

Clint Stevens

Thank you. Here is my report:

River to River Trail Report

December 7, 2019 to January 4, 2020

Start: Elizabethtown

End: Grand Tower

After years and years of saying I would like to hike the trail, I finally did it. I chose winter because that is the longest, I have off work and because of the rampant ticks, chiggers, and poison ivy during the summertime we all know and love. Because of other obligations and the weather, I chose not to do a thru-hike, but perhaps one day I will. I combined day hikes and backpacking. My longest stretch was five days of hiking from Bethesda Church to Ferne Clyffe. My longest day hike was the final stretch of seventeen miles from Godwin Trailhead to Grand Tower. I averaged a little over ten miles a day. I camped in a hammock and stayed plenty warm even though a few nights dipped into the mid- to low-twenties. My favorite section was from Garden of the Gods to Herod. My least favorite was the many road sections. My toughest day was the final stretch on the Mississippi flood plain. The temperature was in the thirties and I had a twenty to thirty mile an hour headwind. I saw some hunters and equestrians and two-day hikers in Panther's Den. I also saw two others beginning the trail at Elizabethtown, but otherwise I saw no one the whole trip. I had to wade several creeks, but this was nowhere near as bad as I expected. In fact, I almost came to enjoy wading the creeks as it cooled and cleaned my feet. I did the whole trip without getting a single blister, which I attribute to frequent sock changes. Keep your feet dry and you will be happy. Hiking the trail was a wonderful experience, and I will no doubt have fond memories of this adventure for the rest of my life.