

Garden of the Gods Wilderness / Buzzard Roost Loop

Shawnee National Forest

2020

Trail Markings:

General Forest Trails marked by white diamonds with trail numbers written onto them.



River to River Trail (R2R) features white diamonds with a blue "i", except in wilderness where it is a natural wood diamond with the "i" routed.

Safety: Personal safety-make sure someone knows your route and establish a check in time. Wear appropriate clothing and footwear depending on the weather and terrain. Carry plenty of water, food, compass and a first aid kit. This hike is remote. Cell phone coverage could be spotty.

Extra caution should be used where the trail is near the bluffs and when traveling on wet slippery rocks. Beware of poison ivy and oak. Various insects including ticks and mosquitoes are present here during spring, summer and fall. Venomous snakes are also present here including timber rattlesnakes and copperheads.

Emergencies: The nearest hospital is Harrisburg Medical Center. Cell phone service along the trail can be spotty so be prepared and know where your closest outlet is when dialing 911.

Camping: There are no designated camping areas along the trail but numerous ideal trail side camping areas. Note camping is prohibited within Natural Areas. Use existing campsites, don't create new ones. Use portable camp stove for cooking. If a campfire is needed, keep it small and use existing

fire rings. Protect water quality by washing and camping 200 feet from any water sources. Leave the campsite cleaner than you found it.

Trail Ethics: "Please practice Leave No Trace principles" Pack It In, Pack It Out. Some rare and endangered species of plants are located in the area so please stay on the designated trails and leave the rocks and plants for others to enjoy. Equestrians frequent this trail system: hikers should yield to horses. Approximately half of this hike is within Garden of the Gods Wilderness. Please abide by wilderness guidelines and restrictions.

Facilities: There are no facilities along this entire trail. Bury human waste and toilet tissue in a 6 inch deep "cat hole" at least 200 feet from water.

Avenza: The map included with this brochure is available in the Avenza Map Store for downloading to your smart phone. The Avenza App can be downloaded by searching the app store on your phone for this:



Once the app is downloaded access the map store and search for the following map:

Shawnee NF Multi-Day Hikes

This brochure will still be a helpful handy reference to know what the points of interest might be.

Description: This loop is a total hike of approximately 15 miles and would be ideal for a 2-3 day weekend hike. The hike is designed to start from the Back Packers parking lot at Garden of the Gods and proceed clockwise. The information in this brochure is based on this route.

The trail starts by following the River to River (R2R) trail with overlook vistas on the left side of the trail and the Observation trail bluff to the right. From the R2R trail, trail 152B turns right down through a valley with great bluffs on both sides of the trail/creek. Trail 152B dead ends at trail 001A. At this intersection, a short detour is recommended following trail 001A to the right far enough to see the Big H and then return.

Continue following trail 001A across the north side of Garden of the Gods Wilderness. Once it crosses Forest Road be looking for trail 010.

Alternate routes in this segment follow 108E and 108K to see many of the unique rock formations of Garden of the Gods.

Trail 010 follows the Golden Circle bluffs on the left. Be sure to explore the Knights of the Golden Circle Arches just north of forest road 1621. This area is about the halfway point, and the area is frequently used for camping.

Getting up and leaving early in the morning would result in arriving at Buzzard Roost overlook vista for the early morning sunrise. After taking in Buzzard Roost, a short hike down trail 158 will take you to Mushroom Rock. The hike rejoins the R2R trail and follows it for a while before hiking down trail 137A to trail 137 which proceeds out of Rice Hollow and over to the High Knob area. An alternative would be to hike the entire trail 137; however, note that this will go onto private property.

Trail 137 crosses High Knob Road and intersects trail 165 which is hiked back south to the R2R trail at High Knob Horse camp where you can enjoy a treat at the camp store. From there the hike takes the R2R about 3 miles back to the start.

Exploring the Twin Towers is a worthwhile side trip and exploring the base of Buzzard Roost is also a must-do.

Travel Time: This depends entirely on how fast you hike and how much exploring you do but is recommended as a 2-3 day adventure.

Surface Type: Dirt and rock



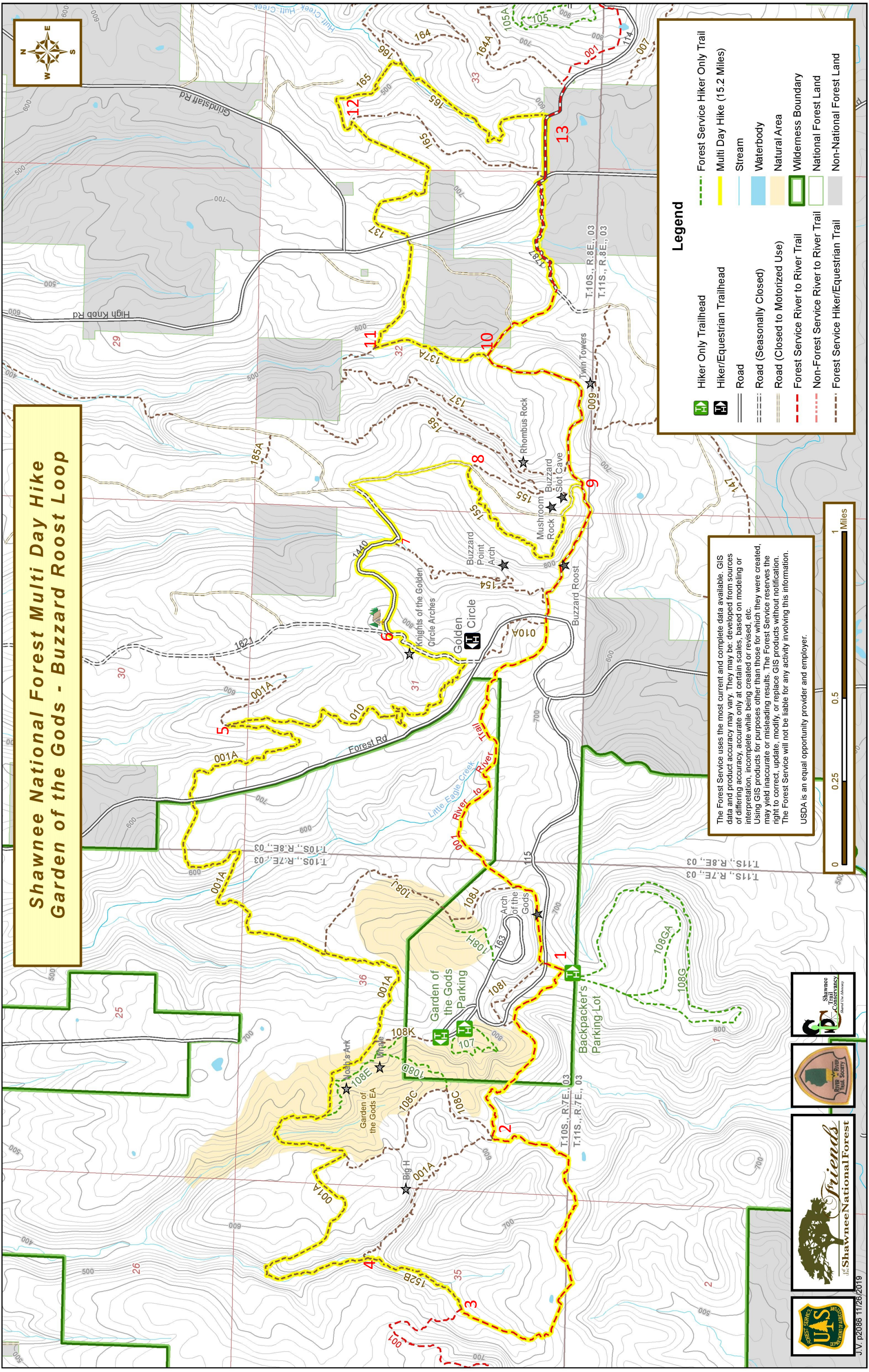
#	Directions (The numbers show on the map)	Miles
1	Start at Backpackers Parking Lot at Garden of the Gods, start heading left/west on R2R trail	0.0
2	Continue left on R2R Trail.	0.8
3	Veer right/NE on trail 152B leaving the R2R	1.9
4	Veer left/east onto trail 001A. Continue east on trail 001A to trail 010 across Forest Road. Bypass right turns on side trails 108C, 108E, 108K and 108J.	2.3
5	At points 2 or 4 a 0.25 mile trip down trail 001A will take you to the Big H Arch	5.8
6	Turn right/south onto trail 010 and follow it to Golden Circle trailhead parking lot. Turn left and follow FS road 1621.	7.2
7	Just past Knights of the Golden Circle Double Arch, continue on FS road 1621 for 100 yards and then turn right and go through gate and downhill on FS road 1440.	7.6
8	At the Creek Crossing continue left on FS road 1440. A detour onto trail 154 for a short 0.2 mile hike will take you to Buzzard Point Arch across the creek near the bluffs. Return to FS road 1440.	8.2
9	From FS road 1440, turn right/west onto trail 155 and follow it to the top of Buzzard Roost. Then continue on the trail down to the R2R trail.	9.0
10	Turn left on the R2R trail and follow it east to trail 137A.	9.8
11	Turn left/north onto trail 137A and follow it down to trail 137.	10.2
12	Turn left/east onto trail 137 and take it up and out of Rice Hollow to cross High Knob Road.	10.9
13	When trail 137 intersects trail 165, turn left/NW and follow it around to the R2R at High Knob Campground. (Turning right on 165 will also take you to R2R at High Knob)	12.3
14	Once at R2R at High Knob, turn right and follow R2R back to Backpackers Parking lot. The trail will pass below Buzzard Roost and the Arch of the Gods which should be explored.	15.6



Garden of the Gods Wilderness - Buzzard Roost Loop

Some of the sights along this hike include the following:

Shawnee National Forest Multi Day Hike Garden of the Gods - Buzzard Roost Loop



Legend

	Forest Service Hiker Only Trail		Multi Day Hike (15.2 Miles)
	Hiker Only Trailhead		Stream
	Hiker/Equestrian Trailhead		Waterbody
	Road		Natural Area
	Road (Seasonally Closed)		Wilderness Boundary
	Road (Closed to Motorized Use)		National Forest Land
	Forest Service River to River Trail		Non-National Forest Land
	Non-Forest Service River to River Trail		
	Forest Service Hiker/Equestrian Trail		

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