

Trails at Raccoon Creek State Park

The 44 miles of trails offer a wide variety of hiking options to meet the needs of the casual day hiker as well as the overnight backpacker looking for a challenge within a wilderness setting, and also biking, horseback riding and cross-country skiing.

All visitors using the park trail system should read the trail rules and usage information posted at all the trailheads before beginning.

Backpacking

19.5 miles

The Heritage, Forest and Appaloosa trails make up the green-blazed Raccoon Loop Backpacking Trail, the longest loop trail in the park. Camping is available in two locations along this trail system.

Multi-use Trails

Mountain Biking, horseback riding, hiking permitted

Appaloosa: 3 miles, easiest hiking with a few moderate hills, yellow blazes

The main equestrian trail, Appaloosa, can be accessed via the equestrian parking lot off PA 168 and the connecting Appaloosa Spur Trail. The trail winds along rolling forested hills of maples, oaks, hickory and cherry. Near its western end, the trail passes an old homestead and spring house. Connector Trail Number 4 (hiking only) off of Appaloosa Trail leads to one of the overnight backpacking campsites.

Appaloosa Spur: 0.7 mile, easiest hiking, yellow blazes

Appaloosa Spur Trail connects the Equestrian Trailhead parking lot on PA 168 to the Appaloosa Trail.

Buckskin: 1 mile, more difficult hiking, yellow blazes

The Buckskin Trailhead on Nichol Road provides access to Camp Trail, Pinto Loop Trail and Heritage Trail. The trail passes through a steep, densely forested stream valley.

Nichol Road: 3.5 miles, easiest to more difficult hiking

Nichol Road is the gateway to most of the trails in the western section of the park. Several loop hikes of varying lengths can be created using Nichol Road and connecting trails.

Palomino: 1.1 miles, easiest hiking with a few moderate hills, yellow blazes

Palomino Trail follows an old roadbed for most of its length beginning and ending on Nichol Road.

Pinto Loop: 1.7 miles, easiest hiking, yellow blazes

Pinto Loop Trail has very little elevation change. The wide path passes through a mix of forest meadows. These features make it an excellent cross-country skiing trail.

Lake: 1.9 miles, easiest hiking with one moderate hill, blue blazes

This trail is for hiking and biking only and there are some biking restrictions. Lake Trail follows an old road along Traverse Creek, which leads to the northwest shore of Raccoon Lake. During the 1800s, Traverse Valley was the location of several pioneer homesteads and gristmills. An elaborate two-story stone springhouse dated 1846 still exists near the western end of the trail.

Hiking Only Trails

Beach: 0. -mile, most difficult hiking

Connects the “D” loop in the campground with the swimming area on Raccoon Lake.

Camp: 1.4 miles, more difficult hiking, white blazes

Camp Trail provides access to the south shore of the Upper Lake, a favorite area for wildlife and waterfowl viewing. Modern cabin users can access Camp Trail via Connector Trail Number 1 (blue blazes), located behind Cabins 5 and 6.

Cross-country Skiing: 2.1 miles, easiest hiking, white blazes

This trail is great for cross-country skiing. Accessed from the pavilion area near Shelter Number 6, the trail follows an old roadbed, crosses the main park road to meet Heritage Trail, then follows Heritage Trail through pine forest and small meadows. The trail loops away from Heritage along a hilltop, then crosses over Heritage into a pine plantation. The trail crosses the main park road again and returns to the trailhead at the pavilion area. A fireplace and picnic tables in Shelter Number 6 are available as a warming and rest area.

Forest: 6.2 miles, more difficult hiking with a few difficult hills, white blazes

Running through the northern part of the park, Forest Trail transects several stream valleys that feed into the 101-acre Raccoon Lake. After leaves drop off, the high ridges offer scenic views of the lake. Spring wildflowers are spectacular along many sections of the trail. The trail passes through an old stone quarry site. The quarried stone is still visible today in park culverts, retaining walls and old cabin foundations. The trail crosses PA 18 near the park office and continues on through forested stream valleys to the western trailhead along Nichol Road. Connector Trail Number 6 leads to the overnight backpacking campsites.

Heritage: 9.5 miles, more to most difficult hiking, blue blazes

This is the longest trail in the park. It runs along the southern border of the park and passes through land settled by Beaver County’s first settlers. In the western section, the trail follows some of the first wagon roads begun in the early 1800s. In addition to the main trailhead, Heritage Trail can be accessed by connector trails at the boat trailer parking lot (C7), campground (C8), Camp Trail Trailhead Parking (C9), Buckskin Trail via Connector Trail Number 10 (C10) and at two points along the main park road near the roadside picnic areas. A variety of options exist for loop hikes using these access points and connecting trails.

Heron: 0.5 mile, moderate difficult hiking

This short trail connects Wetland Trail to Nichol Road and Palomino Trail.

Mineral Springs Loop: 1.2 miles, easiest hiking, white blazes

This loop trail begins and ends across from the park office. Mineral Springs Loop passes through one of the park's historic areas, once known for the "healing qualities of the mineral water."

Above the springs are the remains of the 1800s Frankfort Mineral Springs Resort. A detailed brochure on the history of this area is available at the park office.

Upland: 0.6 mile, more difficult hiking, blue blazes

This short trail begins across from the park office and connects to Mineral Springs Loop.

Valley: 1.1 miles, more difficult hiking

Cut in along a steep section of Traverse Valley, the trail passes through an open hardwood forest joining with Beach Trail above the swimming area. Beach Trail connects the "D" loop of the campground to the swimming area.

Wetlands: 1.2 miles, easiest hiking

Wetlands Trail follows the North Shore of the Upper Lake and continues up Traverse Valley to Nichol Road. This wetland habitat is one of the best areas in the park to observe wildlife like beaver, muskrat, turtle, wood duck, goose and deer.

Wildflower Reserve: 5.5 miles of trails for hiking only

The hiking trails wander through fields, forests, meadows and along Raccoon Creek. In the end of April, guided wildflower walks are very popular. To protect the wildflowers, pets are prohibited. Hikers must stay on the trails.