

A delightful hike to moss-covered Nebo Springs begins behind the visitor center on the Rim Trail. Turn right onto the Rim Trail then down Nebo Steps (light blue) to the Bench Road Trail. Turn right on the bench and follow until you get to the sign for Nebo Springs. The climb back up Nebo Springs Trail, then right onto the Rim Trail, completes a rectangular "circle." Highly recommended for the historical significance and natural beauty, this loop is, however, strenuous.

The stone enclosure of Nebo Springs, located directly below the bench, dates back to the 1800's. Children were often sent to the spring with buckets to fetch water for meals.

The first log house, built on the mountain after the Civil War, was constructed near Nebo Springs by Louis C. White. It was Mrs. White who named Mt. Nebo after the mountain in the Bible from which Moses had a view of the promised land.

VARNALL SPRINGS TRAIL

Length: 1/2-mile one way, 2-hours round trip
 Trailhead: From either the Rim Trail or Bench Trail south of the camp ground
 Terminus: Varnall Springs
 Difficulty: Return Strenuous
 Color coded: Orange

The Varnall Springs Trail winds through natural features, a diverse forest, and many wildflowers. The spring was once the water supply for the town of Dardanelle. Some of the old waterpipes remain visible.

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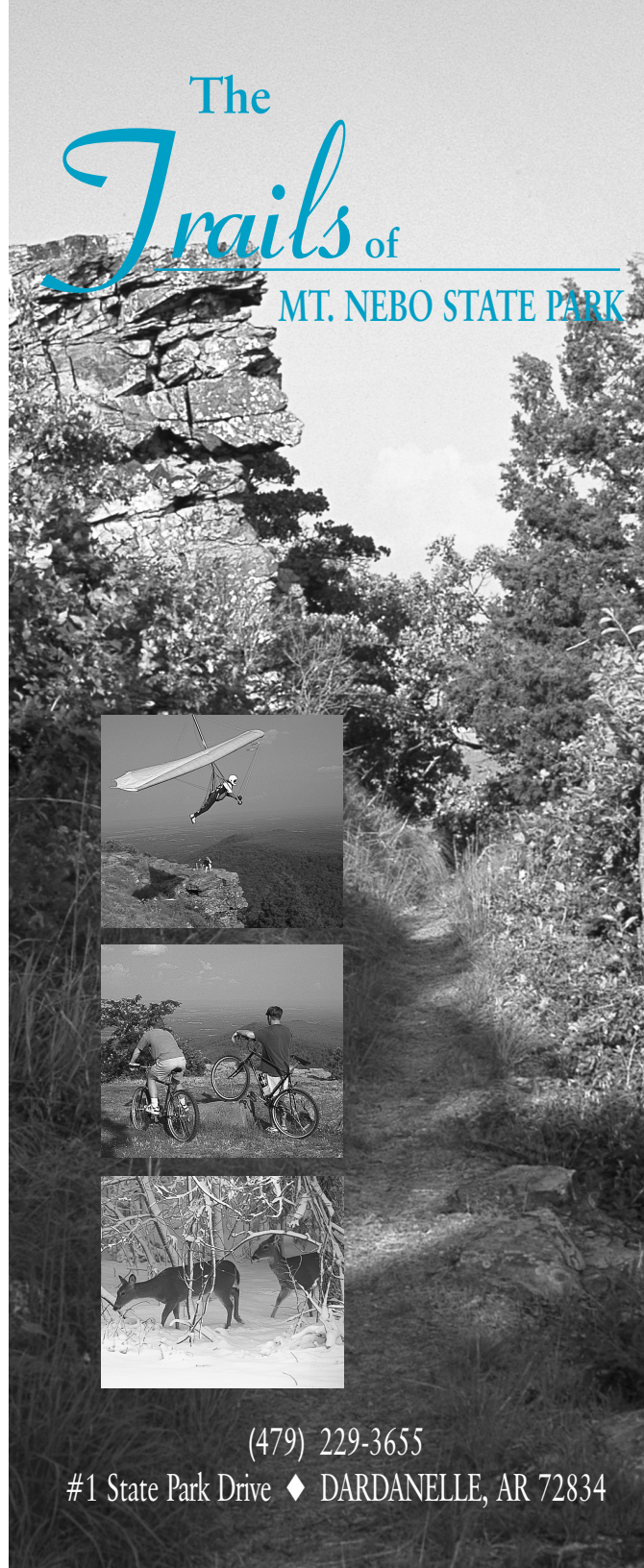


Arkansas State Parks
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EXH SHP 10-2004



The Trails of MT. NEBO STATE PARK



WELCOME to Mt. Nebo State Park

Welcome to Mt. Nebo, a park in the clouds steeped in 1890's history, alive with geological happenings, and natural as can be for wildflowers, birds, and other animals. A serene atmosphere awaits the visitor, as well as cooler temperatures--as much as 10-15 degrees cooler than the Arkansas River Valley below.

The park's 14 miles of hiking trails were originally made by early residents of the mountain in the 1890's, when Mt. Nebo was a thriving summer resort. Hotels, stables, and homes centered around the springs on the mountaintop and along the solid sandstone bench. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) improved the trails, and built cabins and a pavilion in 1933 after Mt. Nebo became a state park. Most trails have since been upgraded by the Young Adult Conservation Corps and other trail crews--most recently, extensive work was done in 1996.

To orient the hiker: a simple pattern of trails exists. Completely circling the top of the mountain is the Rim Trail. Completely circling the mountain approximately 300 feet below the Rim Trail is the Bench Road Trail. Interconnecting these two circular trails are several short vertical and near-vertical paths, which lead the hiker to various points of interest: Nebo Springs, Fern Lake (man-made), a seasonal waterfall, Gum Springs, etc. Trails vary from easy to strenuous; be prepared for changes in terrain.

Hang glider pilots launch off Sunrise Point and may be seen gliding overhead, riding the thermals with hawks and vultures. The slopes also provide habitat for the rufous-crowned sparrow--a unique opportunity to view this western bird.

Discover deer, raccoons, opossums, squirrels, groundhogs, reptiles, birds, and butterflies. Field guides are available at the visitor center gift shop; and interpretive hikes and programs are available free as scheduled throughout the year. Check at the VIC for a current schedule or at ArkansasStateParks.com

HIKING HINTS AND RULES

STAY ON THE MARKED TRAILS. Mt Nebo has steep slopes and cliffs, with the accompanying danger of falling or getting lost. Rocks along the edges of cliffs and overhangs may be loose--sometimes even large ones--and your extra weight could possibly send them tumbling. Direct supervision of children is essential. Rappelling is prohibited. Stepping off trails also kills delicate plants, compacts the soil, and destroys the natural beauty. Please leave all plants and animals undisturbed.

WEAR COMFORTABLE FOOTGEAR that is appropriate for hiking. Take the time to test your soles on the rocks before starting out; being sure-footed is important.

ALWAYS STAY OFF THE TRAILS WHEN LIGHTNING IS FLASHING. Mt. Nebo is the highest point for many miles.

TAKE A CANTEEN OF WATER when hiking in hotter months. Steep slopes and long hikes can dehydrate you quickly.

INSECT REPELLENT may be desirable. Check for ticks after every hike.

SNAKES may be seen on occasion--let them be. Although three kinds of venomous snakes inhabit Mt. Nebo, the majority of species found here are harmless.

TAKE ONLY PICTURES, LEAVE ONLY FOOTPRINTS. If you pack in litter, pack it out. No glass bottles on the trails, please.

IT IS UNLAWFUL to deface, destroy, or remove natural features of the park.

*From sunrise to sunset,
 wildlife to wildflowers,
 trails to waterfalls,
 Mt. Nebo offers a variety to
 see & do in all seasons.*

(479) 229-3655

#1 State Park Drive ♦ DARDANELLE, AR 72834

RIM TRAIL

Length: 3 1/2-miles, allow approx. 2-hrs
 Trailhead: Behind VIC, and various other access points
 Terminus: Circle back to starting point, or access points.
 Difficulty: Easy, VIC to waterfall area
 Moderate, VIC to Hwy 155 & waterfall area to Sunrise Pt.
 Steep, Hwy 155 to Sunrise Pt.
 Color coded: Yellow

Circling the top of the mountain is the Rim Trail. Originally blazed by the 1890 residents of Mt. Nebo, it was further developed in the 1930's by the CCC who added stone steps and other improvements.

Spectacular, panoramic views await the hiker. On a clear day, 100 miles of the Arkansas River are visible. Beginning as a snowmelt trickle in Colorado, the Arkansas River runs through Kansas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas before emptying into the Mississippi. Also easily recognized from our lofty height is 34,000-acre Lake Dardanelle.

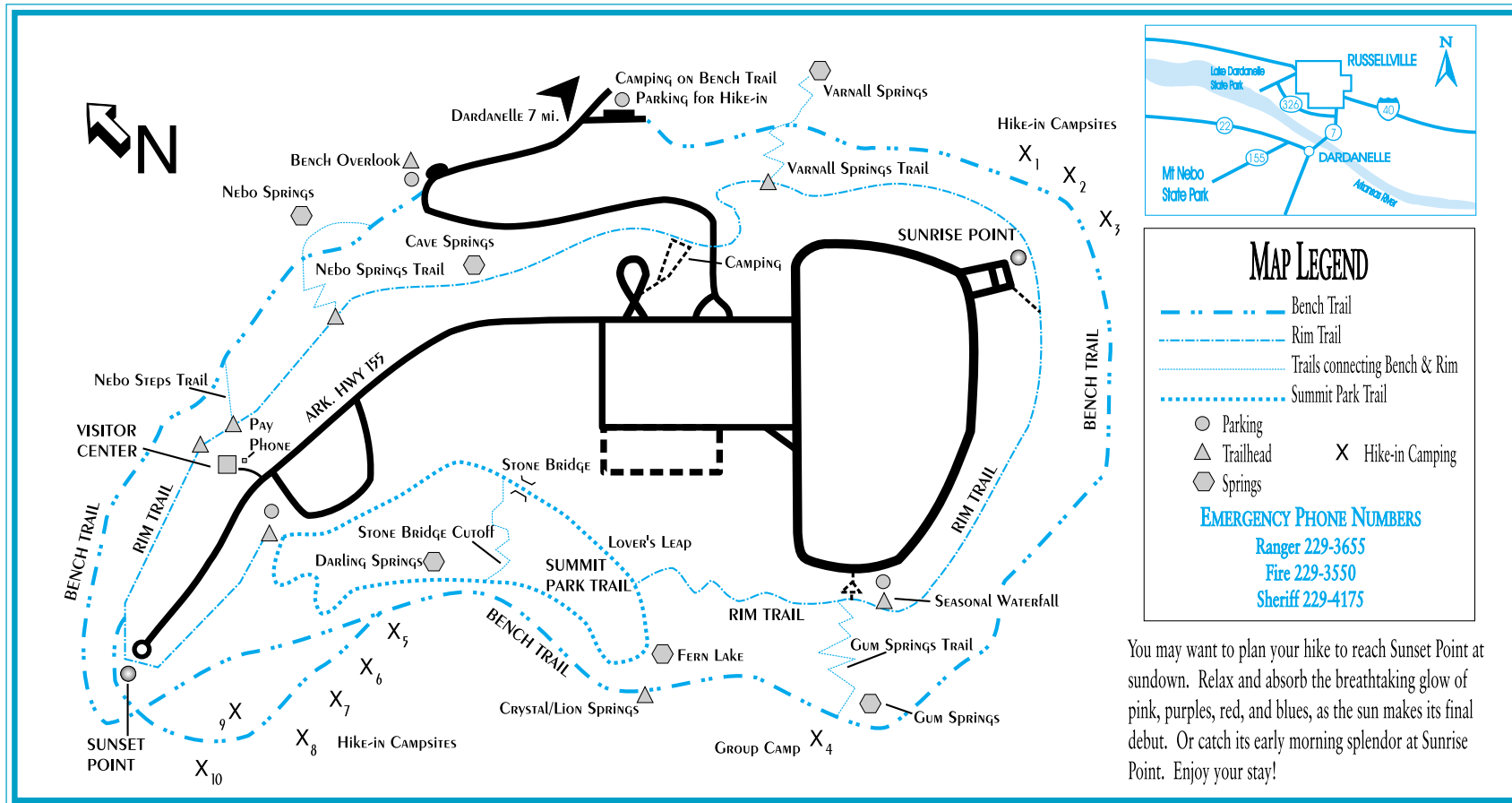
BENCH ROAD TRAIL

Length: 4 miles, 3-4 hours
 Trailhead: Bench Overlook on Hwy 155
 Terminus: Parking area for hike-in camping
 Difficulty: Easy, but long
 Color coded: Dark Blue

A huge, round slab of sandstone perhaps 15-20 feet thick lies approximately 300 feet below the summit of Mt. Nebo. It extends completely through the mountain, like a gigantic solid pancake. Most of the bench is buried in the mountain itself. On this shelf, encircling the mountain is the Bench Road Trail.

Known in the 1890's as Bench Boulevard, the bench had a hotel, homes and stores, as did the mountaintop.

The trail is long - 4 miles - but offers easy walking, easy access, scenery and history. Interconnecting trails between the Bench Trail and the Rim Trail can be found at Nebo Springs, Nebo Steps, Sunset Point, Fern Lake, Gum Springs, and Varnall Springs. Mountain bikes and horseback riders are welcome. Motorized vehicles are prohibited, however.



MAP LEGEND

- Bench Trail
- - - Rim Trail
- Trails connecting Bench & Rim
- Summit Park Trail
- Parking
- △ Trailhead
- ⬢ Springs
- X Hike-in Camping

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS
 Ranger 229-3655
 Fire 229-3550
 Sheriff 229-4175

You may want to plan your hike to reach Sunset Point at sundown. Relax and absorb the breathtaking glow of pink, purples, red, and blues, as the sun makes its final debut. Or catch its early morning splendor at Sunrise Point. Enjoy your stay!

SUMMIT PARK SELF-GUIDED TRAIL

Length: 1 mile, 2 1/2-hours
 Trailhead: From VIC across Hwy 155 a few hundred feet
 Terminus: Return to trailhead
 Difficulty: Moderate to strenuous, with return on rim trail easy.
 Color coded: Red

Named for the Summit Park Hotel which was built near the trailhead in 1889, this one-mile trail is a footpath to Fern Lake. It was enjoyed by guests of the famous hotel until the hotel burned in 1918.

The Summit Park Self-Guided Trail is included in both the Arkansas Trails System and the National Trails System. A self-guided trail brochure may be obtained at the park visitor center.

WATERFALL/ GUM SPRINGS TRAIL

Length: 1/4 mile, 45 minutes (double time if returning)
 Trailhead: Waterfall Natural Area
 Terminus: Gum Springs
 Difficulty: Return Strenuous
 Color coded: Pink

Developed by the CCC in the 1930's using only hand labor and mules, this trail passes the seasonal waterfall enroute from the Waterfall Overlook to Gum Springs. The trail is very steep, with many switchbacks and huge rock steps, some weighing 500 pounds.

NEBO SPRINGS TRAIL NEBO STEPS TRAIL

Length: 3/4 mile, 1 1/2-hours
 Trailhead: Nebo Steps at Rim Trail behind VIC
 Terminus: Circle right on bench trail and return to VIC via Nebo Springs Trail
 Difficulty: 1/3 strenuous, descent and bench easy
 Color coded: White