

Shenandoah National Park

Backcountry Camping Trip Guide



Trip Name: Mathews Arm and Jeremys Run

Description: Wooded campground, wilderness valley with excellent camping and fishing

Entry: 24 MP - Elkwallow Picnic Area

Exit: 24 MP - Elkwallow Picnic Area

Map(s): PATC # 9 North District

Level: Strenuous Beginner

Total Length: 16.6 miles

Day One

Campsite: North District developed area (MACG) - campground or cabin
3 miles

Hike down the connecting trail to the Appalachian Trail (AT), less than 100 yards.

Turn right onto the AT, hiking north 0.3 mile.

Turn left onto Elkwallow Trail and hike 2 miles.

Camp at Mathews Arm Campground (see note).

(Ask the ranger to point out the service road which will take you to Knob Mountain Trail.)

Day Two

Campsite: Jeremys Run Trail - backcountry

8 miles

Hike down the service road, past the yellow chain gate.

Turn left on Knob Mountain Trail and follow it for 7.2 miles.

Turn left onto Jeremys Run Trail, hiking upstream over 1/2 mile to find a place to camp.

See note below.

Day Three

5.6 miles

Hike up Jeremys Run Trail 5.4 miles.

Turn left onto the AT, hiking north 0.2 mile.

Turn right to return to Elkwallow picnic area, 100 yards.

Notes

Mathews Arm Campground generally opens at the end of May and closes the end of October. Sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and may fill to capacity on weekend nights. Plan to either check into your site before you start hiking on the first day, or to arrive by 4:00 p.m. on a Friday or Saturday (earlier on a holiday weekend).

There are 14 stream crossings on Jeremys Run Trail and the water can be knee to waist high in the spring and after heavy rains!

There are many legal, pre-existing campsites along Jeremys Run (and a few persistent illegal campsites, so take care). Hike upstream on Jeremys Run trail (there are very few places to camp downstream). When you are about 1/2 mile above the Neighbor and Knob junctions you will be in a wider part of the valley with camping possibilities. This is the best area to camp, and the only place groups are likely to find enough room. Gradually the valley will narrow and campsites will become sparse. There are a couple of small places to camp as you approach the Knob Mountain Cutoff Trail. Then it becomes very steep, ending your camping possibilities. Reminder: Campfires are not allowed, even if you see a fire ring for someone else's illegal fire!