Breathe in the wonder of the outdoors as you meander through Clarke County’s glorious open spaces. Whether you’re hiking solo or with a crowd, you’ll reap the rewards of the lush landscape of a well-planned community, balancing the need for economic stability with the conservation of our natural resources.

This guide is compiled by the Clarke County Conservation Easement Authority, to celebrate the open spaces in Clarke County that make hiking so wonderful. For more information, visit www.clarkelandconservation.org—and add your best hikes to our list!
1. **Blandy Experimental Farm. 400 Blandy Farm Lane, Boyce.** Four walking trails, each beginning and ending at the parking lot. Three-quarters to two miles. Gorgeous setting with educational mission; signage to guide and inform. “Don’t forget your dog!”
   www.blandy.virginia.edu/public-programs/walk-blandy

2. **Shenandoah River Campus at Cool Spring Battlefield. 1400 Parker Lane, Bluemont.** 195 bountiful acres along the Shenandoah River. Formerly a golf course—and, in 1864, a Civil War battlefield—now a Shenandoah University research area and prime hiking destination with more than five miles of paved trails. Part of Clarke County’s land conservation easement program. “Spectacular bluebell hike in the spring.”
   http://www.su.edu/venue/cool-spring

3. **Ashby Hollow. Millwood.** Part of the Appalachian Trail. Park on Route 605 at Morgan’s Mill Road. Through several hollows, past amazing rock formations, along two mountain streams, and a wooden footbridge. Fantastic views of nearby Winchester when trees are bare. Known as the “Roller Coaster,” thanks to the many climbs and descents. 6.5 total miles out and back if you reach the ridgeline. “For a good leg stretcher, simply walk along Rt 605.”
   http://www.hikingupward.com/OVH/AshbyHollow

4. **Raven Rocks. Off Pine Grove Road, Bluemont.** 5.5 miles out and back. Part of the white-blazed Appalachian Trail. Three challenging climbs, so go prepared with proper footwear. Stop to dip your toes in Raven Rocks Hollow stream. Pass from Virginia into West Virginia on the trail. Incredible views of the Shenandoah Valley. Popular with rock climbers. “The view from Raven Rocks is one of the best in the area.”
   http://www.hikingupward.com/OVH/RavenRocks

5. **Hollow Brook. Off Morgan Mill Road on Rt. 605, Bluemont.** 3.8 miles. Easy trail that’s perfect for families. Start on the white-blazed Appalachian Trail. Head up Buzzard Hill. Your reward: a history lesson as you pass the ruins of old homesteads and an incredible waterfall at the top. “This hike is at its best in the spring or after it’s been raining.”
   http://www.hikingupward.com/OVH/HollowBrook

6. **Ashby Gap. Park on Rt. 601 (parking area is recessed 75 yards).** Out and back hike on blue-blazed route of the Appalachian Trail. Ridges, streams, the Myron Glaser Cabin (for rent!), and Rod Hollow Shelter—lots to see. “The best time for this hike is springtime, when the wildflowers are out and the streams are at their fullest.”
   http://www.hikingupward.com/OVH/AshbyGap

7. **Sky Meadows State Park.** Park at Liberty Hill Road before Ashby Gap and head south on the Appalachian Trail from Rt. 50. Several loop trails weave lazily through Sky Meadows State Park, with beautiful views of the Piedmont. “In May, trillium covers both sides of the trail.”
   http://www.sherpaguides.com/virginia/mountains/blue_ridge/sky_meadows_sp.html

8. **Chet Hobert Park. Berryville.** Two miles that follow the periphery of the 102-acre Clarke County Parks and Rec fitness area. Open to the public from dawn to dusk seven days a week. A stone dust surface was added to expand the trail, thanks to a grant from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. Good for all ages and fitness levels. Boasts rest areas, play equipment. “Magical grove of tall pine trees on the trail in the park.”
   http://clarkecounty.gov/parks/parks-and-recreation.html

9. **Along the Shenandoah River. Berryville.** Two good hiking options, both on gravel and easy, flat walks (see number 10). First, park at Locke’s Mill Boat Landing on Locke’s Mill Road (Rt. 621). Go right, walking on the road upstream; take left on Briggs Road, toward Ellerslie Road intersection. 3.4 miles out and back.

10. **Along the Shenandoah. Berryville.** Park under the Rt. 50 bridge on Rt. 622, and hike along Swift Shoals Road. Walk along the road until it turns away from the river, for 3.4 miles out and back.

11. **Holy Cross Abbey. 901 Cool Spring Lane, Berryville.** Beautiful, open pastures sprawl throughout this special property. Home to the Cistercian order of monks, visitors at the guest retreat house are welcome to hike the land. More than 900 acres of the Holy Cross Abbey property are part of the Clarke County’s land conservation easement program.
   https://www.virginiatrappists.org

12. **Bear’s Den. Off 601 South from Rt. 7, Bluemont.** A popular hiking spot for locals. Trails lead to Bear’s Den Hostel, at 18393 Blue Ridge Mountain Road. A 66-acre retreat boasting two stone turrets and a secluded cottage in the woods along the Appalachian Trail. Offers a series of day hikes, from one to six miles. Includes easy nature trails and the challenging Crescent Rock climb and Spout Run hike (reserve six hours out and back for each). Three trails let you casually explore the Bear’s Den grounds. “Don’t forget to catch the beautiful sunset over the Shenandoah Valley at Bear’s Den Rocks.”
   http://www.bearsdencenter.org

13. **Smithfield Farm. 568 Smithfield Lane, Berryville.** For a short and relaxing hike through fields filled with native flora and fauna, plan a visit to Smithfield Farm. Be joined by red-tailed hawks, ruby-throated hummingbirds, eastern kingbirds, and purple martins as you meander the trails. (For an extra treat, reserve an overnight at the historic Smithfield Farm B&B. The 1824 brick manor house is on the National Register of Historic Places.) “The trail around the farm promises an A-plus birding and wildlife walk.”

Download this guide at www.clarkelandconservation.org