



Hiking Adventure

war eagle mill style



Pack up a Bean Palace lunch and hit the road... the dirt road, that is.

Whether you want a half-mile, informative stroll on the Van Winkle trail in the Hobbs State Park Conservation Area, or a full-day physical blowout, be sure your feet are packed into comfortable shoes for hiking. Shoes and water are the two most sought after items for intrepid day hikers, and those familiar with hiking always have the best of both. A lightweight rain jacket always comes in handy, too.

The 12,000 acres of the Hobbs State Park Conservation Area (HSPCA) is a beautiful, ten winding highway miles east of Rogers and about 25 miles south of Eureka Springs. Hiking and biking are free, of course, and there are currently four hiking trails to choose your level of involvement.

Van Winkle Trail, Hobbs State Park

Just a couple of miles west of the new Hobbs Visitor's Center is the Van Winkle Trail, a level ground walk through the remnants of a historical plantation that was a thriving sawmill, gristmill, blacksmith shop and antebellum garden. This 19th-century former commercial hub is accessed through a walking tunnel underneath Hwy. 12. You will stroll on the same road used by Yankee and Confederate soldiers during the Civil War, when the Van Winkle mill ground the corn to feed thousands of political rivals.

Pigeon Roost Trail

About the same distance, but in the other direction (east) of HSPCA Visitor's Center, is the trailhead for the Pigeon Roost Trail, a figure-eight formation of two four-mile loops. Hikers can choose either loop or the entire eight-mile walk. This moderately strenuous trail has breathtaking overlooks of Beaver Lake, campsites with fire rings, and uncommonly bountiful wildlife.

Shaddox Hollow Trail

One mile north of Hwy. 12, on Arkansas Hwy. 303, is the Shaddox Hollow Trail. This trail is only a mile-and-a-half long, and, naturally, a mile-and-a-half back. The first half-mile (and the last) winds along a ridge before dropping down to the actual hollow. Because the trail has its moments of dramatic descent, remember that it will have the same "exhilarating" slope coming back up to the ridge.

Hidden Diversity Trail

Hidden Diversity Trail is actually four loops – Little Clifty Creek Loop is nine miles; War Eagle Loop, five miles; Bashore Ridge Loop, three miles; and Dutton Hollow Loop, three miles. Together, with an added one mile of connecting trail, Hidden Diversity offers twenty-one miles of manicured, mostly level trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding. There are designated watering holes for horses, and some trails are wheelchair accessible. Hidden Diversity Trail is designed for day use and not open for camping. Most of the trail is within one-half mile of a highway, so should you feel lost, you're not. Stay put, bring a whistle, and you will be found and turned around in short order.

It's all in a day's hiking around the War Eagle Mill where we hold a place for you to put your feet up and get refueled at the Bean Palace Restaurant.

