

2024 Tye River Ridge Runner Reports

Links to Evan Brown's 2024 Tye River Ridge Runner Trail Reports:

- [Tye River Ridge Runner Week 1 Trail Report](#)
- [Tye River Ridge Runner Week 2 Trail Report](#)
- [Tye River Ridge Runner Week 3 Trail Report](#)

What is a Ridgerunner?

If you've hiked on the Appalachian Trail (A.T.) during its busy season, you might have crossed paths with a Ridgerunner - a cheerful, Trail-tested individual who lives and works on the Trail. Ridgerunners are often met with a lot of questions about their job: Are you a ranger? Do you live out here? What do you do all day?

The primary role of a Ridgerunner is to educate hikers about Leave No Trace principles, which are essential for protecting the Trail and the A.T. experience. Ridgerunners are trained experts in these principles and the management concerns for their section of the Trail.

While Ridgerunners work closely with the ATC's agency partners, including the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service, they are not law enforcement officers or rangers. Ridgerunners are knowledgeable about the rules and regulations of their section, but don't issue tickets or fines. Instead, Ridgerunners educate hikers using a method called the "Authority of the Resource," which means they share why these regulations are in place and how they help protect the Trail and its visitors. Through this emphasis on education and conversation, Ridgerunners can connect with visitors over a shared love for the A.T. and act as a voice for the Trail.

Ridgerunners are an important part of the Cooperative Management System because of their ability to work with visitors face-to-face - while the ATC, Trail Clubs, and land managing agencies along the Trail provide tons of information about Leave No Trace and Trail stewardship, posting that information online or at kiosks will never be as effective for visitors as having a conversation with a helpful, knowledgeable human being. The ability of Ridgerunners to mitigate resource damage at the high-use, sensitive areas they patrol cannot be overstated, and it is all done by making connections.