

# Pigeon Roost Trail

**GPS:** N36 17.430' W093 55.848'

**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 and resting benches at Pigeon Roost Overlook.

**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 and check the trailhead bulletin board to see if there may be campers ahead of you.

**Features:** Ozark mixed 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 trees uprooted by ice and wind storms, dot the landscape. Wildlife such as mammals 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 and various song birds are often seen or heard in this area. Karst topography is evident in numerous sinking or losing streams, sinkholes, crevices, pits 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, bent into two right angles. It may be a marker tree or "thong" tree. Native Americans marked trails, springs, caves, salt supplies, river crossings, etc. with trees bent to grow in this unusual fashion.

The trail is named for the now extinct passenger pigeon which once roosted by the millions here. 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

**GPS: Townsend Ridge Access:** N36 16.392' W093 58.004' or **Piney Road Access:** N36 17.508' W093 58.605'

**Length:** 24 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 four 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:** Similar to Pigeon Roost many of the same Ozark plant and animals can be seen on this trail. 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".**

Much of the trail area has been subjected to a "prescribed burn" or controlled burn. Native Americans used fire in virgin timber 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. Change is biologically necessary to maintain many healthy ecosystems. 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 the visitor center or the trail accesses.)

- Little Clifty Creek Loop - 9 miles
- Bashore Ridge Loop - 3 miles
- Dutton Hollow Loop - 3 miles
- War Eagle Valley Loop - 6 miles
- Various Spurs - up to 4 miles total



## 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, (2) hazardous and emergency situations, (3) hunting 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 provided hydrants.
- ❖ 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, pass slowly and safely. Never approach another horse, hiker, or cyclist at a gait greater than a walk.
- ❖ This trail is designed for a pleasure pace. No running or galloping.

## Cyclists

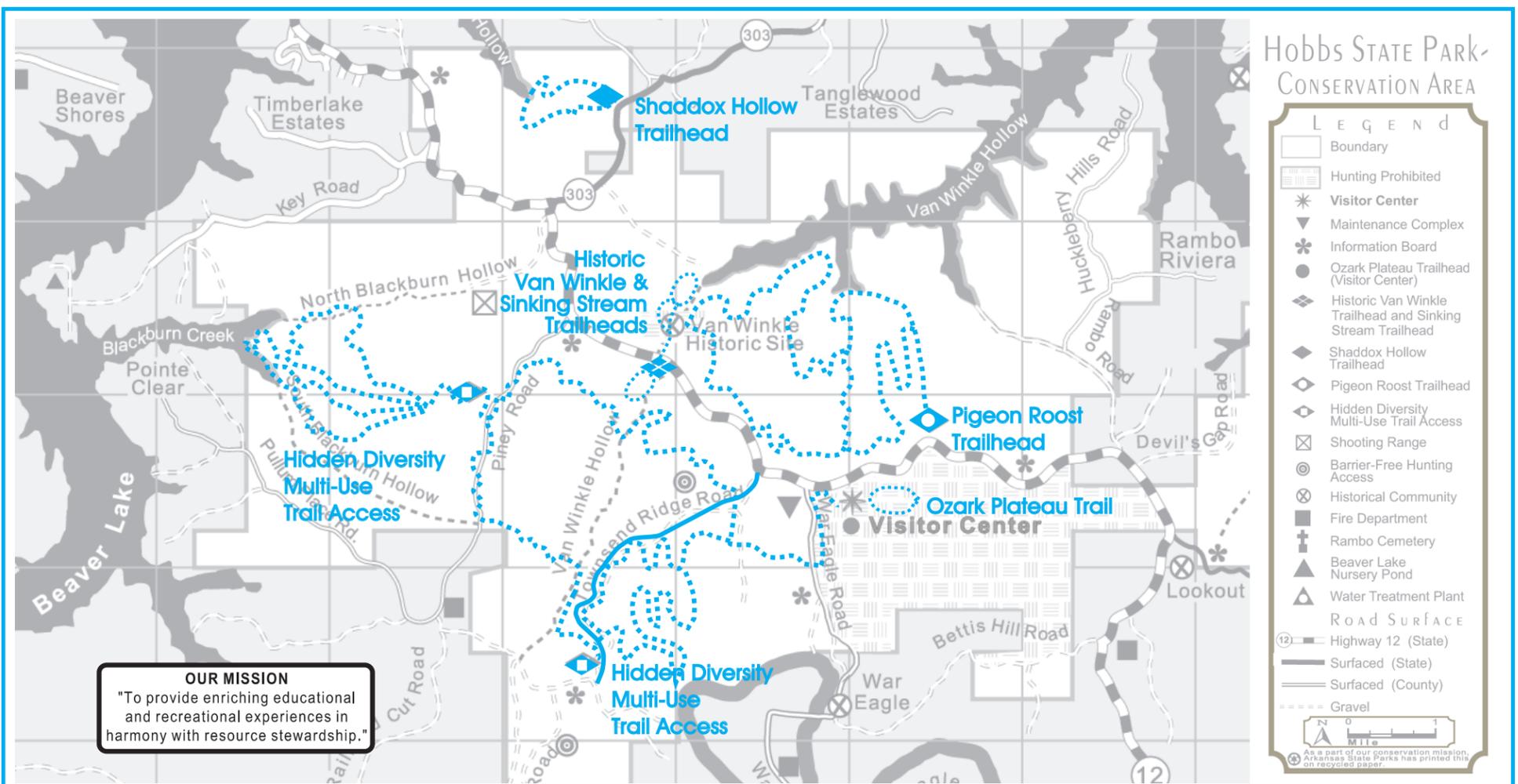
- ❖ Are encouraged to wear a helmet for their protection.
- ❖ Always control your bike in a safe manner.
- ❖ The construction of ramps/jumping of obstacles/trick riding are prohibited.

**Enjoy the trail, and please be courteous to others.**

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



Thank you...most of the park's trails were and are funded by your support of The Conservation Amendment



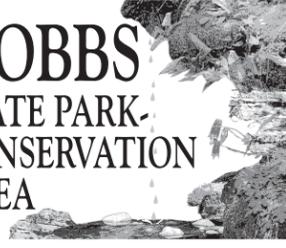
## Volunteer Opportunities

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](http://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



## Trails of Hobbs State Park- Conservation Area

### Ozark Plateau Trail

**GPS:** N36 17.112' W093 56.285'

**Length:** 0.25 of a mile concrete surface inner loop and .50 of a mile crushed stone outer "challenge" loop. Wheelchair, baby stroller or foot traffic only.

**Difficulty:** Easy. Wheelchair accessible and meets ADA guidelines.

**Features:** This barrier-free trail is adjacent to the Visitor Center and the trailhead is a short walk on the paved sidewalk to your right as you leave the Center. Two loops give visitors a choice of an almost level ridge top, with a six foot wide concrete surface trail, or a slightly more challenging outer loop, with crushed stone surface. Each loop has 7 spaced resting benches with wider turnouts providing room for small groups to observe plants and animals that live on ridge tops and in the surrounding valleys or hollows. The name of the trail, "Ozark Plateau", relates to the unique topography that encompasses the park and the surrounding Ozark region. What are commonly called "hills" or some may refer to as "mountains" are actually the remains of an eroded flat ocean floor. This ocean floor was originally uplifted by geological forces within the earth and over time it has been influenced by erosional hydrological forces – rainfall and runoff. Both trail loops traverse through a dry ridge top full of low bush blueberries, tall pines, hickory and oak trees. The lower loop also skirts the edge of two cooler, moister hollows where intermittent seasonal springs flow and in these areas plant representation changes. Glimpses of classic Ozark animal and bird species can be observed if you look closely. Through direct observation, interpretive hikes, interactive exhibits

and panels, students and visitors will learn many plateau concepts and features one of which is "karst" topography, how it was formed, and why this is so important to our health and welfare today.

### Sinking Stream Trail

**GPS:** N36 17.810' - W093 57.494'

**Length:** 0.5 of a mile. Foot traffic only and prohibited access to the Multi-Use trail.

**Difficulty:** Easy, with one small elevation increase.

**Note:** This trailhead is in the same vicinity as the Historic Van Winkle Trail. Sinking Stream Trail travels upstream and Historic Van Winkle travels downstream through the pedestrian tunnel toward Beaver Lake.

**Features:** This nature trail is our most recent addition, opening in 2010; however, it was actually the first one planned and field designed in 1988. Over the years an attempt has been made to make this trail barrier-free, wheelchair accessible, but topography and funding have limited constructing this feature. The trailhead shares the same parking lot, restroom, and picnic area with the Historic Van Winkle Trail on Hwy 12. This natural surface, single track loop, travels upstream from the tunnels under Hwy 12. The trail follows some old level road beds, paralleling the West Fork of Little Clifty Creek, crossing three Boy Scout – Eagle Service Project elevated bridges and returns on the opposite stream bank en-route to the parking area. The upstream portion of the creek sinks under the stream bed gravel, especially during dry spells, then re-emerges further on downstream. A nice spring flows year-round on the west side of the trail and it is reported that at one time this and any spring in the region, produced moonshine during prohibition. One of the three bridges crosses this spring flow, just below some small beaver dams. Spring flowers abound up this hollow/valley; however, the large sycamore, oak and hickory trees, and spice bush, eventually shade

them out. Because of the prolific nature of these particular areas, lots of birds, deer, and other wildlife love the moist, cool habitat, and may be seen if you are quiet.

### Historic Van Winkle Trail

**GPS:** N36 17.810' W093 57.494'

**Length:** 0.5 of a mile Foot traffic only and prohibited access to multi-use trail.

**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.

### Shaddox Hollow Trail

**GPS:** N36 19.114' W093 57.730'

**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.

