

## Masters Park in Haw Creek

Masters Park, on Maple Drive, is a 9-acre hidden treasure in Haw Creek valley. This passive park's pathway winds through a woodland forest, up the valley's northeast slope, for nearly a mile, where it connects with the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP). Just across, and east of, the parkway, you arrive almost immediately at the [N.C. Mountains-to-Sea Trail](#) (MST). Make a right turn (south) onto the MST and you will find yourself, after much walking, at the Great Smoky Mountains Nat'l Park; make a left turn (north) and you will reach, after an even longer walk, the Atlantic Ocean. But most hikers take the north (left) turn onto the MST for the short one-third mile walk to the Haw Creek "overlook rock" -- with its panoramic views to the west of Haw Creek valley, Mt. Pisgah, Cold Mountain, and more.\*\*

The park's recovering forest is home to many flowering plants, including trees, that are part of the botanical diversity of the Southern Blue Ridge region. About a century ago the land was clear-cut for its timber and planted with fast growing Eastern White Pines, that are still found abundantly in the lower portions of the park. Fortunately, the ecosystem is resilient, and native plants are returning.

This 9-acre tract was first envisioned as a community park in 2008, when this parcel came up for sale. With the help of several Haw Creek residents, funds to purchase the land were procured from three sources: individual contributions and private grants, Buncombe County, and the City of Asheville. This public-private partnership led to the creation of Masters Park, now part of the Asheville city parks system. The park is named after Rory Masters, long-time former owner of the property. The trail through the park was completed by volunteers with the Carolina Mountain Club.

So, go out and enjoy an uplifting, natural experience in your "back yard" along the Masters Park trail.



\*\* Hiking north on the MST, you will find a Chestnut Oak tree on the right side of the trail with 2 filled-in, somewhat circular blazes (a red one under a white one). Turn left at this trail intersection to arrive at the "overlook rock".