

TAUM SAUK TRAIL

21 Miles

Rated for: Scouts and Explorers

The Taum Sauk Trail is approximately twenty-one miles in length and will take 5-6 hours on each of two days to complete. The trail starts at the site of old Ft. Davidson in Pilot Knob, Missouri. Pilot Knob can be reached from St. Louis by taking I-55 and US-67 to Hwy W near Farmington. Turn right on W. When Hwy V is reached, turn left on V and follow V to Pilot Knob and Ft. Davidson. The trail ends at Johnson Shut-Ins State Park. The Johnson Shut-Ins park can be reached via Hwy N off Hwy 21, 3 miles north of Pilot Knob, or via Hwy N off Hwy 21, 3 miles west of Lesterville. Travel time by car from St. Louis to Pilot Knob is 2.5 to 3 hours (100+ miles).

Scout hikers can camp over night in the Scout camping area at the Taum Sauk Mountain State Park at the mid-point of the trail. Advance reservations are required to use the campground. Camping fee is \$1.00 per person each night.

TRAIL ROUTE

The trail is marked "Appalachian trail style" with 2" x 6" vertical white paint blazes, double blazes are used to denote an intersection or abrupt change in direction. Be alert for the next blaze. Ozark Trail sections are marked with a green "O" superimposed over a "T" on a white plastic 3" x 5" marker. The starting point is in Pilot Knob, Missouri, at Fort Davidson near S. McCune and W. Maple Streets. This Civil War battle field played an important role in the Union defense of St. Louis. The large depression in the center of the fort was the site of a powder magazine which was blown up to keep it out of Confederate hands.

Leave Ft. Davidson and proceed west on W. Maple (across Hwy 21). Follow the blacktop road 0.1 mile south, then turn west on Shepherd Mountain Road and go about one mile. Turn left on a jeep road which goes up Shepherd Mountain.

From the top of Shepherd Mountain the trail goes in a southwesterly direction, coming out again on Shepherd Mountain Road at the south end of Shepherd Mountain Lake near Hwy M and the Ironton Municipal Water Works. Cross M and follow the road to the bridge across Stout's Creek. Cross the bridge and turn right (west) on the road on the south side of the creek. Follow this road toward Russell Mountain. The trail ascends Russell Mountain and reaches the summit in about 2.5 miles. A large rock cairn, marking the summit, can be seen from the trail. However, remain on the trail and do not visit the cairn. TRESPASSING BY SCOUTS COULD RESULT IN LOSS OF THE TRAIL RIGHT-OF-WAY ON RUSSELL MOUNTAIN, MOST OF WHICH IS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY, AND BRING ABOUT CLOSURE OF THE TAUM SAUK TRAIL!

Continue southwest on the trail along the power cut, cross the road and turn left on the second road and follow the trail south to Highway CC. Cross Highway CC at this point (Approximately fifty yards east of the Ozark Trail trailhead on Highway CC) and continue along the trail until joining the Ozark trailhead access trail. On reaching the Ozark Trail turn right (west) and follow the Ozark Trail across a valley of the Claybaugh Creek and then to the right (west) back up Taum Sauk Mountain. This is the highest point in the state of Missouri, 1772 feet above sea level. After a visit to the high point, follow the signs, taking the State Park Trail to Mina Sauk Falls, about two miles. Here during the spring rains or after a shower, water falls 132 feet in three cascades. Caution should be used near the cliffs and leaders should be alert to protect themselves and the Scouts from injury.

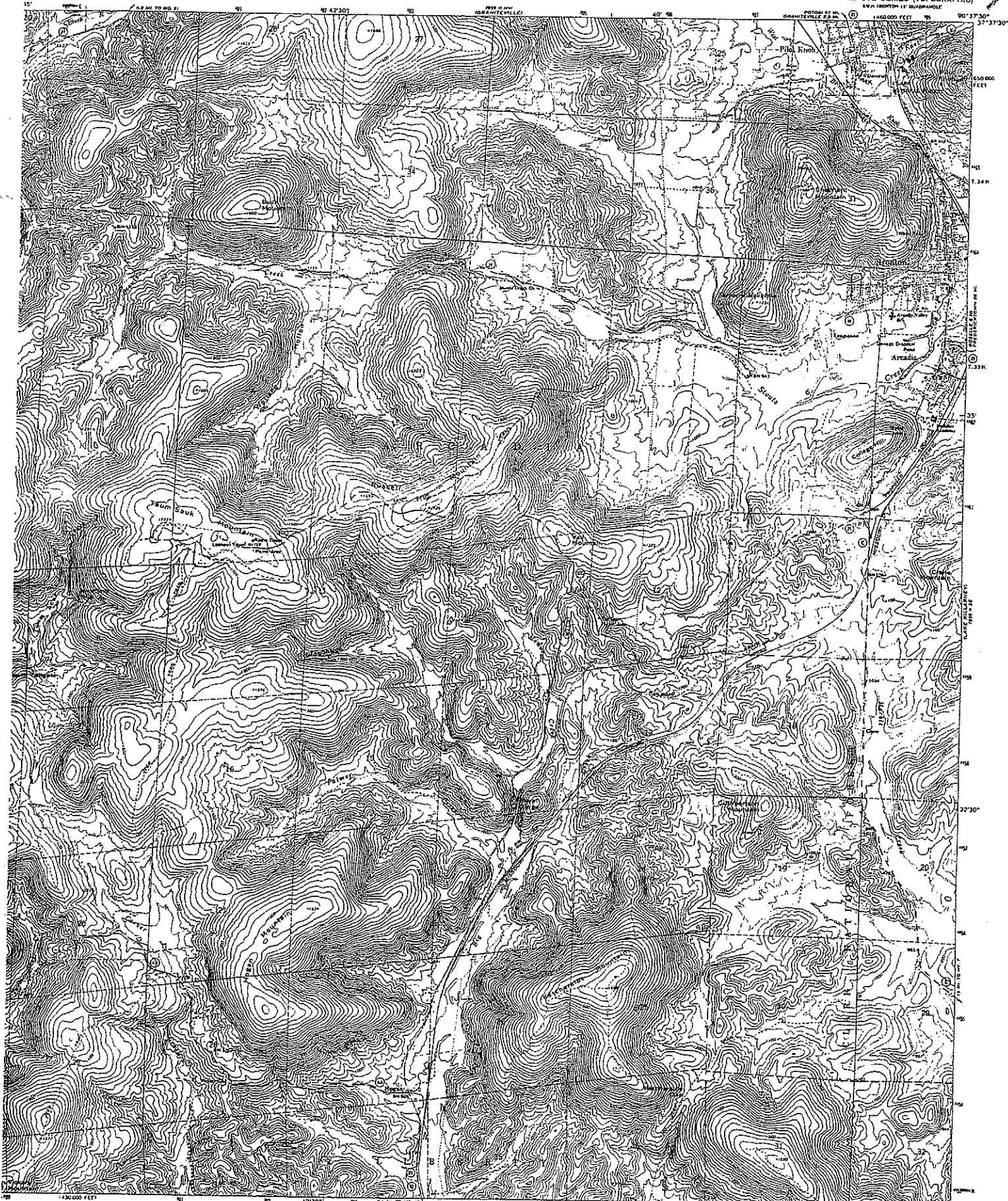
After a stop to enjoy the panoramic view of the surrounding Ozarks, follow the Taum Sauk Trail down the left side of the canyon and falls and head south for about one-half mile. Watch for a sharp turn to the right, where the trail joins an old road which local legend says was once part of an old military road leading to the Arkansas Territory. Reportedly this road was part of the "Trail of Tears" over which 16,000 Cherokee Indians were force-marched to a new home in Oklahoma during the presidency of Andrew Jackson. Shortly after making this right turn, ford Taum Sauk Creek, the first of numerous fordings that will be required as you traverse the Taum Sauk Creek valley. Soon thereafter the trail will pass through the Devil's Toll Gate, which is a split in a rock so named by pioneer travelers on the military road who were compelled to unload their wagons and dismantle or swing them around by hand to get through the narrow passage.

After leaving the Devil's Toll Gate, proceed west along Taum Sauk Creek for about 3 miles. You will pass a pioneer home site marked by a rock chimney. This is an excellent spot for a lunch stop. The trail eventually leaves the creek valley and ascends Proffit Mountain. The trail crosses over a saddle in this long, north-south mountain and descends the west side. The descent via switchbacks from the summit of Proffit affords good views of the upper reservoir of Union Electric's pumped storage power plant. This is the nation's oldest pumped storage electric power generating plant. The trail descending Proffit Mountain borders an area once called Sugar Camp Hollow, where in pioneer days families would camp while collecting sap from the maple trees in the hollow.

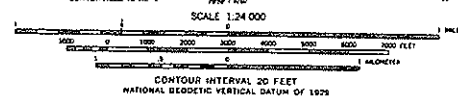
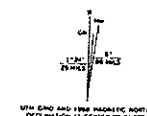
In rainy weather and/or when the Black River is in flood, hikers should follow the marked (with white blazes) trail west from Proffit Mountain to Hwy N. At Hwy N, turn left, cross the highway bridge over the East Fork of the Black River, and go to the entrance of Johnson Shut-Ins State Park, a short distance beyond the bridge. Turn left into the state park and continue on the park road to the youth group campground (prior arrangements must be made with the Park Superintendent to camp there—call 314/546-2450) and the scenic granite shut-ins on beyond. (Warning for leaders: The shut-in rocks are wet, slippery, and HARD. Caution should be used.) \$1.00 per person, per night is charged for camping.

If the river is not in flood, follow the Ozark Trail route into the state park. The Ozark Trail joins the Taum Sauk Trail at the saddle where the Taum Sauk Trail crosses Proffit Mountain and follows the Taum Sauk for about 0.5 mile past the saddle to a well-marked Y. At the Y the Ozark Trail turns off to the left (south) into the valley of Leaky Creek (so named because the flow in the creek is mostly leakage from Union Electric's Taum Sauk Reservoir). This is a scenic valley with a sizeable year round flow of water. The trail (marked with Ozark Trail signs and blue Appalachian Trail style blazes as a side trail of the Taum Sauk Trail) follows the valley west to the Black River and then heads south along the river to a low water bridge crossing near the shut-ins. If you do take the Leaky Creek route and find the river trail under water, the Black River will be impassable at the low water bridge. In this case backtrack to Y and continue to Hwy N and cross the river at the Highway bridge as described above.

Special Note: The "High Country" Ozark Trail section (shown on the trail map) that parallels the Taum Sauk Trail to the north creates the possibility of a 14-16 mile loop hike beginning and ending at either Taum Sauk Mountain or Johnson Shut-Ins state parks. This information should be of particular interest to backpackers.



revised, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
from USGS and USCGS
topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1968
contour projection. 1927 North American datum
600,000 grid based on Missouri coordinate system, east zone
20-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
35, shown in blue
Red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
readily visible on aerial photographs. This information is unclassified



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy duty ——— Light duty
Medium duty - - - - - Unimproved det
○ State Route



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, CENTER, COLONIAL ROADS, OF RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092,
AND THE DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION,
MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, ROLLA, MISSOURI 65401.
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TERRAIN MAPS WITH SYMBOLS OF AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

IRONTON, MO.
WITH IRONTON 15 QUADRANGLE
1:24,000—1968/37-77.5