.
7. TH/ hwy 298 crossing; 1/4 mile after it splits from US 270, west of Mt Ida. Parking.
8. TH/ hwy 270 crossing: No parking; not a good TH unless you have a shuttle team.
9. TH/FR 922 crossing (about mi 30): No parking lot; room for two or three cars on roadside. Should be used with a shuttle crew. Take 379 south out of Mt IDa. Turn right on FR 37 (gravel road), go approx. 1 mile and turn left on FR922; drive about a mile to where Womble crosses (approx ttrail mile marker 30)
10. TH/FR 92 end of trail; use hwy 379 south from Mt Ida for several miles, after it turns to dirt. Requires one left turn as 379 ends. Turn right onto FR 92 turn right; limited TH parking (3 cars max).
11. Southern TH: As above, but continue past FR 92 to FR 68. Turn left to North Fork Lake. Larger parking lot (5-6 cars); no facilities.

**For additional info:** Ouachita National Forest trail map TR-17; Womble Ranger district 870 867-2101 (see link on trails index page).  
Tim Ernst: "Arkansas Hiking Trails" (p. 143)  
Several OMH hike leaders know this trail well. Ben Glazer knows trailheads as well as anyone.

### Recent Hikes

**Jan 27, 2011**      **Leader:** Tom Cornelius      **25 Hikers**      **OMH Thursday**

**Route:** Hwy 27 TH (m 12.9) north to D75A trailhead (m 3.5)

**8.6 miles**

**Difficulty Rating 3**

**Scenic Rating 3**

*Beautiful winter hiking day - clear, blue sky; high in 50s. Big turn out included three first time hikers, and several new first time "Thursday hikers"*

*Tom gave us a scenic side trip up on the bluffs above Ouachita River (actually, he missed a turn off of the bluff, so we got about 1/4 more bluff line than intended.*

*Back-to-the-old-days shuttle process, with no Ben or Glenn.*

**sss:** Views from bluffs above Ouachita River north shore

**Womble Trail  
above Ouachita River**



**Womble View**



## OMH Trail Data / History

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- Oct 28, 2010**      **Leader:** Mike Moriarty      **23 Hikers**      **OMH Thursday**  
**Route:** CR 61 to Hwy 27 TH (@ m 22.5 to @ mi 13)  
**9.5 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 2**      **Scenic Rating 4**  
*Near perfect hiking day - fall is really here. High in 60's; light breeze; deep blue sky; sun playing off the color in trees; swish, swish, swish of leaves; as we hiked this prettiest section of the Womble.*  
*Mike led 14 hikers on main hike from CR 61; Jim led subgroup of seven late-comers and shuttle drivers on shorter segment from FR 922. We all ended up together.*  
*Lunch on ridge top.*  
*Ice cream stop afterwards at Mt Ida Dairyette.*  
**sss:** Bluff top river views  
mountain views from ridge tops  
sun playing on fall leaves
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- Sept 30, 2010**      **Leader:** Larry Kizer / Tom Cornelius      **23 Hikers**      **OMH Thursday**  
**Route:** FR 922 north to FR 61 (@ mi 30 to @ mi 22.5)  
**8.0 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 2**      **Scenic Rating 2**  
*Autumn might finally be here; temps approaching 80, but not bad. Larry was hike leader, but couldn't hike, so delegated Tom C to be 'lead hiker'.*  
*Hiked from FR 922 (about m 30) to CR 61 (about mi 22.5)*  
*Since our area is so dry, we were surprised to find numerous water crossings but easily rock-hopped. About half way into the hike, there was a spur that would have taken us to the Ouachita River, but was blocked by fallen trees and overgrown with vegetation. Although I was planning to explore, conditions did not warrant it. All in all, a good, easy hike to begin our Fall hiking season*  
*No shuttle crew today, so spent an hour at end recovering vehicles; Larry drove to far end and met us. It should be noted that Larry Kizer, who coordinated this hike, provided a cooler-full of refreshments (water, beer and assorted sodas) after the hike.*  
*Everybody was very complimentary of this value-added gesture on Larry's part.*  
*Convinced again that mileage on FS map are wrong. Map shows the hike from FR 922 - FR 61 at 9.1 miles, but we did it in less than 4 hours. According to mile markers it is between 7.5 - 8.0 (our time line supports this).*  
**sss:** Views from ridges; creeks and crossings
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- Apr 23, 2009**      **Leader:** Phil Simpson      **17 Hikers**      **OMH Thursday**  
**Route:** Hwy 298 TH to Hwy 27 parking lot (23.8 - 12.9)  
**10.9 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 3**      **Scenic Rating 3**  
*Beautiful spring day - it actually got hot (88).*  
*Encountered a black snake and lots of wild flowers. Wild Azaleas were particularly stunning.*  
*Sallye and Joe did a partial hike (@8 mi) and put car at other end to shuttle drivers.*  
**sss:** Bluff views above Ouachita River [mi 14 - 15]  
Hillside traverse [mi 15 - 17]
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- Dec 4, 2008**      **Leader:** Phil Simpson      **9 Hikers**      **OMH Thursday / local in lieu of overnight**  
**Route:** Hwy 298 to County Rd 59 and back  
**9.0 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 2**      **Scenic Rating 3**  
*The hike was moderate and easy to do. The trail was in excellent condition with adequate flashing. Small bridges crossed most water crossing.*  
*Tried to find spur to River Bluff, but could not.*
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- Apr 24, 2008**      **Leader:** Glen McClain      **9 Hikers**      **OMH Thursday**  
**Route:** Hwy 27 parking lot (mi 12.9) to Hwy 298 (mi 23.8)  
**10.9 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 2**      **Scenic Rating 3**  
*Wet, drizzly day; trees and wildflowers coming out. Walked in light rain much of time.*  
*Jim dropped out half way across due to sciatic pain and helped Ben by moving cars.*  
**sss:** Views from bluff line on south side of Ouachita River

## OMH Trail Data / History

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**Feb 14, 2008**      **Leader:** Phil Simpson      **4 Hikers**      **OMH Thursday**

**Route:** Southern end: State Hwy 298 south to North Fork Lake

**14.0 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 3**      **Scenic Rating 3**

*The trail was in excellent shape and well flashed. The hills were moderate and easy to do. Only 4 persons showed up for this hike in lieu of an overnight to the Ozarks.*

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**Jan 25, 2007**      **Leader:** Ken Schultz      **22 Hikers**      **OMH Thursday**

**Route:** Northern end: FR 149 up OT (1.4 mi) to northern end of Womble; down Womble across hwy 88 to hwy 27, across the bridge and into woods to parking lot and TH.

**14.3 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 3**      **Scenic Rating 3**

*Covered over 14 miles in about six hours flat.*

*Nice day; cold start; about 50 and sunny at end. Ice cream at Story after.*

**sss:** Views of Ouachita River from bluff lines (about a mile around mm 10)

Mossy creek crossing past mm 9.

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**Jan 19, 2006**      **Leader:** Marv Weitzenfeld      **?? Hikers**      **OMH bonus**

**Route:** FR 922 to souther terminus

**7.0 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 3**      **Scenic Rating 3**

*Bonus hike on meeting day*

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**Jan 12, 2006**      **Leader:** Ken Schultz      **?? Hikers**      **OMH Thursday**

**Route:** Hwy 88 to River Bluff

**12 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 3**      **Scenic Rating 3**

*Local hike during Oklahoma OT trip*

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**Oct 6, 2005**      **Leader:** Marv Weitzenfeld      **?? Hikers**      **OMH Thursday**

**Route:** North end. FR 149 TH for Ouachita trail, west to Womble intersection; south on Womble to hwy 88

**9.5 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 3**      **Scenic Rating 3**

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**Mar 24, 2005**      **Leader:** Marv Weitzenfeld      **18 Hikers**      **OMH Thursday**

**Route:** FR 922 to FR 61

**9.0 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 2**      **Scenic Rating 3**

*Beautiful day, with great views in all directions; a little bit of water in the creeks; and perfect temps.*

*Split group. Marv led half group southward from FR 61; Jim led other half northward from FR 922.*

*Lunch beside small creek with holly trees all about.*

**sss:** Views

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**Sep 30, 2004**      **Leader:** Marv Weitzenfeld      **12 Hikers**      **OMH Thursday**

**Route:** From Muddy Creek (mile 118.7) on Ouachita Trail to Womble intersection (Mile 117.2) then first eight miles of Womble to hwy 88.

**9.5 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 3**      **Scenic Rating 3**

*Split the group and hiked from opposite ends with key exchange. Jim Gifford led second group. Re-united at Story.*

## OMH Trail Data / History

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**Sept 23, 2004**      Leader: Marv Weitzenfeld      **13 Hikers**      *OMH Thursday*

*Route:* Mile 12.9 (US 27) to Mile 21.7 (River Bluff spur) and on to River Bluff

**8.8 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 2**      **Scenic Rating 3**

*Womble Trail in excellent condition.*

*One difficult climb (Reed Mtn) right out of parking lot; two small creek crossings (no waders).*

*Split group and came from opposite ends with key exchange*

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**Feb 26, 2004**      Leader: Gary Eason      **12 Hikers**      *OMH Thursday*

*Route:* Two groups hiked opposite directions from FR 92 to Hwy 298

**8.5 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 3**      **Scenic Rating 3**

*Beautiful day. Trail in very good shape; water crossings minimal and easy to negotiate*

*sss:* Leaf off views from atop ridge

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**Oct 9, 2003**      Leader: Gary Eason      **3 Hikers**      *OMH schedule*

*Route:* North Fork Lake (southern terminus) to FR 92

**4.7 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 3**      **Scenic Rating 3**

*Paula talks Jim and Gary into hiking in the rain (despite forecast for "steady, soaking rain" with scattered thunderstorms. The three had a wonderful time; the rain wasn't too bad (until after the hike and driving home). Start of fall colors; some beautiful reds and oranges.*

*Covered 4.7 miles in 1:40.*

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**Feb 13, 2003**      Leader: Gary Eason      **15 Hikers**      *OMH Thursday*

*Route:* FSR 59 to Rocky Shoals

**8.5 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 3**      **Scenic Rating 2**

*Flat hike !! Good pace. Done by 12:30p*

*Temps in 40's; rain threatening, but never came.*

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**Jan 31, 2002**      Leader: Mike Zeller      **?? Hikers**      *OMH Thursday*

*Route:* Southern TH to FR 922 [30.6 - 38.0]

**7.6 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 3**      **Scenic Rating 3**

*Hiked in rain for several miles*

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**Dec 27, 2001**      Leader: Mike Zeller      **?? Hikers**      *OMH schedule*

*Route:* Hwy 270 (Rocky Shoals) to River Bluff [25.7 - 19.8] + 1.4 spur to River Bluff

**10 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 2**      **Scenic Rating 3**

*No details recorded, except for 10 miles*

**For additional info:** Tim Ernst: Arkansas Hiking Trails (p. 143)

Marv Weitzenfeld is OMH resident expert on Womble Trail; Mike Zeller has led this hike several times.

USFS maps available; Womble Ranger district 870 867-2101

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**Sep 27, 2001**      Leader: Ben Glazer      **12 Hikers**      *OMH schedule*

*Route:* Hwy 27 to River Bluff [mi 12.9 to 19.8] (+1.6 spur to River Bluff)

**8.5 miles**      **Difficulty Rating 3**      **Scenic Rating 2**

*sss:* Views from River Bluff