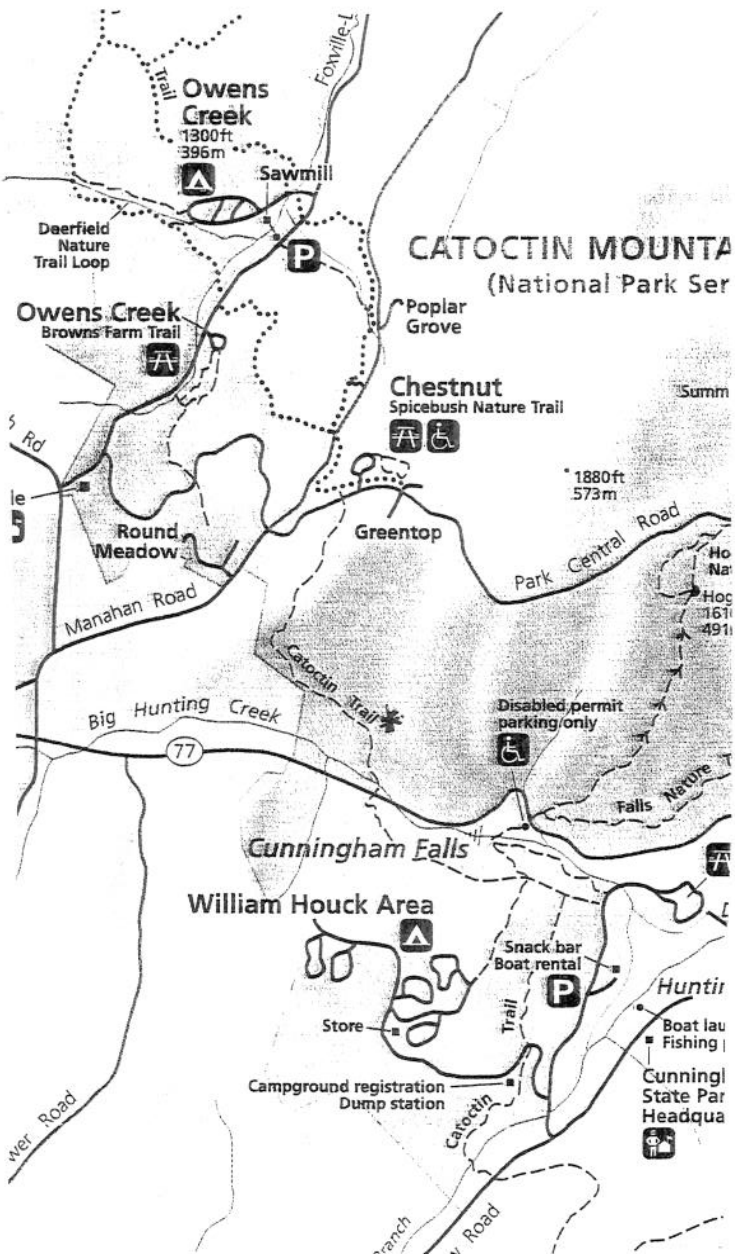


# CATOCTIN TRAIL - ROUTE 77 TO PARK CENTRAL ROAD

By Marylou Stone

The Catoctin Trail, marked by blue blazes, is a trail that starts at Gambrill State Park and continues north through the Frederick City Watershed, Cunningham Falls State Park and Catoctin Mountain Park. It is 26.5 miles long and ends at Mount Zion Road, 1.3 miles north of Owens Creek Campground in Catoctin Mountain Park.



I hiked a section of this trail from Route 77 to Park Central Road. This section of the trail is in Catoctin Mountain Park. Finding a place to park where the trail crosses Route 77 is very difficult. The parking is also very limited on Route 77 and is not marked. It is better to park in the Chestnut Picnic Area in Catoctin Mountain Park where there is plenty of parking available and is not far from where the trail crosses Park Central Road.

This section of the trail is approximately one mile, or two miles round trip. From Route 77 it is a constant uphill, with some sections being steeper than others. It is also rocky in some sections, so tennis shoes or hiking boots are a good idea. The first part of the trail seems to follow an old road bed. As you climb farther, you cross several dirt roads, so pay attention to the blue blazes.

I did this section on a warm summer afternoon and listened to the White Breasted Nuthatches serenade me as they sound like little tin horns.