Washington State Park

1000 STEPS TRAIL

This trail is a remarkable example of the outstanding rock work completed at Washington State Park during the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps. In 1936, the CCC's Company 1743 constructed the trail using the large stone steps that gave 1000 Steps Trail its name. After climbing the stone steps through the oak/hickory hardwood woodland, hikers will encounter more of the CCC's handiwork - an overlook shelter built into the hillside to resemble a natural outcropping. This stone shelter overlooks the Big River valley and makes a nice resting place after the long climb up the talus slope. This shelter can only be accessed via the hiking trail. Hiking along this trail, visitors may see many of nature's wonders, including colorful wildflowers, native songbirds, frisky squirrels and other small mammals, majestic hardwood trees and abundant dolomite rock outcroppings. 1000 Steps Trail also meanders through the 68-acre Washington State Park Hardwood Natural Area, an area of land set aside for protection because of its natural beauty.

Along the trail, hikers will encounter several bridges and stonework that may become slippery, rocks and roots sticking up in the trail's natural surface, and steep grades traversed by uneven stone steps. Hikers also may notice a number of downed trees along many sections of the trail; these are a result of severe storm damage and the area is recovering as time passes.

Hikers should register at the trail registration box at the Thunderbird Lodge bulletin board (near the trailhead) prior to beginning their hike. Trail maps are located at the bulletin board as well. The trail shares a trailhead and a section of trail with Rockywood Trail.

Distance: 1.25 Miles
Uses: Hiking [✓]
Blazes: Yellow
Class: Loop
Surface Type: Natural
Trail Rating: Rugged
Estimated Hiking Time: 1 Hour, 15 Minutes
Trailhead & GPS Location: 38.08557, -90.68348

Elevation profile is not available

You may experience:
2) Natural Surface-dirt/mud/gravel, shifting rock, slippery surface, etc.
3) Rocks, roots and/or downed vegetation on trail
5) Physically challenging obstacles
6) Wood or stone steps
7) Steep grades and inclines more than 10%
8) Bluffs or drop-offs next to trail
9) Bridges and/or structural crossings
10) Water/stream crossings without bridges
11) Occasional water over trail
12) Road/highway crossing

This trail or a portion of this trail travels through:
Washington State Park Hardwoods Natural Area
TRAIL BLAZE COLORS & SURFACE TYPES
The maps on this website indicate the blaze colors for each trail. If more than one trail shares tread, that portion of the trail is identified by more than one color. The surface type of a trail is indicated on the maps generated by this website by a pattern overlapping the blaze color of the trail.

TRAIL TYPE – Loop, Multi-loop, One Way, System or Multi-section
A loop trail is one that will return you to the trailhead. Multi-loop trails offer two or more separate loops, ex. a trail having a north and south loop. A one-way trail takes you from the trailhead to the farthest point on the trail and you will have to retrace your steps to return to the trailhead. If you plan to return to your starting point on a one-way trail, you will have to double the distance to calculate your estimated mileage and/or hiking time.
A trail system is a series of interconnected trails that allow you to chose your own route. A Multi-section trail offers two or more separate sections, ex. Katy Trail State Park, and distances are shown both for the entire trail and the sections.

YOU MAY EXPERIENCE
These conditions are all things you may encounter while on a Missouri state parks trail. Trailhead signs at the start of each trail also indicate which conditions exist on that trail.

ESTIMATED HIKING TIME
The estimated hiking time was determined by considering the average user’s speed and the conditions that might be experienced on a specific trail. Your speed may be slower or faster than the time listed.

GPS COORDINATES
There are several methods of communicating GPS coordinates. Most GPS units will convert from one coordinate system to another. If you require a different coordinate system for your unit, visit dnr.mo.gov/gisutils/ to convert the coordinates shown on this map to another version.

NATURAL AREAS / WILD AREAS
Natural areas are identified in pink. Natural areas are recognized as the best remaining examples known of Missouri’s original natural environments. These natural areas are managed and protected for their scientific, educational and historical values. Missouri state parks have 38 designated natural areas, encompassing almost 22,000 acres.
Wild areas are identified in brown. The Missouri Wild Area System is made up of large tracts of land set aside as wilderness, which make the perfect setting for hiking and backpacking. A wild area must be 1,000 or more acres in size, show little impact from humans, and possess outstanding opportunities for solitude. They are strictly protected for their wilderness benefits as well as for their use for environmental education and scientific study.