



Keep Your Toes Warm While Winter Hiking

Why they get cold and how to avoid problems on the trail.

READ MORE ON PAGE 11 ▶



Trails to Great Photos

Robert Rodriguez Jr. reveals some of his favorite places for photography in our region.

READ MORE ON PAGE 7 ▶



TRAILWALKER

Winter 2012

New York-New Jersey Trail Conference – Connecting People with Nature since 1920

www.nynjtc.org

Awards Celebrate Our Volunteers

Trail Conference Awards are determined by the Board of Directors, except for Distinguished Service Awards, which are determined by the Volunteer Committee. The following awards were announced at the October 15, 2011 Annual Meeting in Ossining, NY.

RAYMOND H. TORREY AWARD

Given for significant and lasting contributions that protect hiking trails and the land upon which they rest.

All-around Volunteer JANE DANIELS, Mohegan Lake, NY



Jane Daniels, a well known leader in the local, regional, and state trails community for at least three decades, received the highest volunteer

award given by the Trail Conference. The Raymond H. Torrey Award, named for a founder of the Trail Conference, was presented to Jane at the Annual Meeting.

Jane has served on the Trail Conference board of directors for more than 20 years, including six as board chair. She is co-author with her husband, Walter, of *Walkable Westchester*, a best-selling guide to hundreds of miles of trails in Westchester County that has led countless residents and visitors to discover trails in the county.

Jane represents hikers on the New York State Trails Council and serves on the board of the Hudson Valley Greenway Council. She is supervising the building of a new community trails network in Yorktown, where she lives, working with town officials, mountain bike groups, Trail Conference volunteers, and others to create this new community resource. Jane fosters similar collaborative trail work between hikers and other user groups throughout the state and the region.

Above all, in all her roles, Jane has been for a generation a Voice for the Volunteers, working tirelessly to recruit, encourage, mentor, and reward the ever-growing cadre of Trail Conference volunteers. The Trail Conference today fields more than 1,200 active volunteers who maintain more than 1,800 miles of trails in the New York-New Jersey region and produce trail maps and books used by hikers and others.

The award presented to Jane Daniels by the Trail Conference honors her countless contributions to these achievements.

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GEORGETTE WEIR

Training & Recruitment Boost Trail Crew Rosters

When last seen (by this reporter) Monica Day, of Highland Park, NJ, was scrunched under the Appalachian Trail boardwalk in Vernon, NJ, perched on a precarious stack of boards that was sinking slowly but steadily into the muck of the Pochuck Swamp (photo above). She was working out, with help from crew-mate Lee Mott, the correct alignment of a metal fixture that would hold the platform aloft. For something like two decades, this has been Monica's idea of weekend fun.

Thankfully, Monica isn't alone in her choice of outdoor sport.

We launched four new crews in 2011 and see potential for more.

Building bridges, moving heavy rocks, clearing new trail routes, constructing erosion controls—people who enjoy being outside, working with others, putting “old-fashioned” tools such as hammers and drills to work, and seeing the results of their labor at the end of the day—these are the pleasures often cited by trail crew volunteers. “It's a great change after a week in the office,” is an often heard sentiment.

The Trail Conference is working to attract and train more skilled volunteers like Monica.

Trail crews and maintainers are the backbone and muscle of the Trail Conference. Without these volunteers most of the more

than 1,800 miles of trails in our region would not exist or would be impassable—especially after a season of storms such as we experienced in 2011. (Monica and the rest of the West Jersey Crew were putting the Pochuck boardwalk back into place after it had been floated off alignment by the floodwaters that followed Tropical Storms Irene and Lee.)

With the growth of trail miles, increasing knowledge about trail-building best practices, and the simultaneous shrinking of public funding for parks and trails, the Trail Conference recognized the need to recruit new crew members and leaders for our existing crews, offer more skill-development workshops for volunteers, and add new crews, some with specialized skills. Thus was born, in 2006, Trail U; its first, and for a while only, campus was the Bear Mountain Trails Project.

This year the Trail Conference, with financial support from REI, and working with Trail U alumni and experienced volunteers, launched four new trail crews. The Jolly Rovers, a roving trail crew specializing in technical stonework, hit the trails in March (see their report on page 5). Their projects often double as training grounds—satellite Trail U sites—for students of stone work.

The Invasives Strike Force, which removes targeted invasive plants from selected trail-sides, made its first work trips this fall (see page 7), as did the Bear Claw Crew, which brings Natural Design principles and rock-work training (courtesy of the Jolly Rovers) to trail projects in north Jersey (page 5).

In November, the new Orange-Rockland Long Distance Trails Crew, which will focus on Appalachian Trail, Highlands Trail, and Long Path projects in the West Hudson region, debuted by clearing a route for an AT relocation on West Mountain in Harriman-Bear Mountain State Park (see West Hudson Field Notes, page 4).

The success of the multi-level training

continued on page 3

Cleaning Up the Messes

The email from Sterling Forest Trail Supervisors Peter Tilgner and Suzan Gordon was dated October 31, 2011:

Dear Sterling Forest Trail Maintainers,
Today I was at the Tenafly Nature Center where I cleared, with hand tools, 0.4 mile of trail in about 4.5 hours. You all have your work cut out for you. I suggest you get to it pronto. Please note and let us know the position of all blow-downs for future chainsaw work.

Thank you in advance for your effort doing this herculean task. We know you are up to it.

Two days after the storm dubbed Snowtober tracked along much the same route previously blazed by Tropical Storms Irene and Lee, Trail Conference volunteers were once again cleaning up after Mother Nature. “Not in my 10 years of volunteering with the Trail Conference have I seen such havoc on Bergen County trails,” commented Chris Connolly, trail volunteer and Trail Conference board president, after a day's work at Tenafly. (He worked with maintainers Suzan Gordon, Peter Tilgner, and the chainsaw team of Jack Driller, Mark Liss, and Adam Jacobs).



GEORGETTE WEIR

Steve Zubarik of the West Hudson South chainsaw crew clears a tree from the Ramapo-Dunderberg Trail in November. The crew cleared 171 trees in the region in the month following the October 29 snowstorm, and 455 trees from July 1 through November 30.

Yet within days, many trails were cleared and reopened to the public. John Mack, trails chair of the West Hudson South region, reports that the region's chain sawyers and their support teams cleared 171 trees from trails in Harriman-Bear Mountain and the Tenafly Nature Center in just the one month immediately after the storm. The sawyers were still at work as of December 1, but trails in the region were, for the most part, cleared.

Trails Council Chair Pete Heckler was out hiking many miles of trails Thanksgiving weekend and afterward had nothing but praise for the crews and maintainers. “Hundreds of people were out enjoying the trails at Harriman. That they were able to do so is thanks to the hard work of our volunteers.”

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GEORGETTE WEIR
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GRAPHIC DESIGNER

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Mission Statement

The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference is a federation of member clubs and individuals dedicated to providing recreational hiking opportunities in the region, and representing the interests and concerns of the hiking community. The Conference is a volunteer-directed public service organization committed to:

- Developing, building, and maintaining hiking trails.
- Protecting hiking trail lands through support and advocacy.
- Educating the public in the responsible use of trails and the natural environment.

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Join the Gunzlers in Building a Legacy for Trails



Life-long hikers John and Marianne Gunzler invite others to help preserve the future of the Trail Conference.

In 2011, John and Marianne Gunzler of Park Ridge, NJ, inaugurated the Trail Conference's new Legacy Fund, an endowment-like fund created by the board of directors in June, with their very generous gift of \$100,000. The Legacy Fund is intended to be a reservoir of support for the core programs of the Trail Conference year after year, decade after decade. The Gunzlers look forward to other donors adding to the fund so that it grows substantially over time.

Trails are a life-long passion for John and Marianne. Fifty-two years ago the couple met for the first time while on a hike in Harriman State Park.

They have been generous in giving back to the trails they love through volunteer service and financial gifts to the Trail Conference. John has been a very active member of the board of directors, serving from 1999 to 2008, and continuing to be a leading member of the membership and development, nominating, and Darlington Schoolhouse steering committees. On his almost daily hikes, he sees first-hand the positive impact Trail Conference volunteers make on trails.

"If you think, as I do," says John, "that the Trail Conference has meaning, you

should be concerned for its long-term future. It's a small, often hand-to-mouth operation that is vulnerable to changing circumstances. The Legacy Fund is intended to build the financial resources that will lessen that vulnerability."

John notes that even though the work of the Trail Conference is accomplished largely by volunteers, "those volunteers still need staff support and an organization to be sustained over time." And as he looks at trends in public financing of parks, "there is going to be more and more work for the Trail Conference to do."

The Legacy Fund principal will be invested and the annual revenues used to support the Trail Conference's mission. Donations can be made while the donor is still living and may take the form of cash, stocks, bonds or property. However, unlike a true endowment, the principal of the fund may be used with board approval.

Donors may elect the Legacy Fund as the destination of their gift to the Trail Conference. For more information, contact Development Manager Don Weise, dweise@nynjtc.org or 201.512.9348, ext. 13.



Letters to the Editor

Feedback

Thanks for the Hikes

Editor's note: This letter was directed to volunteer Daniel Chazin, author of most of the several hundred hike descriptions on our website. Find a Hike at nynjtc.org.

We are two women who hike together and wanted to express our appreciation to you for your trail directions.

This past summer we hiked in New York and New Jersey, using your directions for seven different hikes, including trails in Harriman, Black Rock Forest, Norvin Green, Abram Hewitt, and Storm King.

Thanks to your hard work, we were able to follow the trails and enjoy the beauty of the outdoors. We occasionally got lost, but this was usually because we were talking too much and missed the blazes that indicate turns in the trail. Your directions were excellent, and we thank you!

— Thea Landesberg & Amy Quartuccio

A Sampling of Comments From Our Website

Re Year-End Trails Report

November 22, 2011, Lowell says:
...outstanding work in a very difficult year. Lots of trees and limbs down from the October snow storm. Great work and continued good luck.

Great Hike at Silas Condict County Park!

On November 22, 2011 nancyz says:
We did this hike on 11/20/11 & really enjoyed it! Fabulous view of a farm/home with a white fence encircling it, which looked like a postcard. Great job of blazing too.

Great Mix of Terrain on Manaticut Point Trail

On November 27, 2011 kingm60 says:
Great hike, moderate difficulty sounds about right, has secluded Lake Sonoma, great views from different points throughout the hike with the best being Overlook, several rock scrambles, swamp land, stream crossings, it was a great mix of terrain in a not-so-long hike. While it was almost December it was unseasonably warm so the ticks were out in force, and we didn't

ATC to Highlight Town of Warwick

Acting on an application prepared by Gene Giordano, chair of our New Jersey Appalachian Trail Committee and a Warwick resident, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy has designated the Town of Warwick as an Appalachian Trail Community. The town is the first in the New York-New Jersey region to be granted this designation, and one of just a dozen communities so designated along the length of the AT. Assemblywoman Annie Rabbitt supported the application.

"Appalachian Trail Communities help conserve the landscape of the trail, but also reap the rewards of eco-tourism and outdoor recreation," said the assemblywoman. "This is truly an example of how one person can make a real difference for the community around them."

The Appalachian Trail Community program partners designated towns with economic development assistance through the ATC. In addition to helping attract tourists and hikers, the conservancy helps



LES FERGUSON

designated towns with conservation planning, municipal and regional financial aid, and acts as a catalyst for enhancing economic development projects.

ATC also works with local educators to help promote trail and environmental stewardship, as well as with local organizations and volunteers, land agencies and public trusts. As a designated Appalachian Trail Community, the town of Warwick will be eligible for all of these benefits, in addition to getting national and global exposure through the conservancy's promotional materials and web site.

The NJAT Committee will work with ATC and local partners to schedule and plan a public announcement event early in 2012. Congratulations to Gene and the committee on winning this designation for the Town of Warwick.

bring any deer. The trail seemed unpopular so the tall grass on the trail made a great jumping off point for the little buggers. Our clothes were covered and I had to pull four out from my legs with tweezers. Not fun. Moral of the story, be prepared.

Hiking the AT/Lemon Squeezer

On November 30, 2011 sph001 says:
Instead of the mall on Black Friday, I took the AT/Lemon Squeezer loop...a good hike. The only caution was the slippery leaves on the trail... the views and scenery ... excellent. I can imagine this is best in the Fall at peak!... This hike has it all—forests, steep climbs, rock formations, Island Pond, Dismal Swamp... recommended.

Great Reroute of the TMI

On November 30, 2011 banjolady says:
[T]he southern Harriman trail crew has done a great job rerouting the TMI near Ladentown up an alternative route and extending the red arrow to meet it. This was previously a cairn-blazed route, which was far superior to the rocky stream bed route of the former TMI. Thanks to the trail crew for all their great maintenance and rerouting.



Send Us a Letter

Email it to tw@nynjtc.org; in the subject line, put "letter to TW editor"; or send it to Trail Walker Letters, NY-NJ Trail Conference, 156 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah, NJ 07430.

From the Executive Director



Coming in 2012: A Bigger, Better Trail U

As 2012 begins, the Trail Conference is busy with a major upgrade of our Trail University curriculum. We believe that improving the trail-related knowledge and skills of our volunteers, staff, and partners is the best way to improve the overall quality of the trails. We expect you and the millions of others who take a hike in the future will be the ultimate beneficiaries of this initiative.

The approximately 1,800 miles of trails we maintain are getting older each year. Many of them have withstood increasingly heavy use for a half-century or more. Most were not designed for such traffic, and eroded or poorly-drained treadways are the unfortunate and all-too-common result. A classic case of being loved to death.

The demand for trail crews, those hardy souls who come together on weekends to address the more challenging projects, has outstripped the capacity of our existing crews, even though new crews have started just this year. (See articles pages 1, 5.)

In our work with existing trail crews and the new crews coming out of the Bear Mountain based Trail University, we have found that good projects, good training,

and good leadership are the key ingredients for a productive and sustainable trail crew. Since we have plenty of good projects in 1,800 miles of trails and plenty of good leaders among 1,200 volunteers, we are focusing on upgrading the skills training available to our volunteers.

The current Trail U curriculum consists of basic trail construction and maintenance how-to workshops, plus occasional more technical construction workshops offered through special projects. Updating existing courses and adding bigger picture concepts that relate to trail design, assessment and management are areas where we plan to upgrade the Trail U workshops.

Of course, significant training occurs in impromptu and less formal circumstances such as when a supervisor walks a trail with a maintainer or when a new crew member works alongside veterans on a trail crew. This is a highly effective means of education, which we will continue to emphasize.

The new Trail U curriculum will be divided into core entry-level courses, and advanced training in specialized topics. It will use the accumulated knowledge of Trail Conference volunteers and the foundation level concepts as put forth by Troy Scott Parker in *Natural Surface Trails by Design* and further elaborated by Jeff Schoenbauer in *Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines*. The core curriculum is still under development, but we expect it to include the following categories.

Trail Maintenance: The current, well-developed Trail Maintenance 101 workshop will be expanded to include additional emphasis on creating drainage, monitoring developing trail issues, and maintaining for appropriate desired experiences.

Trail Design & Assessment: This is the basic design, layout, and assessment course. Students will learn about trail planning, soils, grades, hydrological relationships and trail alignments. Students will also understand the humanity in a trail: what makes one trail more enjoyable and satisfying than another. Trail experience concepts (user expectations, gateways, anchors, trail flow, etc.) will be introduced and analyzed in existing trails, and implemented in new designs. Assessment will use the same concepts to focus on how to evaluate trails for physical sustainability, suitability for the desired users, and for human experience.

Trail Construction: Using the same core foundation concepts focused on in the Design & Assessment workshops, a core set of techniques will be offered relating to basic tread and drainage, working with stone, and tool safety. Topics will be covered that include sidehill trail construction, grade reversals, the rolling grade dip, as well as how to properly retrofit drainage into existing trails with dips, swales, and waterbars. Constructed trail features will be covered, with additional emphasis on how each structure must fit appropriately into its location and how trail structure architecture affects trail experience.

Leadership and Management: This will cover the skills necessary to successfully lead others, manage projects, and work with trail and park system managers. This training will be geared toward senior volunteers and staff.

These "new, improved" Trail U courses will be great opportunities for dedicated volunteers to develop additional skills and enjoy more satisfaction in their volunteering. Most important, it will allow the Trail Conference to improve the quality and quantity of its trail stewardship efforts for all to enjoy. So, as we roll out these courses and work trips in the coming year, we hope many existing and new volunteers will be eager to join in the fun.

— Edward Goodell
Executive Director
goodell@nynjtc.org

Enhanced training will better prepare us to take on new stewardship responsibilities at our region's parks.

TRAINING BOOSTS TRAIL CREW ROSTERS

continued from page 1

program that was explored at Bear Mountain, and the lessons learned from it, will help determine the content and structure of an expansion of our Trail U program that is planned for 2012. To learn more about these plans, please read the executive director's column above.



David Day, right, works with West Jersey Crew member Pete Zukoff on Pochuck boardwalk.

Why We Love Trail Crewing

By Dave and Monica Day,
West Jersey Crew Chiefs

The easy, short, and utterly insufficient answer is that it is something that we enjoy doing. Being hikers, I guess it stemmed from wanting to "give back" something in support of the trails that we enjoyed using. Each of us came to do trail work by a different path, but we ended up in the same place (literally—we met in 1996 on a work trip in New Jersey).

It is work that has a tangible result, and at which we have become reasonably proficient. The challenges of new situations keep it from getting dull. It's really satisfying to put effort on a project; and then at the end of the effort, to have a new or fixed trail, a new bridge, stone wall, stone steps, whatever. It feels really good to build or repair a trail that will give other hikers (and us) a nice hiking experience. Knowing that what we do enables people (many for whom this is their only chance) to get out into the woods, streams, and fields safely and comfortably is very satisfying. We take pride in what we accomplish, knowing it will benefit others in such a direct way.

There's a whole other side to the story, as well. It's not just about the work—it's also the people you do the work with. Trail maintainers are, generally, solitary acts. Trail crews are, however, very much a social event. A large part of the draw for us is to have the chance to spend a day in the woods, working on the trails we love, with a group of like-minded people. It is a shared experience that can only happen in that kind of situation. It's a lot of fun to go out and work, sweat, get filthy and bug-bit when you are doing it with friends who are also dedicated to the activity.

We've been lucky to have had a chance to work with a lot of good people, many of whom have become friends. The park staff that we've worked with here in New Jersey has been great—we really try to develop a warm, working relationship with them, which has been very much win-win for everybody. Feeling appreciated and understood by them is also a real boost.

So, why? It's fun, the people are great, the woods are beautiful, and we can't think of a more enjoyable hobby.



Trail News

New Crew Relocates AT on West Mountain

Enthusiastic volunteers combined with good weather resulted in early completion of a long-awaited relocation of an Appalachian Trail section on West Mountain in Harriman State Park. The new route follows a more gradual climb up (or down) West Mountain, replacing a steep section that was subject to severe erosion and was often muddy. It also incorporates a short section of the 1777W and truncates a section of the Fawn Trail. The area is just south of the AT's crossing of Seven Lakes Drive, between West and Bear Mountains, and involved 0.85-mile of newly built and blazed trail.

The trail clearing and rock work was spearheaded by Chris Reyling, crew chief of the new Orange-Rockland Long Distance Trail Crew, and Larry Wheelock, West Hudson Program Coordinator, over three weekends, with great support from new crew volunteers. New blazes were quickly applied and old blazes eradicated by Gail Neffinger and volunteers of the Orange-Rockland AT Management Committee. George Perkinson, AT Trail Overseer from Rt. 17 to the Bear Mountain Bridge, commended all the volunteers for their quick work on this project. Details about the relocation can be found on our website: See Harriman State Park.

Manaticut Point Trail Section Relocated

This fall, the new North Jersey trail crew known as the Bear Claw Crew relocated about one mile of the Manaticut Point Trail in Norvin Green State Forest. The relocation moved the trail off of an uneven woods road and into the woods along a route that hike writer Daniel Chazin called "beautiful" when he first visited it in November. It also provides improved stream crossings. The improvements include shifting the trailhead to a new location on Crescent Drive, adjacent to a huge boulder. The trailhead is no longer opposite a house and the roadwalk at the end of a loop hike on the trail is now shorter.

Trailhead Relocated at Ramapo Reservation

The trailhead for the Yellow-Silver Trail in the Ramapo Valley County Reservation has been relocated to the southeastern end of MacMillan Reservoir. It still can be found by following either the Silver or Schuber Trail to the reservoir.

Harriman & Minnewaska Bridges Update

Thirteen trail bridges in Harriman/Bear Mountain State Park, and all four trail bridges at Minnewaska State Park that were destroyed by flood waters in late summer are still out. They are not expected to be replaced soon. Trail Conference volunteers and staff continue to work with park managers in the hopes of expediting decision-making and approval of bridge replacements. We will post updates on the respective park info pages on our website: nynjtc.org/view/parks.

Road Closures in Delaware Water Gap

Flooding and saturated ground conditions from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee caused significant damage to roads throughout the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. A number of primary and secondary roads, including a 7.5-mile segment of U.S. Route 209 in Pennsylvania and parts of Old Mine Road and NPS 615 in New Jersey, remain closed pending repairs as of the deadline for this issue. For updated information about the status of the roadways, call 570-426-2492 for a recorded message.



New Trail Blaze for SRT

Keep an eye on the Shawangunk Ridge Trail. A new blaze has been designed and approved, and volunteers will start putting them up along the ridge this winter. The new blaze was inspired by the Long Path logo and was designed by Trail Conference member and graphic design consultant Lou Leonardis (Enzo Creative).

Regional Field Notes

Catskills

Jeff Senterman,
Catskills Program Coordinator
jsenterman@nynjtc.org



While our early winter storm at the end of October did provide a Halloween surprise, thankfully many of the trails throughout the Catskill region suffered little, if any, damage. We got about 18 inches of powder snow instead of the heavy wet snow others received.

Trail and regional infrastructure damage from Hurricane Irene and Tropical

Storm Lee was another story, however, and these were the topics of extensive discussion at a meeting of the state Forest Preserve Advisory Committee meeting I attended in October. The meeting was an opportunity to talk about the Dept. of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) response to the storms and how it differed in the Catskills and the Adirondacks. The Trail Conference received recognition from the DEC staff of Regions 3 and 4 for the work that we did managing and disseminating trail and roadway information following the storms.

Networking

In November, I gave a presentation to a

group of about 80 people attending the Ulster County Trails Conference. I focused on our Community Trails Program and how we could use that program to help communities capitalize on their recreational trail resources and improve them. It was a great event and we were able to introduce ourselves to many new potential partners.

I also attended a planning conference put on by the Delaware County Tourism Department, which hopes to forge a regional identity for the western Catskills and for the Catskills as a whole. It was exciting to see so many different groups and organizations working toward this common goal.

Seek More Trails to Adopt

Following the signing of our Adopt-a-Natural-Resource Agreement with the

DEC (see last issue), we have formally asked the DEC to allow us to adopt new trail miles and a new lean-to within Region 3. We currently have volunteers and a club ready to adopt these resources. We are working on identifying new trail networks for adoption throughout the region and making sure we have the volunteer and member club strength to properly maintain those trails.

This winter I look forward to a roundtable discussion with the Trails Chairs and Supervisors from the Catskills and the Long Path North. I am also looking forward to the start of the spring season as we have a number of exciting trail construction projects, workshops and training opportunities coming up. 2012 is going to be an exciting year in the Catskills and along the northern Long Path.

New Jersey

Chris Ingui,
New Jersey Program Coordinator
cingui@nynjtc.org



Crew Landmarks

A milestone was reached in November when long-time North Jersey Trail Crew Chief Sandy Parr led his last work outing for the Trail Conference.

Sandy announced this fall that he was retiring as a Trail Conference volunteer and moving to Vermont. Sandy has been a stand-out among our volunteers, dedicated and reliable over several decades. See page 6 for more about Sandy.

Our new Bear Claw Crew, co-led by Rich Raschdorf and Frank Schoof, launched this fall with several successful trail work outings in North Jersey. The crew completed a significant reroute of the Manaticut Point Trail (yellow) in northern Norvin Green State Forest (see Trail News, page 3, for more), and a reroute of the Yellow Silver Trail in the Ramapo Valley County Reservation. Fur-



Trail Conference shared info with 500 visitors at opening of new LL Bean store in Paramus.

ther work in the Reservation is planned, including work on both the Schuber and Silver Trails, with funding for puncheon and timber steps being provided by Bergen County Parks Department.

The crew can expect a new supply of tools when they are ready for work in the spring of 2012. Thanks to a grant from REI for North Jersey Trail Crew development, the tools are scheduled to arrive this winter.

Keep It Green

In November, the Trail Conference joined with its more than 140 partners in the Keep It Green Coalition to celebrate 50 years of land preservation through the state's Green Acres program. Over the past 50 years, Green Acres has preserved more than 650,000 acres of open space and provided many new parks and outdoor recreational facilities in every county, made possible in part through partnerships with other government and nonprofit entities. Green Acres has not only preserved critical lands and waters for future generations, but has increased access to green spaces for urban and rural residents alike.

Outreach

The Trail Conference helped LL Bean celebrate the grand opening of its new retail outlet in Paramus by setting up a table to distribute information about our maps, books, and volunteer opportunities. Thanks go to volunteer Patty Kwan, who stayed busy responding to the more than 500 people who stopped by the table.

East Hudson

Leigh Draper,
East Hudson Program Coordinator
draper@nynjtc.org



LL Bean Awards Help AT

Projects along the Appalachian Trail in Dutchess and Putnam (DP) counties got a boost thanks to two LL Bean grants. The RPH Cabin Volunteers, a member club that supports our Dutchess-Putnam AT Management Committee by focusing on AT projects in Fahnestock State Park, earned an award for the purchase of tools to be used on trail projects. The club's mission is to service the Appalachian Trail and support AT thru-hikers by teaching and training members in skills related to trail maintenance, con-

ducting trail maintenance projects to repair damage to the footway, and upgrade the trail with steps and bridges.

Another LL Bean award provided materials to allow Trail Supervisor David Kinosky to refurbish the hikers' privy near the Telephone Pioneers Shelter, on the AT in Pawling. The former supervisor for the section, Ollie Simpson, and members of the Pawling Hiking Club helped transport the pieces to the site.

AT Volunteers Honored

Jim Haggert of Poughkeepsie, chair of our Dutchess-Putnam AT Management Committee, in November received the President's Call to Service Award in recognition of more than 4,000 hours of volunteer service. (See page 10.) Trail Conference member Robert Haas, of Wappingers Falls, NY, surpassed 500 hours in volunteer time with the DP AT committee and received an Appalachian



Scout Joseph Quartucio built a new kiosk at trailhead for Camp Smith Trail

Trail Conservancy cap as recognition. Over the course of more than 25 years, Bob has been instrumental in successfully bringing many AT projects to comple-

tion, including bridges, shelters, and, still ongoing, the boardwalk over the Great Swamp in Pawling, NY.

Other Projects

Sea Scout Joseph Quartucio of Cortlandt Manor recently completed a new kiosk on the Camp Smith Trail for his Eagle Scout project. Joseph attends Hendrick Hudson High School and worked with East Hudson trail volunteer Fred Stern on the project.

Yorktown Community Trails and the Trail Conference were awarded \$4,000 from IBM for the purchase of tools, equipment, and materials to complete bridges and trail improvements in the region. The grant acknowledged Trail Conference participation in the IBM Day of Service in July, which marked the company's 100th anniversary. More than 100 employees volunteered that day on trail projects throughout the East Hudson region.

West Hudson

Larry Wheelock,
West Hudson Program Coordinator
wheelock@nynjtc.org



Building Up Our Crews

Building our trail crews in the West of Hudson area will be a primary focus during 2012. The parks in this region are among the most popular with hikers—Harriman/Bear Mountain, Schunemunk, Storm King, Minnewaska, and Black Rock Forest among them—and we hope to draw new and experienced trail builders to the ranks of our crews. There are great opportunities for alumni of Trail U.

We aim to create core groups who may specialize in rock work, timber work, trail design, erosion and water control, and assessing a trail for condition deficiencies. If you think you may be interested, you can indicate that on our website by completing the short Volunteer Interest form (find it at nynjtc.org/volunteer) or contact me directly via email or phone.

We took a big first step in this crew building effort on November 13, when we launched the new Long Distance Trail Crew for Orange and Rockland counties. See the year-end crew reports for more about this new group (page 5).

Meanwhile, our West Hudson South Crew, under the leadership of Crew Chief Chris Ezzo, continues its magnificent work on nearly 200 miles of trails in Harriman/Bear Mountain. In his report (see

page 5) Chris notes that the crew's work was "heavy on rock work this year as water seems to get the better of us." Recruiting new members for Chris and his crew is also high on our 2012 agenda.

What's New at Bear Mountain

Once the All Persons section of the AT and loop was opened on top of the mountain on June 11, crews there moved to the bottom of the mountain near the Inn and next to Hessian Lake to work on the first phase of an interpretive trail and plaza. Most of a Demonstration Trail was complete. It represents most of the techniques needed to build a good trail and comes with station sites which eventually will have interpretive panels explaining that site's work. Design work on the interpretive component of the trail is nearly complete.



Members of the new Orange-Rockland Long Distance Trail Crew relocated a nearly one-mile section of the Appalachian Trail on West Mountain in Harriman State Park in late fall.

Trail Crew Reports for 2011

Jolly Rovers Stonework Crew

This roving trail crew, specializing in technical stonework, was launched this past March as part of an effort to address the Trail Conference's pressing need for the rehabilitation of severely eroded and otherwise damaged trails.

After its first season in the field, the crew can proudly report that a total of 18 crew members, all recruited and trained at the spring 2011 workshop series on Bear Mountain, volunteered over 1,800 hours to install 120 stone steps, 115 feet of stone turnpiking, and 125 square feet of stone paving in New York and New Jersey parks east and west of the Hudson River.

Membership in this crew required volunteers to take five mandatory Trail U workshops in trail construction. A diverse group of individuals took up the challenge: ironworkers, landscapers, software engineers, real estate agents, and rock climbers were all drawn to the idea of roving from region to region, camping out, and work-



The dirtier, the better for Jolly Rovers.

ing on some of the most physically demanding projects trail work has to offer.

The goal of this crew also has been to train other Trail Conference volunteers in all regions at every trip they hold. Tim Messerich, Appalachian Trail Crew Chief for the Ralph's Peak Hikers Cabin Volunteers, reports: "During our camp-out this past July, the Jolly Rovers did top-notch trail work installing numerous stone steps on Shenandoah Mountain [Putnam County, NY]. Our club was most impressed with the quality of their work. Not only was the trail vastly improved, but our club was taught invaluable techniques, which in turn increased our capacity to take on more difficult projects."

—Chris Ingui, Co-Crew Chief



Sandy Parr starting out on his last crew trip.

North Jersey Trail Crew

The big news from this long-serving crew is the retirement of its leader, Crew Chief Sandy Parr, bridge builder extraordinaire. Read more about Sandy in the awards story on page 6. Before departing, Sandy led his crew on several trips to complete a long needed reroute on the Stonetown Circular Trail in Ringwood, NJ.

Bear Claw Crew (northern New Jersey)

This new crew co-led by Rich Raschdorf and Frank Schoof, launched this fall and took on two projects in northern New Jersey. The crew completed a significant reroute of the Manaticum Point Trail (yellow) in northern Norvin Green State Forest (see Trail News on this page for more), and a reroute of the Yellow Silver Trail in the Ramapo Valley County Reservation.



Members of the Invasives Strike Force on one of two fall work trips in Norvin Green State Forest.

West Jersey Crew

In 2011, the crew worked in parks throughout West Jersey: Worthington State Forest, Jenny Jump State Forest, High Point State Park, Stokes State Park, and Wawayanda State Park.

In Jenny Jump, the crew completed and opened the new 7-mile-long Jenny Jump Trail. In Stokes, stepping stone pathways were installed in several constantly-wet areas of the Swensen Trail. On High Point's Iris Trail, drainage was added in several places that are prone to flooding, and water bars were installed in other steep and eroding trail sections.

In Worthington, a section of the Dunnfield Creek Trail was rebuilt after the floods from Hurricane Irene washed away the existing tread, and the stream was cleared of the tangle of blow-downs that contributed to the original damage. Downed



West Jersey crew members clear a log-jam on Dunnfield Creek.

trees from Hurricane Irene were cleared on the Appalachian Trail and Dunnfield Creek Trail in Worthington, as well as from the Jenny Jump Trail in Jenny Jump. And in Wawayanda, the crew repaired the Pochuck boardwalk, damaged when the floodwaters from Hurricane Irene caused boardwalk sections to float and move.

Thank you to everyone who was part of the West Jersey Crew in 2011: Jesse Bardwell, Pam Barnhard, Amy Battaglia, Ian Blundell, Gordon Campbell, Joan Campbell, Chris Filchak, Irene Foster, Jim Harvey, Mike Lakner, Joan Theresa Lyons, Liz Marshall, Bill Martin, Gay Mayer, Will McNulty, Lee Mott, Joe Pomesi, Steve Reiss, Chuck Rood, Bill Taggart, Linda Taggart, Lory Wolf, Pete Zukoff.

Thank you also to the people who volunteered for the crew but weren't able to work because the work days that they signed up for were rained or snowed(!) out.

And finally, thank you also to our NJDEP partners at the state parks, who consistently support our work.

—Monica Day & David Day, Crew Chiefs

West Hudson South Crew

The West Hudson South trail crew enjoyed another year of great trail work. We worked on several different projects across the Harriman Park region, including the installation of stepping stones across a swampy area on the Appalachian Trail and building a retaining wall on the Timp/Torne Trail near Dunderberg Mountain. This season was heavy on rock work as it seems water is getting the better of us lately.

Many people put in a lot of miles to come out and help on various projects. All told, 28 people came out this year and donated over 350 hours of time to the cause of safe trails. A big thank-you to all the generous volunteers listed: Roland Breault, Gail Brown, Jim Brown, Brian Buchbinder, Chris Connolly, Lucas Deaver, Chris Ezzo, Bob Fuller, Joyce Gallagher, Claudia Ganz, Mary Hillely, Bill Horowitz, Joan James, Frank Keech, Rich Kopsco, Richard Lynch, John Mack, Bob Marshall, Gay Mayer, Lori Maynard, Trudy Pojman, Trudy Schneider, Charles Silver-Frankel, Lisa Talme, Elizabeth Zeldin, Steve Zubarik, and Giacomo (last name not known).

I would also like to offer a special thank-you to Terri and Steve Zubarik for hosting our end of the season BBQ. It was a splendid affair!

—Chris Ezzo, Crew Chief

Long Path/Shawangunk Ridge Trail Crew

Our main achievement this year was the start and near completion of the Mine Hole Trail, part of a major relocation of the Long Path between the Shawangunks and the Catskills.

In addition, we accomplished a minor relocation of the Long Path along the Palisades, did some trail restoration in the Neversink Gorge, and of course there was a lot of chainsaw work.

Several of our work crew came out multiple times, including Paul Labounty, Joan James, Dave Booth, Lalita Malik, Melissa Bean, John Bradley, Kevin McGuinness, and Thom Patton.



Long Path North Hiking Club bridge builders repair crossing at Tubbs Pond.

The LP North Hiking Club built a nice bridge at White Birch Pond and repaired a couple of bridges following Irene.

In addition we organized a trailhead cleanup in Deerpark, Orange County, to host announcement of the transfer of Trail Conference protected land to New York State DEC, held a Trail Maintenance 101 workshop in Wurtsboro, and staffed two tabling events in Wurtsboro and Ellenville.

We also got permission from Orange County to use the Heritage Trail for a planned major relocation of the Long Path off its longest road walk.

—Jakob Franke, Co-Crew Chief

Catskill Trail Crew

Our efforts in the Catskills got off to a good start this year by collaborating with staff from the Catskill Center to improve the Long Path through the Catskill Center's Platte Clove Preserve. The trail crew, with lots of help from the Rip Van Winkle Hikers, also spent a good part of the summer working on the Pine Hill West Branch Trail, clearing out years of accumulated growth and blow-downs. This work was done under a special agreement with the DEC. We are working on adopting the trail under our new Adopt-a-Natural-Resource Agreement with the DEC. Smaller crews led by trail supervisors and maintainers also helped tackle some of the post-Irene blow-downs on Catskill trails.

—Jeff Senterman, Catskills Program Coordinator

Invasives Strike Force Trail Crew

Two ISF trail crew work days were held in New Jersey's Norvin Green State Forest in the fall to try to remove targeted invasive plants along specific trail sections. One of the big problems there was burning bush (winged euonymus), and volunteers cleared out a few dozen very large individual specimens.

Our goal with the ISF Trail Crew is not to remove every invasive everywhere along the trails, but rather to concentrate our efforts on protecting the intact native communities and pushing back the encroachment of invasives in these areas.

Plans for the 2012 season involve increasing the number of volunteers on our monitoring force with the goal of doubling the miles of trail surveyed, and ramping up the number of ISF trail crew work days across the region. We are looking for many more new volunteers for both efforts. Training sessions for new monitoring volunteers will be held in late spring; trail crew volunteers are not required to attend training. See the ISF program report on page 7 for more info.

—Linda Robleder, Project Manager

Long Distance Trail Crew

This brand-new crew is intended to concentrate on work needed for the Appalachian Trail, the Long Path, and the Highlands Trail in Orange and Rockland Counties. Experienced trail volunteer Chris Reyling is Crew Chief. His long history of working with the other crews has prepared him well for running his own.

Thirteen volunteers came out on November 13 to help on the crew's first project—clearing the path of a reroute for the Appalachian Trail on West Mountain in Harriman State Park. The relocation was completed in December and will be included on the next edition of the Harriman-Bear Mountain Trails map (set for publication in early 2012).



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Trail Conference Awards 2011 continued from page 1

MAJOR WILLIAM WELCH TRAIL PARTNER AWARD

Presented to those outside the Trail Conference, (state, federal, local agency partner officials) who have given long and/or significant assistance to the local hiking community.

WILLIE JANEWAY, NYS DEC Director of Region 3



"Willie Janeway is the modern embodiment of Major Welch's drive to fuse volunteers and public agencies for the public good," Executive Director Ed Goodell said in making the award announcement. "Willie's expertise is especially valuable in these tough budgetary times where his 'cooperative management' approach supports nature-based tourism and economic development at no additional cost to the taxpayers.

"In October 2011, Janeway signed an Adopt-A-Natural-Resource agreement with the Trail Conference for the maintenance of over 200 miles of Catskill trails and 26 lean-tos. With his support, Trail Conference volunteers will be taking on more trail responsibilities in the Catskills, helping to maintain these important destinations for visitors and residents. Government needs more volunteer savvy managers like Willie."

WILLIAM HOEFERLIN AWARD

This award recognizes Trail Conference volunteers who have demonstrated exemplary service to trail maintenance, management, and/or trail land protection.

Trail Volunteer GENE GIORDANO, Warwick, NY



Gene can't seem to get enough of trails, and his enthusiasm for trail work is contagious. A trail maintainer since at least 1993, Gene has taken on various volunteer assignments in Ringwood State Park in New Jersey and on the Appalachian Trail (AT), both on the ground and in supervisory positions.

Currently, Gene chairs the New Jersey AT Management Committee for the Trail Conference, a position he has held since 2004. He also is a Trail Supervisor in Ringwood State Park, since 1999; and AT Supervisor for New Jersey since 2010. He continues as a trail maintainer at Ringwood State Park.

Gene, who teaches music to children, is very dedicated to working with young people and getting them involved in trail work. For many years he has involved Boy Scouts in projects and, thanks to his ongoing cultivation, Ringwood Boy Scout Troop 96 received the Next Generation Award from the Trail Conference in 2005.

Trail Volunteer GERARD HOEKSTRA Jr., late of Jewett, NY, and Oakland, NJ *Gerard passed away June 15, 2011 and his award was accepted by his son Gordon.*

Gerard was a long-time Trail Conference volunteer in both North Jersey and the Catskills. He volunteered as Trail Supervisor at Ramapo Valley County Reservation in North Jersey, was a trail maintainer at Morris County High Mountain from 1992-2003, served stints as Trail Supervisor in the Hunter Mountain and Westkill regions of the Catskills, and as a shelter caretaker in the Catskills from 1992-2010.

He earned USFS (U.S. Forest Service) chainsaw certification, participated in the USDA (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture) Rutgers-Trail Conference Invasive Species

monitoring program, and was a Trail Conference delegate-at-large. Gerard did an excellent job of keeping the trail network up to Trail Conference standards and his maintainers on their toes.

PAUL LEIKIN EXTRA MILE AWARD Recognizes those volunteers who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to projects.

Trail volunteer LEE MOTT, Milford, PA



Lee is a frequent trail volunteer, especially on the Appalachian Trail in both New York and New Jersey. In 2010, Lee went above and beyond the call of duty; in response to a call for help from Trail Conference's New Jersey Appalachian Trail Management Committee, he repaired, with help from other volunteers, five trailside privies, and in 2011, one more, all of them ADA compliant, as required by federal regulations. Along with this work, Lee continues as a stalwart member of the West Jersey Crew. He also contributed significant work on the AT as part of the Bear Mountain Trails Project.

Project manager on new map, CRAIG NUNN, Rutherford, NJ

Craig, a Trail Conference Life Member and trails volunteer wearing many hats, performed outstanding service as project manager of our newly published first edition of the Jersey Highlands Trails: Central North Region map set. This project was a large undertaking that required extensive field-checking of trails, making connections with trail volunteers, parks partners and other trail-savvy individuals to produce a very high-quality map. Craig was instrumental in coordinating the GPS data collection, reviewing and revising the maps with staff cartographer Jeremy Apgar, putting together the materials for the map backs, and generally ensuring the maps and associated information were as comprehensive and accurate as possible. He actively field-checks for other Trail Conference publications.

Web Designer DOUG CLEEK, Mahwah, NJ



Doug's volunteer efforts for the Trail Conference have helped keep our organization at the forefront in the communications revolution and raised our visibility to the trail-using public. His professional expertise is in designing and supporting websites, and he donates his considerable design and technical skills to the Trail Conference by helping to provide an attractive, useful source of trail and hike information for the public. The website includes detailed information on hundreds of hikes and parks in the region as well as opportunities for the public to easily support and volunteer for trails and parks.

Doug also manages and contributes to many of our social media projects, such as our Twitter account, and contributes to our Facebook pages (now closing in on 3,000 fans). Doug can often be seen on trails in our region in the company of his son, Justin, wife Linda, and dog, Buddy, or with his son's Boy Scout troop.

Thank you,
volunteers!

Assistant webmaster BILL ROEHRIG, Phillipsburg, NJ



Bill has been a valued member of the web team handling many of the highly technical updates, fixes, and other changes to the Trail Conference web pages. Without his work, the important and necessary upgrade accomplished this year from an early version of our website software (Drupal 5 to Drupal 6 for those in the know) would have taken much longer and cost a significant amount of money for consultants. His responses have been astonishingly instantaneous, and he makes so much possible for the Trail Conference as we continue to keep up with the latest in communications technologies.

KEN LLOYD AWARD

Recognizes members of Member Clubs who have demonstrated exemplary service to trail maintenance, management, and/or trail land protection.

Trail volunteer JOHN GRAHAM, Mount Kisco, NY



For more than two decades, John Graham of Mount Kisco, NY, has given enthusiastic service as volunteer on trails in the East Hudson region, for much of that time as a volunteer with the Appalachian Mountain Club, New York-North Jersey Chapter (AMC). The club, a founding member group of the Trail Conference, has long maintained trails in the region.

Trail Conference records mark 1984 as the year John first got involved with a Trail Conference project, helping to build the Appalachian Trail across a new route in Putnam County. "Not only did he have a good eye for laying out a trail, but he also was an excellent teacher," recalls Jane Daniels, herself a long-time active volunteer in the East Hudson region. John served as the AMC East Hudson Trails Supervisor from 1986 to 1989, continuing as maintainer of the Breakneck Ridge Trail for the AMC from 1989 to 2006.

Wearing his Trail Conference hat, John helped design the Wicoppee Trail in Fahnestock State Park and has maintained it since 1995. He helped refurbish trails at Westchester County's Merestead historic site in spring 2010. Whether sporting the logo of the Trail Conference, AMC, or both, John has given many years of continuous, dedicated service to the trails community, always with a big smile and appearing to be having the time of his life.

Trail volunteer CLARENCE PUTMAN, South Kortright, NY



Even before, but especially since his retirement from NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation, long-time Trail Conference member Clarence Putman has been a very active supporter of the development of the Long Path, especially north of the Catskills. Clarence has been a trail maintainer on the LP since 1994, and in 2011 became Supervisor of LP North. A member and officer of the Long Path North Hiking Club, Clarence recently was instrumental in filling a significant gap in the LP route just north of the Catskills. Clarence leads hikes and writes articles about the LP and hiking for local publications, including the Gilboa Historical Society Newsletter.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD Awarded by the Volunteer Committee upon review of recommendations by committee chairs.

Web content editor PHIL MCLEWIN, Mahwah, NJ



Phil McLewin proves that volunteering for the Trail Conference can be done from just about anywhere. Though Phil often may be spotted on trails in our region—especially at Ramapo Valley County Reservation—he has contributed hundreds of hours helping to write and edit the information about parks and hikes that the website delivers to the public at no cost.

Phil does most of his volunteering from the comfort of his home in Mahwah. But, sensibly spending winter days in southern California, Phil also logs in as a volunteer from his perch near the beach, regularly making needed updates to web information, adding new parks to our collection, and working with writers who submit hike descriptions to be included in our online collection. Phil's work has contributed greatly to our project of transposing to the web information distributed in the past through the *New York* and *New Jersey Walk Books*.

North Jersey Crew Chief SANDY PARR, Bound Brook, NJ



Sandy Parr has embodied the Trail Conference tradition of volunteer leadership for too many years to count, including more than two decades as North Jersey Crew Chief. He was given our Hoeflerlin Award in 1990, and never stopped volunteering, until December 2011, when he stepped down as North Jersey Crew Chief. Whether repairing trail treads or designing and building bridges, Sandy has left a legacy for us to build upon. Sandy will also be missed for his unfailing attendance and thoughtful contributions at Trail Council meetings. Sandy led his last North Jersey Crew work trip on November 13, relocating a section of the Stonetown Circular Trail in Ringwood. He plans to relocate himself to Vermont. The award was presented to Sandy at the October meeting of Trails Council. All who walk New Jersey trails owe Sandy many thanks for long and loyal service and lasting accomplishments.



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Science & Ecology

Acorn Booms & Busts

Variability in annual acorn production has an important effect on forest ecosystems

By Edna Greig

2011 was a bust year for acorns. The oak trees in our area produced few nuts. In contrast, 2010 was a boom year, and a thick layer of acorns covered both forest floors and suburban yards. Year-to-year variation in acorn production is common, but why did such an extreme variation occur in 2010 and 2011? How does this affect forest ecosystems?

First, a little background on oaks. The four most common oak species in our area are split into two groups. The red oak group, which includes red (*Quercus rubra*) and black (*Q. velutina*) oaks, has leaves with pointed and bristled lobes. The white oak group, which includes white (*Q. alba*) and chestnut (*Q. prinus*) oaks, has leaves with rounded lobes. The red oak group takes two years to mature its acorns, while the white oak group takes one year. Acorns mature in late summer and early fall and are an important food for mammals, birds, and insects.

At irregular intervals of about three to five years, individuals of an oak species over a wide geographical area produce a bumper, or mast, crop of acorns. One hypothesis is that the trees evolved masting as a strategy to improve reproductive success. In most years, animals consume 80 to 100% of the acorn crop, leaving few acorns to germinate into new tree seedlings. In a mast year, trees produce so many acorns that animals cannot possibly eat them all. Another hypothesis is that masting is a

response to favorable environmental conditions, especially to weather conditions during April, when trees are flowering and being pollinated.

The trees exhaust themselves by producing so many acorns in a mast year and typically produce few acorns over the following one to three years. Each species of oak follows its own annual pattern of acorn production—an acorn boom year for black oak might coincide with an acorn bust year for white oak. If each species is at a low point in its acorn production cycle in a given year, there will be virtually no acorn crop, as happened in 2011.

What can happen to a forest ecosystem following an acorn bust year? Larger animals like deer and bears often can find alternative food sources and may not be severely affected. But mice and chipmunks rely upon acorns for their winter caches and will likely suffer dramatic population declines. The following spring and summer, populations of insects and other invertebrates may increase because there are far fewer mice and chipmunks eating them. Mice and chipmunks also eat the eggs of ground-nesting birds like juncos, so these birds might increase in number. The raptors, snakes, and mammals that prey primarily upon rodents may face food shortages and population declines.

Mice also harbor the bacterium that causes Lyme disease, which they can transmit to black-legged ticks that obtain their first blood meal from them. Fewer mice following an acorn bust year means fewer ticks being infected with the bacterium. These ticks get their second blood meal the summer thereafter, often from a larger mammal or human. If the ticks were not infected with the bacterium the previous year, they cannot transmit Lyme disease. Studies by Dr. Richard Ostfeld and others at the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook, NY, have shown that the size of an acorn crop is a valuable predictor of

continued on page 11

World Class Landscapes for Photography in the Hudson Valley

By Robert Rodriguez Jr.

Find full article and more of Robert Rodriguez's photos at nynjtc.org/photography

World class landscapes, art and culture, and history all make the Hudson Valley an attractive destination for nature and landscape photographers. But for me the real treasure is found in the huge network of hiking trails that cover both sides of the Hudson River, especially in the Hudson Highlands region.

This region provides some of the most dramatic viewpoints along the Hudson, and a well established trail network attracts hikers in large numbers, especially from New York City and surrounding areas.

I have visited and photographed many of the same locations for years, yet never tire of finding new ways to interpret the landscape. Winter creates a whole different perspective, so my snowshoes get lots of use (and abuse) during the snow season.

Here are a few locations to get you started:

- Breakneck Ridge: open summits, spectacular views, and many photographic options.
- Storm King Mountain: great location for panoramas, changing light, and often covered in fog.
- Mount Beacon: climb to the south firetower and enjoy a 360-degree view all the way to NYC on a clear day. Sunsets can be magical.

Thank you to the Trail Conference for keeping these trails in such great condition.

Robert Rodriguez Jr., is a professional landscape photographer specializing in landscapes of the Hudson Valley (www.robertrodriguezjr.com).



Atop Mount Beacon in the Hudson Highlands.

Early Results: The Top Five Invasive Plants Along Our Trails Are...

By Linda Rohleder

The Trail Conference's Invasives Strike Force (ISF) got off to a great start in 2011, its inaugural season of monitoring invasive plant species along trails: 100 volunteers trained and 163 miles of trails in New Jersey and the lower Hudson Valley region of New York surveyed for 14 invasive species. This mileage represents 12% of the 1,430 trail miles in the focus areas. We are starting to tabulate initial results.

Our most common invaders will likely not surprise anyone. Japanese barberry tops the list, followed by Japanese stiltgrass (a.k.a. Nepalese browntop), multi-flora rose, and garlic mustard. Our fifth most common species might be unexpected, however: burning bush (a.k.a. winged euonymus), a commonly planted shrub in residential and commercial landscapes.

ISF members also documented sightings of many of the species on our Phase 2 list of 11 emerging invasives. The most common of these was Japanese angelica tree (a.k.a. Japanese Hercules club, or devil's walking stick). We also had quite a few records of linden viburnum, another landscape shrub, which is only just beginning to be recognized as invasive.

Using our initial data we were able to identify some areas that were only lightly invaded in Norvin Green State Forest, and two ISF Trail Crew work days were held there in the fall to try to remove some of the invaders. One of the big problems there was burning bush, and volunteers cleared out a few dozen very large individual specimens.

Our goal with the ISF Trail Crew is not to remove every invasive everywhere along the trails, but rather to concentrate our efforts on protecting the native communities that are relatively intact and pushing back the encroachment of invasives in these areas. The work crew enjoyed sights of a few native trailing arbutus and pink lady's slipper orchid plants as they worked to clear the invaders.

Our plans for the 2012 season involve increasing our volunteer monitoring force with the goal of doubling the miles of trail surveyed, and ramping up the number of ISF trail crew work days across the region. We are looking for many more new volunteers for both efforts. Training sessions for new monitoring volunteers will be held in late spring; trail crew volunteers are not required to attend training.

You can find more about the program, on our web site (www.nynjtc.org/invasives) or contact me at rohleder360@gmail.com.

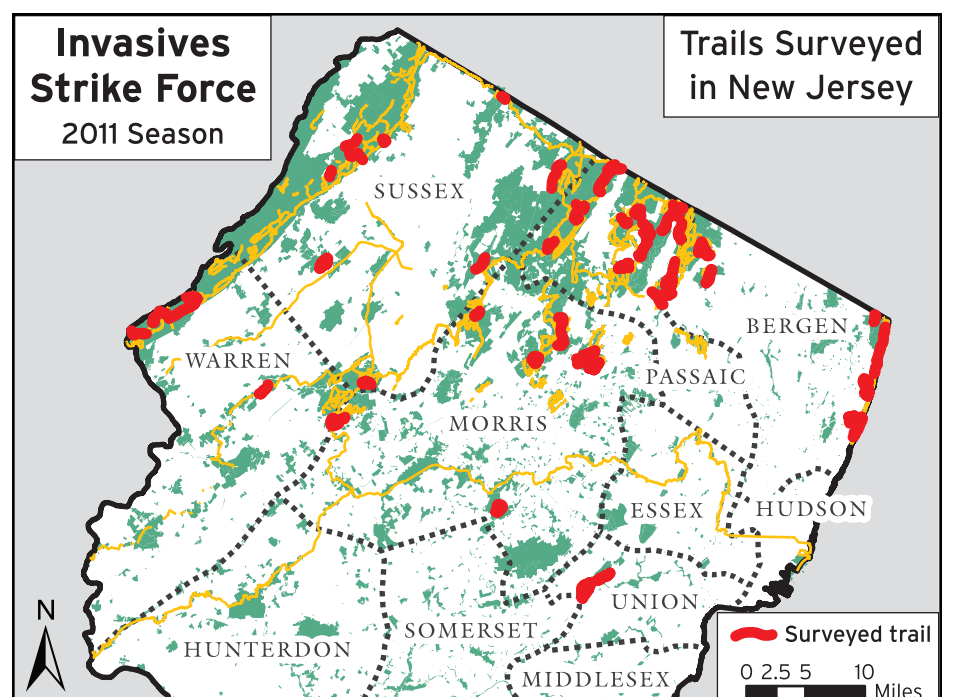
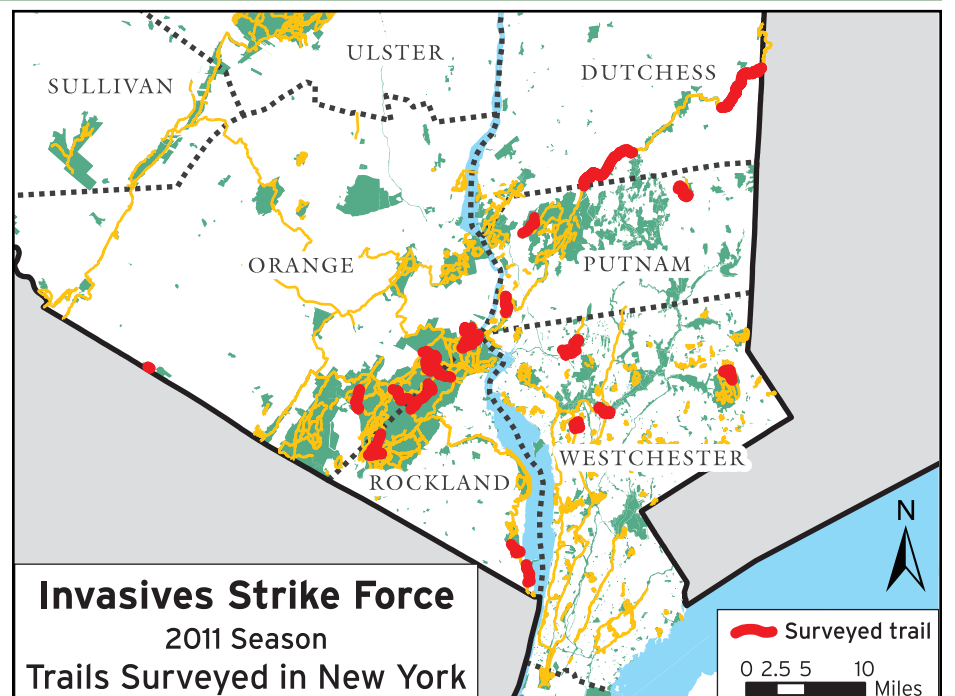
Thanks to all of our volunteers for their participation, and a special thanks to the following ISF volunteers who surveyed more than five miles of trail: Sona Mason, Stephen Zubarik, Therese Zubarik, Bill Males, Nancy Males, Schuyler Jenks, Ryan Hasko, Mary Dodds, Aelin Compton, and Michael Bellaus.

The following are some quotes from our ISF volunteers summing up their thoughts about the program:

"I see so much more now when I hike! The training has broadened my interaction with the environment when I'm in the woods or just driving down the street (ailanthus is everywhere!)."

"[The single best thing about participating was the] sense of satisfaction at contributing to a very worthwhile project."

Trail Conference member Linda Rohleder is a PhD candidate at Rutgers University in the Dept. of Ecology, Evolution, and Natural Resources. She volunteers as ISF project manager and is among the ISF members who have surveyed more than five miles of trails.



These maps show the trails surveyed for invasives in New York and New Jersey in 2011. The program achieved broad coverage across the region and across many parks. Additional details will be posted on our web site at www.nynjtc.org/invasives as they become available.

HIKERS' ALMANAC

A Sampling of Upcoming Hikes
Sponsored by Member Clubs

Find many more hikes at www.nynjtc.org. Click on Scheduled Hikes under Go Hiking!

January

Sunday, January 1

AMC-NYNJ. Bare Rock, Sterling Ridge Trail, NY. Leader: Christine Benton, 347-464-6367, call before 8:30pm; cbentonhiker@yahoo.com. Meet: contact leader for time and location. 8 miles at moderate pace. Celebrate the New Year with a hike to Bare Rock with scenic overlook of Greenwood Lake. Rocky uneven terrain with many ups and downs. Traction aids required; bring snowshoes if sufficient snow. Not an early-out hike. Shuttle required.

SW. New Year's Day Hike in Upper Manhattan, NY. Leader: Cy Adler, 212-663-2167. Meet: noon at 178th St. and Broadway, George Washington Bridge bus station information booth. Explore Manhattan's north end, Inwood Hill and Highbridge parks, shoreline of the Harlem River. Some hills. Non-members \$3.

Saturday, January 7

AMC-NYNJ. Intro to Winter Hiking, Southern Harriman State Park, NY. Leader: Stuart Kurtz, 732-469-5344, stuartkurtz@verizon.net. Meet: contact leader for time and location. 7 hilly miles at a moderate pace. Novice and experienced winter hikers welcome on this opportunity to learn more. Appropriate gear and clothing required; loan of limited number of crampons and snowshoes available. All weather hike, providing road conditions are acceptable.

PM. Family Walk, Pyramid Mountain Natural Historic Area, NJ. Leader: call 973-334-3130 or visit www.morrisparks.net to register. Meet: 1pm at Pyramid Mountain parking lot, 472A Boonton Ave., Boonton, NJ. Families with children of all ages are invited to stroll the trails as our naturalist helps them discover winter animals and plants. Out by 2:30pm. \$2 fee per person (age 2 and up). Program repeats on Saturday, February 25.

Sunday, January 8

WTA. Rockwood Hall State Park, Old Croton Aqueduct, and Rockefeller Preserve, NY. Leader: Carolyn Hoffman, 914-948-0608, earthwormch@aol.com; register by Friday night. Meet: 9:30am at North White Plains train station; ask leader about alternative meeting place. Easy 7 miles; 3-mile option available. If enough snow, we'll cross-country ski.

AFW. Bear Swamp Lake, Ramapo County Reservation, NJ. Leader: call 973-644-3592 or visit www.adventuresforwomen.org for info and to register. Meet: 9:30am; register for location. Moderate hike; out by 2:30pm.

IHC. Ringwood State Park, NJ. Leader: Steve Rikon, 973-962-4149, rikon4@optonline.net. Meet: 9am at Skylands Manor parking lot A. Moderate climb to viewpoint. See the manor and grounds in winter. Heavy snow or ice cancels.

TLR. Hike in the New Year at Teatown Lake, NY. Leader: call 914-762-2912 ext. 110, to register. Meet: 1pm; call for location. Moderate hike to Vernay Lake, looking for ice formations along the Waterfall Trail and winter wildlife as we circle Teatown Lake. On our return we'll toast the New Year with a hot drink. Out by 3pm. For adults only; non-members \$5 per person.

Saturday, January 14

WTA. East Hudson Highlands, Hudson Highlands State Park, NY. Leader: Carol Harting, 845-669-6731. Meet: contact leader to register and for location. 7-8 moderate miles. From Manitoga, we'll hike the Osborn Loop, Curry Pond Trail, and Appalachian Trail, with a climb to Sugarloaf South for views of the Hudson River. Snowshoe if conditions warrant.

UCHC. Watchung Reservation, Mountainside, NJ. Leader: Angela Coble, 908-420-7915; call morning of hike after 8am. Meet: 10am at trailside parking lot. Moderate, hilly hike of about 2 hours. Bad weather cancels.

Sunday, January 15

AMC-NYNJ. Palisades Beginner Friendly Hike, NY. Leader: Soham Aso, asosemail@yahoo.com. Meet: contact leader for location. 7 miles at a moderate pace. Mostly level hike along the Hudson River.

IHC. Ghost Lake, Jenny Jump State Forest, NJ. Leaders: Ursula and Patirck Davis, 973-786-7087. Meet: 9:30am at Ghost Lake parking, Great Meadows, NJ. Moderately strenuous 6-7 miles with elevation gain of 450 feet. Bad weather or driving conditions cancel.

TLR. Family Walk, Tracks in the Snow, Westchester County, NY. Leader: call 914-762-2912 ext. 110 to register. Meet: 1pm; call for location. Easy walk for families with children ages 5 and over. Many animals are out looking for food and leave tracks in the snow. We'll follow tracks and other signs to see what animals are doing. Non-members \$5 per person. Out by 2:30pm.

Saturday, January 21

AFW. Sourland Mountain, NJ. Leader: call 973-644-3592 or visit www.adventuresforwomen.org for info and to register. Meet: 10am; register for location. Easy to moderate hike; out by 2pm.

WTA. Marshlands Conservancy, Rye, NY. Leader: Leslie Millman, oolesie@aol.com. Meet: 10:30am at Conservancy parking lot, 220 Boston Post Rd. near Rye Golf Course. Easy 3-4 miles. Enjoy a 2-hour hike in this preserve on trails through fields, forest, and a salt marsh.

Sunday, January 29

WTA. George's Island Park and Montrose State Forest, NY. Leaders: Jane and Walt Daniels, 914-245-1250, jdihikes@gmail.com. Meet: 1pm at parking lot by Hudson River; contact leaders for directions. Possible pick-up at train in Cortlandt with advance notice. Easy 5 miles. Hike will end at about the time that eagles fly in to roost (but no guarantees).

IHC. Sourland Mountain Preserve, NJ. Leader: Udi Cohen, udic@audiocodes.com. Meet: 9am at Sourland, East Mountain Rd., Hillsborough, NJ. Strenuous 8.5 miles. Scale the valley of rocks and see the Devil's Half Acre. Lovely view of the surrounding farms. Bad weather or driving conditions cancel.

UCHC. Round Valley Recreation Area, Lebanon, NJ. Leader: Pat Horsch, 908-693-8331. Meet: 10am at south parking area. Moderate 4-5 miles on Cushtunk Trail, with views of the reservoir. Some level terrain, some hills, one substantial hill. Traction aids may be needed.

Sunday, February 12

WTA. Appalachian Trail in Fahnestock State Park, NY. Leader: Carol Harting, 845-669-6731. Meet: call to register for time and location. Moderate 7.5 miles. Hike scenic woods and hills on the AT from Dennytown Rd. to Canopus Hill Rd. and back.

Saturday, February 18

AMC-NYNJ. Skannatati Skedaddle, Harriman State Park, NY. Leader: Art Almeida, 914-271-8659, arta@croton10520.com. Meet: contact leader for time and location. 9 very hilly miles at a moderate pace. Steep initial climb; traction aids required if icy or snowy conditions. Snowshoes if appropriate.

Sunday, February 19

UCHC. South Mountain Reservation, South Orange, NJ. Leader: Jim Schlegel, 973-731-4339. Meet: 10am at Tulip Springs parking. 4 miles at a moderate pace; about 2 hours. Snowshoes if warranted.

Saturday, February 25

AFW. Glenclyffe, Garrison, NY. Leader: call 973-644-3592 or visit www.adventuresforwomen.org for info and to register. Meet: 9:30am; register for location. Easy to moderate hike; out by 2pm.

UCHC. South Mountain Reservation, Millburn, NJ. Leader: Angela Coble, 908-420-7915; call morning of hike after 8am. Meet: 10am at Tulip Springs parking. 2-hour hike at a moderate to brisk pace. Heavy rain, ice cancels.

Sunday, February 26

UOC. Manasquan Reservoir, NJ. Leader: Coralyn Gorlicki, 732-548-2315. Meet: contact leader for time, location, and carpool information. The 5-mile perimeter of the reservoir is easy walking with much wildlife to see. Visit the Environmental Center and Visitor Center with fireplace for lunch spot.

WTA. Palisades Shore Path, NJ. Leader: Herb Hochberg, 914-723-6566, h_hochberg@hotmail.com. Meet: 9am at North White Plains train station; contact leader for alternate meeting place. Moderate 7 miles. North from the George Washington Bridge at the base of the Palisades, with great views of Manhattan and the Bronx. Return on Long Path atop the cliff.

TLR. Finding Your Way: Basic Map and Compass Workshop, NY. Leader: call 914-762-2912 ext. 110 to register. Meet: 10am; call for location. Learn the basics of compass and map reading skills to help you better navigate in the woods. Indoor and outdoor activities; bring lunch and water. Concludes at 2pm. This program is for adults only. Non-members \$15.

March

Saturday, March 3

UCHC. Garret Mountain Reservation, West Paterson, NJ. Leader: Angela Coble, 908-420-7915; call morning of hike after 8am. Meet: 10am at Lambert Castle. Moderate 2-3 hour hike. Bring traction aids in case needed. Bad weather cancels.

Sunday, March 4

AFW. Schooley's Mountain County Park, NJ. Leader: call 973-644-3592 or visit www.adventuresforwomen.org for info and to register. Meet: 10am; register for location. Easy to moderate hike at a leisurely pace; out by 2pm.

IHC. Silas Condict County Park, Morris County, NJ. Leaders: Guy and Jennifer Percival, 973-590-7437, jenguy@optonline.net. Meet: 9am at the park, Kinnelon Rd., Butler, NJ. Moderate 7 miles. Come see the new trails and enjoy the last of winter. There's even a casino! Bad weather or driving conditions cancel.

Saturday, March 10

UCHC. Garret Mountain Reservation, West Paterson, NJ. Leader: Walter Koenig, 973-684-5528. Meet: 10am at second paved parking lot on left, on one-way loop reservation road. Easy 2 hours on mostly gravel paths; great views of Paterson and NYC. Eat at Libby's Lunch afterward, then visit the Great Falls.

Sunday, March 11

IHC. Spruce Run Reservoir to Voorhees State Park, NJ. Leaders: Guy and Jennifer Percival, 973-590-7437, jenguy@optonline.net. Meet: 9am at NJ Observatory parking lot, Voorhees State Park, Glen Gardner, NJ. Moderately strenuous 8 miles; shuttle required.

Saturday, March 17

UCHC. Pine Meadow Lake, Harriman State Park, NY. Leader: Dave Hogenauer, 973-762-1475. Meet: 10am at Reeves Meadow visitor center on Seven Lakes Dr. Moderate 6-7 miles; out by about 1:30pm.

Sunday, March 18

NYR. Nine Bridges on the Passaic River, NJ. Leader: Craig Nunn, 551-206-6823, dystopicnj@gmail.com. Meet: 7:55am at Penn Station NJ Transit ticket windows for 8:14 train to Broadway-Fair Lawn (Northeast Corridor, one-way; change at Secaucus to Bergen Line). We'll cross the river 10 times on different bridges, connecting old factories and other interesting sites between Fairlawn and Rutherford, NJ. Dangerously bad weather cancels.

Saturday, March 24

UOC. D&R Canal New Connection, Trenton, NJ. Leaders: Bob & Linda Barth, 201-401-3121, barths@att.net. Meet: contact leader for time and location. Hike along the canal path, including the new connection to the main canal, while learning about many historical sites and canal features.

THE TURNING POINT

Deep into unfamiliar mountains,
I take a map, pack full of gear,
and try to see how far I can go
without using any of it,
choose trails I think I've seen before,
that seem to lead to viewpoints, pleasing
my climbing heart, though the aged body
balks, stumbles on slick roots and cobbles,
gasps on the steeps, trembles on scarps,
and I'm so far into the woods
I can't recall the names of flowers
or recognize the trees.

That's when I sit on a cold rock,
shed my pack in the calm forest
softly busy with seeds, saplings and death,
and think about not going back.
Of course I soon get up,
shoulder the pack, get out my compass,
and find my way back into memory.
But on each return some part of me
stays behind on that crucial rock,
searching up slope through slanting light
for the highest, longest lookout,
far uphill beyond the whispering leaves.

— GEORGE PETTY

Sunday, January 22

NYR. Wawayanda State Park and Greenwood Lake, NJ. Leader: Ludwig Hendel, 718-626-3983. Meet: 7:10am at Port Authority Bus Terminal for 7:30 NJ Transit bus to Mountain Creek (Vernon, one-way). Strenuous hike; proper winter gear including traction aids and flashlight required.

IHC. Lost Village, Watchung Reservation, NJ. Leader: Jim Schlenker, 908-561-0228, jimso331@gmail.com. Meet: 9am at Watchung Reservation's Trailside Museum on Coles Ave., Mountainside, NJ. Moderately strenuous 8 miles. Explore most of the reservation, including the Lost Village, a former quarry and an old industrial area. Bad weather or driving conditions cancel.

Saturday, January 28

RVW. Flagler Arboretum, Dutchess County, NY. Leader: for more information, please call 845-758-6143. Meet: 10am; call for location. Moderate 4 miles, about 5 hours. Inclement weather date is following Saturday.

UOC. Byrne State Forest, Burlington County, NJ. Leader: Coleen Tighe, 732-568-9241. Meet: contact leader for time, location, and carpool information. Wooded trail on mostly sandy or stone surfaces. This is part of the Pine Barrens and the Batsto Trail.

February

Saturday, February 4

AFW. Hacklebarney State Park, NJ. Leader: call 973-644-3592 or visit www.adventuresforwomen.org for info and to register. Meet: 10am; register for location. Easy to moderate hike; out by 2pm.

UOC. Sandy Hook Gateway National Recreation Area, NJ. Leader: John Horvath, 732-249-4257. Meet: contact leader for time, location, and carpool information. A brisk winter walk on the beach and the Old Dune Trail, followed by lunch at a local seafood café.

UCHC. Tallman Mountain State Park, Piermont, NY. Leader: John Jurasek, 845-519-4247, call before 10pm; must register by evening before the hike. Meet: 10am at 450 Piermont Ave. in Piermont, NY; park across the street in lot D. Moderate 5 miles. Long Path and other trails to view the berms and salt marsh. We'll then walk the mile-long Piermont pier halfway across the Hudson River! Adverse conditions will alter route.

WTA. Ward Pound Ridge Reservation, NY. Leader: Mike Kaplan, kaplanm2001@yahoo.com. Meet: 9:30am at North White Plains train station; contact leader for alternate meeting place. Easy to moderate 6-7 miles. Explore southern end of the park, Overlook, Leatherman's Cave area, and Trailside Nature Museum. Bad weather cancels.

PM. Rock and Ridge Hike, Pyramid Mountain Natural Historic Area, NJ. Leader: call 973-334-3130 or visit www.morrisparks.net to register. Meet: 1pm at Pyramid Mountain parking lot, 472A Boonton Ave., Boonton, NJ. Moderate hike, great for ages 7 and up. Hike to Tripod Rock and Bear Rock and learn about the geology of the area.

Sunday, February 5

NYR. Great River to Smithtown, LI, NY. Leader: Clive Morrill, 212-242-0931, cimorrill@aol.com. Meet: 6:55am at Penn Station LIRR ticket windows for 7:10 train to Great River (one-way). Follow LI Greenbelt Trail all day to Smithtown, passing through Connetquot River State Preserve and several ponds.

Saturday, February 11

TLR. Family Snowshoeing, Westchester County, NY. Leader: call 914-762-2912 ext. 110 to register. Meet: 1pm; call for location. Learn the basics of snowshoeing and join us for an hour-long walk in the woods. For families with children ages 7 and over. Non-members \$5 per person.

The activities listed are sponsored by member clubs of the NY-NJ Trail Conference. All hikers are welcome subject to club regulations and rules of the trail. You are responsible for your own safety. Wear hiking boots or strong, low-heeled shoes. Bring food, water, rain gear, first aid kit, and a flashlight in a backpack. Leaders have the right and responsibility to refuse anyone whom they believe cannot complete the hike or is not adequately equipped. Easy, moderate, or strenuous hikes are relative terms; call leader if in doubt.

More than 100 clubs belong to the Trail Conference, and many of our affiliate groups sponsor hikes not listed in the Hikers' Almanac. For a descriptive list of Conference clubs, consult our website or send a SASE with your request to NY-NJ Trail Conference.

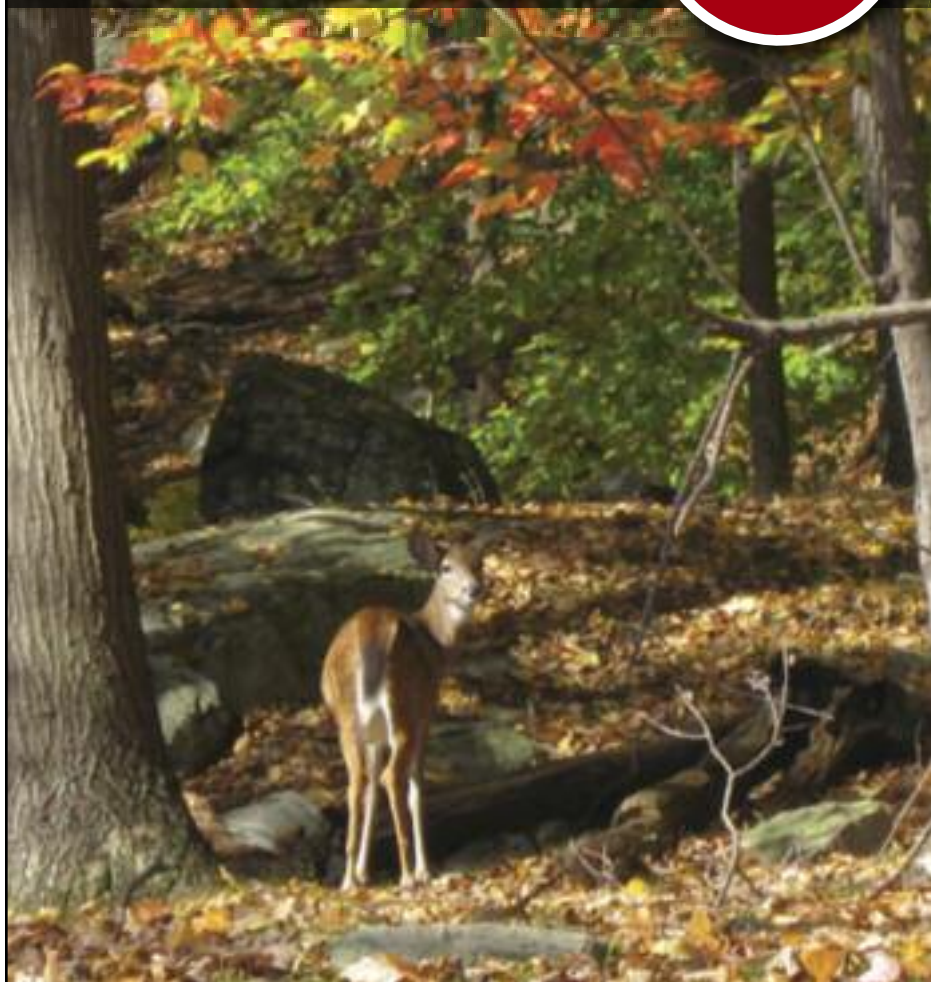
Club Codes

Only those clubs with hikes offered in this issue are listed below. Please call numbers listed to confirm.

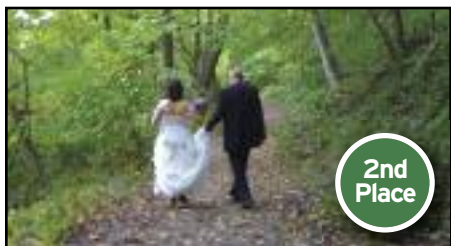
AFW	Adventures for Women	RVW	Rip Van Winkle Hiking Club
AMC-NYNJ	Appalachian Mountain Club,	SW	Shorewalkers
	New York-North Jersey Chapter	TLR	Teatown Lake Reservation
GS	Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center	UCHC	Union County Hiking Club
IHC	Interstate Hiking Club	UOC	University Outing Club
NYR	New York Ramblers	WTA	Westchester Trails Association
PM	Pyramid Mountain Natural Historic Area		

Clubs wishing to have hikes listed in Hikers' Almanac should send their schedules to tw@nynjtc.org or to the Trail Conference Office. The deadline for the Spring issue is February 15.

Fall in Love with Trails PHOTO CONTEST



MIKE MATLICK



STAN SHULFER



JANICE POSPISIL

Congratulations to Trail Conference member Mike Matlick, the grand prize winner of our Fall in Love With Trails Photo Contest!

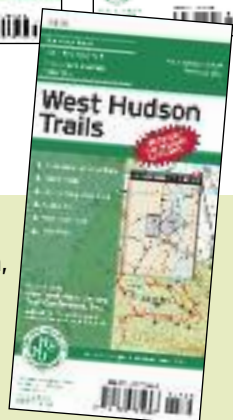
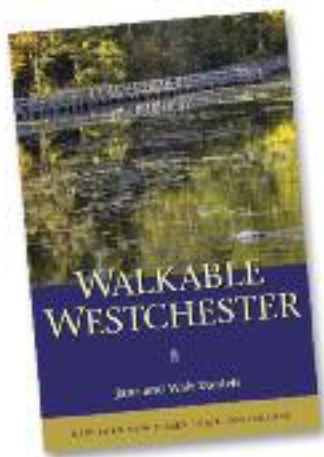
Mike snapped the winning photo in Harriman State Park near Silvermine Lake just off the Menomine Trail, which is maintained by Trail Conference volunteer Steve Zubarik. To get this great fall shot, which includes dappled woods and white-tailed wildlife, Mike says he was just lucky to be in the right place at the right time.

Congratulations also go to our second- and third-place winners, Stan Shulfer and Janice Pospisil. All winners will receive all of our maps, a free annual membership, and a gift certificate donated by Campmor. 305 photos were submitted in the contest, which took place on our Facebook page. Submissions were accepted through October, and voting took place through November. Thank you to contest sponsor Campmor.

Hikers' Marketplace



Go Places with Trail Maps and Books from the Trail Conference.



We cover your favorite hiking areas in the New York-New Jersey region, including Harriman-Bear Mountain, the Catskills, North Jersey and Jersey Highlands, East and West Hudson Highlands, and more.

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Visit www.nynjtc.org/panel/goshopping!
Or call 201-512-9348

Member Club News

Find links to all Trail Conference member groups online under the Community tab at www.nynjtc.org. Member groups: submit your news and photos for *Trail Walker* and the website via email: tw@nynjtc.org.

Chinese Mountain Club Clears Shore Trail

Representative of the public service performed by our trail maintaining clubs and individuals was the cleanup of three miles of the Shore Trail in Palisades Interstate Park by the Chinese Mountain Club. In October, club members put in 200 hours cleaning up debris deposited by Hudson River floodwater along the stretch they maintain. They hauled away eight 40-gallon bags of trash, 11 tires with rims, one plastic dome, a 55-gallon plastic drum, a plastic "A" frame traffic barrier, yards and yards of marine rope, and other assorted trash. Too big to handle were the remains of boat docks. They also did maintenance work on the Giant Stairs. It was a challenging season for trail volunteers. Thank you all for your dedication.



Shui-Kei Ng, president of the Chinese Mountain Club, clears debris from the Shore Trail.

Friends of Shawangunks Helps Preserve Joppenbergh Mountain

The big news from the the Gunks is the addition of Joppenbergh Mountain to the protected open space inventory! Trails anyone?

In September the Open Space Institute's land acquisition affiliate, the Open Space Conservancy, purchased Joppenbergh Mountain, a 117-acre parcel that towers over Rosendale, NY. Friends of the Shawangunks, through its land-trust affiliate, The Shawangunk Conservancy, agreed to raise \$85,000 (46%) of the sale price in order to secure the mountain's preservation.

Two years ago, the former ski-jump property came on the market for \$500,000. After a two-year roller-coaster course of negotiations between OSI and the Town of Rosendale, which for a time was a potential partner in the protection effort, Friends of the Shawangunks was approached for support. After much discussion, the Conservancy board agreed that preservation of this site was important enough to justify the fundraising effort, by far our biggest ever.

Title to Joppenbergh, which looms above the adjacent Wallkill Valley Rail Trail and overlooks the Rondout Creek, will be conveyed to the Wallkill Valley Land Trust, which agreed to administer and maintain the land. OSI, FOS, WVLT and others will develop a management plan for preservation and low-impact public use.

Saving this mountain is a significant challenge for FOS. We absolutely need our members and friends to be generous with contributions.

For more information, see our six-page color brochure at shawangunks.org/joppenbergh-mtn/ or the impressive Wikipedia article at [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joppenbergh Mountain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joppenbergh_Mountain).

— H. Neil Zimmerman, President
The Shawangunk Conservancy & Friends of the Shawangunks



GEORGETTE WEIR

View over Rondout Creek from a lookout on Joppenbergh Mountain.

Leave No Trace: Ethics & Trail Tips

By Bob Russo

Plan ahead and prepare. This first LNT principle is especially important in winter.

Winter is a beautiful time in the woods but it can be very dangerous, so special attention should be paid to planning ahead and preparing.

Disregarding approaching bad weather can transform an easy hike into a risky encounter with hypothermia.

Always let someone know where you are going and when you plan to be back. Sign register boxes at the beginning and end of your hike.

Be prepared to sit tight or turn back if you sense danger or sustain an injury or are lost.

Even if you carry a GPS, always take a compass and a good map of the area, even if you know it well; snow changes the lay of the land.

Make sure that first aid, navigation, and self rescue are part of your training.

Snowshoes and crampons are a must when there is snow and ice on the trail.

Make sure you're in adequate physical shape for the trip.

Pack a small stove, pot, and food for a day and a half at least, waterproof matches, a whistle, a signal mirror and a reflective piece of cloth.

Dress in wool or synthetic clothes using layers, good insulated waterproof boots, and an extra pair of socks.

If you practice all this, you can have a pleasurable and safe hike.

Bob Russo is a Trail Conference life member and volunteer and a Leave No Trace Master Educator. Find more Leave No Trace principles at www.lnt.org.



TRAIL CONFERENCE VOLUNTEERS

September 24 - November 21, 2011

The Volunteer Committee acknowledges these new volunteers who took on or completed an assignment during the time period noted above. The list also includes existing volunteers who accepted additional assignments. We thank all Trail Conference volunteers!

Office Program Assistant:
Marianne Ansari

Publications Field Checker:
Peter Diamond, Catherine Ray, Eileen West, Robert Willemann

Trail Corridor Monitor:
Donald Myers

Trail Crew Chief: Chris Reyling

Trail Crew Member: Steve Butfilowski, Paul Kienker, Ann Kinney, Frank March, Sona Mason, Debbie Melita, Keith Mulvihill, G. Gail Neffinger, George Perkinson, Allen Rochkind, Chris Reyling, Jerry Ruocco, Fred Schneider, Marek Stycos, Marjorie Taylor, Richard Taylor, Theresa Vela

Trail Maintainer: Andrew Argeski, Peter Beck, Patti Binko, Tricia Boomhower, Marty Costello, Ken Dolsky, Ray Flavell, Robert Fuller, Leonard Giusti, Harold Guest Jr., Rick Hibbert, Jeffrey Jones, Lawrence May, Kevin McGuinness, Charles Morgan, Brian Osborne, Kori Phillips, William Phillips, Jeffrey Roggenburg, Robert and Ashley Rubolotta, Robert Russo, Ted Schlesinger, David Smith, David Sutter, John Tiffit, Tristan VonHaugg, Teresa Wandas, Joe Whalen, Edward Young

Trail Supervisor: Wilfredo Diaz, Ed Leonard

Web Associate: William Ellis

Did we miss you or someone you know? Please tell us so we can correct our records and give you the thanks you deserve. Contact the Volunteer Administrator via email: volunteers@nynjtc.org



VOLUNTEER LOCAL



MIKE LUBCHENKO

Volunteers from Camp Coombe helped out this summer on the Yorktown Trails Project.

Great Scenery, Invigorating Outdoor Service, Fun & Camaraderie Are Available Close to Home

Here's a sampling of parks and trails where we have openings for trail maintainers:

- Highlands Trail
- Ringwood State Park
- Long Path North
- Shawangunk Ridge Trail
- Neversink River Unique Area
- Minnewaska State Park Preserve

Prefer to put your administrative skills to work?

Lenape Trail (NJ) Supervisor Needed

In 2012 resolve to give something back to the trails you enjoy year-round. Visit nynjtc.org/volunteer to learn more, apply for a position, or indicate a specific interest. Watch for our Trail U schedule of spring workshops: nynjtc.org/view/workshops.

DONORS TO THE ANNUAL FUND

September 29 - November 28, 2011

GIFTS

Estelle Anderson, Anonymous Donor, Ken Bald, Melissa Bean, Dr. George L. Becker Jr., Dr. George L. Becker III & Dr. Alissa Gelmann Becker, Daniel Berman, Vartika Bhandari, Ed Blaumeiser, Jack Bloom, Norman Blumenstein, Ian Blundell, Rita Boyd, Alice M. Broquist, William J. & Carol K. Burns, Ruth Chasek, Joshua Clements, William C. Close, Herbert J. Coles & June Fait, D.N. Connolly, Chris Connolly, John Dalenberg, Andrea J. Damato, Jane & Walt Daniels, Joseph DiSaverio, Ken Dolsky, Donald & Ruelien Eisen, Laura Enos, Greg McAlpin, Kevin & Diane Fee, Jakob & Gely M. Franke, Christopher & Dorothy Freeman, Henry & Samira Galler, William Gannett, Mark Garrahan, John A. & John C. Gaut, Peter Gensicke, James Gilligan, John J. & Wanda C. Giuffrida, Coralyn & Abraham Gorlicki, Scott Greene, Jim Grieshaber, John & Marianne Gunzler, Joseph F. Helmer & Mary Dodds, Maria Himber, Daniel Hoberman, Frederick Hodde, Robert J. Jonas, George A. Kalosieh, Richard & Marion Katzive, Kathleen M. Kearns, Priscilla Kellert, Gary & Cindy Kuhns, Richard R. Levine & Diane Levine, Rosanne Levitt, Rosemary & John Leyden, Sheila Lipshie, Eileen T. Mahler, Ronald Manning, Mary Anne & Charlie Massey, Jennifer Mathews, Richard J. Menfi, G. Gail Neffinger, Paul Neuman, Anthony V. Paterno, William F. & Mary H. Penny, George P. Perkinson, Eric & Maria Banuelos, Harry D. Perrinm, Jeanne Petta, Mary Jean Purdy, Bob & Sandy Purnell, Marilyn Raitiere, Peter Reiner, Chris Reyling, Andrea Minoff, Johanna Rioux, William R. Roehrig, Linda Rohleder, Ruth Rosenthal, Matthew Rotjan, Peter M. Rowe, Lowell & Rosalie Saferstein, Alex Saunders, Robert J. & Barbara L. Sayre, Charles & Xiomara Scheidt, Joshua Schickman, Marypat & Todd Schreibman, Seth Schwartz, Mehran M. & Penny Shirazi, Kenneth M. Shure, Richard E. Sparrow, Lee Spencer, Margaret J. Starmer, Dean B. Talcott, Diana Trebbi, Donald Tripp, Daniel R. & Lynne H. Van Engel, Donald E. Wade, Alfred M. Wanamaker Jr., Larry A. Wehr, Patrick G. & Winifred J. Welsh, Henry Wong, Don Zabransky, Carrie Odgers, Hugh N. Zimmerman

TRIBUTES

In honor of Mary Smart's birthday
John & Marianne Gunzler

In honor of Evelyn H. Lauder and her love of the land
New York-New Jersey Trail Conference Board of Directors

In memory of Dr. Joan Ehrenfeld
The Orion Society

In memory of Ann Grubn
Hans Khimm

In memory of William Hladik
Tom Groegan, Robert P. and Maxine Guenther, Bob Young, John Hladik, Robert E. Warren

CORPORATE, FOUNDATION & OTHER DONORS

ADK North Jersey Ramapo Chapter, Adventures For Women, American Express-JustGive, Boy Scout Troop 50, Church Communities Foundation, Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP, EarthShare, Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund, Google, IBM Corporation, Network For Good, Pfizer Foundation Matching Gifts Program, Sundance Outdoor Adventure Society, Truist, Unilever United States Foundation, Inc.

Tributes are only printed for donations of \$25 or more.

25 Years on the R-D



GEORGETTE WEIR

The Ramapo-Dunderberg Trail in Harriman State Park celebrated its 90th birthday in 2011. According to legend, the trail was the first built by Trail Conference volunteers, who completed its approximately 20 miles in just three months.

For the last 25 years, John Lipsett has maintained, under the auspices of ADK-NY Chapter, the 4.6-mile stretch from Route 17 in Sloatsburg to Route 106. On November 26, 2011, John, a lawyer who resides in Manhattan, led his annual fall trail clearing. He got to the trail by bus from Port Authority, as he has four to five times a year for the past 25 years. Thank you, John, for your dedication!

Save These Dates!
Member/Delegates Meetings 2012
Thursday, February 9:
New York City
Saturday, June 2:
National Trails Day, location TBD
Saturday, October 20:
Annual Meeting, location TBD

AT Volunteer Gets US Presidential Service Award

Jim Hagggett was awarded the President's Call to Service Award, arranged through the National Park Service, in honor of his long and distinguished service to the Appalachian Trail. This award is given to recognize volunteer service to the community and the nation. It is awarded to those who have been documented as having given in excess of 4,000 hours of service. Jim serves as Chair of the Dutchess-Putnam AT Management Committee of the Trail Conference, and has been a trail builder, trail building trip leader, trail maintainer, NPS land monitor, and trail supervisor since 1982. The Trail Conference congratulates Jim on this well deserved recognition.



Jim Hagggett (left) accepts Presidential thank-you from Ron Rosen.

We welcome these new member clubs (find list of all member groups on our website):

BSA Troop 258

Delaware and Hudson Canal and Gravity Railroad Conservancy

Hudson Valley Hikers

Society for the Advancement of Judaism

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Warm Toes While Winter Hiking: Finding Comfort Below Freezing

By Howard E. Friedman, DPM

Hiking on a truly frigid day should make a sane person nervous. We are mammals after all, fur-less, warm-blooded, engineered to function optimally at a core body temperature of 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit (F), more than 60 degrees above the freezing point. Simply put, we are not designed for the cold. And nothing says "cold" like the gnawing pain of icy toes.

The Body's Design Challenge

The human body is designed to preserve the temperature of the important organs in the chest and abdomen even at the expense of the extremities. In cold conditions, warm blood will be shunted to the body's critical core organs to maintain the right temperature.

In all conditions, the amount of blood that can flow into the toes is limited by the size of their very small arteries; further, the toes have a large surface area relative to their size, resulting in significant heat loss. Indeed the surface temperature of the toes is often 10-20 F less than that of other areas of the body even while indoors. Moreover tight laces and thick socks can further constrict the blood flow to the toes.



Neoprene overboot (left) by Forty Below Ltd can be used over a hiking boot or trail shoe in freezing, wet temperatures.

Another challenge to keeping toes warm while winter hiking is snow condition. Early morning's hard-packed, firm, and relatively dry snow may, by afternoon, be a slushy mix that makes the feet cold and wet.

Moreover, a boot and sock warm enough for active winter hiking may be under-insulated to keep the feet warm during a lunch break. If the core body temperature drops, the feet will become even colder. And if perspiration is not wicked away from the feet, the dampness will accelerate the loss of heat; feet may become encrusted in an icy coating.

Before Thinking About Boots

Before deciding on footwear, the hiker must dress appropriately from head to toe to maximize insulation and prevent heat loss throughout the entire body. A cold core will lead to even colder toes. The hiker must likewise be adequately hydrated before and during the winter hike, as dehydration will also lead to cold extremities. Keep in mind that caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol all are reputed to lead to constriction of blood vessels, and thus to reduced warming action by blood flow.

Before setting out, the hiker should assess the status of the terrain on the trail. Walking on hard-packed snow below the freezing point requires insulation, but not necessarily waterproofing. Hiking in deep snow above freezing requires less insulation but waterproofing is necessary. Hiking at a moderate to strenuous pace without stopping, even in below freezing temperature, may require less insulation since the activity of hiking will promote warmth to the toes. But, planning a full day out with rest stops will require extra layers for the lulls in activity. During the rest stops the hiker should change into dry socks if necessary. Up to a half-pint of fluid can be lost from

the feet through perspiration becoming trapped, and frozen, in the socks and boots.

The Standard Solution

For a moderate-to-strenuous hike in fairly dry snow and temperatures close to the freezing point, most hikers will be comfortable in an insulated, waterproof, over-the-ankle boot with layers of socks. A thin wicking sock made of polypropylene or wool under a thick insulating sock made primarily of wool can be a quite effective insulating combination. Do not lace the boots too tightly, to avoid constricting circulation, and change socks when wet. If wetness is anticipated, hikers may add a waterproof sock over their insulating sock. One popular brand is Rocky Gore-Tex socks. To accommodate extra layers, winter boots may need to be one size larger than usual.

Waterproof, breathable, insulated boots abound. They are insulated with materials like Thinsulate or Primaloft, synthetic microfibers much thinner than standard polyester fibers. They are added to boots in increments of 200 grams/square meter. Manufacturers equate increased insulation

with a lower temperature range of comfort. LL Bean, for example, advertises winter boots insulated with 200 gm of Primaloft that they have tested during active outdoor activity like quick-paced hiking or snowshoeing to be warm to minus 5 F, 400 gm of insulation tested to minus 40 F, and a 600 gm Primaloft boot that they have tested to minus 50 F.

But determining a comfort range depends on many factors, and the same boots LL Bean says will keep feet warm during jogging or snowshoeing to minus 5 F, they estimate will keep feet warm only to 30 F during regular walking. One specialty winter boot company, Baffin, says its boots with a thick inner boot are tested to minus 100 F!

When hiking in several inches of snow or in situations where snow or ice could be kicked up and land inside the boot or wet the lower pants leg and slowly drip into the boots, hikers should add a gaiter—a water-resistant fabric sleeve that covers the lower portion of the leg and the top portion of the boot, including the opening around the ankle. The gaiter prevents snow, slush, and water from entering the shoe around the ankle area. Gaiters come in different heights and materials and methods of attaching to the top of the boot. They are secured to the

bottom of the boot with a strap. When Standard is Not Warm Enough Ed Viesturs, America's best known mountaineer, recently posted that he finally found comfort for his cold toes while climbing Mt. Vincent in the Antarctic in 2011 by donning a neoprene overboot that completely encloses his plastic mountaineering boots but also includes an integrated gaiter. Though hiking in the Northeast does not pose the challenges of the Antarctic, Mr. Viesturs' solution for warm toes is now being used from Norway to the Himalayas, from the Antarctic to the east coast of the United States. Indeed, one company, aptly named Forty Below—the temperature at which not only human skin, but mercury in thermometers freezes—specializes in creating insulating neoprene overboots that can form-fit to any type of shoe, from a flexible running shoe to a stiff mountaineering boot. A few companies offer overboots. Products vary in their weight, height, ability to accommodate traction devices, and other features.

Non-Standard Approach

Avid hikers have long strived to develop a light-weight system for winter hiking and snow-shoeing. Many believe that lighter-weight footwear is more comfortable, and enables one to hike further, and that unrestricted motion in a flexible shoe helps keep the feet warmer.

One such system for hiking in snowy cold temperatures incorporates a liner sock, an insulating sock, a non-waterproof non-insulated trail runner shoe, an insole, a gaiter, and a waterproof Gore-Tex sock, explains Will Reitveld, senior editor for gear and apparel, in the online publication BackpackingLight.com. This layering system could be further modified by replacing the light trail runner with an insulated light hiking boot and a neoprene overboot for snowshoeing in colder temperatures, he writes.

Toes still cold?

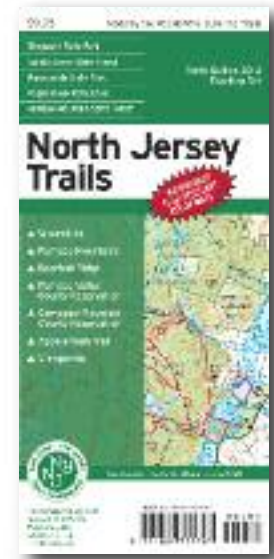
A few more warming aids are available to the hiker suffering with chronically cold toes. Chemical warmers that become activated when exposed to the air can be placed under a sock and may add about five degrees of warmth for a few hours to the immediate area they contact. During a rest break, they can be placed into a boot in advance to "pre-heat" the inside of the boot, suggests Joel Attaway, president of Forty Below.

In addition, some pre-fabricated foot beds are reportedly quite helpful in providing further insulation. Toasty Feet Insoles are a favorite of Will Reitveld, while Mr. Attaway recommends Spenco Polysorb, which he says is a good insulator due to its closed-cell flexible neoprene and shock absorbing qualities.

Overall, hikers should be actively engaged in thinking about and planning their winter cold weather footwear. Simply lacing up the insulated boots and hoping for the best is not sufficient, as it may very well lead to a curtailed hike or even extremely painful feet and toes. With a better understanding of how to apply the concept of layering to footwear, hikers should be able to customize their footwear to their planned hike and modify it as needed even during the hike.

Howard E. Friedman, DPM, is an avid hiker, a podiatrist in Suffern, NY, and a frequent contributor to Trail Walker of articles relating to hiking and health. Find his articles on our website at nynjtc.org/news/health-news

Now Available: Tenth Edition of North Jersey Trails Map Set



The revised 10th edition of North Jersey Trails is now available. This two-map set features over 275 miles of marked trails within more than 16 parks in northern New Jersey. Several new trails and many relocations of existing trails have been incorporated into the maps, including the new Manaticut Point Trail and a revised configuration of trails near Weis Ecology Center in Norvin Green State Forest, as well as the relocation of the Highlands Trail and surrounding trails near Clinton Reservoir in the Pequannock Watershed. In addition, the Pochuck Boardwalk section of the Appalachian Trail is now shown in its entirety.

The maps show all trails and many woods roads in Ringwood State Park, Ramapo Valley County Reservation, Ramapo Mountain State Forest, Norvin Green State Forest, Wawayanda State Park, Abram S. Hewitt State Forest and the Pequannock Watershed, and a large-scale map of Campgaw Mountain County Reservation is also included. Nearly 15 miles of the Appalachian Trail and 40 miles of the Highlands Trail are shown on the maps.

To obtain this map set, shop online at nynjtc.org, call 201-512-9348, or stop in at the Trail Conference office.

The map set was produced with support from Campmor, an outdoor store and retail partner of the Trail Conference.



ACORN BOOMS & BUSTS

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the risk for Lyme disease in humans two years later.

Acorn booms and busts affect forest ecosystems in complex ways that scientists are continuing to investigate. Given the acorn boom crop of 2010, we should be extra vigilant about Lyme disease in 2012.

Trail Conference member Edna Greig writes regularly for Trail Walker on natural history topics. Find previous articles by her and other science/natural history contributors on our website: nynjtc.org/news/science



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Featured Hike



Sylvan Glen Park Preserve

Length: 4.9 miles

Difficulty: moderately easy

Features: old quarries, giant white oak

Map: at nynjtc.org/view/maps

No dogs or mountain bikes

Driving: Take the Taconic State Parkway to Route 202 and turn west. At the traffic light at Lexington Avenue, at 1.8 miles, turn right. Drive 0.6 mile to Morris Lane. Turn right and go into the parking lot at the bottom of the hill.

In 2010, Trail Conference volunteers joined forces with the Westchester Mountain Biking Association and the Town of Yorktown to build a trail network on both sides of the Taconic State Parkway incorporating 6 miles of existing trails. By the end of 2011, 11.5 miles of new trails had been completed. Trail-building volunteers included the Trail Conference's Jolly Rovers—trained in advanced rock-work building techniques—Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and others from the community. Portions of the network are for both mountain bikes and foot traffic; others are hiker-only.

Trails Supervisor Jane Daniels describes a 5-mile loop hike that includes both new and older trail sections and passes a host of interesting natural and historical features. A detailed hike description can be found on our website (nynjtc.org/hike/turtle-pond-trail-loop) and is the basis for this introduction to the new trail network.

Sylvan Glen Park Preserve protects an abandoned 19th-century quarry, which in its heyday supplied honey-colored granite for St. John the Divine Cathedral in Manhattan. Quarries and remnants of quarrying operations are in several locations and include foundations, polished blocks, partially finished carvings, old machinery, and cables.

From the parking lot, take the Turtle Pond Trail (white) past an outdoor classroom and at a woods road, turn left uphill. Turn left at the Sylvan Brook Trail (yellow), then, shortly, left again onto the Grant Lookout Trail (red). This will pass a quarry

(no view) before returning to the Sylvan Brook Trail. Turn left onto Sylvan Brook Trail and continue to its end on the Turtle Pond Trail. Go left again and almost immediately cross a gas pipeline at 0.8 mile.

Continue on the Turtle Pond Trail as it passes through white pines, crosses Sylvan Brook, and passes by remains associated with quarrying operations. Interpretive signs are along the trail. When Turtle Pond Trail ends at the High Quarry Trail (blue), turn right. Abandoned quarry machinery, cables, and cut stones are scattered along the trail. At 1.7 miles, a side trail leads to a view into the quarry pit and to the west. Be cautious.

Newly built trails in this Westchester preserve pass abandoned quarries and related remains of 19th-century activities.

Leave the view and follow the co-aligned High Quarry (blue) and Sylvan Glen (red) trails away from the quarry operations. When the trails split, go straight on the Sylvan Glen Trail (red). At the junction with the Old Farm Trail (green) at 2.5 miles, turn left. Stay on this trail through an old riding ring, over a wood bridge, onto a woods road, and to its end at the High Quarry Trail at 3.1 miles. Turn left and follow the High Quarry Trail back to the quarry area and rejoin the Sylvan Glen Trail. When the trails split, turn left to go behind the pile of discarded rocks.

Continue on the Sylvan Glen Trail. At 3.9 miles descend the stone steps built by the Jolly Rovers this past summer. A "don't miss" feature, on a short side trail, is the 18-foot circumference Quarry Oak. Return to the Sylvan Glen Trail, which passes through the quarry and then ends at the Turtle Pond Trail. Go left to take the Turtle Pond Trail back to the parking lot.



The Quarry Oak in Sylvan Glen Park Preserve.



The Jolly Rovers Trail Crew hardened the trail to prevent erosion.

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