

Trail Notes for the Wildcat Mountain Loop

Description: The Wildcat Mountain Natural Area is maintained by the Nature Conservancy. Paul Elliot, author of "60 Hikes Within 60 Miles" "60 Hikes Within 60 Miles - Washington D.C.", describes a 2.9 mile loop in this infrequently visited hiking venue. Recently fellow hiker Kris Koyote (A.K.A. the Koyote Kid) discovered a labyrinth of intersecting woods roads - some with signs and some without - throughout the venue and put us onto it. Here you will find a description of a 5.27 mile moderate loop (almost a figure 8) with over 1500 feet of elevation gain. That's a lot of E.G. for a 5+ mile hike but only the first 500 feet over about 0.5 miles are difficult. The rest seems barely noticeable as you walk the fairly easy grades of the old woods roads. The allure of this place is not fantastic vistas or beautiful waterfalls, rather, it is the solitude found when hiking in an area seldom visited by others.

Safety Note: Many of the woods roads continue onto private property and the boundaries are not always marked. We show some of these continuing trails on the map with dotted lines beyond the northern border should you miss a turn or two. Please try to avoid hiking on private property.

[Google Custom Directions](#)

As England Mt Rd bears to the left stay straight on a gravel road. Kiosk and parking is on the right.

Trail Notes: From the [parking area](#) walk up (east) the gravel road. When the road veers to the left turn right onto an old fire road, walk around a chain gate and soon turn left onto a footpath and begin a climb via a series of switchbacks. The 2.9 mile "preferred" route is clearly marked with [yellow and green trail markers](#). You will hike most of this plus more on the woods roads. It has no official name so we call it the Wildcat Mt Loop Tr.

After climbing for 0.45 miles cross through a break in an old stone farm wall (There are lots of these among your route.) and turn left, following the wall for a bit. In 0.61 miles turn right onto the first of many woods roads still following the yellow and green markers. The route makes a sharp left as another woods road comes in from the right in 0.22 miles. Shortly after that cross a small stream and come to the junction with another woods road. The yellow and green markers go to the right. Follow this route back to the initial climb to complete the 2.9 mile loop. To complete the 5.27 mile loop [turn left](#) instead. In another 0.14 miles arrive at the John Tr (straight ahead and to the right). This is the apex of the figure 8. Turn left just before this trail onto another woods road.

Cross a small stream and in 0.27 miles from the John trail junction turn right on yet another un-named woods road and climb for 0.30 miles to the junction with the Enon Church Tr (unsigned at this point). Turn right here but in a few yards turn left on yet another un-named road and climb some more. In another 0.24 miles reach a rise with a stone wall on the left. It looks like there used to be a vista here but it is all filled in now. Near a

break in the wall find [2 trail signs](#). Tom Tr goes to the left and Wendy Tr goes to the right. Turn right.

In about 0.1 miles turn right onto the Mayberry Tr. It might not be signed. In another 0.17 miles pass boundary markers and a Mayberry Tr sign just before reaching an intersection with another road. This is John Tr which you saw a sign for earlier. It's not signed at this point. Turn right onto it and follow it for 0.61 miles to the initial John Tr intersection. About halfway down you will pass a strange intersection of other roads on the left and [the Enon Church Tr](#) that you hiked on earlier on the right.

At the initial junction with the John Tr bear left (straight) and in 0.07 miles turn right onto another woods road that comes down from the mountain on the left. In 0.21 miles arrive at another 4X intersection and the [Old Smith House](#). To the right is a section of the "preferred route" which passes the recently restore [Spring House](#). Both structures date back before 1900. At the main intersection turn right onto the yellow and green marked trail in front of the Smith House, passing a usually dry pond with culvert on the left. In 0.20 miles pass another woods road on the right. In 0.36 more miles leave the woods road miles turning right onto a footpath. In another 0.21 miles turn right and follow a stone wall for 0.09 miles to the initial break in the wall. Turn left through the wall and retrace your original steps back to your vehicle.