

CATOCTIN MOUNTAIN PARK - CHARCOAL TRAIL

By Marylou Stone

This trail not only lets you get some exercise but also teaches you about the story of making charcoal for the iron furnaces during the 1800s.

The trail is a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile loop that starts and ends at the Thurmont Vista parking lot on Park Central Road. The trail is very easy. The hardest part of this trail is following it. After passing the exhibit that shows how charcoal was made the trail takes a sharp right hand turn back towards the parking lot. It looks like the trail is ending at an old roadbed, but go right to other exhibits and the continuation of the trail and the parking lot.

I walked this trail in the fall with some friends. Not only was charcoal making interesting, but we also made a game out of seeing who could name the most trees by the different leaves that we found.

We think we found the following leaves: Shagbark Hickory, Sassafras, Yellow-poplar (commonly called Tulip tree), Red Maple, Scarlet Oak, Black Oak, Chestnut Oak, and Bigtooth Aspen.

