

# AT Vista 2023 Hike Descriptions

## Friday, August 4

1. **A.T. - Roaring Creek to Big Yellow Mtn:** Hike to 5540' bald with 360° views via Yellow Mtn Gap/Overmountain Shelter. No low clearance vehicles on gravel access road.
2. **A.T. - Sams Gap to Devil Fork Gap:** Ascend Bald Mountains to traverse series of knobs of forest and high pastures, pass Hogback Ridge Shelter, and descend
3. **A.T. - Allen Gap to Tanyard Gap:** Steadily ascend Spring Mountain in woods passing shelter. Features Rich Mountain Firetower (3,643') with great views
4. **A.T. - Pump Gap and Lover's Leap:** Lollipop loop first reaching overlook with great views into Hot Springs town and then a forest walk past old pump house
5. **A.T. - Carvers Gap to Round Bald:** Very popular hike to first bald with outstanding views into NC/TN. Parking can be a challenge.
6. **Cloudland Trail to Roan High Bluff:** Hike through red spruce forest out to Roan High Bluff Overlook platform and back in cooler 6,200' elevation. (\$3 day use fee)
7. **Jacob's Nature Park Interpretive Hike:** Enjoy a slow-paced hike, brief stops for explanations, of this wonderful nature park with classic wetland, meadow, and hardwood forest habitats.
8. **Lakeside Trail, Bays Mtn. Park:** Hike around reservoir in TN's largest city park, ending at the animal habitats
9. **A.T. - Osborne Farm:** An easy stroll on gravel path into working cattle pasture for views into Shady Valley
10. **Rocky Fork SP - Whitehouse Cliffs:** Staircase up to the overlook into the Rocky Fork state park and wilderness
11. **A.T. - Nolichucky Overlook:** Up switchbacks to Cliff Ridge for views of the Nolichucky River, railroad trestle, and beyond

# AT Vista 2023 Hike Descriptions

## Saturday, August 5

1. **A.T. - Sams Gap to Big Bald:** Ascend Big Bald (5,516') summit for views of Mt. Mitchell, Smokies, Camp Creek Bald, and Unaka Mtn.
2. **A.T. - Carvers Gap to Grassy Ridge:** Very popular hike thus early leave to get parking. Cross open balds to take side trail to 6,184' highpoint. Individual cars can decide whether to have lunch in Roan Mountain, TN.
3. **A.T. - Straight Branch US 58 to Damascus, VA:** Carpool to meet hike leader at new ATC Visitors Center in Damascus where a car will be left for the shuttle. Hike back past cascading stream into the Friendliest Town.
4. **A.T. - US19E to Hump Mountain:** Climb to 5,587' open bald summit for magnificent panoramic views of rolling mountains in all directions
5. **A.T. - Jones Meadow to Allen Gap:** Drop shuttle near Allen Gap then proceed up Viking Mtn to Jones Meadow. Enjoy views and then descend through forest to roadway.
6. **A.T. - Tanyard Gap to Rich Mountain:** Hike up to rebuilt fire tower for 360° views of forested mountains.
7. **ATC Training: Trail Design & Water:** Learn the A.T. desired condition, trail design and construction while cleaning and repairing water diversions and other general maintenance north of Iron Mountain Gap.
8. **White Rock Loop - Buffalo Mountain Park:** Classic Tennessee woodland loop hike with a stop at the coveted White Rock Overlook.
9. **A.T. - Shook Branch to Watauga Dam:** Beautiful views of Watauga Lake and the mountains of the Pond Mountain Wilderness. Lunch at the dam.
10. **A.T. - Low Gap to Cross Mtn.:** Drop shuttle at Cross Mtn then proceed to Low Gap. Gradual climb 3.5 miles to shelter, then descent to reach gravel accessible path across working cattle pasture for views into Shady Valley.
11. **Pinnacle Mountain Firetower:** This hike will be 500th time for the leader! Great 360° view of mountain ranges from rebuilt observation platform.
12. **A.T. - Beauty Spot to Unaka Mountain:** Drive to Beauty Spot and enjoy the views. Hike up steeply on switchbacks through red spruce forest
13. **Sill Branch Falls:** 60' waterfall is one of the most accessible in the region.
14. **A.T. - Laurel Falls from Hampton:** Former A.T. route (now Hampton Blueblaze) follows the Doe River to 40' high waterfall. Group size limited to ten total.
15. **Litter Clean-up Hike:** After the 1pm workshop, put into practice the principles learned by cleaning a trailhead, such as Shook Branch/Hampton, TN.

# AT Vista 2023 Hike Descriptions

## Sunday, August 6

1. **The Channels Natural Area Preserve:** Labyrinth of sandstone cervices on top of mountain with views. Early morning leave as limited parking enforced by local police.
2. **A.T. - Devil Fork Gap/Jerry Cabin/Fork Ridge Trail:** 9.5 miles on A.T. and 2 miles on Fork Ridge Trail. Features two shelters, including Jerry Cabin, a historic gravesite and beautiful views from atop Big Butt. Low clearance vehicles are not advised on access road to Fork Ridge Trail.
3. **A.T. - Straight Branch US 58 to Damascus, VA:** Carpool to meet hike leader at new ATC Visitors Center in Damascus where a car will be left for the shuttle. Hike back past cascading stream into the Friendliest Town.
4. **A.T. - Coon Den Falls to Dennis Cove:** 2 mi. up Coon Den Fall Trail past 50' cascading falls. Head 1.3 mi. south on A.T. to overlook for Roan Highlands. Head down/north 3 mi. on A.T to Dennis Cove.
5. **A.T. - Carvers Gap to Grassy Ridge:** Very popular hike thus early leave to get parking. Cross open balds to take side trail to 6,184' highpoint. Individual cars can decide whether to have lunch in Roan Mountain, TN.
6. **ATC Training: Field Leadership:** A deep-dive into ground and 1:1 management for shovel-ready trail projects. At USFS Watauga RD work center in Hampton. If possible, please bring your own folding chair.
7. **A.T. - Tanyard Gap to Hot Springs:** A.T features Lovers Leap Rock with views of French Broad River and the town. Individual cars can decide whether to have late lunch in Hot Springs, NC or leave to save an hour.
8. **A.T. - Tanyard Gap to Rich Mountain:** Hike up to rebuilt fire tower for 360° views of forested mountains.
9. **Rocky Fork SP - Whitehouse Cliffs:** Staircase up to the overlook into the Rocky Fork state park and wilderness.
10. **A.T. - Hughes Gap to Little Rock Knob:** Hike through hardwood forest to great views into NC from Little Rock Knob (4918' elevation).
11. **Rock Creek Falls:** Steady climb along stream (four crossings) to reach a 50' double tier ribbon waterfall you can stand under. Later, continue to cool off with a dip in park swimming hole.
12. **Bays Mtn Park Fire Tower:** Lakeside Trail with up and back on Fire Tower Trail to have views across the Holston River towards the Clinch Mtns in Virginia.
13. **A.T. - Laurel Falls via Dennis Cove Road access:** Follow former timber railroad path to descend 25 floors of rock steps down to 40' high waterfall. 10 max group size.
14. **Jacob's Nature Park Wildflower Hike:** Enjoy a slow-paced hike, brief stops for identification, of this wonderful nature park with classic wetland, meadow and hardwood forest habitats.
15. **ATC Training: Tool Care & Maintenance:** Workshop to offer tips for in-field management and post-work cleaning/sharpening of trail-maintaining tools. At USFS Watauga RD work center in Hampton.

# AT Vista 2023 Hike Descriptions

## Monday, August 7

1. **The Channels Natural Area Preserve:** Labyrinth of sandstone cervices on top of mountain with views. Early morning leave as limited parking enforced by local police. Some folks might want to carpool from Meadowview, VA if heading north on I-81 to save an hour return to ETSU.
2. **A.T. - Carvers Gap to Grassy Ridge:** Very popular hike thus early leave to get parking. Cross open balds to take side trail to 6,184' highpoint. Individual cars can decide whether to have lunch in Roan Mountain, TN.
3. **A.T. - Tanyard Gap to Hot Springs:** A.T features Lovers Leap Rock with views of French Broad River and the town. Individual cars can decide whether to have late lunch in Hot Springs, NC or leave to save an hour.
4. **Lower Big Laurel Creek:** Walk on an old railroad bed previously used to carry logs to the sawmill in the former town of Runion down to the French Broad River.
5. **Rocky Fork SP - Flint Creek Trail to A.T. Flint Mtn Shelter:** Up cascading Flint Creek past battlefield with a steep climb (trekking poles recommended) to A.T. and then 0.5 mi. to shelter. Blockstand Creek Trail with views along Snakeden Ridge and descend by Blockstand Access.
6. **Rock Creek Falls:** Steady climb along stream (four crossings) to reach a 50' double tier ribbon waterfall you can stand under.
7. **Buffalo Mountain: Salamanders:** Eastern TN is the salamander capital of the world! After a brief talk, we'll heat to cool Catbird Creek to do some sleuthing.
8. **A.T. - Laurel Falls via Dennis Cove Road access:** Follow former timber railroad path to descend 25 floors of rock steps down to 40' high waterfall
9. **A.T. - Indian Grave Gap to Beauty Spot:** Steady climb on A.T. to 4,437' open bald with views into NC/TN. Could be a shuttle hike for half the distance.