



# - BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL

Polk County News [Article](#) from Clare Sullivan:

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## Benton MacKaye Trail Association hard

by: Rhea Porter

January 2022 will be remembered for the beautiful snow fall that blanketed the Tennessee forests. Unfortunately, last month's snowstorms were accompanied by roaring winds that caused downed trees and power outages. Thirty-five blowdowns were reported along the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT) in the vicinity of the Lost Creek's limestone gorge.

"The damage was incredible," said Clare Sullivan, Vice President of the Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA). "When we surveyed the trail, some of the trees were so intertwined across the trail that we had to saw through the maze of branches in order to move forward."

The Benton MacKaye Trail Association's volunteer work crews were quick to react. Within three weeks, the blowdowns on the section from Reliance to the Lost Creek Campground had been removed and an additional 38 trees were cleared along the trail from TN Highway 64 across Kimsey Highway to the Lost Creek Campground. Both sections are now clear for hikers to enjoy.

"Clearing this amazing section was a priority before the Spring wildflowers start to pop-up and thru hikers begin their treks," said Keith Mertz, BMTA's Tennessee/North Carolina Maintenance Director. "This is one of the BMT's incredible scenic sections."

To learn more about the BMTA or to volunteer to help clear the trails, visit BMTA's website at [www.bmta.org](http://www.bmta.org) or contact Clare Sullivan (404) 849-0872.




L-R: Anne Anderson, Steve Cart Mertz, and Elizabeth Weikert tackle the trail.



Karen Kocher of Cleveland through a conglomerate of trees a Creek section.



## **- UPDATE**

From Clare Sullivan: The Tellico/Ocoee Volunteer Trail Crew recently cleared trails in Cherokee National Forest:

- Boyd Gap Trail;
- Old Copper Road Trail – 30 trees removed;
- Brush Creek Trail – 80 trees removed!
- Thunder Rock Express and Quartz Loop Trail in the Tanasi Trail System at Ocoee Whitewater Center.

Thank you to the trail maintainers for all you do to keep everyone hiking, biking and riding!

# - PAST EVENTS

## LOWRY TOP MARCH 3, 2022



Fourteen hearty souls, including Hike Leader Jack Callahan, made the eight-mile round trip up Oswald Dome Trail to an undisclosed turn, thence through the woods to Lowry Top. Finding the exact location, the group enjoyed the special view of downtown Reliance. There is only one location where the view is unobstructed. The weather was excellent for hiking and a pleasant lunch at the viewing spot. Hiking back there was one sandy spot in the trail with what looked like a very large cat track. The trailing arbutus was just beginning to bloom, as were catsfoot, or everlasting, known by several different names. The group made its way back down to Quinn Springs parking lot, and all fourteen were accounted for. It is a somewhat difficult hike due to the 2000-plus foot elevation gain, but all agreed it was well worth it.

- Jack Callahan



## **DRY POND LEAD TRAIL/SECTION 12 OF THE BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL MARCH 5, 2022**



On an absolutely balmy early March Day, seven, then eight, hikers started near the Ocoee Number 3 Powerhouse and trekked eight to nine miles to the top of Section 12 of the Benton MacKaye Trail, commonly known as the Dry Pond Lead Trail. The trail did not live up to its name, however, as we witnessed a small body of water alongside the trail (see accompanying photo)—possibly a small vernal pond? Although I have hiked this trail many times previously, I have never seen water near the summit. We enjoyed great views of the surrounding mountains in all directions and were able to put names to many of the peaks by use of a handy phone app. We climbed almost 1700 feet in elevation from the gorge to one of the summits along the Little Frog Wilderness Area. After lunch near where the trail begins to head toward Kimsey Highway, we descended back down to our vehicles. Enjoying the day were visitors Tory Bailey, Janet and Rob Coombs, Joey Sloan and Charlie Snow, as well as club members James Anderson, Sue Robinson and Hike Leader Randy Morris. - Randy Morris

## BLACK MOUNTAIN SECTION OF THE CUMBERLAND TRAIL MARCH 8, 2022



Eight hikers split into two groups: Jack and Margaret Callahan, Carin Taber, and Judy Price drove to the top of the mountain to hike the loop, while Hike Leader Sue Robinson, Mary Alton, Teresa Greene, and Lucia Case started the hike from Route 68 up the mountain. We stopped at Windlass Cave for some exploring around the cave and in the creek. We headed up the mountain where we all had our rocks to throw into the “abyss.” We paused at the primitive campground to catch our breath and then made it to the “cubes” that never cease to amaze. We had clear skies for lunch at the viewpoint overlooking Grassy Cove. We then took the lower trail by the old house foundations and spring house. We explored a few more giant-sized boulders before heading back down the trail. Then we had cold drinks and a bite to eat afterward at the American Grill. - Sue Robinson



**MONTHLY CLUB MEETING MARCH 10, 2022**



Our March monthly club meeting was well-attended with regulars, several new members, and guests. There was a really nice array of great foods and desserts at the potluck, and a terrific slide presentation put on by Teresa Greene and Sue Robinson. They covered their camping/road trip to Yellowstone, Glacier, and Mount Rushmore. It was very informative and had wonderful slides of the scenery. In April, the presentation will be on local wildflowers and mushrooms presented by Mr. Leon Bates. For everyone who wants to learn to identify some of these flowers, you won't want to miss this! - Jack Callahan



**EUREKA TRAIL MARCH 11, 2022**

Canceled. - Ruth Pannell

**DUNLAP COKE OVENS MARCH 12, 2022**

Canceled due to weather. Will be rescheduled. - Jack Callahan

**WALK IN THE WOODS - JOHNSTON WOODS MARCH 25, 2022**



- James Anderson

### **WEDNESDAY WALKS ON THE CLEVELAND GREENWAY**



Great afternoons on the Greenway this March. The weather did not disappoint. We dodged snow, heavy rains, and 25 mph winds, but were never deterred. The walks were well-attended each Wednesday and we look forward to April as paw paw trees bloom and Jack-in-the-Pulpit plants emerge. - Jack Callahan

### **THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH BREAKFAST**



We had a nice gathering this month. We had to add an extra table to accommodate everyone. Hope to have more folks join us as the weather is improving. We always have lively conversation and a nice meal. - Jack Callahan

# - UPCOMING EVENTS

NOTE: Event schedule subject to change according to guidance from governmental agencies and offices regarding COVID-19, weather, or other conditions. An email will be sent to members if an event is canceled.

## **SCENIC SPUR**

### **APRIL 1, 2022 FRIDAY CLEMMER TRAILHEAD**

Short 2.5-mile walk on Scenic Spur Trail near the intersection of Hwys 30 and 64 to view wildflowers. This is the trail that goes to Rainbow Falls, but we do not intend to go that far. Also, Clemmer Trail is close by and we could hike a section of it if anyone wants to. Contact Hike Leader Ruth Pannell at 423-506-9623 or 263-9730 or email [crpannell@comcast.net](mailto:crpannell@comcast.net) for meeting time, etc.

## **MONTHLY CLUB MEETING**

### **APRIL 14, 2022 THURSDAY 6 PM SENIOR CENTER ETOWAH TN**

Bring your favorite dish for the potluck dinner. The Club will be furnishing drinks, cups, and plastic eating utensils. The program is Wildflower Identification by Leon Bates.

## **WALLS OF JERICHO**

### **APRIL 16, 2022 SATURDAY**

Meet at Cleveland Park and Ride commuter parking near the intersection of I-75 and Georgetown Road (next to Mapco) at 9 am. This will be an eight-mile moderate to strenuous hike with about 1500 feet of elevation change both down and up. We will set up a short car shuttle and begin the hike at the Tennessee trailhead. We will hike 4.5 miles down along the Mill Creek drainage. We should see lots of wildflowers in the lower part of the canyon. The last half mile before the walls and around the walls is treacherous footing with lots of slippery rocks. We will hike back out along the heavily-traveled Alabama portion of the trail. This trail goes steeply up with 1500 feet of elevation back to the parking lot. If there is significant rain just prior to or the day of, the hike will be canceled. Contact Hike Leader Jennifer Schroll at 423-284-1256.

## **BALD RIVER**

### **APRIL 19, 2022 TUESDAY**

Meet at the Cherohala Skyway Visitor Center in Tellico Plains, TN, at 9 am. Approximately eight-mile easy to moderate hike on the Bald River Trail along the Bald River. Some small water crossings will be required, and a variety of wildflowers will hopefully be in bloom. Bring your lunch to eat by Torino Falls. Text Hike Leader Sue Robinson at 423-519-9751.

## **SHAKERAG HOLLOW**

### **APRIL 30, 2022 SATURDAY SEWANEE TN (RESCHEDULED DATE)**

To carpool, meet at the Park and Ride commuter parking area near the intersection of I-75 and Georgetown Road (next to Mapco) in Cleveland, TN, at 8 am EDT. (Sewanee is in CDT.) Drive time one and a half hours. This trail is an excellent trail to see a wide variety of native plants. It is approximately five miles total and is considered moderate. Another two miles might be added if the participants want to hike out to an overlook. Pack a lunch and water. Contact Hike Leader Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885.



### **WALK IN THE WOODS**

#### **APRIL 26, 2022 TUESDAY 10 AM JOHNSTON WOODS MCDONALD TN**

Meet at Johnston Woods trail parking lot off Hwy 11S near the former Bachman Home at 10 am. We will walk the 1.2-mile trail first, and then the 2.9-trail for a total of 4.2 miles. Considered easy. Hikers may walk one or both trails as they connect at the parking lot. Contact Hike Leader James Anderson 423-715-8824.

### **WEDNESDAY WALKS ON THE CLEVELAND GREENWAY**

Every Wednesday Jack Callahan leads a 3.75-mile walk on the Cleveland Greenway, meeting at the lower end of the parking lot across from Perkits and the Gondolier restaurant adjacent to Keith Street. Meet time is currently 4:30 pm. A note on the walk is sent out the beginning of each week on Messenger. Contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 if you want to be included in the messages.

### **THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH BREAKFAST**

Join us for conversation over breakfast at 8:30 am at Old Fort Restaurant on 25th Street in Cleveland. For more information, contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885.

## **· NON-CLUB OPPORTUNITIES**

### **SPRING WILDFLOWER PILGRIMAGE IN GSMNP**

**APRIL 26 - 30, 2022 TUESDAY - SATURDAY**

### **TELLICO/OCOEE VOLUNTEER TRAIL CREW**

Check the Facebook page for future work days.

### **BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION**

See the calendar for upcoming events.

As always, go to the specific sponsor web page for more information on these events if you plan on attending.

# **- MINUTES**

Club Meeting Minutes for 3-10-22

The meeting was called to order by President James Anderson. Several visitors were recognized and welcomed.

A motion to approve the February minutes was made by Jack and seconded by Margaret. The motion was approved by the group.

Treasurer, Jennifer Schroll, reported the Club has a checking account balance of \$1777.50.

Several Club members reported on previous hikes and activities.

Upcoming hikes were mentioned, including that the visit to the Dunlap Coke Ovens will have to be rescheduled. Also, Ruth mentioned that the Eureka Trail hike has been cancelled.

The President mentioned there are still some T-shirts available for sale.

The Club also discussed the meeting location due to the problems we have encountered with the Senior Citizen Center not being open for us recently. After some discussion, it was the consensus of the group that we would continue with the Senior Citizen Center at this time.

The business portion of the meeting was concluded. VP Jack Callahan introduced Teresa Irons Wyatt and Sue Robinson. Teresa narrated a slide show of their recent trip out West.

Respectfully submitted,

James Anderson, President and Secretary