

Waterfalls Tour / Sliding Rock Directions

This is an all day tour. However, you can shorten the trip and pick and choose whichever falls you like.

Drive east about 8 miles to the third traffic light and turn right onto 276, (Russ Ave) Follow 276 South about 3 ½ miles to the top of the hill in Waynesville. Turn right onto Main Street and drive through town. Make a left right after the Exxon station on 276 South. Follow 276 about 20 miles until you pass the Blue Ridge Parkway and until you see a parking lot on the left hand side for **The Cradle of Forestry**. This is a great historical spot and has an interesting museum,

Sliding Rock: Proceed South on 276 for about 4 miles to a paved parking lot on the right for **Sliding Rock**. There are facilities to change your clothes, We recommend not wearing nylon bathing suits but old shorts. The water will be cold. Lifeguards are on site in season.

Moore Cove Falls is next. Follow 276 South about one mile to a parking lot on the left. Walk across the bridge and immediately begin the trail on the right at the Moore Cove signpost. The trail into this waterfall is about .7 miles. It is considered a moderate trail. You can get behind this 50 foot waterfall on a large ledge. Always use extreme caution in climbing around waterfalls.

Looking Glass Falls: When leaving Moore Cove Falls continue south on 276 for one more mile to **Looking Glass Falls** on the left. These falls can be viewed from the roadside. There is also a short trail to the base. This is one of the prettiest and easiest falls to view without hiking.

Slick Rock Falls. Proceed a short distance south on 276 to a right on to F. R. 475. On this road is the **Pisgah Forest Fish Hatchery** which makes for a nice stop. It is one of the areas largest trout hatcheries. After the Hatchery turn right onto 475-B. Go 1.1 miles to a small pull-off on the right. **Slick Rock Falls** can be viewed from the roadside or take the 200 foot walk to the base. This is about a 35 foot waterfall. From the bottom you can get behind this one as well.

Second Falls: Continue on 475-B until it comes out on 276 and take north. Follow to the **Blue Ridge Parkway** and enter heading **south**. Proceed about six miles to **Graveyard Fields** at mile marker 418.8. Begin the paved trail at the steps at the north end of the overlook. You will enter **Yellowstone Prong** after .2 miles. Cross the creek and turn

right. After a short distance the trail forks right and descends steeply to the base. There will be a sign right after you cross the creek called **Lower Falls**. These falls can also be seen from the parkway.

Yellowstone Falls and Upper Falls: are also located here. Yellowstone is the highest of the three, falling more than 100 feet into a pool and then another 25 feet into a second pool. Follow the directions to **Second Falls**, however instead of turning right at the point of the steep descent bear left. After ¼ mile you will enter a flat open area with a campfire ring to the right. Walk 100 feet past the fire ring to an overlook of the cascade from the cliff. Be very cautious, this is not a developed overlook, and can be very dangerous.

Upper Falls is the third waterfall at the **Grave Yard Overlook**. Following the directions to **Second Falls**, after crossing the Yellowstone Prong, take an immediate left onto **Graveyard Fields Loop** trail and follow 1.4 miles to the falls. On the way back you can make a loop by crossing the stream at the first wide bend and picking up the trail to the parking lot.

The **Graveyards** is one of the most popular stops on the Blue Ridge Parkway. It was formed after a particularly intense fire in 1925. The remaining stumps and debris became covered in moss and needles and took on the look of a very old graveyard, thus the name. Because of its openness, along with the Yellowstone Prong running through it, you get a totally different feel of the mountains, and great views. Combined with the waterfalls this is a great spot to spend a couple of hours.

Waterfall on Sam Knob Trail: Upon leaving **The Graveyards**, proceed south until you reach NC. 215. Take North towards Waynesville. Go .8 mile to a parking area on the right. Rock hop **Bubbling Spring Branch** and follow .7 miles along the railroad grade to the cement bridge below the falls. If you still have energy, follow another 1.3 miles to **Flat Laurel Creek Cascades**, which is a cascade that runs almost a half mile along.

Bubbling Spring Branch Cascades, can be seen from N.C. 215 one mile further down from the Sam Knob pull-off. This is a cascade that falls close to 200 feet. Two other falls are located at each of the next two pull-offs, and can be seen with minimal effort.

If you haven't had enough there are two more waterfalls before you head back. After you leave **Bubbling Springs Cascade** travel 2.1 miles to a sharp left turn and park on the shoulder. If you have crossed the river a second time you have gone too far, turn around and go back .15 mile. The first is **Waterfall on Sam Branch**. Climb the steep bank and pick up an old, heavily overgrown logging road. This leads to the falls (.3 miles). To see **Waterfall in Wash Hollow**, rock hop the creek and proceed another 100 yards. Waterfall

in Wash Hollow is considered the prettier of the two. Upon leaving these two falls continue on 215 until it hits 276 N and take back to Waynesville, and Maggie Valley.

This is a great full day trip. Add or subtract to it as you desire. We have tried to include enough easy hikes and side trips to keep everyone interested. The roads in the mountains are winding and steep, and are not high speed roads. Take your time and enjoy some of the mountains best scenery. Please remember not to climb on the rocks in these falls. They become slippery with mist and moss. Every year several people get hurt seriously because they get on the falls where they shouldn't be.