

Backcountry Camping Trip Guide

One Night

National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior
Shenandoah National Park
Emergency: 1-800-732-0911



Elkwallow and Jeremys Run

Standard - Circuit

Level: Beginner or Strenuous Beginner

Total Length: 6.7 to 15 miles

Trip Description: Popular wilderness valley, excellent camping and fishing (open for harvest)

Entry: 22 MP - Piney River/MACG

Exit: 22 MP - Piney River/MACG

Map(s): PATC # 9 North District

Day One

Campsite: Jeremys Run Trail - backcountry

3.6 to 7.6 miles

Turn onto Elkwallow Trail and hike 2 miles.

Turn right onto the Appalachian Trail (AT), hiking south 0.6 miles.

Turn right onto Jeremys Run Trail and hike 1 to 5 miles.

Find a place to camp (see notes).

Day Two

3 to 7.6 miles

Hike upstream on Jeremys Run Trail (up to 4.6 miles).

Turn left onto Knob Mountain Cutoff Trail for a steep 0.5-mile hike uphill.

Turn right onto Knob Mountain Trail to return to campground (about 2.5 miles).

Notes

There are many stream crossings and the water can be knee to waist high in the spring and after heavy rains!

You will only be able to take this route when Mathews Arm Campground is open, generally late May through October.

There are legal, pre-existing campsites along Jeremys Run Trail (and a few persistent illegal campsites, so take care). Hiking downstream from the Knob Mountain Cutoff Trail, the valley narrows so the campsites become sparse until you are a 1.5 miles or so past the Cutoff Trail. The further you hike downstream, the wider the valley is and the more campsites that appear, including places large enough for groups of up to 10 to camp, until you are 1/2 mile above Neighbor and Knob Mountain trails (4.2 miles below the Cutoff). Below Knob Mt Trail and Neighbor Mt Trail there are very few legal campsites. Reminder: Campfires are not allowed, even if you see a fire ring for someone else's illegal fire!

Options

To make this a two-night trip, simply spend the second night on Jeremys Run as well. You may stay in the same campsite or move to another location along the run (stream). For a nice day hike on your second day, hike downstream on Jeremys (there are some great swimming holes along the way) at least to the waterfall, or even until the trail reaches a grassy area – and shortly afterwards climbs up a steep hill. (The trail leaves the stream entirely at this point and is no longer worth following.) For example, day one hike 4 miles and set up camp, day two day hike down Jeremys Run to the waterfall (4 miles from the Cutoff) and back to camp -- 7 miles round trip, and day three return to campground, 3.5 miles; total distance 14.5 miles.