

SWEETHEART HIKE

A SELF-GUIDED WALK
THROUGH THE LOVE STORIES
OF BULL RUN MOUNTAINS
NATURAL AREA PRESERVE



Follow the white highlighted path through the Preserve to learn about a few of our biological and historic love stories. From salamander romance to extensive family trees, this hike will get you feeling the love!

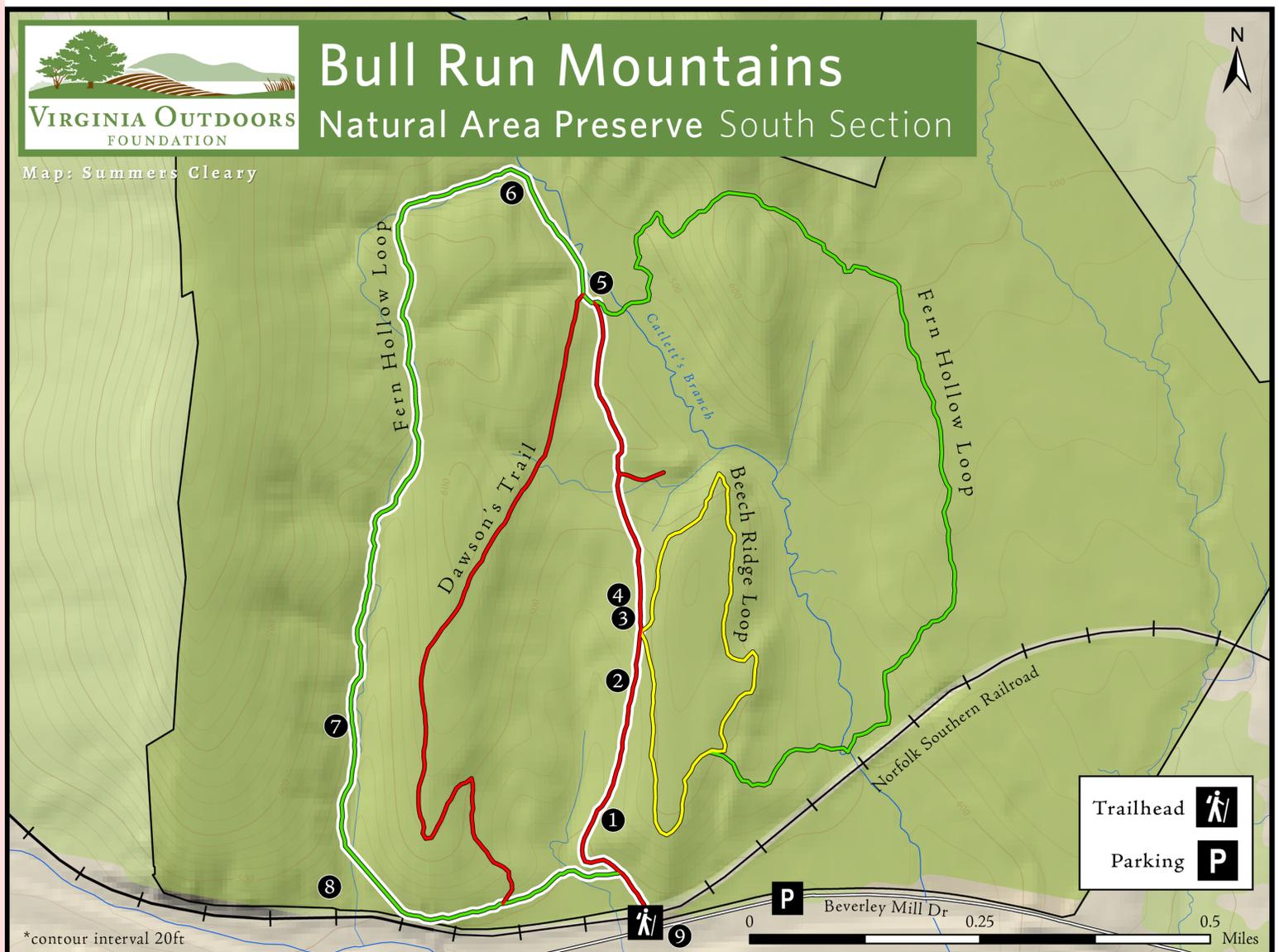




Image: Becky Conway

Stop #1: **Blown away by the force of Mother Nature**

Look for the huge fallen red oak tree. In 1972, the Preserve was hit by Hurricane Agnes, which tore trees down for two miles in the South Section. In Jackson Hollow, Agnes was also responsible for destroying the dam, which the previous owners did not fix, resulting in the ecological wetland gem present today. This shows that not only people impact the land, but weather also plays a big role in what this area looks like and how it changes over time. Fallen trees provide an opportunity for critters to dig in the loose soil by the rootball, creating excellent burrows and future love nests. Younger trees now compete for open canopy space and race to fill the temporary hole.

Stop #2: **Tattooed Trees**

As you continue your hike, you'll notice several trees that tell love stories of past visitors. The smooth bark of beech trees makes them easy targets for tree carving. This taboo tattoo is regrettable since tree bark is similar to our skin, and the graffiti can never be removed! The bark protects the tree from infection, parasites, or pests. Instead of doodling our love in a permanent but harmful way on our forest, strive to leave no trace of your visit.

Remember - take only pictures, leave only footprints!



Images: Becky Conway



Image: Joe Villari

Stop #3: **Vernal Pool**

This body of water differs from a puddle after a rain storm because it is a temporary or seasonal pool. While it will eventually dry up, it plays a critical role in the reproductive cycles of many plants and animals, such as the spotted salamander. Adult spotted salamanders will try to return to the exact same vernal pool they themselves were hatched to mate! When the eggs hatch, the larva have feathery gills and two front legs. Eventually, they will metamorphosis and take to the land to find a home under the rocks or logs of the Preserve until its time for the lifecycle to repeat.





Image: Becky Conway

Stop #4: **Witch Hazel**

The tree branching directly over the vernal pool is witch hazel, a medium-sized tree that actually blooms during early winter! It depends on owl moths, who pollinate the tree. The moths raise their body temperature up to 50 degrees by shivering to stay warm during the cold season.

Stop #5: **Hampton Cole**

Hampton Cole first appeared on the U.S. Census in 1830, listed as a free colored person. He made payments on 16 acres of land now within the Preserve, and he also worked for the Confederate States of America during the Civil War. Upon his return from war, he found a white trespasser had invaded and laid claim to his house. Throughout his life, Hampton Cole had 5 wives and 7 children! If you are interested in learning more about his tragic story, you should attend one of our hikes with Cultural History Interpreter, Barinaale Dube!

Richard COLE-53534 (d. 1849-Prince William County, Virginia)

sp: Sallie -53536 (b. 1802-Virginia, USA)

Mary COLE-53543 (b. 1829-Prince William County, Virginia)



Hampton COLE-53526 (b. 1831-Virginia, USA)

sp: Delia EWELL-53527 (b. 1830-Virginia m. 17 Jun 1866 d. 28 Feb 1864-Alexandria, P

sp: Lydia E PINN-53533 (b. Abt 1829-Prince William, Virginia m. 1853 d. 1864-A, Virg

Calvin Newton COLE-53531 (b. 17 Mar 1857-BRM, P, V, USA d. Af. 1870)

Hampton Oberry COLE-53530 (b. 1859-PWC, Virginia d. 25 Feb 1864-A, PW,

sp: Elizabeth LAMBERT-53535 (b. 1846-Prince Wm. Co. m. 3 Nov 1901)

sp: Nancy THOMAS-53537 (b. 1838-Prince Wm Co m. 29 Mar 1893)

sp: Mary Frances SPENCER-53538 (b. Abt 1838-Virginia m. 17 Nov 1870 d. 25 Aug 18

Alfred A. COLE-53540 (b. Abt 1871-Virginia d. 20 Nov 1950-Alexandria, Virg

sp: Marion M SAUNDERS-53553 (b. Abt 1878-District of Columbia m. 27 Nov

Willber Marvin COLE-53552 (b. Abt 1906-District of Columbia d. Oct

sp: Beatrice V GRIFFIN-53559 (b. Abt 1910 m. 26 Apr 1931)

Ruth E COLE-53551 (b. Abt 1908-District of Columbia)

Elton S COLE-53555 (b. Abt 1911-District of Columbia)

Lawrence R COLE-53554 (b. Abt 1913-District of Columbia)

Malinda COLE-53529 (b. 15 Nov 1873-Manassas, Prince William, Virginia, USA

Hampton COLE-53528 (b. 11 Oct 1876-Prince William County, Virginia)

Richard COLE-53532 (b. 7 Aug 1878-Prince William County, Virginia)

Rob. H. COLE-53539 (b. Abt 1879-Virginia)



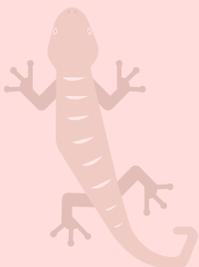
Images: Becky Conway

Stop # 6: **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**

Look for *horizontal* rows of tiny cavities in tulip poplar and maple trees, especially along the trail near Catletts Branch. These are the sapwells of yellow bellied sapsuckers, a medium sized woodpecker. The sticky holes attract insects, which in turn draw hummingbirds, bats, and even porcupines to these sweet sources of protein!



Image: Janis Ston



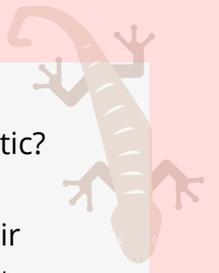


Image: Becky Conway

Stop #7: **Kinky folded phyllite**

With a name like that, who knew rocks could be romantic? This shiny metamorphic rock has dark stripes, or kinks. They are made up of the exact same minerals, only their orientation is shifted so the sunlight hits it at a different angle, creating the rocking tiger striped pattern!



Image: Becky Conway

Stop #8: **Beverly-Chapman Mill**

Not all love stories have a happy ending, as John Chapman experienced. He convinced his family to sell all their land and invest in this mill, shortly before it became a strategic supplies and vantage point during the Civil War. Burned several times as it changed control between the Union and Confederacy, John eventually committed himself to a facility to cope with his grief and responsibility for ruining his family. The mill is currently owned and operated by Turn The Mill Around Campaign, and is closed to the public for structural safety concerns; however, it and many of the structures around the Preserve are made from quartzite, a stone that was quarried right here in Bull Run Mountains!



Image: Becky Conway

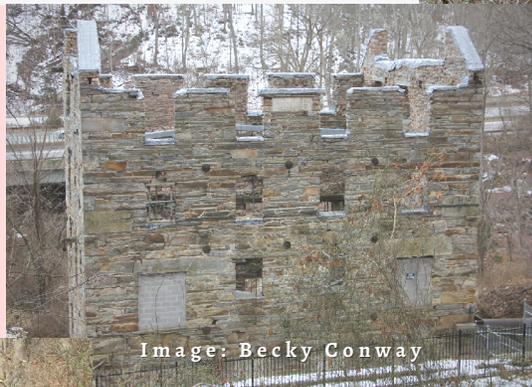


Image: Becky Conway



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Visitor Love

The Preserve is a landscape full of natural and cultural love stories, including the ones you bring with you as a visitor. Whether it's your first trip or you are a returning regular, see if this hike helps you fall in love with the Bull Run Mountains Natural Area Preserve, each & every season!