

Note: To submit an article for the newsletter, send an email to:

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<u>NEXT TWO MONTHS</u>				
			<u>Leader</u>	
Aug 4	APE's First Annual C-Boat Extravaganza: The Nolichucky	II-IV	Bryan Hogan	276-393-4985
Aug 9-13	Konnarock Crew	Maintenance	Joe Deloach	423-753-7263
Aug 11	Gentry Falls and Meadow	B/4/C	Vic Hasler	423-239-0388
Aug 18	Bays Mt. Park: Bays Ridge Road Loop (F/B)	C/3/C	Neil Dotson	423-323-3493
Aug 18	Annual Picnic and Nolichucky First-Timers Run	II-IV	Randy Van Der Aa	423-245-9821
Sept 15	Little Stony Creek Falls	B/3/C	Wes and Lauren Moyer	423-239-9653
Sept 29	AT: U.S. 321 to Watauga Dam	C/3/C	Vic Hasler	423-239-0388

For an explanation of the ratings, see either [Hiking Schedule](#) or [Paddling Schedule](#).

TEHCC Rental Equipment: HT-19 – North Face Lunar Light Tent

Submitted by Vic Hasler, Rental Equipment Coordinator,

I am continuing a multi-year project to create and link blurbs for all of the club's rental equipment to the TEHCC website, which also gives the membership a chance to see what we have in the newsletters. Any feedback or updates to the write-ups are appreciated, so the club can benefit from your experience.

HT-19 North Face Lunar Light is a free-standing tent, requiring just two stakes to extend the rain fly for a 6 sq. ft. vestibule area. Ten aluminum stakes are needed to correctly hold down and expand the full ventilation system. The tent handled well during a very windy outing on the AT near Big Bald. HT-19 is one of the lighter weight backpacking tents that

TEHCC has owned for a number of years. "Lighter" at 4 pounds, 4 ounces means there are even lower-weight tents (sub-2 pounds) now on the market. The tradeoffs for the club's selection of tents are durability, ease of use, performance, and weight. Some older reviews ('98-'05) have indicated it was an excellent choice. North Face appears to have replaced this model with the Tadpole at a price in the \$239 to \$289 range.

While the tent is tall enough at door-end to sit up, the main drawback is that it is short. My 12 year old son and I fit snugly, but I was touching both ends of the tent with bag and camp pillow, so would not recommend it for anyone 6' or over. It would be great for one person on a short trip.

The set-up instructions describe a Quick Pitch system, which appears to be the ganging of sliding rings that quickly fit on the pre-bent poles. The tent sets up reasonably well with the color coded rings. One reviewer stated that set-up takes less than one minute (with experience). The below pictures show the tent with and without the fly, plus the floor plan. The 88" bag length does not translate to reality.



Konnarock Crew - Unaka Mountain Relocation August 9-13

Joe DeLoach reporting

This is the last of the five weeks of Konnarock Crew time we have this year. We will continue work on the long relocation between the north side of Iron Mountain Gap and near the summit of Unaka Mountain. The upper elevations of Unaka Mountain have the benefit of cooler temperatures during this hot season. The Crew arrives on Thursdays and works until Monday morning, with the full days of Friday-Sunday being the ones we target most for Club support. Volunteers who work at least five days with the Konnarock Crew will be rewarded with the coveted Konnarock T-shirt. Please contact Joe DeLoach (423-753-7263) if you have any questions or would like to help.

Scheduled Hiking, Paddling and Trail Maintenance

Opportunities (*Future*)

For an explanation of the hike ratings, see [Hiking Schedule](#).

Gentry Creek Falls, August 11, 2007

Leader: Vic Hasler, 423-239-0388,

Rating: B/4/C



Gentry Creek Falls is a two-tiered waterfall of 30 to 40 foot drops in the Rogers Ridge Scenic Area near Laurel Bloomery, TN. The trail is a five mile round-trip on a gentle former railroad grade, but with numerous stream crossings – only four with bridges. The creek is shallow and fairly small, but a dry pair of socks and shoes is needed for the ride home. Meet at the usual spot by McDonald's in Colonial Heights at 8:30 a.m. for carpooling the 55-mile drive via Damascus. We will have lunch at the falls, then explore the meadow above the upper falls before returning to Kingsport around 5pm. E-mail or call 239-0388 if you have any questions.

Bays Mountain Park, Bays Ridge Road Loop, August 18, 2007

Leader: Neil Dotson, 423-323-3493

Rating: C/3/D (Family/Beginner)

This hike is another introduction to the short loops one can take in Bays Mountain Park. Having done the Azalea trail loop, and of course the ever-popular lakeside loop, we move on to a hike up the ridge on the west side of the park entrance. We'll hike up Bays Ridge Road, and come back on the Lake Road, over the dam and – of course – on to the animal habitats (the wolf pups are due to be released to the adults some time around the time of this hike). If the trees haven't grown up too much, there are several spots off the ridge road which offer views of the valley below and, on a really clear day (unlikely in August), Mt. Rogers, if memory serves. The hike as described is 2.5 miles at most, although there are variations that can add a mile or so if sufficient people want their children to have a nice long nap that afternoon. We will meet in front of the Nature Center at the park at 9:30 a.m. Please call so I will have an idea of how many and who. We should be back at the Nature Center well before noon – so no need to carry lunches; but snacks and water are recommended.

Special Activity and Trip Reports (*Past*)

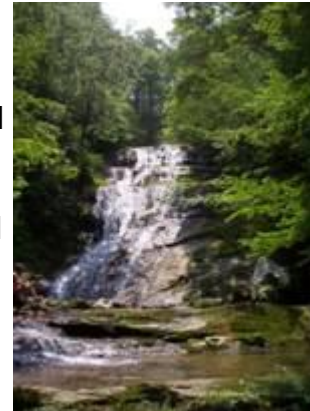
Hike Report: Elrod Falls (Sneedville, Tennessee), June 21, 2007

Vic Hasler reporting

Did you know the club has a list of "Suggested Hikes and Hiking Locations" buried on the

TEHCC webpage under [Hike Leader Guidelines](#)? A recommendation has been made to the webmaster to pull this list up or link one level higher at the [Hiking Info Index](#) page to give it more visibility. With the excellent search tool of the TEHCC website, information on past trips to these locations can be easily obtained.

This report is an update to the March 2003 hike. Elrod Falls had been on the TEHCC suggested hike list for years with no formal trek ever reported in the club newsletter until now. There is no real hike here for the lower falls; it is less than 0.25 miles. The path to the lower waterfall is now paved with loose gravel and plastic fencing is installed on the creek side. There is still not a good trail to the upper falls; instead it is a scramble up roots on the steep hillside. I recommend that TEHCC drop "Elrod Falls (near Sneedville, Tenn.)" from the list of suggested hikes. It would be a nice picnic outing for folks wanting to see area waterfalls.



A.T. Section Maintenance and Special Project Reports (*Past*)

Name: Jim Foster

Date: June 26, 2007

Purpose: Clean, repair, and replace water bars

Location: Greasy Creek Gap north toward Clyde Smith Shelter

People: Jim Foster, Bruce Darby

Summary: Our intent was to clean water bars but we actually ended up cleaning, repairing and replacing water bars. The effect of some recent hard rains revealed several problem areas which we attempted to correct. We didn't get all the way to the shelter, so we'll try to finish in the next week or so.

Name: Jim Foster

Date: June 28, 2007

Purpose: Accompany Forest Service Biologist on relocation approval

Location: Iron Mountain Gap relocation north and south of Hwy 107

People: Jim Foster, Ed Oliver

Summary: Ed and I went with biologist Joe McGinnis and his associate John to Iron Mtn. Gap and checked two short sections of relocation for approval. They hadn't quite finished when they had to leave for lunch but there didn't seem to be any problems.

Name: Collins Chew

Date: June 29, 2007

Purpose: Measure distance to Mountaineer Shelter

Location: Walnut Mountain Road to Mountaineer Shelter

People: Don Baker, Melvia Bishop, Collins Chew, Carol and Dave Dunham, Bob Harvey,

Freda Kuo, Larry Miller, Anna Sherrill, Taylor Pickard

Summary: The Friday hikers rolled the distance to the new Mountaineer Shelter on 6/29/07. The side trail to the Mountaineer Shelter is at mile 15.2 N-S and 10.2 S-N. The shelter is 210 feet off the trail with a small stream for water source 430 feet further on.

Name: Joe DeLoach

Date: July 1, 2007

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Blue-blazed trail from Hampton to the AT, initial climb from gorge up Pond Mountain, and lower section from Shook Branch to Wilderness boundary

People: Craig DeLoach and Joe DeLoach

Summary: We did not have time to clear the entire section from Laurel Fork Gorge across Pond Mountain to Shook Branch, but did have time to clear the worst areas for weeds. We walked in from Hampton to the AT and cleared weeds and some brush from where the Trail starts climbing out of the gorge to where it leaves the railroad grade to start the steep climb up Pond Mountain. This section got bad for weeds after a windstorm brought a lot of trees down a few years ago. On the way back we cut along the recent minor relocation of the blue-blazed trail that was built to avoid the slow mudslide that is occurring near the Trailhead. It appears that most hikers continue to take the former route, and some brush we placed to obstruct it in the spring was long gone. I don't know that it's important to block this route, but if it is, a substantial effort would be needed. The steep section of the blueline headed down to Buckled Rock is getting rougher and more eroded, and we could spend weeks working along the rock bluff where the side trail narrows near the creek. Some time this winter we might do some exploring for potential alternate routes around this bluff. We then drove to Shook Branch and cut the weeds from where the Trail leaves the road to near the Wilderness boundary. That first stretch was built quickly, is narrow, and needs good weeding. Beyond those switchbacks the weeds aren't bad, but the entire section needs lopping and blazing; the blazes are very faint. There is a substantial switchback cut, which we blocked, and will keep an eye on through the summer.

Name: Steve Banks

Date: July 4, 2007

Purpose: Cut blowdowns

Location: Near McQueens Knob Emergency Shelter

People: Robert Mumford, Steve Banks

Summary: We cut out two blowdowns near the McQueens Knob Emergency Shelter (aka the "Holiday Inn").

Name: Jim Foster

Date: July 5, 2007

Purpose: Clean cut and install new water bars

Location: Greasy Creek Gap to Little Rock Knob

People: Jim Foster

Summary: I cleaned the remaining water bars from Greasy Creek Gap to Little Rock Knob. I also cut and installed 10 new water bars and check dams. Hopefully this will eliminate most of the trail erosion on the south end of this section.

Name: Steve Perri

Date: July 7, 2007

Purpose: Cut Weeds

Location: Damascus to Backbone Rock Trail

People: Steve Perri, Jeff Siirola

Summary: Jeff and I headed trail south from Damascus for an in and out maintenance trip to cut weeds and lop rhodos. We removed 3 blowdowns about a quarter of a mile in and cut weeds and rhodos in both directions going to Back Bone Rock Trail. We noticed water had flowed down the trail along portions just trail north of the state line. We also cleaned out the water bars. We saw no hikers. Trail is now mostly de-weeded on this Live Earth Day.

Name: Steve Banks

Date: July 7, 2007

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Abingdon Gap Shelter to spring

People: Robert Mumford, Steve Banks

Summary: On a very hot and humid day, we cut weeds between Abingdon Gap Shelter and the spring 1.5 miles south of McQueens Gap. We also put up a USFS AT sign near McQueens Gap.

Name: Jim Foster

Date: July 9, 2007

Purpose: Cut back annual growth along trail

Location: Hughes Gap to Little Rock Knob

People: Jim Foster

Summary: I cut back growth along sides of trail from Hughes Gap to just south of Little Rock Knob. I also installed one new water bar and cut a small blowdown.

Name: Jeff Siirola

Date: July 14, 2007

Purpose: Clipping and Blowdown Removal

Location: Bitter End to Moreland Gap Shelter

People: Steve Perri, Jeff Siirola

Summary: We performed heavy lopping and clipping, briar cutting, blowdown removal, and minor drainage improvement from Bitter End to just south of Moreland Gap Shelter. A few step-over and leaner blowdowns and many dead pines remain, requiring non-urgent chainsaw removal. This section and its several recent relocations are now in good shape.

Name: Kim Peters

Date: July 15, 2007

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Watauga Dam Road north to about 1 mile from Vandeventer Shelter

People: Kim Peters, Kat Johnson

Summary: We cut the weeds from Watauga Dam road to about a mile south of the shelter when our arms gave out and we had to quit. I was planning another trip to finish this section but found out the Tuesday group finished for me - THANKS GUYS!!

Name: Carl Fritz

Date: July 17, 2007

Purpose: Cut weeds and blowdowns plus paint blazes

Location: Iron Mt Shelter to Watauga Dam Rd

People: Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Dave Dunham, Jim Foster, Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Scott Peoples

Summary: We took on the section from Iron Mt. Shelter to Vandeventer Shelter. Thanks to the many volunteers coming from as far as Colorado (Scott Peoples), we did this in a record short day of eleven hours. We cut all the weeds from Iron Mt Shelter to Vandeventer Shelter and maybe another mile. Four of us walking out to Watauga Dam Rd were thrilled to see that Kim and Kat had cut weeds a good share of way into Vandeventer shelter over the weekend. Jim painted all blazes from Hurley Hollow to Vandeventer Shelter. The only major blowdown we needed to cut out was a 10" pine within a half mile of Watauga Dam Rd. The water source about a mile south of Turkeypen Gap is dry. There is water at Iron Mt Shelter, but it is below where the pipe is and hikers are not finding it. We need to correct this for dry season. Water is okay at Vandeventer. Both shelters are in good shape.

Name: Tim McClain

Date: July 21, 2007

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Spring North of Low Gap to U.S. 421

People: Tim McClain, Peggy McClain

Summary: We cut weeds on most of the section, but we'll need to go back to finish up the weeds and remove a fairly large blowdown located about 1.5 miles north of 421. Poison ivy is thriving this year!

Name: Old Timers Hiking Club

Date: July 23, 2007

Purpose: To install signage and check trail

Location: Low Gap to Cherry Gap

People: Mike Hupko

Summary: Mike installed a hiker only sign at Cherry Gap, trimmed foliage off trail from Low Gap to Cherry Gap, and checked springs at the shelter. He found evidence of horse use, but the spore was old. No recent damage.

Name: Carl Fritz

Date: July 24, 2007

Purpose: Cut weeds and lop

Location: Bradley Gap to Overmountain Shelter

People: Dave Dunham, Doug Hibshman, Jim Foster, Carl Fritz

Summary: We cut weeds and lopped from Bradley Gap to Overmountain Shelter. Trail is in basically good shape. It is good to see some rains in the mountains.

Name: Carl Fritz

Date: July 24, 2007

Purpose: Flag and cut out relocations

Location: Between Bear Branch Road and Bishop Hollow

People: Ken Buchanan, Christopher Jack, Ted Mowery, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples

Summary: We put out pin flags and cut out 11 sections for work with Watauga College on

August 26.