

## **Prince William Forest Park, Parking G**

From Parking area G in Prince William Forest, you can easily get to the vast majority of the park. The loop portion of the paved Scenic Drive is the way that most use to get around however, many other trails and gravel roads create a vast network. In the middle of the Scenic Drive loop is the Turkey Run Education Center. It offers hikes and other educational programs about the history of the park by reservation. In the north part of the park is the Oak Ridge Campground. Running on the trails can vary considerably. In some places, trails are hilly, narrow, winding and with awkward stones on the path. In others, trails can be relaxing and meandering over level ground and forest. The Virginia Hotfoot Half-Marathon has been held in the park.

### **Getting There**

#### From the Capital Beltway

Take Exit 1, for Interstate 95 headed south. Go approximately 22 miles, then take Exit 150 bearing right for Joplin Rd. Rte. 619. Take the second right into Prince William Forest Park and pay an entrance fee at the gate. Turn left on the Scenic Drive before the Pine Grove picnic area and Visitor Center. When you reach the loop portion of the Scenic Drive, bear right going up the hill. A bike trail soon takes-up the left side of the road, making it one-way. 4.4 miles from where you began the loop, turn right into Parking area G. Routes start at the intersection with the Scenic Drive.

### **Area Routes**

#### Scenic Drive (7.2, 5.0, or 6.15 miles, VII, V or VI)

The paved Scenic Drive is a favorite of cyclists mostly. Begin by getting some of the hills out of the way. Go around clockwise gradually dropping at first. The first option for shortening the loop is at Parking area H. The High Meadows Trail dips and climbs to the Taylor Farm Road. It passes the Taylor cemetery; for the former residents. You can then follow the Taylor Farm Road to the flatter the Old Black Top Rd. Skipping this for now, the Scenic Drive drops quickly after Parking area H and eventually makes two crossings of the South Fork Quantico Creek. Before the second however is the second way to shorten the route. You can instead take the Turkey Ridge Rd. up to the Old Black Top Rd. From there it's relatively flat to the Taylor Farm Rd. (where the first option joins) and the Scenic Drive. Skipping this option too, descend to where the Scenic Drive loop portion intersects the entrance/exit road that your drove-in on. Turning left at this intersection, climb to more level ground for the return trip. At the top, the bike trail can be used for 3.15 miles. Note that the Scenic Drive is the main route through the park. Sections of it are without much shoulder and must be shared with cars.

#### Mary Bird Branch (7.1 miles, VI)

Warm-up by taking the Scenic Drive to the Oak Ridge Trail. The Oak Ridge Trail is good for running on. It gradually descends to a fern garden surrounding small streams, then climbs a short hill up to the Old Black Top Rd. The gravel Old Black Top Road descends to a stream and rises also, crossing paths with the Taylor Farm Rd. before reaching Mary Bird Trail. Mary Bird Trail descends to a stream and climbs to the Scenic Drive. It's only a half-mile long and is a little

rocky at first. On the Scenic Drive, use the bike trail to get back to the Oak Ridge Trail. After passing it, a gradual descent brings you back to Parking G.

### Oak Ridge (4.0 miles, III)

Descend quickly on the gravel Mawavi Road. At the bottom, cross the bridge over the South Fork Quantico Creek, and turn right on the South Valley Trail, heading upstream. A little of the trail tends to be waterlogged but there are wooden planks to get you over the mud. Otherwise, the trail is mostly flat and with good footing. After crossing back over the South Fork Quantico Creek on a bridge, the trail leaves the main body of water climbing a little more. It also however, passes by beaver habitat. Visible when I was there in 1999, there was one large lodge, and one smaller one. Ferns also grace the trail. You might see rocks *sweat* if it's humid out. The shade keeps them cool and the hotter moist air condenses on them. The trail meanders a bit as it climbs further but with each step even better footing is achieved. Pass close to the campground, then turn right on the Oak Ridge. A short way on the flat Oak Ridge Trail under the oaks brings you to the Scenic Drive. Return less than a mile on the road back to the Parking G.

### South Valley Trail (5.55 or 3.7 miles, VI or IV)

The South Valley Trail is the longest in the park. It goes nearly 10 miles from high points in the northwest to a low point in the southeast of the park. Most of it follows the South Fork Quantico Creek very closely. On this route, use the Scenic Drive to start, then either take a short cut on the High Meadows Trail, or go directly onto the South Valley Trail. Using the High Meadows Trail, cross over two small stream valleys before a final descent to the South Fork Quantico Creek. The longer way on the road takes you further out the drive then down a steep hill to the creek. This section of the South Valley Trail is for hard core trail runners. The trail is narrow (sometimes overgrown) and rocky. There are good views of the rocky creek however, and you do pass along one of the parks small lakes that are hard to get close to otherwise unless you're renting the cabins. A climb up the Mawavi Road brings you back to Parking G.

### **Nearby and Connecting Zones**

Prince William Forest, Parking G  
Prince William Parkway Trail, Chinn Park

### **What to do Afterward**

#### Food and Drink

Dumfries Café - 703 441-1465  
Chubb's Corner Café - 703 221-7771

Happy Eatery - 703 221-8889  
Pizza Hut - 703 221-7171

#### Entertainment and Edification

Turkey Run Education Center - 703 221-7181  
Weems- Botts Museum - Dumfries - an example of 19<sup>th</sup> century housing - 703 221-3346  
Leesylvania State Park - 703 670-0372

## Scenic Drive

Distance: 7.2, 5.0, or 6.15 miles

Rating: VII, V or VI; paved road with some steep hills; unpaved & gravel on short routes

### 7.2 Mile Route

R 0.0 from Parking G; on the Scenic Drive

<\*

1.05 Parking H; High Meadows Trail

1.85 South Valley Trail (white blazes)

1.95 Liming Lane on R

2.15 bridge over S Fork Quantico Creek; begin climbing steep hill

<\*\*

2.5 Turkey Ridge Rd on L; top of hill

L 2.8 at Rd X; to stay on Scenic Drive loop; R is to park exit

2.85 Turkey Run Ridge Trail

3.15 North Orenda Rd on R

3.25 bike trail begins; Pyrite Rd on R

3.8 Lake One Rd on R

3.85 Mary Bird Branch Trail

4.6 Burma Rd/Taylor Farm Rd

5.45 Parking F on R; Old Black Top Rd on L

>\*

6.4 bike trail ends; Oak Ridge Trail; Oak Ridge Campground road on R

7.15 Mawavi Rd on R

R 7.2 Parking G on R

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### \*5.0 Mile Route

L 1.05 High Meadows Trail

1.45 bridge over creek

R/L 1.95 Taylor Farm Rd

2.1 wooden bridge over stream

L 2.3 Old Black Top Rd (pickup cues at mile 4.3 on 6.15 mile route)

### \*\*6.15 Mile Route

L 2.5 Turkey Run Ridge Rd

2.8 Turkey Run Ridge Trail on R

BR 2.85 Turkey Run Ridge Ed Center

2.9 Old Black Top Rd

2.95 Mary Bird Branch Trail on R

3.0 High Meadows Trail on L

3.45 Taylor Farm Rd

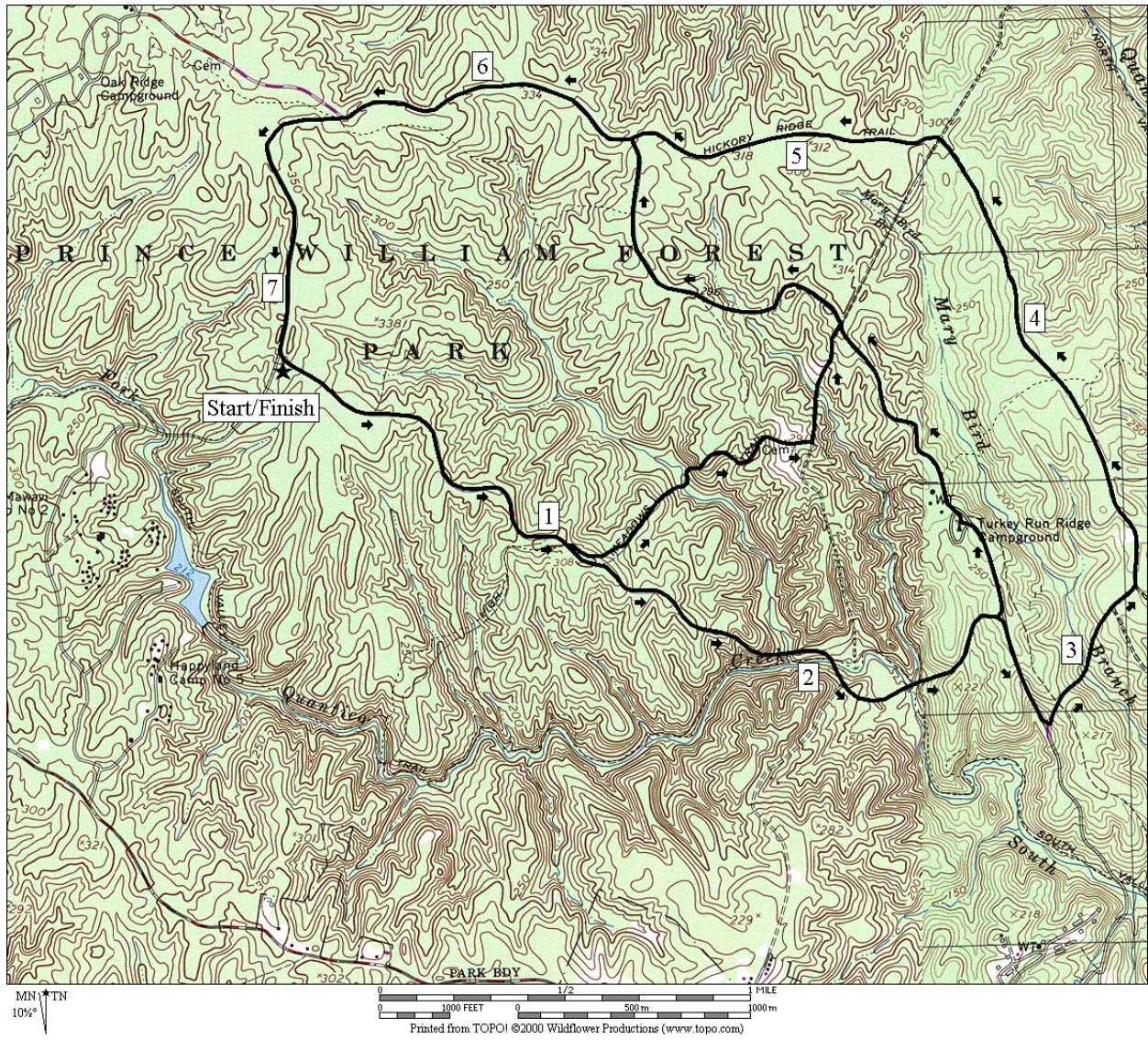
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4.3 Oak Ridge Trail on L

L 4.45 Scenic Dr (pickup cues at mile 6.4 on 7.2 mile route)



# Scenic Drive



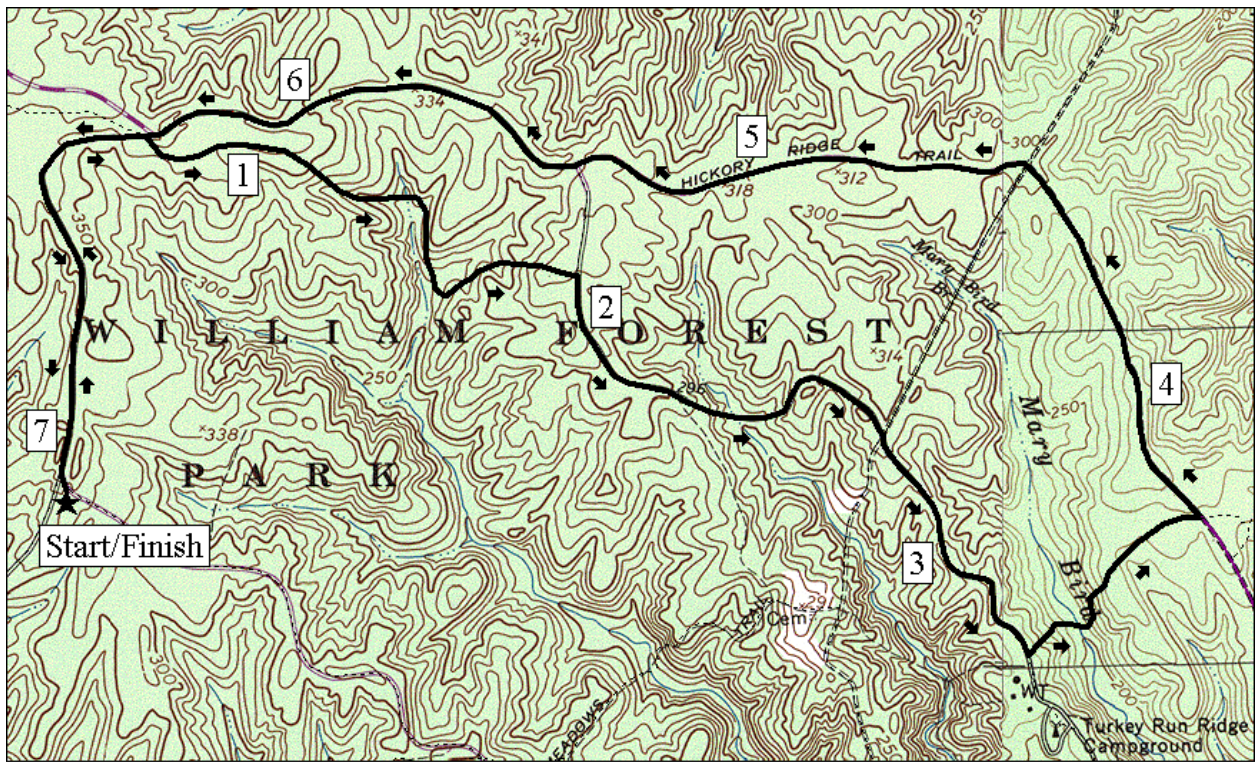


# Mary Bird

Distance: 7.1 miles

Rating: VI; paved road, gravel roads and trails; some moderate hills; shady

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>L 0.0 from Parking G; Scenic Drive<br/>0.0 Mawavi Rd on L</p> <p>R 0.8 Oak Ridge Trail; before road X<br/>1.55 wooden bridges over streams<br/>1.65 wooden bridge over stream</p> <p>R 1.95 Old Black Top Rd (gravel)<br/>2.75 Taylor Farm Rd<br/>3.2 High Meadows Trail on R</p> <p>L 3.3 Mary Bird Trail; descend</p> | <p>3.4 wooden bridge over Mary Bird Branch</p> <p>L 3.75 Scenic Drive (use paved bike trail)<br/>4.5 Burma Rd/Taylor Farm Rd<br/>5.35 Old Black Top Rd on L; Parking F<br/>6.3 Oak Ridge Trail; (bike trail ends); road X on R to campground<br/>7.05 Mawavi Rd</p> <p>R 7.1 Parking G</p> |
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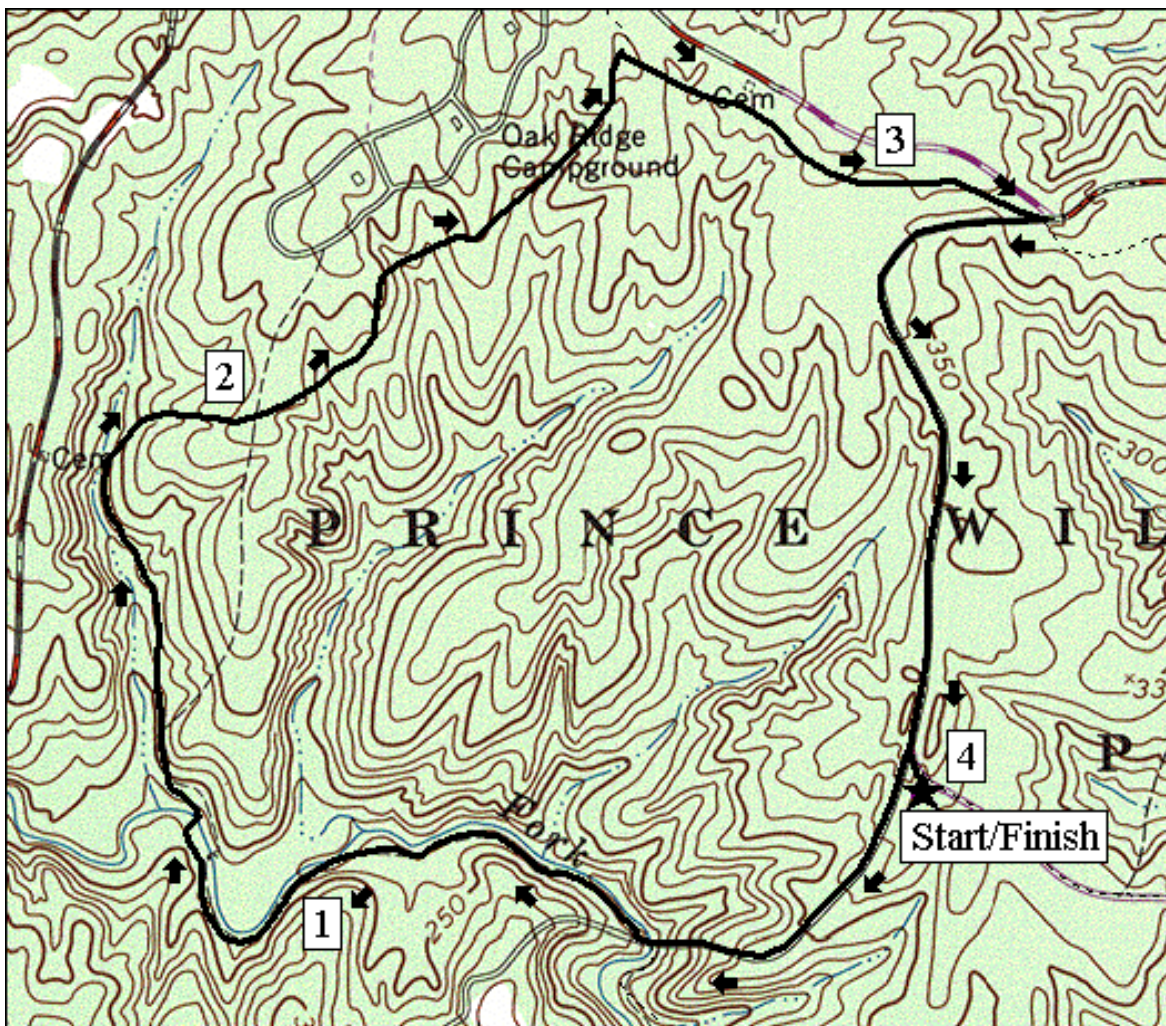


## Oak Ridge

Distance: 4.0 miles

Rating: III; gravel road, natural trails, and paved road, moderate hills and good shade

- |   |     |   |     |                                       |                 |
|---|-----|---|-----|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| L | 0.0 | from Parking G; on the Scenic Drive                                 | 1.6 | beaver dam & lodge before fern garden |                 |
| L | 0.0 | Mawavi Rd on L  | R   | 2.7                                   | Oak Ridge Trail |
| R | 0.5 | South Valley Trail after crossing S Fork Quantico Creek on a bridge | R   | 3.2                                   | Scenic Drive    |
|   | 1.2 | beaver dam  |     |                                       |                 |
|   | 1.3 | wooden bridge over S Fork Quantico Creek before a confluence        | R   | 4.0                                   | Parking G       |



MN TN 0 1/2 1 MILE  
 10 1/2° 0 1000 FEET 0 500m 1000m  
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## South Valley Trail

Distance: 5.55 or 3.7 miles

Rating: VI or IV; paved road, natural trail and gravel road, difficult footing & some hills

### 5.55 Mile Route

		>*			
R	0.0	from Parking G; on the Scenic Drive	4.3	wooden arched bridge goes over S Fork Quantico Creek on L	
<*			4.35	trail X on L to dam	
	1.05	High Meadows Trail; Parking H			
R	1.85	South Valley Trail (SVT) (white blazes); S Fork Quantico Creek	R	5.05	Mawavi Rd; begin climbing; bridge on L
	2.0	wooden bridge over tributary creek	R	5.5	Scenic Drive
	3.25	beaver dam			
	3.7	High Meadows Trail on R	R	5.55	Parking G

### \*3.7 Mile Route

R	1.05	High Meadows Trail	R	1.85	South Valley Trail (SVT); S Fork Quantico Creek (pickup cues at mile 4.3 on 5.55 mile route)
	1.45	wooden bride over stream			
	1.6	wooden bridges over streams			

