

Morrow Mountain State Park

49104 Morrow Mountain Road, Albemarle, NC 28001

GPS: [35.3737, -80.0735](https://www.google.com/maps?ll=35.3737,-80.0735)

Short Loop Trail

This moderate bridle and hiking loop trail circles the base of Morrow Mountain and offers unique views and perspectives of the mountain that many visitors never see. The highlight of the trail is the opportunity to see a globally rare plant and a globally rare natural community. The Short Loop Trail will be the main trail for the day but we will add another trail in the afternoon as time permits.

Parking: Horse Trailer Parking Lot, near the entrance of the park

Length **4.8 mi via Bridle Trail**, Elevation gain **449 ft**, Route type **Loop**, Blaze **White Circle**

Hike leader **Brenda L. Wichmann** is State Botanist with the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. She is a graduate of North Carolina State University and Wofford College. Brenda has a passion for rare plants and has studied them for over twenty years. Throughout her professional career, Brenda has worked for the North Carolina Botanical Garden, regional herbaria, NatureServe, The Carolina Vegetation Survey, and The Nature Conservancy, in addition to the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program.

Fall Mountain Trail

This 4.1-mile loop trail is rated moderate. Starting at the parking lot along Lake Tillery, it traverses a wide variety of habitats and geology. In the beginning, you will notice the remnants of a recent prescribed burn. The top of Fall Mountain features Chestnut Oak and relatively undisturbed rhyolite outcrops. A trekking pole may be handy for crossing a small creek if it has rained recently. We will pause at the top of Fall Mountain for a lunch break or snack (bring your own). Painted Buckeye, Trailing Arbutus, Carolina Silverbell, and Pinxter Azalea may be found along the trail. The descent will include walking along the Yadkin River. Bald eagles and ospreys can sometimes be observed along the river as they search for fish.

If you finish early and want to hike a bit more, the Three Rivers Trail is an easy 0.8-mile loop that borders the Yadkin River. The trailhead begins from the same parking lot near the boat ramp along the Yadkin River.

Parking: Lake Tillery boat ramp parking lot

Length **4.1 mi**, Elevation gain **548 ft**, Route type **Loop**, Blaze **Orange Triangles**

Hike leader **Katherine Culatta** is the botanist/permit coordinator with the North Carolina Plant Conservation Program. Before joining NCPCP, she completed an M.S. in Plant Biology at NC State University, where she received an NCNPS Shinn Grant for her thesis work on *Nuphar sagittifolia*. She learned a love for native plants while growing up in northwest North Carolina.

Hattaway Mountain Trail

This 3.1-mile loop trail was recently modified with switchbacks for easier hiking. It is now rated as moderate rather than the former rating of strenuous. Chestnut Oaks, Sourwood, and Mountain Laurel growing on Hattaway Mountain are typical of the dry, rocky ridges found throughout the Uwharrie Mountains. Also typical is the scattering of milky quartz from abundant quartz veins. It offers rewarding views from the top of the mountain.

After the Hattaway Mountain hike and lunch, Chris will take you on an afternoon adventure to additional areas to botanize.

Parking: Picnic Area Parking closest to the pool

Length **3.1 mi**, Elevation gain **459 ft**, Route type **Loop**, Blaze **Orange Squares**

Hike Leader Chris Liloia, Curator, Habitat Gardens at the NC Botanical Garden in Chapel Hill. These garden collections display plants in assemblages found in natural plant communities.

Morrow Mountain Trail

This 5.3-mile out-and-back trail is moderately challenging due to the steep half-mile just below the peak. Otherwise, it is an easy path connecting the park office to the top of Morrow Mountain. Wildlife is abundant in this area. Once there, the view of the Pee Dee River and Lake Tillery is amazing. Also at the top are restrooms and a picnic area: a perfect place for lunch and a pause.

For thousands of years, Native Americans mined rhyolite at the top of the mountain. Now the residue chips and shards of grayish-blue rhyolite rock can be found at the top and along the Mountain Loop Trail.

Parking: Office and Museum parking lot. We may utilize shuttles if needed.

Length **5.3 mi**, Elevation gain **725 ft**, Route type **Out & back**, Blaze **Blue Triangles**

Hike leader **Jeff Marcus**, the N.C. longleaf applied scientist for The Nature Conservancy, is a leader in local and state efforts to promote the maintenance and restoration of the N.C. longleaf pine ecosystem. Marcus and his wife Ellen are also the stewards of the Plant Conservation Program Eastwood Preserve located north of Pinehurst. Jeff will lead a more general naturalist/ecology/land management & conservation-themed hike.

Three Rivers Trail

The trail is named for the point where the Yadkin River becomes the Pee Dee River and intersects with the Uwharrie River. It is great for a short and easy hike to add to your main hike if time and energy permit. The trail traverses a floodplain and a small ridgeline. Wildflowers such as spring beauties, wing stem, and trumpet creeper bloom at different times of the year. River birch and sycamore trees can be found in the low areas, with many chestnut oak and American beech on the ridgeline.

Parking: Lake Tillery boat ramp parking lot.

Length **.8 mi**, Elevation gain **52 ft**, Route Type **Loop**, Blaze **Blue Hexagons**