

# CANAAN VALLEY - BLACKWATER FALLS - TUCKER COUNTY

# GET TUCKER'D

## Easy Hikes

### Bald Knob Trail

Through the summer and fall months Canaan Valley Resort operates its scenic chairlift to the top of the ski area. From here, follow the signs for Bald Knob Trail. A one mile hike to a spectacular overlook facing west over Canaan Valley. Make sure to plan properly for what time the chairlift closes for downloading.

### Wild Turkey Trail

On the other side of the North Fork of the Blackwater River in Thomas, WV is the Thomas City Park. Fishing pier, pavilion, and short hiking trails make up this quaint, wooded park. Wild Turkey Trail is a 1.8 mile loop along Lake Thomas that climbs about 100 feet in elevation through Hemlock Forest.

### Red Spruce Trail

Red Spruce Trail is a 1.25 mile reclaimed logging road in Blackwater Falls State Park. This densely wooded area is a true reflection of the West Virginia Mountains and is maintained to its full width for hikers and bikers. Pick up the trail from the main lodge, petting zoo, or rental cabin area.

### Back Hollow Trail

For a guaranteed deer sighting, head for the Canaan Valley State Park Nature Center. Back Hollow trailhead is across the street from the Nature Center. A relatively flat trail with views of wetlands and grassy meadows that make up the headwaters of the Blackwater River.

### Beall Loop Trail

In the heart of Canaan Valley is the Beall(pronounced bell)Trail System, which is managed by the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The Beall Loop Trail is a perfect 2.1 mile excursion for young kids or a picnic in the many meadows along the route. Trailhead is located on Beall Lane off of Cortland Road in Canaan Valley.

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## Moderate Hikes

### Otter Creek Trail

From hiking a couple of miles to spending the night out for a 24 mile round trip trek, Otter Creek Trail is an absolute treasure. Begin by crossing the Dry Fork River from the Otter Creek parking lot on an impressive swinging bridge. Native Brook Trout are found in Otter Creek and a few of its tributaries. Be aware of mandatory water crossings during the spring and heavy rain periods.

### Pase Point Trail

A two hour round trip hike along an old rail grade high above the Blackwater River. Pase Point Trail is a well-traveled 1.7 mile hike to Pase Point, which looks over the Blackwater Canyon. There are two red diamond markings on a large tree and rock cairns for the heavily used 100 foot long path to the Blackwater Canyon Rim.

### Blackwater View Trail

Hike along the middle Blackwater River in the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. This 1.4 mile (one-way) Blackwater View Trail is in the heart of the wildlife refuge and Canaan Valley. Bring binoculars and camera to view the abundant bird population calling the valley floor home or part of a migratory stop. Trailhead is located on Beall Lane off of Cortland Road in Canaan Valley.

### Rohrbaugh Trail

I have found Rohrbaugh Trail to be the most navigable trail in Dolly Sods as far as trail surfaces go. High above Red Creek Valley the trail remains as well drained a trail as there is in the sods. Quality camp sites and views of Lions Head are some of the highlights along the 3.6 mile hike.

### Railroad Grade Trail Loop

Canaan Valley State Park is the perfect moderate hike with subtle elevation gains. Approximately 5 miles in distance, Canaan Valley flora and fauna thrive in this section of the park. Park at the resorts main lodge or get trail information from the nature center before reaching the main lodge.

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## Difficult Hikes

### Blackbird Knob Loop

Explore the interior of Dolly Sods Wilderness and the views from Blackbird Knob. Begin from Forest Road 80 parking lot and trail head for Dolly Sods Wilderness and Canaan Valley National Wildlife refuge. This particular loop is a solid half-day trek with plenty of opportunities to add mileage. Take TR 553 east to TR 514. TR 514 north TR 511 (Blackbird Knob Trail). TR 511 East back to the starting point.

### Splash Dam South

Within walking distance from the Town of Davis is Splash Dam South Trail. This trail parallels the southern side of the Blackwater River for 3.9 miles. Expect very rocky sections of trail along the way. At two points there are bridges allowing access to Camp 70 and the Little Canaan Wildlife Areas' trail network. Park in Davis or at the Heart of the Highlands trail head kiosk at the Rt.32 bridge over the Blackwater River.

### South Prong Trail

On the way to Dolly Sods is Roaring Plains Wilderness. If you are looking for somewhere off the beaten path, Roaring Plains is that place. South Prong Trail is an 8 mile arduous hike. Trailhead located one mile from the Laneville entrance of Dolly Sods. Park at the South Prong/Boar's Nest trailhead. Turning South Prong Trail from an out and back into a loop is an option as well. When used as a loop, hike down FR 19 1.5 miles back to your vehicle.

### Big Springs Gap

Plan for a full day hiking a wonderful loop from the Big Springs Gap Trail head in Otter Creek Wilderness. Experience the best Otter Creek Wilderness has to offer in this all-encompassing trip into the wilds of the Allegheny Mountains. Take TR 151 to TR 131 to TR 138 to TR 150. Map and proper equipment is a must when in any Wilderness Areas. Trail intersection signage at times do not exist.

### Hike Between Parks

Utilize the Heart of the Highlands trail connectivity program linking Blackwater Falls State Park and Canaan Valley State Park. This adventure takes you 8 miles across the Canaan Mountain Backcountry full of groves of Red Spruce, Eastern Hemlock and dense rhododendron thickets. Spend the night at either of the state parks lodges before the return trip for a unique weekend getaway.