

ARKANSAS

Kayak fishing tips

<http://www.bradwiegmann.com/kayak-fishing.html>

Crooked Creek

Extended forecast at accuweather.com for Yellville, AR

Map at agfc.com/resources/wildlifeviewing/crookedcreek-watertrailmap.pdf

Fishing report at thewhiteriverinn.com/blog/white-river-fishing-report-crooked-creek/

Best kayak fishing gauge is 10 to 14'.

Water flow & gage height at <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ar/nwis/current/?type=flow>

Look at river location gage heights or click on station number!

Once at the river website, enter 365 days to get a history of the river levels & character of the river.

Arkansas's stream inventory includes ten Crooked Creeks, but only one has been described as "the blue-ribbon smallmouth bass fishing stream of the state." That particular Crooked Creek is found way up in the north central part of Arkansas. It originates near Dogpatch in Newton County, flows north & then east through Boone County, & continues east across Marion County where it empties into the White River. Along the way it passes through the communities of Harrison, Pyatt, & Yellville, but most of its journey is through rural countryside. Source to mouth is 80 miles. As it meanders across northern Arkansas on the way to the White River below Cotter, it passes through typical Ozark landscapes featuring rolling hills, cedar glades, bluffs, bottomland thickets, & lush pasturelands. The stream itself is characterized by deep pools, fast chutes, & clear water. Like most Ozark streams, Crooked Creek can rise rapidly following heavy rains. In flood stage, it's dangerous. Check water flows.

While there are no public Crooked Creek camping sites, campgrounds can be found nearby at Bull Shoals Lake, Bull Shoals State Park, or Buffalo Point (on the Buffalo National River). Recent court decisions have supported a public easement for recreational use on Crooked Creek, such as floating & fishing. The public has a right to recreational use of the creek. However, recreational users should respect the private property around Crooked Creek - camping, trespassing or littering on said property is not allowed. There are primitive sites at the Snow Access and Brooksher Crooked Creek Preserve. The Brooksher Crooked Creek Preserve has no road access. Anglers can also camp at the Fred Berry Conservation Education Center adjacent to Crooked Creek with permission. All camping is limited to one night only.

Smallmouth fishing gets going when the water temp gets **above 55 degrees**. **This can be anytime in March**, depending on weather & flows. Fishing **usually stays good through late October**. **May is best month to fish** Crooked Creek. Fly fishers can use flies that represent live minnows, crayfish, and hellgrammites. Smallmouth and everything else that swims is biting a crawfish style soft plastic lure. Popping bugs & streamers on a fly rod offer some of the best smallmouth bass fishing results, as well as for rock bass & longear sunfish that are also common in Crooked Creek. Use crawdad patterns, finesse worm patterns, clouser minnow, & bullet head shaped poppers. Fish the seams, an area where two different speeds of water form a line. The faster water brings food to fish holding in slower water. In the summer, key in on shoals and ripples because of higher oxygen content located there. In the spring, focuses on lazy water in pools and flats in areas with direct sunlight. Head out early in the morning. **Fall fishing is fantastic**, use hellgrammites or crayfish, shad or perch patterns, poppers, and gold blades early and late in the day. Work below the surface or close to the bottom; use earth tones and purples. The best results come for baits measuring from 2 to 5-inches. As fall comes around and the stream begins to cool, the buzzbaits and topwater bite is phenomenal. In the winter, back to crawfish.

Early in the spring jerkbaits, crankbaits, and jig & pig combos are productive around boulders, deep holes and bluff walls. During the spawn a soft stickbait or wacky worm are great

baits. In the summer, smallmouth will congregate near shoals and shallow running lures like swimbaits, flukes or finesse worms on light jig heads are productive. Danny Smith said Apr 22, '16 Fished it from my canoe a few times. Some tight turns with wood in them on the upper sections (above **Snow Creek**). Be sure to scout anything that doesn't have a clear view.

Crooked Creek smallies can be finicky at times -- but on a good day it's downright awesome.

Ozark Blue Ribbon Stream Regulations: Daily limit smallmouth is 2 at least 14" long. Measure from nose (mouth closed) to tip of the tail (lobes pressed together). Between the Hwy 62/412 Bridge & the Hwy 62 Spur Bridge & from Hwy 101 Bridge downstream to the White River, smallmouth daily limit is one & at least 18" long.

Motel 6 or Expedia or Priceline or Trivago or Tripadvisor, then call hotel

Off season Aug 20 – April 30.

Carlton Marion Inn carltonmarioninn.com \$50+ Old Main Street, Yellville 870-449-6203

Buffalo Point Inn buffalopointinn.com \$60 Yellville 870-449-5014

Mull Manor 13858 Hwy 14 S Yellville 870-449-6311

Wild Bills 23 Hwy 268 E \$50-\$75 Yellville 870-449-6235

While the stream's upper reaches offer opportunities for wade-fishing & occasional float trips, most recreational use along Crooked Creek occurs in the lower 50 miles below Pyatt. A favorite of anglers is the Pyatt to Yellville, 20 miles, section which can be broken down into 3 trips:

Access points on Crooked Creek: Harmon, Pyatt, Snow, Kelly's Slab and Yellville City Park

Distance in river mileage:	Harmon to Pyatt	9.5 miles
	Pyatt to Snow	6.7 miles
	Snow to Kelly's Slab	11.9miles
	Kelly's Slab to Yellville City Park	3.5 miles
	Pyatt access to Yellville City Park	22.1 miles

Access Points

Carry some bug repellent with DEET.

Outfitter: Crooked Creek Canoes Jimmy & Becky Walker (870) 404-6054

36.24229 -92.81082 1002 Marion County 4006, Yellville, AR 72687

They offer canoe and kayak rental along with shuttle service on Crooked Creek.

Call for prices on rentals and shuttle services.

Lodging:

Carlton Marion Inn <http://carltonmarioninn.com/index.html> \$49+ Old Main Street, Yellville 870-449-6203

Buffalo Point Inn (www.buffalopointinn.com) 14 miles south of Yellville. 36.07415 -92.60200

Pyatt (1) to Turkey (4)-Half-day float, 6 miles with riffles, gravel bars, & overhanging limbs. The creek runs small & shallow. To reach take-out, go east of Snow 2 miles, turn south off US 62 onto a country road which provides access to the stream.

CC1 Rt 320, south of Pyatt, 2hr of up & down fishing off dirt road.

36.25648 -92.85958

CC2 Pyatt - Hwy 62 412 Bridge Parking. May be tight fishing.

36.24656 -92.83518

CC3 RR 1.9 Loop, .22 mile neck 3hr of walking around a loop, may be private

36.23659 -92.80597

driveways.

CC4 Turkey – Fish w/ Ramp .25 mile away from CC3.

36.24363 -92.79986

Turkey (4) to Kelly's Slab (7)-One-day float, 10 miles with good scenery, fast chutes, & occasional hazards. The creek gets deeper & wider. Takeout point is one mile west of Yellville at **Kelly's Slab low-water bridge**, A great place to start fishing/floating Crooked Creek. There is a variety of water up and downriver from the bridge, with trails provided by the AGFC. All fish caught along the AGFC property must be released.

CC4 Turkey to

CC5 Ask permission 1.6 loop, or fish, .5 neck 4hr
36.24532 -92.76181

CC6 Fish 2.1 Loop, .3 neck. Park on road and walk loop south back to truck, 4hr.
36.23536 -92.73295

CC7 Kelly's Slab low-water bridge – Parking. Paved access. 4hr
36.22992 -92.71140

Fred Berry Conservation Education Center is 421 acres on a 2.75-mile creek loop. Has a 2.5-mile Creek Bottom Trail loop for **fishing**. An Arkansas Watchable Wildlife site. Smallmouth must be released immediately.

Kelly's Slab (7) to Yellville (9)-Half-day float, 3½-miles ends on east side of AR 14 at Yellville public park.

CC7 Kelly's Slab low-water bridge

CC8 Y'vil Rt 14 City Park overnite.
36.22216 -92.67941

CC9 Y'vil take-out, .5 mile south.
36.21797 -92.67316

Past Yellville, "is recommended only for the serious, dedicated fisherman." The very ruggedness of the float--rocky shoals, tight chutes, & willow thickets--discourages most visits. Below Yellville, the stream dries up almost completely in the summer and fall. Also, in late spring, a very peculiar thing happens to Crooked Creek below Yellville. It disappears, sinking into the ground. (Tests with colored dye revealed that the stream flows underground several miles & emerges at Cotter Spring on the White River near Cotter. The spring has been designated as a trout sanctuary by the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission & is now closed to fishing). Below Yellville, the going is rough, but this is the stretch that produces six- & seven-pound "brownies."