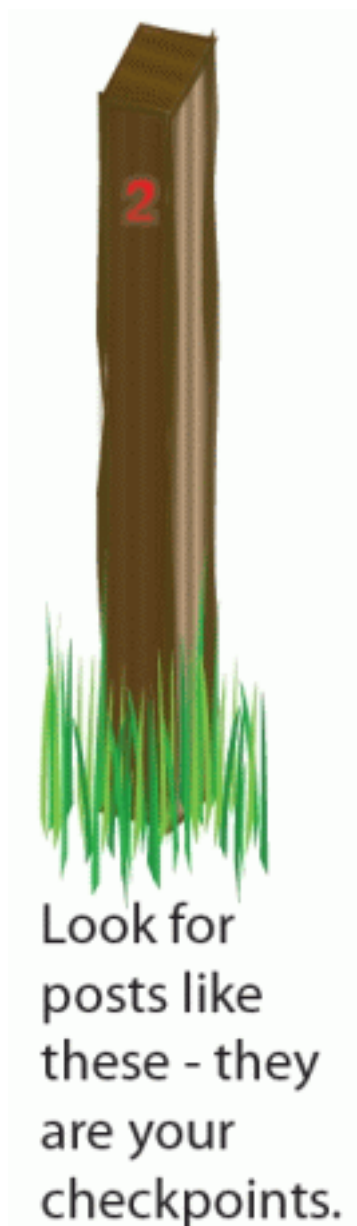


## Permanent Courses



While most orienteering occurs at the weekend events hosted by the club around the Mid-Atlantic region during our Sept - June season (see the [Event Schedule](#) [1]), and **we strongly recommend attending our public events to experience orienteering best**, there are some permanent orienteering courses that can be visited on your own. Instead of the orange and white fabric controls used at weekend events, on these courses you'll usually be looking for numbered wooden posts. Please note that in contrast to the events we organize, **we are not responsible for these courses**; they often get abandoned and neglected over time, and posts may have been moved or even removed. Caveat emptor!

Before trying a permanent orienteering course, please make sure that (1) your skill level is commensurate with the course difficulty, (2) you understand the park rules, and (3) you take safety precautions such as informing park rangers and/or friends or family of your outing. The permanent orienteering courses (details below) are located at:



Bear Branch Park, Camp Hashawa, Westminster MD  
Fountainhead Regional Park, Clifton VA  
Hilton Area of Patapsco Valley State Park, Catonsville MD<-- SEE NOTES BELOW  
Little Bennett Regional Park, Clarksburg MD  
Prince William Forest Park, Triangle, VA

## **Bear Branch Park**

Created in 2005 by Eagle Scouts with help from QOC member Dave Linthicum, this park offers one beginner level orienteering course. The map is at a scale of 1:5000, and is available [here](#) [2].

Directions: Near the center of Westminster, MD. On the Rt. 140 highway, exit north on Maryland Rt. 97 for 3 miles. Turn right on John Owings Rd. After a mile, turn left at the Hashawa-Bear Branch entrance sign. In a few hundred yards, turn right to the Bear Branch Nature Center.

## **Fountainhead Regional Park**

Beginner, intermediate and even advanced permanent courses are available in this Virginia park.

Full details on these courses, as well as links to both course maps and corresponding clue sheets, can be found at URL:

<https://www.novaparks.com/parks/fountainhead-regional-park/things-to-do/orienteering-course> [3]

## **Hilton Area of Patapsco Valley State Park, Catonsville MD**

**October 2021 Update: Status of this course is questionable** More specifically, we believe the park has removed the Start post for unknown reasons and at least one other post has disappeared.

Offered as part of [Park Quest](#) [4], two orienteering courses are available at this venue, in addition to compasses and printed course maps.

You may also print the course maps yourself if you have legal size paper, but they will lack the Park Quest information present on the other side of the pre-printed copies. As PDF files, the 1:7500 scale beginner course is [here](#) [5], and the 1:10000 scale intermediate course is [here](#) [6].

Directions: From I-695 (Baltimore Beltway), take Exit 13, Frederick Road west. Follow for two miles and turn left on South Rolling Road. At first intersection, bear right in Hilton Avenue. Continue 1.5 miles and turn right into the park.

From I-95, take Exit 47 (keep left on exit ramp), heading north (Route 166) to South Rolling Road. Follow 1.8 miles and make a sharp left on Hilton Avenue. Continue 1.5 miles and turn right into the park.

## **Little Bennett Regional Park, Clarksburg MD**

Newly redesigned by QOC member Sam Listwak in the Fall of 2020, and based out of a new location/parking lot in a different section of the park than the 2005-2020 permanent courses, Little Bennett Regional Park offers three permanent O'courses. The maps were created by QOC's Greg & Kathleen Lennon, and were updated along with the course redesign. The courses are named Beginner, Advanced Beginner, and Intermediate, to reflect their level of difficulty. [These roughly correspond to



White, Yellow and Orange courses, respectively.] Also, while the Intermediate level map is a full orienteering map in the sense of having all features represented, the others are simplified; the advanced beginner map lacks vegetative features, and the beginner maps additionally lacks intermediate contour levels. Map scale is 1:10,000; print them in landscape mode at 100% scale on 8.5x11" paper, preferably double-sided (page 2 is the course). Click on the course name for the corresponding PDF file:

[Beginner](#) [7]: 3.1km in length, 55m of climb, 9 controls/checkpoints

[Advanced Beginner](#) [8]: 3.9km in length, 110m of climb, 9 controls/checkpoints

[Intermediate](#) [9]: 4.2km in length, 130m of climb, 10 controls/checkpoints

**Note: as of May 2022, due to the rerouting of some trails by the park as well as two missing posts, these courses and course maps are in need of an update.**

Directions: After exiting I-270 at Clarksburg Road (exit 18), heading east, almost immediately turn left onto Clarksburg Road. Travel 2.3 miles on Clarksburg Road to Wilson's Mill parking area, a small lot on your left before Little Bennett Creek. Google map driving directions are [here](#) [10].

## Prince William Forest Park, Triangle, VA

An extensive set of permanent controls, with over 40 controls and 20+ ways to create courses connecting them, exists in Prince William Forest Park. General information about these courses is [here](#) [11], but maps may only be obtained currently by visiting the PWF Visitors Center during business hours. Note: QOC is currently working with NPS staff to check the condition of all controls in this park and to create new, higher-quality maps for visitor use. The condition of the controls and the maps in use at the moment may be problematic until the update is completed.

Directions: From I-95 exit 150B near Triangle VA, go west and then turn right to enter the main entrance to Prince Williams Forest. Follow the signs the Visitor Center.

[ShareThis](#) [12]

**Source URL:** <https://www.qocweb.org/content/permanent-courses>

### Links:

[1] <http://qocweb.org/content/event-schedule>

[2] <https://qocweb.org/sites/default/files/maps/Hashawa.pdf>

[3] <https://www.novaparks.com/parks/fountainhead-regional-park/things-to-do/orienteering-course>

[4] <https://dnr2.maryland.gov/parkquest/Pages/PatapscoHilton.aspx>

[5] [https://qocweb.org/sites/default/files/maps/Beginner Patapsco Hilton Park Quest.pdf](https://qocweb.org/sites/default/files/maps/Beginner%20Patapsco%20Hilton%20Park%20Quest.pdf)

[6] [https://qocweb.org/sites/default/files/maps/Intermediate Patapsco Hilton Park Quest.pdf](https://qocweb.org/sites/default/files/maps/Intermediate%20Patapsco%20Hilton%20Park%20Quest.pdf)

[7] [https://qocweb.org/sites/default/files/QOC Little Bennett Beginner Course.pdf](https://qocweb.org/sites/default/files/QOC%20Little%20Bennett%20Beginner%20Course.pdf)

[8] [https://qocweb.org/sites/default/files/QOC Little Bennett Advanced Beginner Course.pdf](https://qocweb.org/sites/default/files/QOC%20Little%20Bennett%20Advanced%20Beginner%20Course.pdf)

[9] [https://qocweb.org/sites/default/files/QOC Little Bennett Intermediate Course.pdf](https://qocweb.org/sites/default/files/QOC%20Little%20Bennett%20Intermediate%20Course.pdf)

[10] <https://goo.gl/maps/Ho4ac36J7PSXRKmw5>

[11] <https://www.nps.gov/prwi/planyourvisit/orienteering.htm>

[12] <https://www.qocweb.org/content/permanent-courses>