

Much of the Hidden Diversity Trail area has been subjected to a "prescribed burn" or controlled burn. Native Americans used fire in virgin pine stands to provide better access, improve hunting, and to rid the land of undesirable species so they could farm. The fire, in fact, increased the ecological diversity of plant and animal life in the area. This practice left fewer, but larger trees in the forest with native grasses and wildflowers growing between the trees. Early North American settlers observed this and continued the practice of using fire as a beneficial agent. Change is biologically necessary to maintain many healthy ecosystems. Varying fire timing, frequency, and intensity produces differing resource responses that create correct changes for habitat manipulation. The intent of prescribed burns here at the park is to reduce fuels that could lead to dangerous, uncontrolled fires, and to speed up Mother Nature's natural processes that will return the make up of the forest to that seen 200 years ago. Hikers and riders should use the Hidden Diversity Trail brochure for more detailed information. - (Available at trailhead)

- Little Clifty Creek Loop - 9 miles
- Bashore Ridge Loop - 3 miles
- Dutton Hollow Loop - 3 miles
- War Eagle Valley Loop - 6 miles

Historic Van Winkle Trail

Length: 0.5 mile Foot traffic only.

Difficulty: Easy, wheel chair accessible. Hikers may access the historic area via tunnel under Hwy 12. (Paved parking lot with restrooms) Interpretive panels along the eight-foot wide, hard-surfaced trail describe the historic home, mill, spring and raised Antebellum garden of the Peter Van Winkle family during and after the Civil War. Only a few rock foundation stones remain of the buildings. Guided tours are available.

Your safety is our main goal while protecting the park's unique natural resources for present and future generations.

All Trail Users

- ◆ Motorized equipment, consumption of alcoholic beverages, camping, campfires and littering along the trail is prohibited.
- ◆ Removal of plants, animals, rocks artifacts etc. is prohibited.
- ◆ Pets must be on leash and under control at all times.
- ◆ Please ride or hike on designated trails only. All trail users are requested to travel in single file.
- ◆ Trails or sections of trails may be closed due to: (1) extreme wet weather resulting in unsafe trail conditions, (2) hazardous and emergency situations, (3) muzzle loading and modern gun seasons, and (4) maintenance. Please call in advance for trail availability.

Hikers/Cyclists

- ◆ When encountering horses, please step off the trail; horses may be frightened by bicycles and unfamiliar individuals.

Equestrians

- ◆ Grazing is prohibited; many plant communities found here are both fragile and indigenous only to this area. Grazing may jeopardize this fragile environment.
- ◆ Water horses only at designated areas.
- ◆ Avoid damage to trees. Use designated hitching rails, cross-ties or pickets; instead of tying a horse directly to a tree.
- ◆ It is the responsibility of each rider to remove manure deposited at parking lots.
- ◆ Horses must be under direct physical control at all times.
- ◆ Equestrians, when encountering hikers and bikers, should be respectful by passing at a walk or stopping, if necessary. Never approach another horse, hiker, or cyclist at a gait greater than a walk.

Cyclists

- ◆ Are encouraged to wear a helmet for their protection.
- ◆ Always control your bike in a safe manner while on the trail.
- ◆ The construction of ramps/jumping of obstacles/trick riding are prohibited.

Enjoy the trail, and please be courteous to others.

Historic Van Winkle Trail and Hidden Diversity Multi-use Trail construction, signage, and accompanying amenities were funded by your 1/8¢ Conservation Tax – Amendment 75.



Volunteer Opportunities

Upkeep and repair of trail tread and signs require constant vigilance. You can do your part by removing obstacles from off the trail as you go, by reporting unusual problems, and by volunteering for trail maintenance work days. Contact the park volunteer coordinator to assist.

To learn more about our dedicated park support group as well as get more park information check-out www.friendsofHobbs.com. Become a friends member then "get up, get out, get involved—be a volunteer."

HOBBS STATE PARK- CONSERVATION AREA

The Mission of Hobbs State Park – Conservation Area "to provide enriching educational and recreational experiences in harmony with resource stewardship."

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Trails of Hobbs State Park- Conservation Area



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Shaddox Hollow Nature Trail

Length: 1.5 mile loop. Foot traffic only.

Difficulty: Easy to moderate. This is a good trail for school children and beginning hikers.

Features: Disappearing/sinking streams, typical Ozark forest, limestone bluffs with glades above, wildflowers in season, icicles in winter, spur to Beaver Lake shoreline, ancient fossils, spice bushes, Native American thong trees, dogwood, service berry, and redbuds blooming in Spring time. Observe how flora competes for sun in a burn area. The trail is named after an early settler named Solomon Shaddox. Guided tours available.

Pigeon Roost Trail

Length: 8.4 miles with two loops in figure-eight shape. Dry Creek Loop meanders 4.1 miles. Huckleberry Loop runs 4.3 miles, and includes five primitive tent camping sites. Some overlook the Van Winkle Hollow arm of Beaver Lake. Foot traffic only.

Difficulty: Moderate to strenuous. Campsites are marked and each has a tent pad with fire grill. The trail is popular with scout troops and families for overnight backpacking. No reservations required; it is recommended to call the visitor center at 479-789-5000 to see if there may be campers ahead of you.

Features: Ozark mixed hardwood and pine forest. Oaks, hickories, and short-leaved pine dominate the canopy. Dogwood, serviceberry, maples, and redbud are the common understory trees. Low bush blueberries cover large areas

of ridges, and numerous wildflowers are seen in season. The trail follows old logging roads on ridge tops, and contours around hillsides down into several hollows and back up ridges. Blow-down mounds, the remains of soil from the roots of trees blown down by wind storms, dot the landscape. Wildlife is plentiful, but wary. Many mammals such as flying squirrels, foxes, raccoons, beavers and white-tailed deer are active at night, but may be seen if walking quietly. Bald eagles soar above Beaver Lake and perch in tree tops along high ridges during fall and winter. Wild turkey are often seen or heard in this area. Karst topography is evident in numerous sinking or losing streams, sinkholes, crevices, pits, caves and faults. Karst refers to fragile geological features formed by dissolving limestone that has little or no ability to filter out pollutants introduced in the area. Hundreds of Ozark chinkapin tree sprouts have been identified along the trail, but thus far only a few trees mature enough to produce nuts have been found. About 100 yards down from the trailhead, on the right, stands an uncommon tree, purposely bent into two right angles. It is a "signal tree" or "thong" tree. Native Americans marked trails, springs, caves, salt supplies, river crossings, etc. with trees bent to grow in an unusual fashion. Numerous thong trees are found throughout the 12,000 acres of the state park.

The trail is named for the now extinct passenger pigeon which once roosted by the millions here. The passenger pigeon was once the most abundant bird in the world. It was estimated that there were more passenger pigeons than all other species of birds combined. Pigeon Roost Trail received its name from the fact that huge numbers of passenger pigeons seasonally

roosted from Van Winkle Hollow to the Madison/Benton County line...a roost some 5 miles in length. Massive market hunting and the clearing of forested land in the late 1800's led to the sudden extinction of this bird. The last official stronghold of the passenger pigeon was on property that is now Hobbs State Park - Conservation Area.

Hidden Diversity Multi-Use Trail

Length: 23 miles Multi-Use: Equestrians, mountain bikers, and hikers. No motorized vehicles.

Difficulty: Moderate to strenuous. Elevation gain: 200-300 feet. Users have the option of three trail sections or loops. The trail follows ridge tops and ridge rims, with only a half dozen hills to climb throughout the trail system.

Features: The north center section of this trail is only a half mile south of the Pigeon Roost Trail. (Described above) Many of the same plant and animal features apply to both trails. The theme for this park is not one large mountain or lake or river or forest or historical event or the myriad of plants and animals above and below the ground. It is the sum of all of these. It is diversity. "With awareness, the diversity of life here inspires wonder and discovery".

