

Choose your

New trails to explore this fall in OKC area

path

Isa Almeida

The Oklahoman

USA TODAY NETWORK



A dragonfly sits atop a persimmon tree at Red Ridge Nature Preserve's landscape and wildlife habitat last month, when rehabilitated wildlife was released at the new preserve in Oklahoma City. DOUG HOKE/THE OKLAHOMAN

Now that the summer heat is finally cooling off for fall, Oklahomans are ready to explore the great outdoors.

Across the Oklahoma City metro area, there are a number of new hiking trails, walking paths and other outdoor spaces to explore.

Here's a look at a few new trails and preserves that are open to the public this fall.

New trails at Lake Thunderbird State Park

Lake Thunderbird State Park announced the opening of new hiking and mountain biking trails at Clear Bay in May. The state park, located in Norman, has more than 20 miles of dirt and single-track trails for hiking, running, mountain biking and even equestrian trails.

The state park is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. The park itself is free, but a parking fee is charged per vehicle entering the area.

Bridge connecting Oklahoma River trail

In 2025, a new MAPS 4 pedestrian bridge opened to allow easier access to the First Americans Museum and the OKANA resort and Indoor Waterpark through the river.

Visitors now can get across the river by walking or biking, connecting neighborhoods, cultural landmarks and recreational spaces.

Wiley Post Park improvements

In June, new improvements to the north area of Wiley Post Park opened to the public.

These include two new playgrounds, a band shell, lighting, trees, shade structures and more.

The park spans 48 acres along the Oklahoma River, between South Walker Avenue and South Robinson Avenue, and from SW 15th Street to roughly SW 20th Street.

Also in the park, visitors can explore part of the North Oklahoma River Trail.

Nature preserve opens in OKC

On Sept. 18, rehabilitated wildlife was released at the new Red Ridge Nature Preserve in Oklahoma City.

The Kirkpatrick Foundation, a private philanthropic organization based in Oklahoma City, purchased 133 acres for the preserve to create a protected habitat for local wildlife.

Animal protection organization WildCare Oklahoma has taken in more than 9,600 animals this year, according to KOCO, and their rehabilitated animals are released into the preserve.

The Red Ridge Nature Preserve is located near NE 50th Street and Lincoln Boulevard, at the north entrance of the state's Capitol corridor. The property was purchased in July 2023.

The preserve also is an accredited arboretum, meaning it is a public garden that houses collections of woody plants, particularly trees.

Human access will be permitted but limited at Red Ridge in order to prioritize nature.

Will there be a trail at Red Ridge?

There is a tentative concept of a bike trail at Red Ridge Nature Preserve.

But developers said that a bike trail running through the preserve would disturb the natural environment and cause harm to plants and wildlife.

The reserve developers and city staff are looking into an alternative.

Other hiking trails across the metro area

Arcadia Lake Trail

Bluff Creek Trail

Martin Nature Trail

Liberty Lake Trail

Medicine Park Black Trail Loop

illustration by emily nizzi/usa today network; and getty images

