

Aspen Ranger District
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Aspen, CO 81611
(970) 925-3445
(970) 925-5277- Fax



United States Department of Agriculture

NORTH MAROON 14,014 (4271 meters)

LENGTH: 4.5 miles one-way

ELEVATION GAIN: 4,400 feet

AVERAGE HIKING/CLIMBING TIME:
5.5 hours one-way

USGS MAP(S): Maroon Bells

SKILL FACTOR: All 14'ers within the Aspen District are for experienced mountaineers only.

RECOMMENDED SEASON(S):
Late Summer

ATTRACTIONS/CONSIDERATIONS: The Maroon Bells consist of precariously layered sedimentary rock and are named for their rich maroon color. These mountains are unbelievably deceptive. The rock is down-sloping, rotten, loose, and unstable. The Maroon Bells have claimed many lives in the past years. They are not extremely technical climbs but do require the knowledge of correct routes and proper use of ropes, slings, ice axes and various other pieces of climbing equipment. **Rope and a hard hat are musts!**

ACCESS: Drive west of Aspen on Highway 82 about ½ mile. Turn left onto Maroon Creek Road and drive 11 miles to the parking lot at Maroon Lake.

NARRATIVE: Walk from Maroon Lake to Crater Lake (1 ½ miles- 400' gain). At Crater Lake, bear right toward Buckskin Pass. Stay on the Buckskin Pass trail to approximately 11,000' (about 1 mile up the pass from Crater and a 1,000' gain) where the trail levels out and is fairly close to Minnehaha Creek. Cross the creek and climb left (southwest) ¾ mile to a timberline bench (750' gain) between the upper and lower cliffs. Follow this gully to about 12,400 then bear left into a smaller gully. Follow this to the ridge (approximately 1 mile- 1,500' gain). Follow this ridge to the summit (1 ½ mile – 1,000' gain). A guide is recommended.

The ridge between the Bells is not to be attempted. It is very tricky and the descent down South Maroon is long and difficult.

It is your responsibility to know the hazards involved in your activities and to use the proper safety procedures and equipment to minimize the inherent risks and hazards related to your activity. As a user of National Forest System Lands, you have significant responsibility for your personal safety during any activity you might pursue. The Forest Service installs signs and other information devices at various locations where conditions limit placement of signs or other specific warnings and necessitates the use of more general education efforts. Hazards are not limited to, but include: changing weather conditions, snow, avalanche, landslides and falling rock, caves, overlooks, falling trees or limbs, high or rushing water, contaminated water, wild animals, becoming lost or over exerted, hypothermia, remnants of mining and other activities involving excavation, tunnels, shafts, decaying structures and a variety of equipment, and changing road and trail conditions. You may also be exposed to unreasonable acts of others. **The Forest Service does not manage or control all of these occurrences.**

The peaks in the White River National Forest do not have designated routes to the top. The Forest Service is currently studying the present, user-created trails to determine the feasibility and desirability of designated routes. For further sources on information and routes to the peaks, please call the office at (970) 925-3445.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CALL - PITKIN COUNTY SHERIFF - 920-5310

