

Luray's New Front Porch

HAWKSBILL GREENWAY

Luray, Virginia

Preserving our Natural Resources for Future Generations

LURAY
HAWKSBILL
GREENWAY

WELCOME



Welcome to the Hawksbill Greenway!

Where Urban Meets Wild

The Luray-Hawksbill Greenway combines a lush habitat for birds, butterflies, trout, and other wildlife along with urban amenities.

It offers a two mile, 10-foot-wide, paved walking and biking trail which is handicapped accessible. The path is divided by color stripes in order to give a sense of lanes. It also has yellow markers painted every 1/10 mile to let trail users measure their walking distance. Different colors are used on each section of the Greenway. See map.



The Greenway has become a major venue for the town. Many activities are held there, including a Youth Trout Fishing Tournament, Festival of Spring, Evenings on Main concerts during the summer, as well as various charity events.

Trail users are only steps away from Luray's vibrant downtown area – with its restaurants, Farmers' Market, shops, hotels, B & B's, museum & restored train depot – and its historic homes in quaint residential neighborhoods.

The Greenway crosses Main Street in the center of town and provides easy access to business and residential areas.

The walkway under Main Street allows you to continue along the Greenway without having to cross the street.



Take either ramp up to the street level for access to Historic Downtown Luray. Six major parking areas are available. Many trail users park at different locations in order to vary their walking/biking experience.

Greenway Courtesy

1) Walk/bike on the right side of the path. 2) Yield the right of way to all pedestrians. 3) Pass trail users on the left. 4) Bikers should give adequate warning to avoid surprises. 5) High speeds are not permitted on the Greenway. 6) Walk bikes where indicated along the trail.

Dogs Have Rules Too

- Dogs are welcome and must be leashed.
- Mutt-Mitt dispensers are located along the trail with biodegradable bags to pick up after your pet.
- Trash containers are located at convenient points along the trail where you can deposit the filled bags and other trash.



Along the trail drinking fountains are available to accommodate wheel-chairs and pets. A convenient pet dish is located at the bottom of each fountain. Remember, you and your pet should always be properly hydrated for health and comfort's sake.



Benches and picnic tables are conveniently located along the trail. These have all been donated by Greenway supporters.

The trail is adjacent to the Hawksbill Creek for about a mile of its entire two mile length. Another portion of the trail loop approximately seven tenths of a mile also follows the creek, and swings around a cattle pasture and returns to the creek.

Healthful Benefits of Walking and Biking

You will see many people and their pets using the Greenway. Joggers, power-walkers, and people strolling; all enjoy the benefits of walking.

Health experts encourage us to walk as a means of maintaining heart health and overall fitness. Trail users can easily develop a walking plan suited to their needs by using the trail map in this booklet. The woman pictured on the cover, actually lost over 100 pounds by walking the Greenway!



Need Information?

If you are a tourist and have questions, there are outdoor kiosks along the Greenway which provide a variety of brochures about the town and local events.

Bird Watching on the Greenway

Luray Hawksbill Greenway is home to many birds which hunt food in the waters of Hawksbill Creek.

- Black-crowned Night-Herons and Green-backed Herons are common in warmer seasons.
- Great Blue Herons and Kingfishers are year-round residents. As trees in the riparian area of the Green Section grow taller the bird population will change and woodland birds will become more prominent.
- Bluebirds and Tree Swallows use the nesting boxes along the loop trail each year.
- Alert birders will see a wide variety of birds especially in the early morning.



The trail is utilized in all seasons. Many people have reported seeing wildlife such as muskrat, beaver, and mink along the trail.

Although the Greenway is not designed to function as a tailored park you will see many flowering plants and small gardens along the trail.



- Two perennial gardens are planted in the trail splits.
- The Luray Garden Club Memorial Garden features a variety of trees, shrubs and flowers along with a gazebo and benches.
- Ruffner Plaza features a variety of perennials and annuals in the planters.



Greenway Murals

Murals in Luray date back to 1937. Local artists have continued this tradition in the past few years.

The murals along the streets depict historic themes specific to Luray. Other murals along the Greenway focus on natural images. These were painted by local artists and school children.

See These Numbered Locations on Center Trail Map.



1 - Flowering Forest

The entire Greenway is home to thousands of native trees. Some of these were already growing when the Greenway was designed, but most of them were planted as part of the Riparian Buffer.

The Flowering Forest consists of over thirty trees that are either native or hybrids of native trees which display especially attractive flowers and/or foliage.

The trees which have been planted around the Trail Head Plaza are low growing species and are recommended for planting under utility lines.

All the trees in the Flowering Forest are identified with markers displaying the species, cultivar, and common name. Most of the trees in this area were provided by the Page County Tree Board, garden clubs, and Luray's Tree and Beautification Committee. Also included are two gardens planted with perennials and shrubs where the walking trail has been divided. These plants have all been donated and are also identified with markers.

#2 - Riparian Buffer

The young trees and rough grass located here are part of our Riparian Buffer. This planting of a sixteen-acre plot along the Hawksbill Creek was done with a grant awarded to the Page County Tree Board in December 1999.



Various church groups, Hill & Valley Garden Club, Boy & Girl Scouts, Tree Board members, high school students, and community volunteers have planted more than 2,500 seedlings over a period of several years.

Varieties of Oak, Maple, and Ash as well as Locust, Bald Cypress, River Birch, Red Osier Dogwood, Persimmon, Redbud, and shrubs are growing up to become a forest buffer in this area.

The buffer is part of Virginia's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. Because of this program agreement, grasses and weeds in the restricted area cannot be mowed from April 15 through August 15.



Riparian buffers are the single most effective protection for our water resources in the entire Chesapeake Bay Watershed. These buffers are one-hundred foot wide strips of grass, shrubs and trees along the banks of rivers and streams. The Riparian Buffer along the Hawksbill provides a transition zone between the water and the cattle pasture. It filters out phosphorus and nitrogen from fertilizer and animal waste and traps 80-85% of these chemicals which formerly entered the stream during moderate to heavy rainfalls.

The habitat offered by riparian buffers is home to a multitude of plants and animal species, including those rarely found outside this narrow band of land influenced by the creek. This buffer also serves as a wildlife travel corridor.

When this forested riparian buffer matures it will benefit aquatic habitat by improving the quality of the water through shading, filtering and moderating stream flow. Shade in the summer maintains cooler, more even temperatures. This allows the water to hold more oxygen and will reduce stress on the fish and other aquatic creatures.



This riparian buffer has contributed significantly to the transformation of this creek into a "Class A" trout stream.

#3 - Luray Garden Club Memorial Garden

This charming garden is accessed by way of traversing a small loop starting near the picnic tables and drinking fountain, crossing the access road, and looping around the garden.

The Luray Garden Club is the oldest club in Page County. It was founded in 1931 and federated in 1933.

This outstanding club has remained active throughout the years and has contributed significantly to the beautification of Luray. Members have planted trees, shrubs, and perennials throughout Luray. The club meets monthly and continues to seek ways to help the community preserve its green space.



This lovely garden provides a quiet place to enjoy nature and beautiful plants. The gazebo which was made possible by donations from club members was installed in 2010.

There are a number of benches around the garden where one can relax and enjoy a variety of planter beds. Each Crepe Myrtle, Magnolia, and Dogwood tree was planted as a memorial to faithful garden club members who are now deceased.

The Hill & Valley Garden Club

This club was established in 1956 by the Junior Women's Club of Luray.

The purpose of the club is to encourage gardening, find inspiration by working hand-in-hand with nature, and to enhance our homes and benefit our community. The club's motto is: "One is nearer God's heart in the Garden than anywhere else on Earth."



Members provide seed for the birds during the winter at the MontVue Nursing Home and conduct horticulture therapy sessions at the Hawksbill Nursing Home.

The club provided the landscaping at the Luray West End traffic island. Members enjoy working with their hands and hearts by maintaining the historic cemetery on Main Street, memorial trees at Ralph Dean Park and planters at Page Memorial Hospital entrance.

Fund-raising activities during the year have enabled the Hill & Valley Garden Club to donate plants directly to the Greenway, and to purchase accessories such as the water fountain at the north end of the Greenway.



Both clubs planted a Monarch Butterfly Waystation on the Greenway and in the old County Cemetery in 2015.

4 - Fishery Rock Structures

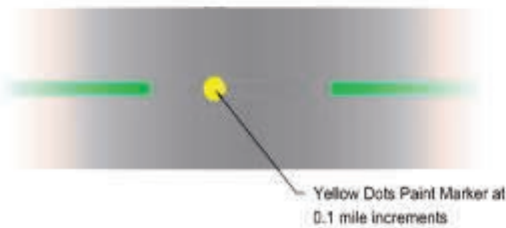
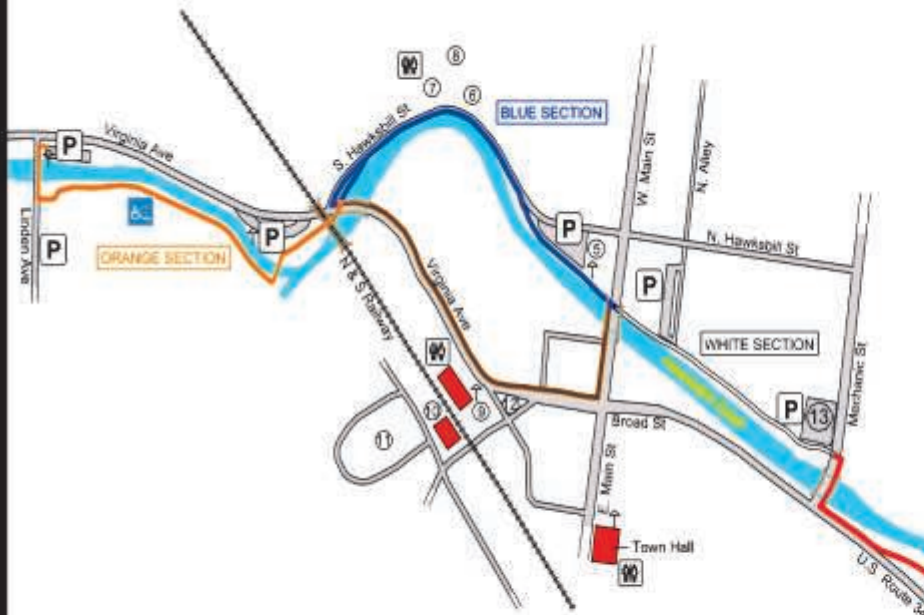
This project has enhanced the trout fishing in a one-half mile section of Hawksbill Creek through the construction of a series of in-stream structures. These massive rocks have enhanced the riffle pool complex.

Riparian shrubs and plants help lower water temperatures. Six groups of massive rocks were placed along the creek to achieve this goal.

Funding was provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Fund and the Chesapeake Bay Program. On-site planning and work was performed by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.



Trout stocking takes place 8-9 times a year from October to May. The Hawksbill Creek is a “Class A” trout stream and designated as Heritage Waters.



DISTANCE MARKER DETAIL
Not to Scale

- A. PAINT COLOR OF STRIPES
CORRESPONDS TO TRAIL SECTION.
- B. PAINT MARKERS ARE PLACED AT TENTH
OF A MILE INCREMENTS. PASSING TEN
(10) MARKERS EQUALS ONE (1) MILE.

Luray

The Town where Caverns meet the Sky

HAWKSBILL GREENWAY

Luray's New "Front Porch"

Key to Circled Numbers on Map:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ① Flowering Forest | ⑦ Crockery and Bottles Found at Base of Cliff |
| ② Riparian Buffer | ⑧ Champion Chinquapin Oak Tree |
| ③ Luray Garden Club Memorial Garden | ⑨ Visitor Center - Historic Restored Train Depot |
| ④ Fishery Rock Structures | ⑩ Library |
| ⑤ Ruffner Plaza | ⑪ Inn Lawn Park |
| ⑥ Cliffside Pocket Park and Butterfly Garden | ⑫ Confederate Soldiers Monument |
| ♿ ADA Accessible Fishing Platform | ⑬ Farmer's Market |

HEALTH INFORMATION: CALORIES BURNED PER MILE BY WALKING

SPEED/POUNDS	100 lb	120 lb	140 lb	160 lb	180 lb	200 lb	220 lb	250 lb	275 lb	300 lb
2.0 mph	57	68	80	91	102	114	125	142	156	170
2.5 mph	55	65	75	87	98	109	120	136	150	164
3.0 mph	53	64	74	85	95	106	117	133	146	159
3.5 mph	52	62	73	83	94	104	114	130	143	156
4.0 mph	57	68	80	91	102	114	125	142	156	170
4.5 mph	64	76	89	102	115	127	140	159	175	191
5.0 mph	73	87	102	116	131	145	160	182	200	218



A “Youth Trout Derby” is held on the second Saturday of April each year. This event draws hundreds of children plus parents and friends. It is sponsored by the Page County Sheriff’s Department, the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and Luray’s Department of Parks and Recreation.



Trout fishing is permitted year round. State fishing and trout licenses are required. Please observe rules as stated in Virginia’s Fishing Guide which is available where licenses are purchased. Fishing licenses and the associated trout stamp may be purchased at the following locations:

- Appalachian Outdoor Adventures: 2 West Main Street
- Fairview Store: 101 Antioch Road at Fairview Road
- Outlanders Inc.: 4768 US Highway 211 West
- Southern States Cooperative: 201 Williams Street (off East Main Street)
- Wal-Mart Super Center: Sporting Goods Department - Route 211 West.

#5 - Ruffner Plaza

This plaza is the site of the first two lots which were sold in order to establish the Town of Luray and, subsequently, Page County. Isaac Ruffner sold both lots to Christian Forrer-Price on September 4, 1812 for a total cost of \$121.00.



Although flooding of Hawksbill Creek rendered these lots as unsuitable building sites, the Town of Luray developed them to become this attractive park. The plaza is bordered by brick planters and a protective railing. The walkway under Main Street was made possible in part by the Luray Rotary Club. It offers a safer way to cross the street.

All plantings in this plaza were designed, furnished and planted by the Page County Master Gardeners. The pergola and its swings, as well as park benches were donated by individuals who love and support the Greenway.

Please take time to read the memorial plaques on the west side of the plaza which provide more information about the history of the park.



There was an earlier building foundation on this site that was much lower and closer to the stream. The exact construction date of the previous building is unknown, but is estimated to have taken place sometime in the 1800's.

6-Cliffside Pocket Park

Much of the Hawksbill Creek, which winds toward the Shenandoah River, has steep, wooded cliff-like banks. Because of the ruggedness of these areas, people seldom use them and they are a secluded habitat for a wide assortment of birds and small animals.

These “wilderness thresholds” offer fine opportunities for nature study and bird observation right in the center of town. With cliffs and bluffs often 50 to 100 feet above the water these wild areas offer a scenic frame to our historic town and are worthy of preservation in their own right. This pocket park contains a Butterfly Garden where you can spend time watching the many varieties of butterflies which are common to this area.



The small park has benches, picnic tables, and a drinking fountain which is handicap accessible and pet friendly.

When you walk on this portion of the Greenway, note the old-fashioned working saw mill across the stream from this park. Limited parking is accessible from South Hawksbill Street.

The Greenway comfort stations were completed in 2010 and are open from dawn until dusk 365 days a year. One restroom is located on the Blue Section and a second restroom on the Green Section. Both are ADA compliant.



The exterior façade of each one is designed to blend in with the trail's natural surroundings.

This project was made possible through a grant provided by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.

If you have driven to this “pocket park,” please note South Hawksbill Street is for south bound traffic only and all vehicles must exit to the right, onto Virginia Avenue which is Business U.S. Route 340 South.

7 - Crockery & Bottles Found at the Cliff

When the Blue Ridge Mountains were settled in the 1800's, some of these families worked at the Stony Man Camp (Skyland) until Shenandoah National Park was developed ca 1937.

Broken plates, crockery and glass items used by these families and Stony Man Camp's dining hall were thrown in trash heaps during this period.



Many items of trash were carried downstream during periods of heavy rain and were deposited in the flood plain.

As a result, dinnerware fragments discovered when this pocket park was being developed are typical of those found in former settlement sites throughout Shenandoah National Park as well as all communities downstream from the Blue Ridge Mountains.

All of these bottles and dish fragments are at least fifty years old.

The two soft drink bottles at the top of the photograph are from Whistle Bottling (“Wet Your Whistle”) Harrisonburg, VA which went bankrupt during the Great Depression. These bottles are stamped with the patent date of 1926.

One of the pieces of dinnerware is by Carr China, chartered by Thomas Carr, Grafton, West Virginia in 1916. Carr specialized in restaurantware and his business was discontinued in 1952.

Note the wide mouthed apothecary bottles to the left of the soft drink bottles. The small bottle shaped liked a mandolin has a cork. Its origin is unknown, but the shape was a popular design for perfume bottles.

#8-Chinquapin Oak

The second largest Chinquapin Oak in the state of Virginia grows just above the Hawksbill Greenway.

With a massive canopy spread of 132 feet, this arboreal treasure is estimated to be at least 250 years old. It would have sprouted around 1776, the year the Declaration of Independence was signed and when Page County was still inhabited mainly by Native Americans and a few settlers. The trunk measures 19.8 feet in circumference and it towers 60 feet above the ground.



The Page County Board of Supervisors decided not to build on this site in order to protect the Oak. So few trees such as this Chinquapin Oak remain, and we are proud to have it living in our community. Come view it in all four seasons to truly appreciate its beauty.

#9 - Restored Train Depot

The restored depot is just a short walk from the end of the Greenway at Virginia Avenue.

Though not part of the Greenway, the depot houses the Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center, and a Railroad Museum. It is a great source for area information.



The depot has been restored to its period of greatest significance—the 1940's. This was just before the Norfolk & Western railroad terminated passenger service on the line, the end of steam trains, and the point of departure for soldiers during World War II.

Orange Section of the Greenway

This section was completed in the fall of 2008 adding approximately 1,800 feet to the trail.

This phase has become a popular area for walking and sight-seeing with its beautiful scenery, and footbridge.



Trail-side bench and picnic table designs were researched due to the possibility of a high water event; the designs chosen have proven to be virtually flood proof.

The Hill & Valley Garden Club along with Scouts and the Town, donated money & labor for the plantings near the parking area.

Permeable Paver Parking Lot

The permeable paver parking lot and rain garden Orange Section of the Greenway was completed in 2011. Spaces have been marked for parking on the entire lot including the “Turfstone” area which resembles grass. Along with the additional parking, the main goal in this particular area is to filter run-off into the Hawksbill Creek.

By installing the permeable pavers, and associated landscaping, we have achieved our goal and are confident that the environmental benefits of this project will have a positive impact on our waterway for generations.



This project was made possible through a grant provided by the Virginia Department of Forestry.

ADA Compliant Fishing Platforms

The Greenway is ADA accessible, but some people experience difficulty negotiating edges of the stream bank due to uneven surfaces. In order to alleviate this situation, in 2015 one of two ADA accessible fishing platforms was added along Luray’s award winning Greenway trail.



A second fishing platform will be constructed in 2016. Persons such as disabled veterans, those with walking disabilities, and those who are not comfortable walking on uneven surfaces will benefit from these platforms.

One platform is located in the corridor where the Parks & Recreation Department holds its annual youth trout fishing tournament each April. This will allow handicapped or disabled children access to the creek during this popular tournament.

Platform #1 is on the Red Section of the trail close to the Mechanic Street parking lot. It is easily accessible via a walkway to the platform. Note: 911 addresses are posted on signs in the event of an emergency.



Platform #2 will be located on the Orange Section of the Greenway close to Oscar Sours bridge and will be only a few feet from the Greenway path.

We are grateful to Racey Engineering for their donated design work and to Turner Concrete & Excavating for constructing the platform.



Brick pavers were installed at the site to recognize the supporters and organizations who donated funds for the project.

All fishermen are welcome to use the platforms. However, we urge those using the platforms to be alert for and respect those who do require the use of them and suggest you might like to provide assistance if needed.

Support the Hawksbill Greenway Foundation

Since the Greenway project began more than a decade ago, many Luray citizens and businesses have worked to create this urban paradise through their donations and hard work.



When the Greenway was completed in 2009, the Hawksbill Greenway Foundation was formed to assist in the enhancement, long-term care, and maintenance of this treasured open green space.

The Board of Directors offers a heartfelt “thank you” to everyone who has planted trees and gardens, raised funds, painted murals, donated benches and tables, as well as drinking fountains and contributed in a hundred other ways to creating this unique space.

We are proud to acknowledge donations which have exceeded over \$400,000 for these trail-side amenities. We look forward to your continuing support and ideas for the future. If you are interested in making a donation, please contact the Department of Parks & Recreation or the Hawksbill Greenway Foundation.





This booklet prepared by Eleanor Ames
Hawksbill Greenway Foundation Board Member.

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**For information call: 540-843-0770
or visit: www.HawksbillGreenway.org**

