

Charlies Bunion

Trail Features:	Panoramic Views
Trail Location:	Newfound Gap
Roundtrip Length:	8.1 Miles
Total Elevation Gain:	1,640 Feet
Avg. Elevation Gain / Mile:	405 Feet
Highest Elevation:	6,122 Feet
Trail Difficulty Rating:	11.38 (strenuous)

Trail Description:

The hike to Charlies Bunion begins from the Newfound Gap parking area. Hikers will travel eastbound along the Appalachian Trail to reach this popular rock outcropping. The steady climb over the course of the first two miles of this hike will quickly leave the crowds behind at Newfound Gap. For your effort during this portion of the hike, you'll be rewarded early and often. At roughly two-thirds of a mile, you'll enjoy grand views of the North Carolina Smokies towards the south. Hikers will also enjoy a wide variety of wildflowers that bloom at these elevations during the spring and early summer, including violets, spring beauty and trout lilies.



Just before reaching the Sweat Heifer Creek Trail junction, roughly 1.7 miles from the trailhead, be sure to take in the outstanding views of Mount LeConte and Myrtle Point towards the northwest.

Throughout several portions of the hike you'll be traveling at elevations hovering around 6,000 feet. Being at the highest point along this narrow ridge, with stunning views on either side of the trail, you'll feel like you're walking on the spine of the Appalachian Mountains.

At just over 2.7 miles, the Boulevard Trail to Mount LeConte forks off to the left. Hikers should proceed straight ahead to continue towards Charlies Bunion. At roughly four miles from the trailhead, a short spur trail will fork off to the left and lead you to your destination.



Charlies Bunion is a rock outcropping that was originally known as Fodderstack. The current name was derived when Charlie Conner went hiking one day with Horace Kephart, one of the early proponents for a national park in the Smokies, and author of *Our Southern Highlanders*. When they paused for a rest on the rocks, Conner took his boots and socks off and exposed a bunion that resembled the surrounding rocks. Looking at Conner's feet, Kephart remarked, "Charlie, I'm going to get this place put on a government map for you." And so he did.



Charlies Bunion offers spectacular views of the mountains to the north, Mt. Kephart and the Jump Off to the west, and Mount Guyot towards the east. Due to the extremely steep drop-offs you'll definitely want to watch your footing in this area.