



TRAIL WALKER

New York-New Jersey Trail Conference – Maintaining 1,683 Miles of Foot Trails

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TC Work Honored at National Trails Day Event

Participants at a National Trails Day event sponsored by the Trail Conference in the southern Shawangunks had two reasons to celebrate: cleanup of 150 acres of preserved open space and a surprise announcement by special guest Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) that he had that week introduced legislation in Congress to support a feasibility study of designating the Long Path a National Scenic Trail. The Trail Conference has been working for several years to achieve National Scenic Trail study status for the Long Path (LP), a portion of which traverses the Shawangunk Ridge via the Shawangunk Ridge Trail.

Hinchey's bill, the Long Path Trail Study Act of 2008, would authorize project-based funding and technical assistance via the National Park Service in order to explore alternative routes for connecting existing sections of the trail. (Please turn to page 3 to read Congressman Hinchey's remarks in full and learn more about how a National Scenic Trail study might benefit the LP.)

The main focus of the June 7 event, however, was celebration of the cleanup of a 150-acre property preserved by the Trail Conference and due to be turned over to NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and added to Wurtsboro Ridge State Forest. The land offers the opportunity to link the Shawangunk Ridge Trail to a network of rail and canal trails in the area of the southern Shawan-



Trail Conference Executive Director Ed Goodell, center, accepts the DEC Partnership Award on behalf of the Trail Conference from DEC Region 3 Director Willie Janeway (left) and Congressman Maurice Hinchey (right), at a National Trails Day event in Summitville on June 7.

gunks. Trail Conference volunteers, DEC officials including Region 3 Director Willie Janeway, and area residents helped pick up remaining trash, reviewed maps depicting the area's trail networks and weak links in terms of protected lands, and marked completion of a major step in readying the site for transfer to the state.

On behalf of DEC Commissioner Pete

Grannis, Region 3 Director Janeway presented the Trail Conference with its Partnership Award. Citing the Trail Conference's work in "protecting critical natural resources and providing for outstanding outdoor recreational opportunities along the Shawangunk Ridge," Commissioner Grannis noted: "Many of these properties required a level of commitment well

beyond what anyone would have expected. This has included researching tax maps, meeting with landowners, assembling volunteers, and undertaking the cleanup of some of the more significant properties in this outstanding assemblage. Your persistence is a testament to the strength of our partnership."

Also attending the event were: **Paula Medley**, President, Shawangunk Ridge Coalition & Basha Kill Area Association;

"Your persistence is a testament to the strength of our partnership"

Aileen Gunther, Assemblywoman, 98th District; **Seth Goldman**, Executive Director, Neversink Valley Area Museum; **Ethan Winter**, NY Conservation Manager, Land Trust Alliance NE office; **Neil Zimmerman**, Chair, Friends of the Shawangunks; **Valerie Freer**, Sullivan Audubon Society; **Dave Colavito**, Sullivan Alliance for Sustainable Development; and 40 volunteers, members, and area residents.

See photos from other National Trails Day events on page 3.

Do You Hike the Hudson Highlands?

By Maria Leiter

Just north of Cold Spring, NY, along the Hudson River in Hudson Highlands State Park, are some of the most popular hiking trails in the country; so are some of the most difficult, even treacherous trailheads. Today, an effort is afoot to design a solution that will remedy access problems and enhance outdoor recreation in the area for hikers, bicyclists and other outdoor enthusiasts.

Glaciers deepened the river gorge here, and the resulting estuary has the geological structure of a fjord. The Hudson Fjord is framed by Storm King, Breakneck, Crows' Nest, and Bull Hill. On the east bank, Route 9D parallels the river. Heading north from Little Stony Point, it is magnificently scenic and heavily used by the public as a gateway to outdoor recreation.

But when the Philipstown Greenway



A greenway group seeks to improve access and parking at the busy trailhead areas in Hudson Highlands State Park.

Committee applied to the Hudson Valley Greenway to add the Hudson Fjord Hike/Bike Trail—the section of road between Little Stony Point and Breakneck Ridge—to its list of Greenway Trails, they received only provisional approval. Says Committee Chair (and Trail Conference member) Michael McKee, "Safety was the state Greenway's concern, and we had to rethink our proposal. We applied for a grant to fund a study to see what could be done. We described access to local trail systems and the Hudson River as, 'unsafe, unregulated and inconvenient'—and in need of improvement."

A Popular Destination

Spectacular views of the Hudson River and Highlands, the adrenaline-and heart-pumping thrill of climbing Breakneck Ridge, easy, family friendly trails on Little Stony Point, and a dedicated stop on the Metro-North rail line just for hikers, all contribute to making this section of the park one of the most popular hiking spots in the country. The area has been voted among the top ten best hiking destinations by *Newsweek* Magazine, and the Breakneck Ridge Trail currently ranks as the #1 day hike in the nation in an online poll conducted by Trails.com.

A walk on the trails near Breakneck intersects with the paths of history. Henry Hudson paused just north of here in 1609, waiting for weather and the tide, on his way back down the River. 2009 will mark the quadricentennial of his voyage. Nearby, the fortress at West Point was established as the United States Military Academy in 1803.

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Volunteer Profile Andy Garrison: Trash Bash Super Hero

Excavators are not usually part of a trail volunteer's tool inventory, but for a full week in May, Andy Garrison, a trail maintainer and crew member in the Shawangunks, was in control of one on the Trail Conference LaFarge project in Summitville.

Andy has been a mainstay and leader among the Trail Conference's LaFarge Trash Bash clean-up volunteers, who have cleared 25 tons of heavy-duty trash and debris and hundreds of tossed tires from 150 acres in



LARRY WHEELER

Summitville in order to make the site eligible for transfer to the NYS DEC. (See story above.) ("LaFarge" refers to the cement company of the same name that once occupied the site.) The Trail Conference purchased the land in 2005 in order to provide a link for the Shawangunk Ridge Trail with the O&W rail trail and D&H Canal trail in the valley below. It will become part of the adjacent Wurtsboro Ridge State Forest.

In the course of seven months, Andy has dedicated hundreds of hours to the project—on weekends with other volunteers and on his own after work and additional weekends. He has found vendors to provide dumpsters and construction equipment needed for the project, negotiated discount rates for using it, and operated the equipment himself. In May, Andy took a week of vacation to get behind the controls of an excavator, needed to knock down an old wall of what had been the LaFarge Cement company's plant. "The wall was a lot thicker than you might have imagined," he says. "Since this was a cement factory they didn't have to skimp."

The wall demolition was, he says, the biggest challenge of the clean-up project, though for him it was also a matter of being back in the saddle. Now a maintenance section supervisor with the New York State Thruway Authority, Andy started his career as a construction equipment operator.

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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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The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference is a volunteer, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. It is a federation of 103 hiking and outdoor groups, and 10,000 individuals.

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From the Board of Directors

Nominating Committee Names Slate for Board

On May 27, 2008, the Board of Directors approved the appointment of Ann Gruhn to the board of directors, to replace Anne Osborn, who has resigned to take the position of TC science consultant. This appointment was to be submitted to the Delegates for approval at the June meeting.

Ann M. Gruhn

Ann is a hiker, cyclist, cross-country skier, and a long-time Trail Conference member. She is recently retired from IBM, where she worked as a programmer, a senior program manager, executive project manager, and in strategic development. She brings to the Trail Conference a wealth of expertise in information technology.

At the Trail Conference Annual Meeting on October 18, 2008, three members of the current board of directors will be presented for re-election for three-year terms.

Daniel Van Engel Ian Highet Seth McKee

Also at the Annual Meeting in October, two new members of the board of directors will be presented to the delegates for approval, as will nominees for delegates-at-large.

Winston Perry

Win has been a Trail Conference member since the 1960s. He has been a trail maintainer of the Upper Nyack Trail, a section of the Long Path, for decades. An architect, he has served on the Upper Nyack Planning Board for 25 years and is a trustee of the Historical Society of Rockland.

Edward Saiff

Ed is a professor of biology at Ramapo College, and clinical professor of pathophysiology and neurosciences at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. He has served on and chaired the Mahwah Environmental Commission, as well as the Mahwah Board of Education. He is a dedicated outdoors man and will be a key liaison between Ramapo College and the Trail Conference as the Trail Conference prepares to move its headquarters to the Darlington Schoolhouse, even closer to the college than we are now.

Nominees for Delegates-at Large

The following TC members are nominated to represent TC's individual members at delegates meetings: Robert Berlin, David Bertollo, Carolyn Canfield, Harvey Fishman, Steve Galla, Clifford Gerenz, Toby Golick, Suzan Gordon, Jill Hamell, John Jurasek, Harold Kaplan, Peter Kohlberger, Mark Liss, Jeff Marino, Margo Moss, George Petty, Karen Rose, Trudy Schneider, Dave and Naomi Sutter, Peter Tilgner, Robert Ward, Richard Zinn, Henry Zulauf.

Call for Nominations for Awards

Members may nominate individuals for Trail Conference awards (See list of awards at right). Award winners are honored and recognized at our Annual Meeting. Cut-off date for recommendations is September 1, 2008. Please send nominations (with supporting statements) to Malcolm Spector at mbspecs@aol.com.

— Malcolm Spector
Chair, Nominating Committee

TC Appoints NY East Hudson Regional Representative



The Trail Conference is pleased to welcome Christie Ferguson to the staff. She fills the position of NY East Hudson Regional Representative. In the position, Christie will tailor and deliver a range of trails-related services, primarily in Westchester and Putnam counties, and will inaugurate the Trail Conference's new East Hudson Community Trails Program.

The East Hudson Community Trails Program is made possible by a \$100,000 challenge grant from Westchester resident Dr. Lucy R. Waletzky and a match in the amount of \$30,000 by the Westchester Community Foundation. The trail initiative is designed to expand the Trail Conference's capacity to provide assistance to local trail programs in Putnam and Westchester Counties.

Christie is a resident of New Paltz, NY, and has eight years experience in environmental education focusing on developing programs, designing materials, and training volunteers. In May, she earned a master's degree in environmental policy at the Center for Environmental Policy at Bard College in Annandale, NY. At the same time, she earned a master's in teaching from Bard.

"My husband and I are outdoors enthusiasts, and we have become quite attached to the New York landscape," she says. "I look forward to working in the East Hudson region with the dynamic Trail Conference volunteers. See you on the trails!"

Before joining the Trail Conference, Christie worked as a research assistant for Hudsonia. Prior to that, she was zookeeper and educator at Bear Mountain State Park's Trilside Zoo. She served an internship as an environmental educator at Minnewaska State Park Preserve; interpretive hiking guide for Rivermen in Fayetteville, West Virginia; and education coordinator for Pelican Man's Bird Sanctuary in Sarasota, Florida.

MGM 2008 IS OVER!

Thank you to all who participated in the 2008 Member-Get-A-Member Campaign. This year we were able to get 58 new members to join the Trail Conference and support all the hard work that our staff and volunteers do daily! Winners of the raffle prizes will be contacted individually. The winners of our top three prizes are:

Grand Prize, Campmor Camping Package: Andrew Bell

Second Place Prize, One-night stay at the Emerson Resort and Spa: Ronald Rosen

Third Place Prize, Lunch and Hiking at the Mohonk Mountain House: Steven Alt

MEMBER
get a
MEMBER



TC Awards; Nominees Welcome

(See report from Nominating Committee at left.)

Honorary Life Membership

Conveys life member status and the right to vote at Delegate's meetings. Usually given after long years of service to the Conference.

Raymond H. Torrey Award

The Conference's most prestigious award, given for significant and lasting contributions that protect hiking trails and the land upon which they rest.

William Hoeflerlin Award

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

Leo Rothschild Conservation Award

Presented to a person or organization that has made a significant contribution to the protection of our trails and/or the natural lands that surround them.

Corporate Partner Award

Given to businesses or their employees for outstanding service to the hiking community.

Major William A. Welch

Trail Partner Award
Presented to those outside the Trail Conference—for example, state, federal, or local agency partner officials who have given long and/or significant assistance to the local hiking community.

Next Generation Award

Given to those under age 21 who are making significant contributions of time and energy to trail building or protection.

Ken Lloyd Award

Recognizes members of Trail Conference member clubs or member clubs who have demonstrated exemplary service to trail maintenance, management, and/or trail land protection.

Paul Leikin Extra Mile Award

Recognizes those volunteers who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to projects such as a book, map or advocacy.

Calls & Letters to the Editor

Trash Bash Fan

Nothing delights me more than reading about Trash Bash I and Trash Bash II, where a former industrial site, now overgrown, was cleared up by you to be turned over to the state to be used as a park. This is conservation at its best. And your innovative use of volunteers and donated supplies and services is impressive. Thank you for doing such a great job.

Michael Sasse
New York NY

Correction

Shawangunk Ridge crew volunteers thanked on page 1 of the May/June issue incorrectly merged two names, which should have been listed as Linda Siwarski and John Pawlowski. We apologize for the error.

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.

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www.NYNJTC.org

From the Executive Director

Congressman Maurice Hinchey Announces Long Path Legislation



EG: I would like to cede my column space in this issue to comments made by Congressman Maurice Hinchey at a National Trails Day event celebrating the volunteer clean-up of 150 acres in Sullivan County, NY. In his surprise announcement of the Long Path Study Act of 2008, Congressman Hinchey once again demonstrated by his words and deeds that **he is one of the greatest proponents of protecting the region's natural heritage and making it accessible for all to enjoy.**

Remarks by Congressman Maurice Hinchey, D-NY, June 7, 2008

I would like to thank the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference for co-sponsoring today's event marking National Trails Day and celebrating the preservation of an important piece of open space.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers and local organizations that worked to clean up the area over the past year. As you know, these volunteers have been cleaning up what is known as the LaFarge Property, this 150-acre property that the Trail Conference had purchased and preserved, which is now being purchased by the NYS DEC for addition to the Wurtsboro Ridge State Forest. The property includes former railroad beds, which we expect will be used as "rails to trails" paths.

This property is a key parcel in the creation of a 36-mile protected corridor along the Shawangunk Ridge connecting the federally protected Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area with the constitutionally protected Catskill Forest Preserve. The property will someday link the adjacent D&H Canal with the Shawangunk Ridge Trail, which is part of a much longer trail for which we are seeking federal designation.

Long Path Trail Study Act of 2008:

I am very pleased to announce that I have introduced the **Long Path Trail Study Act of 2008** along with other members of the New York and New Jersey congressional delegations. This legislation was developed with the assistance of the NY-NJ Trail Conference, and I'd like to thank Bill O'Hearn and Ed Goodell for their leadership and effort on this.

This legislation seeks to amend the National Trails System Act in order to provide for a study of the Long Path, a system of trails and potential trails running from Fort Lee, NJ, to the Adirondacks in New York. Following passage of the legislation, the Secretary of Interior will have two years to conduct this study through the National Park Service and report the results of this study to Congress for consideration.

This study would determine whether to add the Long Path Trail to the National Trails System, which already includes the Appalachian Trail.



The Long Path Trail could eventually connect New York City with the Adirondacks, including trail portions in the Catskills and Shawangunk Mountains.

The study will:

- Make available project-based funding and technical assistance via the National Park Service.
- Explore alternative routes for connecting existing sections of the estimated 350-mile trail.
- Find alternatives to the miles of road walks that are currently needed to cross central Orange County and other areas.

If the Trail study shows good promise, which I am confident it will, and the study recommends that National Trail System designation be pursued, we will then introduce the legislation needed to add the Long Path Trail to the national system.

The Long Path Trail will connect many of our state's most spectacular natural resources, including: the Palisades cliffs in New Jersey; the Appalachian Trail; the Highlands Trail in Harriman State Park; the Shawangunk Ridge; the Rondout Creek Valley; some of our highest peaks in the Catskills; the Finger Lakes Trail; and the Helderberg Escarpment and Thacher State Park.



Congressman Hinchey at our NTD event

This study would determine whether to add the Long Path Trail to the National Trails System, which already includes the Appalachian Trail.

The Long Path was originated by Vincent Schaefer of the Mohawk Valley Hiking Club in the 1930s as New York's version of Vermont's Long Trail and was publicized in Raymond Torrey's weekly column in the *New York Post*. The Trail Conference has been slowly developing the LP for the last 70 years and recently took the lead in promoting this national designation.

In the process of establishing this trail, private property will be respected and no federal eminent domain may be used. The trail's maintenance and development will rely on local partnerships with partners, such as with the Trail Conference and Adirondack Mountain Club.

This legislation, which was introduced in the House on June 5, was co-sponsored by Congressmen Eliot Engel (NY) and Steve Rothman (NJ). A companion bill has been submitted in the Senate by Senators Frank Lautenberg and Robert Menendez of New Jersey and Senators Schumer and Clinton in New York.



100 Degrees!! But Trail Events Carry On!

Despite sweltering heat, trail work events in both New York and New Jersey scheduled to coincide with National Trails Day took place as planned. A sampling of Trail Conference stalwarts is below.



Jane Geisler of Union Vale, NY, stands above a new step on a section of the AT in Dutchess County.



Volunteers with the Dutchess-Putnam AT Committee prepare to head into the woods to complete projects on two sections of the trail.



Yet another tire is removed from LaFarge.



Andy Garrison levels ATV-damaged terrain at the LaFarge site.



Heavy lifting with the West Jersey Crew on the AT in Worthington State Forest, NJ



Volunteers from Deloitte completed 3/4 mile of side-hilling on the Warren Trail in NJ.



After clean-up at LaFarge, refreshments and speeches, with Shawangunk Ridge as backdrop.



The Deloitte-Touche group at work.

Conservation & Advocacy



From the Conservation Director: William P. O'Hearn

The Art of Strategic Conservation Planning: Focusing on What's Most Important

As I mentioned in a previous column, we land trust manager types are like Donald Trumps in reverse: When he looks at a piece of vacant land, he obsesses on what he can build there; when we see open space, we obsess about how we can preserve it. In that sense, we are greedy, and as soon as we finish one land deal we want to move on to the next one.

As we all know, real estate is opportunity-driven: We can't purchase property until the landowner is willing and ready to sell it to us and we can agree on a price. So, in theory, we could just run after every parcel that came on the market at a decent price.

Reality, of course, is quite different. Because we use charitable dollars and public money from state and county agencies in most of our transactions, we are accountable to the public for how we spend those dollars, as we should be. With federal funding for open space preservation at an all-time low and both New York and New Jersey facing budget challenges, it's more important than ever to make every acquisition dollar count.

The Trail Conference has developed its own internal guidelines for prioritizing tracts of land. We specialize in linear corridors that support and protect our "big four" long-distance trails—Appalachian Trail, Long Path, Highlands Trail, and Shawangunk Ridge Trail—and key connecting trails. Our volunteer network of trail maintainers is stretched pretty thin over 1,700 miles of trails, so we are careful not to buy chunks of land that are going to generate new trail branches that will be difficult to maintain.

These guidelines can cause disappointment among our fellow land trusts and even our own volunteers, who at times will approach us with a property that "needs to be saved" but doesn't fit our mission. At other times we will decide to live with a subdivision of a property where the vast majority of the site is preserved and our trail can go through, but which allows for several residential units to be built. This may disappoint some who would prefer to see the whole property conserved.

Situations like this can be tough calls where we really have to be focused and disciplined and mindful of our priorities. That's why we are now developing a project rating system to support our decision-making process, and will be sharing it with the Trail Conference board over the next few months. Once we have completed this system, you as a Trail Conference member can feel free to challenge us and say, "Why did you buy that property?" We will have a good answer backed up by a scoring system.

Conservation & Advocacy News Notes

Make sure you get Action Alerts from the Trail Conference so that you can help support our region's trails, parks, and open spaces. Set your email program to accept mail from the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference!

NEW JERSEY

TC Continues to Fight Parks Budget Cuts in NJ



BRENDA HOLZINGER

Public supports NJ parks at a Trenton rally. Following a successful rally at the state capital in Trenton April 23, Trail Conference volunteers and staff continue to fight proposed closures and cutbacks at New Jersey state parks and forests. Although the state Dept. of Environmental Protection has retreated from the original recommendation for full elimination of services and/or closure at parks and forests around the state (including High Point, Jenny Jump, and Worthington), the



TC staffer Brenda Holzinger rallies the crowd in support of NJ parks.

future of New Jersey's state parks and forests are still very much up in the air. As this issue goes to press, it looks like New Jerseyans will be able to enjoy all their parks and forests with full activities until Labor Day, but the fight continues for what will happen in the fall and beyond.

NJ Trails Plan Finally Here

The long awaited NJ Trails Plan was finally released at the end of May with a comment period continuing until June 30th. The Trail Conference submitted detailed comments and encouraged all members to submit comments as well via an action alert. Information about the plan is available at www.njtrailsplan.org.

NEW YORK

Catskill Master Plan Would Add to Wilderness Areas

New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation's revised draft master plan for state lands in the Catskills contains good news for hikers. The plan proposes to:

- expand the West Kill Wilderness Area to include most of the Hunter Mountain Wild Forest;
- create Windham Blackhead Range Wilderness Area by combining the former Blackhead Range and North Mountain Wild Forests with portions of the Windham High Peak and Black Dome Wild Forests;
- create four trail corridors for bicycles on existing woods roads through existing or new Wilderness areas.

The Trail Conference sent comments on the plan to DEC. We supported the proposals detailed above and added a strong caution against yielding to pressure to allow off-road bicycle use on the Escarpment Trail/Long Path or on steep and narrow hiking trails in Wilderness areas, including on Windham High Peak.

Additional components of the draft master plan include recommending maximum group size of 12 for day hikes—a voluntary limit, not mandatory—and maintaining register boxes on trailless peaks as long as they are maintained under an Adopt-a-Natural Resource agreement.

Interim Changes Proposed for Windham High Peak Wild Forest

At the same time NYS DEC released its revised master plan for state lands in the Catskills, it also made public proposed changes to the Unit Management Plan for the Windham High Peak Wild Forest. The changes would allow new off-road bicycle loops in areas that the draft master plan does not target as new Wilderness areas. The Trail Conference went on record in support of the planned changes to the UMP as written.



Trail Conference Joins Shawangunk Ridge Biodiversity Partnership



The Trail Conference has become a member of the Shawangunk Ridge Biodiversity Partnership. The Partnership comprises nonprofit and public organizations and aims to use science and land management strategies to preserve the sensitive wildlife habitat and other natural resources of the Shawangunks.

Informed by field research findings, partners collaboratively manage the larger landscape, provide environmental education, and work with local communities to preserve open space on the slopes of the ridge. Over 40,000 acres of the ridge are protected by the members of the Shawangunk Ridge Biodiversity Partnership.

The Trail Conference will work cooperatively with the partners to improve access and user etiquette on our public lands. This partnership should help enhance our ability to make informed decisions about laying out and maintaining trails.

Other members of the Partnership are: Cragmoor Association, Friends of the Shawangunks, Mohonk Preserve, NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation, New York State Museum, New York State Natural Heritage Program, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Open Space Institute, Palisades Interstate Park Commission, and The Nature Conservancy.



Trail News

AT Reroute in Wawayanda: "Spectacular!"

A reroute of the Appalachian Trail in Wawayanda State Park has been completed. An initial section of this reroute from the Hoeflerin Trail to Wawayanda Road was completed last year. The new section now ascends and follows a ridge at Wawayanda Road, crosses it and descends to Kazmar Pond, and follows the outlet brook from the pond down to Iron Mountain Road. The relocation moves the trail off the woods roads.

The reroute was completed by members of the New Jersey AT Field Crew, the West Jersey Crew, and the Union County Hiking Club, with help from the Wawayanda State Park staff and NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection. Some comments from members of the New Jersey AT Committee not involved with the project: "I wish the relocation was my idea—spectacular!" "The reroute in Wawayanda is beautiful. I felt like I was hiking in Maine."



JEREMY APGAR

AT reroute in Wawayanda gets rave reviews.

Reminder: Route 106 in Harriman Closed for Summer

The bridge at Little Long Pond remains closed to traffic and the 5-ton limit at the bridge just west of the Kanawauke Circle remains in effect. This is a temporary situation which we will have to live with this summer, but it is not expected to be permanent. Trailhead parking areas along Route 106 are open, but are accessible by car only from the west (Route 17/17A) side of the park. The Kanawauke parking area is accessible from Seven Lakes Drive.

Harriman: Diltz Road Parking Area Closed Indefinitely

Algonquin Pipeline is prohibiting, until further notice, parking in the lot on Diltz Road in Ladentown. They cite danger from the heavy equipment that will be passing through carrying massive 42-inch pipe as well as other materials and machinery, as the reason. The lot is at a trailhead for the Tuxedo-Mount Ivy Trail and Limekiln Mountain, and is owned by Orange and Rockland Utilities, which heretofore graciously allowed hiker parking. Algonquin is leasing the lot and expanded and graveled it for purposes of pipeline construction. It is not known when the lot will again be available for hiker parking. Pipeline construction is expected to be complete by November of this year. Alternate trail access points are Kakiat County Park, the Ramapo Township Equestrian Center, and the Long Path crossing of Calls Hollow Road (refer to Harriman Bear Mountain Trails Map 118, 2007 edition).

Pipeline Trail Impacts: An Update

The natural gas pipeline projects through Harriman and Sterling Forest State Parks, which began last year, continue. The Algonquin project is now located in the southern portion of the park, paralleling Route 202, proceeding northeast to cross Calls Hollow Road and onward. Both Algonquin and the Millennium pipeline projects will affect the trails in Kakiat Park this summer. Work is also in progress on the essentially parallel overhead high volt-

continued on page 5

Trail Crew Schedules

July - August 2008

For the latest schedules and additional details, go to nynjtc.org and click on "Trail crews/Work trips."

TBD = To Be Determined

For all trips bring work gloves, water, lunch, insect repellent. In some cases, tools are provided. Contact leaders in advance for meeting times and places. Volunteers must become members of the Conference to participate in these projects. A one-time "guest" participation is allowed, so bring your friends.

NORTH JERSEY WEEKEND CREW
Leader: Sandy Parr, 732-469-5109

Second Sunday of each month
 Trips start at 9:30 am; call for location and details during the week before the scheduled trip day. Tackle a variety of projects ranging from trail repair to bridge building in northern New Jersey.

NORTH JERSEY WEEKDAY CREW
Leader: John Moran, thornburyhall@verizon.net

This crew covers the NJ Ramapos, Ringwood S. P., Norvin Green S. F., and NJ Palisades area. Its purpose is to respond quickly to immediate needs, rather than to schedule definite events far in advance. If you're interested in being on call for this work, contact John Moran by email.

WEST JERSEY CREW
Leaders: Monica and David Day
Phone: 732-937-9098 **Cell:** 908-307-5049
Email: westjerseycrew@trailstobuild.com
Website: www.trailstobuild.com

Gone Hikin' for the summer months.

HIGHLANDS TRAIL CREW
Leader: Glenn Oleksak, glenno@nji.com

We meet on the first or second Sunday of each month, with additional trips sometimes scheduled. We tackle a variety of Highlands Trail projects from trail maintenance to trail building. Most upcoming spring trips will be in Hunterdon County, NJ. For details on trips, go to www.nynjtc.org and click on "Trail crews/Work trips" at left. Please contact leader if you are coming on a trip so that you can be notified of cancellations.

METRO TRAILS CREW
Leader: Joe Gindoff, 718-614-2209
joeghiker@aol.com

July 12 (Saturday)
Van Cortlandt Park Bronx, John Muir Trail
 Meet 9am, at the Riding Stables parking lot near B'way and Henry Hudson Pkwy. RSVP is necessary to joeghiker@aol.com

Aug 16 (Saturday)
Pelham Park, Bronx
 Meet 9:00am at SE corner Orchard Beach Parking Lot. Waterbar construction on Hunter Island.

EAST HUDSON CREW
 Work dates to be announced on website. Sign up for email notification at www.nynjtc.org; click on "Trail Crews, Work Trips" then Sign-up for Trail Crew at top of page.

WEST HUDSON SOUTH CREW
Leaders: Chris Ezzo (Crew Chief): 516-431-1148, musicbynumbers59@yahoo.com
 Brian Buchbinder: 718-218-7563, brian@grandrenovation.com
 Claudia Ganz: 212-633-1324, clganz@earthlink.net
 Bob Marshall: 914-737-4792, rmarshall@webtv.net
 Monica Day: 732-937-9098, Cell: 908-307-5049, westjerseycrew@trailstobuild.com

Gone Hikin' for the summer months.

WEST HUDSON NORTH CREW
Leaders: Denise Vitale, WHNTrails@aol.com
 Dave Webber, webberd1@yahoo.com

Gone Hikin' for the summer months.

NEW JERSEY APPALACHIAN TRAIL FIELD CREW
Leader: Gene Giordano, trailwork@appalachiantrail-nj.org

Second Saturday of Each Month, April through November
 Work begins at 9am and is finished before 4pm. Covers the entire NJ section of the AT, blue-blazed side trails, and shelters. Supplements work by our individual maintainers as requested and for special work projects. Workers bring gloves, lunch, and water; all tools, equipment and training provided. Email leader to be placed on email notification list.

BEAR MOUNTAIN TRAILS PROJECT
Project Manager: Matt Townsend, townsend@nynjtc.org or 201-512-9348
For info and to register: volunteers@nynjtc.org, or call 201-512-9348, ext. 17

Second Saturday of Each Month
Beginner work trips.

Weekly Work Trips
 Scheduled Thursday through Monday (including on weekends that have workshops)



TRAIL NEWS

continued from page 4

age lines in the same area. Particularly affected will be the equestrian trails, including Sherwood Path, which largely follow the pipelines. Other access road construction may be observed in the vicinity; one leading from Calls Hollow Road is already in use.

Millenium Pipeline has essentially finished laying pipe through the right of way in Harriman State Park from the NYS Thruway to Kakiat Park. Some finish work remains to be done, such as surface grading in some areas, grass seeding and tree planting.

The Trail Conference is monitoring the impact on trails of the various projects and, through contact with park officials, has requested corrections for six of the trail crossings, including appropriate trail configuration, drainage, and erosion control. Currently, hikers can cross the pipeline wherever they encounter it on trails in Harriman, although in some instances a

little searching for the trail continuation may be required.

Pipeline work also continues through Sterling Forest State Park. Park officials work closely with the pipeline companies, although control is somewhat limited insofar as the pipelines hold long-term rights of way.

Pedestrian Tunnel Reopens at Bear Mountain

The pedestrian tunnel under Route 9W at Bear Mountain State Park reopened June 5th after 10 months of reconstruction. The tunnel provides safer access to trails east of the road as well as to the pool and Trailside Zoo. The tunnel is now accessible to the disabled.

Some Minnewaska Trails Stay Closed after Fire

See page 7.

Find Trail News online at www.nynjtc.org.



Mitzvah Day Leads Group To AT Summit Clean-up



Pictured behind piles of garbage, bottles, cans, and glass fragments and a cairn built to replace an ugly illegal firepit, are, left to right: Mariah Robishaw (Rosen granddaughter), Ron Rosen (Vassar Temple), Ollie Simpson (Appalachian Trail supervisor), Jessica Susser (Vassar Temple) Rachel Susser (Vassar Temple), Courtney Robishaw (Rosen granddaughter), and Sue Mackson (Temple Beth-El).

For the third consecutive year, the AT on Shenandoah Mountain in New York's Dutchess County was the destination for volunteers participating in Dutchess County Mitzvah Day.

The volunteers head to the mountain's rocky summit to clear litter and fire rings. Ron Rosen, Trail Conference delegate to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Mid-Atlantic Regional Partnership Committee, was with the group, which went out on May 18. "While we still had three large fire rings, the total amount of litter was down

from the previous years," he reports. "Last year we hauled about 440 pounds of litter and 'stuff' off the mountain; this year only about 100+ pounds! We believe the cumulative effect of cleaning the summit, and keeping it cleaner, has finally resulted in less litter than previous years!"

Dutchess County Mitzvah Day is sponsored by Jewish Family Services of Dutchess County.



New Jersey Appalachian Trail Committee Welcomes Youth Groups for Trail Work Experiences



The NJ Appalachian Trail Management Committee reserves two sections of the Appalachian Trail in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area for outreach programs with Scout and school youth groups. Youth and leaders learn about trail maintenance and the AT and then go out on the trail to work. On May 10, 18 volunteers from Scout Troop 56 from Millington, NJ, spent the day on the AT and re-blazed, trimmed back brush, cleared blow-downs, and removed illegal fire rings. Any groups interested in signing up for the program may contact the NJ AT Committee at trailwork@appalachiantrail-nj.org. Thank you Troop 56!



A trails program sponsored by the TC's New Jersey AT Management Committee introduced Scouts and leaders of Troop 56 from Millington, NJ, to the Appalachian Trail and trail maintenance. The committee welcomes inquiries from other youth groups.

Gene Giordano
 NY-NJ Trail Conference
 Chairman, NJ Appalachian Trail
 Management Committee

Volunteer Classifieds: Get Involved!

Contact volunteers@nynjtc.org or 201-512-9348, ext. 26, to indicate your interest or get more information about these or other volunteer opportunities. Information is also available at www.nynjtc.org; click on Volunteer.

Darlington Schoolhouse Public Relations Coordinator

Join the DSH steering committee to assist with writing press releases and coordinating distribution of press releases to interested parties to promote the project at milestone events.

Volunteer Manager for the Friends of Darlington Schoolhouse

The community is showing great interest in assisting with the restoration of our new home. We are looking for a volunteer to manage volunteer interest and speak with interested volunteers.

Database Assistant

Our database manager is at capacity! Assist our information manager with routine database maintenance, data importing and exporting, creating scripts and new modules. Experience working with relational databases and Excel is essential.

Google Earth Cartographer

Assist our in-house cartographer expand our website with production of virtual hikes in Google Earth.

Trail Crew Chief for the East Hudson Trails Committee

Supervise and lead the work of a regional trail crew so that trails are built or repaired to Trail Conference standards.

Trail Maintainers

Adopt a trail of your own! We have openings in Black Rock Forest and the Catskills.

Trail Crew Volunteers

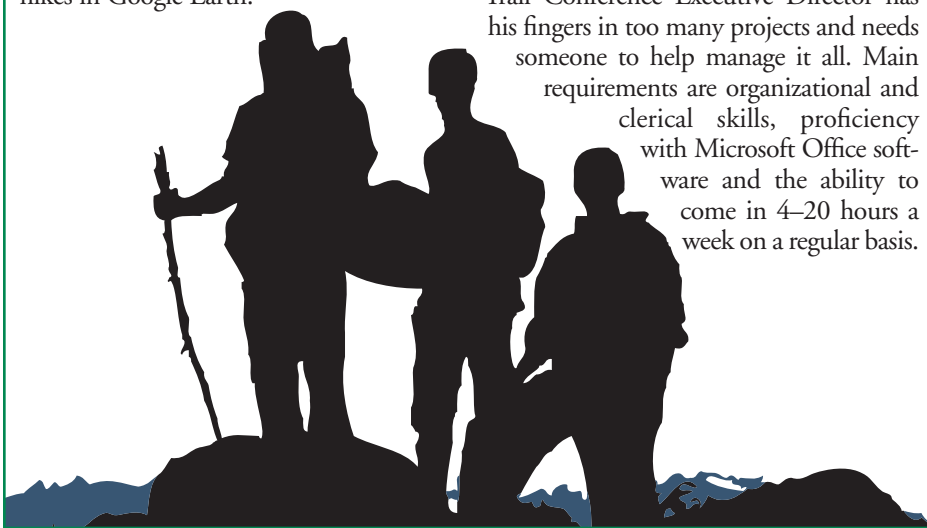
Our West Hudson South and West Hudson North Crews seek new members. Get on-the-job training while building new trails and enjoying the camaraderie of other outdoors people.

Land Use Research Assistant for Darlington Schoolhouse Project

Familiar with New Jersey land use regulations? Like to read site plans? Here's a great opportunity to put your skills to work for the Trail Conference. Compile data on NJ DEP, Bergen County, and Mahwah policies and regulations regarding flood plains, Highlands Act, site plan review, and RSIS; develop contacts at these agencies. Research and collect materials and information needed to rehabilitate the Darlington Schoolhouse. Help prepare applications for building permits and approvals.

Executive Assistant

Trail Conference Executive Director has his fingers in too many projects and needs someone to help manage it all. Main requirements are organizational and clerical skills, proficiency with Microsoft Office software and the ability to come in 4–20 hours a week on a regular basis.



2008 NJ AT Ridge Runners



Each summer, Ridge Runners hike back and forth on the Appalachian Trail in New Jersey, monitoring AT use, educating hikers on good trail practices, and caring for the backpacker campsite in Worthington State Forest. The program was established in 1992 and is cosponsored by the Trail Conference along with the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection, the National Park Service, and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. In May, this year's Ridge Runners hit the trail in New Jersey: Neil Koch, Kevin Riedel, and Christian Rodriguez.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

continued from page 1

Consequently, he has enjoyed his recent time behind the controls of the excavator and looks forward to his next challenge—using a bulldozer to level out terrain damage from ATVs.

Andy lives near the Shawangunk Ridge in Wurtsboro, has been maintaining a section of the SRT since 2002, and is a regular with the Shawangunk Ridge Crew. Says Crew chief Jakob Franke: “Andy has hardly missed any of the work trips (and we’ve had many) building new trails in the Shawangunks. On these trips he is a good friend, an extremely productive worker, and a great story teller. He is one of those people who can work and walk and talk at the same time.”

With his son, also named Andrew, Andy has hiked the Long Path end-to-end. They plan to take a month this summer to do the

same on Vermont’s Long Trail. Also this summer Andy will become SRT supervisor for the Trail Conference, succeeding Eric Meyer, who is resigning because of time constraints “Eric has done a superb job as supervisor for the last seven years,” Jakob says. “We are lucky to have Andy to fill these large shoes.”

“Andy is one of my Trail Conference heros,” says Brenda Holzinger, TC staff member charged with cleaning up the LaFarge property. “In addition to Andy’s dedication and hard work, he is also a source of immense inspiration to everyone who works with him, including me. His enthusiasm, can-do attitude, boundless energy and ability to find fun in every aspect of the clean-up are the reason this



Andy Garrison is at the control of an excavator at the TC’s LaFarge site.

project is such a huge success.”

Says Andy: “I just do this stuff because it needs to be done and I’m around to do it.”

* TRAIL REFLECTIONS *

Attention All Trail Stewards: Maintainers, Crew Members, Monitors, etc: Have you enjoyed a good day on the trail while doing maintenance? Share your experience with words or a photo. Send your contributions to Trail Walker editor Georgette Weir at tw@nynjtc.org.

Me and My Friend Jenny

By Patty Lee Parmalee



Sometime around 20 years ago, a friend from California came and visited me in New York. We had done a lot of hiking near his home in the desert, so I wanted to show him that we had beautiful hiking terrain in the East too. Thus: the Shawangunks.

We got a late start, so decided to stay overnight in the Chelsea Motel and search the map for a nearby trail in the morning. It turned out to be Jenny Lane, and it was a perfect choice for a day hike: an easy grade up through dense hardwoods, emerging briefly into an opening of ledge and dwarf pitch pine, ending with a side trail down to Lake Awosting. At the time I had no idea that one day (2001) I would move to the town of Shawangunk, let alone that when I asked the Trail Conference for a trail to maintain I would be given Jenny Lane! I lost the boyfriend, but I kept the trail—a more reliable companion really.

I had helped out with other trail crews occasionally, but having solo responsibility for a segment was a little intimidating. On my introductory foray, Rob Segal came along to show me the ropes. We lopped and clipped away at the laurel and blueberry till I was quite tired, and tired of it. I get the method, I said to him; let’s go home and I’ll come back another day. No, we can finish, said Rob, and sure enough. I got a second wind and we did—largely due to his indefatigable enthusiasm.

It was then I knew this was not a responsibility to be taken lightly. I kept at it solo for a year or two, feeling an ever greater sense of ownership and love for that stretch of land, where I would often hike even when not working there. Most of my attention, though, was held by 2,500 acres on a different slope, which the public (especially me) could not visit. As Coordinator of Save the Ridge, I spent three years in a campaign to stop the 250 houses and golf course planned for Awosting Reserve.

One day I got a call from Ed Goodell inviting Save the Ridge to become the 100th NY-NJ Trail Conference member organization. Eureka! We could join for half price as a maintainer club, and I would have a team to help with the work. Of course, people have turned out to be busier

than they thought they would be when they voted for the plan, but a small faithful core has come to love and care for our Jenny as I do. We have a good time together when we go, and they agree with me that it’s great to feel that you have earned the privilege of using the Ridge by putting in some physical work as well as advocacy.

Last spring we made a start on the season’s work but didn’t finish the job before a hit-and-run driver put me in the hospital for June and July. I spent the fall in slow rehabilitation and pretty much dropped the ball on responsibilities and physical work. One day in November, out of the blue an email came from Rob Segal and Jakob Franke (who had both visited me in the hospital) organizing a Long Path work trip on—Jenny Lane! Those guys are the definition of responsible: they saw a need, figured I wasn’t up to dealing with it, and just went ahead and took care of it themselves. I did join them (and Rob Sklar), though I probably wasn’t much use. But it was great to be alive, out on “my” trail again, a kind of second coming home.

“...having solo responsibility for a segment was a little intimidating.”

I looked forward to being strong enough this spring to take the job back and make regular trips up there. That (and if I could ever race again) would mean I was fully recovered—or at least recovered enough—and back to normal. Come March I started composing the email in my head that I would send to the Save the Ridge crew, saying “Let’s go do a first go-through before the leaves come out, it’s easier to see then...”

But before I sent it, that whole part of Minnewaska went up in flames. From my barn on the east side I could see a sky-full of black smoke behind the ridge. I kept wondering whether Jenny was burning—like a parent with a child trapped in the house. The map on the *Times Herald-Record* website suggested the worst: our trail appeared to be the southern border of the burn area and perhaps had been partly gouged by bulldozers making necessary firebreaks. I sent out letters asking if anyone knew whether maintainers would be expected to go clean up the damage or whether the fire had “done our work for us.” I waited for a chance to go visit Jenny in the hospital, so to speak.

Instead, the latest word is that though other routes in the park have opened, Jenny is badly wounded and needs to be left alone to regenerate. Possibly for years. Life will not, after all, return to normal. I feel as though my friend Jenny needs me but I can’t go to her, even though—healthier now myself—I finally could. And she probably doesn’t need me as much as I need her; she needs for me—and everyone—to leave her alone, while natural processes take over and she heals. I understand that. I’ve been there.

But I do miss her. I look forward to our reunion, when she is strong enough to accept my help, as the friends I know through her have helped me.

Patty Lee Parmalee is a maintainer of the Jenny Lane Trail at Minnewaska State Park Preserve.



Science & Ecology

Liverwort: A Pretty Little Plant with a Medieval Name

By Michael Alcamo



Conocephalum conicum
Hawai'i, a leafy liverwort

Liverworts have possibly the most unattractive name in science.

In the Middle Ages, people thought they resembled the inner workings of the liver. And so to medieval science, it made sense that they would have a connection to the health of that organ. ("Wort" is an old word for "plant.")

But this small plant has nothing to do with the liver, human or otherwise. It lives a quiet, wet, photosynthetic life without interacting much with humanity at all. Liverworts evolved into their current form around 400 million years ago—when the algae found their way onto land, and around the time that the pebbly conglomerate of the Gunks was formed.

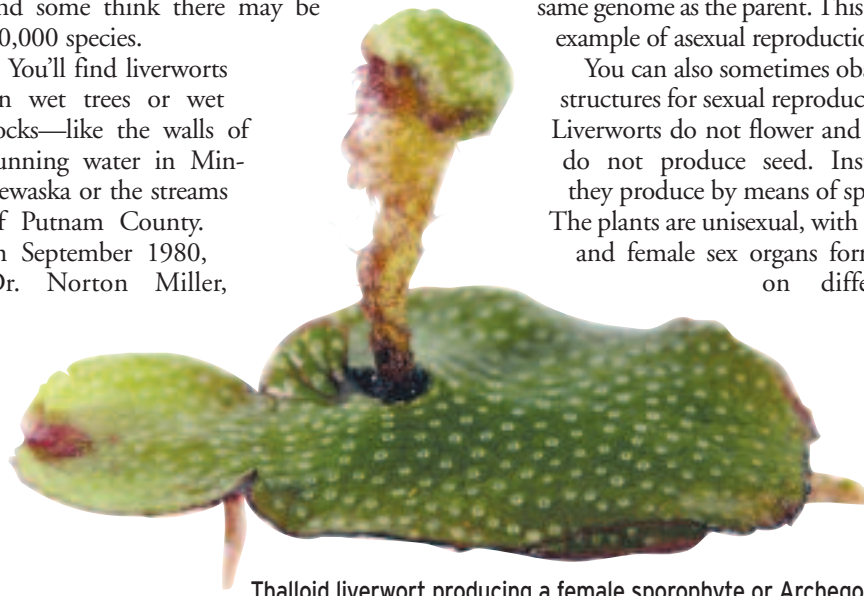
A liverwort is a non-vascular green plant, either leafy or thaloid (having a body undifferentiated into leaf, stem, or root). Liverworts resemble mosses but differ from

them in key ways: Their leaves or thalli grow in two or three clear ranks. In contrast to mosses, their leaves never have a "costa" or mid-rib. Liverworts may also have very tiny hairs at their edges, called "marginal cilia." They are unique in that they attach to their substrate with a very fine single-cell rhizoid.

About 90 percent of liverworts also feature an unusual tiny organelle in their cells that, so far as is known, is unique in the plant kingdom. These are oil bodies, containing a lipid or oil, and are thought to keep the plant moist and/or provide an odor or taste that keeps away predators. While the so-called "more advanced plants" often get a lot of credit for their lovely flowers or their maple syrup, they don't have these interesting oil bodies in their cells.

Liverworts now have their own phylum, Marchantiophyta, and are generally viewed as distinct from the other non-vascular plants, mosses (Bryophyta) and hornworts (Anthocerotophyta). It's estimated there are 6,000 to 8,000 species, but new liverworts are being identified constantly, and some think there may be 10,000 species.

You'll find liverworts on wet trees or wet rocks—like the walls of running water in Minnewaska or the streams of Putnam County. In September 1980, Dr. Norton Miller,



Thaloid liverwort producing a female sporophyte or Archegonium

chief bryologist at the New York State Museum, observed 25 different species of liverworts along Esopus Creek in upstate New York.

Liverworts are grouped into three varieties: thallose, complex thallose, and leafy. Each plant is about one to four inches long. "Thallose" liverworts, the Marchantiopsida, look like small green ribbons. "Leafy" liverworts, the Jungermanniopsida, comprising about 85 percent of species, are very small with even more and tinier scale-like leaves arranged on a tiny stem.

When you find your liverwort, look for other interesting features. Liverworts reproduce in two ways, sexually and asexually, and there are specialized features associated with each. On thallose liverworts, look for small cups, called cupules. Within the cupule are tiny bumps, the gemmae, which look like little green eggs but are, in fact, granules that contain a complete set of the parent plant's genetic information. When hit by raindrops, the gemmae fall to the ground and can become new plants—clones with the same genome as the parent. This is an example of asexual reproduction.

You can also sometimes observe structures for sexual reproduction. Liverworts do not flower and thus do not produce seed. Instead, they produce by means of spores. The plants are unisexual, with male and female sex organs forming on different



Leafy liverwort Asterella tenella

plants. The antheridiophores of the male look like umbrellas, while the female's archegoniophores have deeply lobed finger-like projections. Look for both at the edges of the thalli.

It's been discovered recently that the chemical compounds of some liverworts have unusual properties. They appear to have certain anti-cancer and anti-bacterial abilities. Others appear to have anti-fungal or muscle relaxing characteristics. These may relate to the plant's own defense mechanisms.

Liverworts contribute to nutrient cycles, provide seed-beds for larger plants, and form microhabitats for insects and an entire array of microorganisms. Whether in tropical cloud forests or in our own area, they are considered an important factor in supporting hill stability and helping to prevent soil erosion.

An excellent field guide is Conard and Redfern: *How to Know the Mosses and Liverworts*, 1979. For any field work, I recommend a 10x hand lens, available from a site like www.CompleatNaturalist.com, for around \$20.

Michael Alcamo is a Trail Conference and ADK member and naturalist.

Noxious Weed Poisons Monarch Butterfly Larvae



Black swallowwort, a Monarch killer, in flower

If smothering all your favorite wild flowers, strangling shrubs, and tripping up small children weren't sufficient crimes, add Butterfly Baby-killer to the list.

Black swallowwort (*Cynanchum louseae*) has got to go. Cut it, pull it, cut it again, mattock up the roots, and keep it from producing pods, which burst to release milkweed-like seeds that spread this invader across the landscape. Hand-pulling black swallowwort usually won't eliminate the plant; the stems break, leaving a "bowl of spaghetti" set of roots behind to fling up new tendrils. You might have to resort to a coup de grace application of glysophate on the final regrowth after you have cut the plant back several times in one season.



Cynanchum louseae (black swallowwort)

And it smells. The stinky alkaloids poison the butterfly larvae, which hatch out when confused Monarchs lay their eggs on this milkweed look-alike.

The glossy very dark green leaves and dark purple small flowers differentiate Black swallowwort from its paler no less lethal cousins. In Europe it has pests. How it got here without any remains a mystery.

There is no effective, completely mechanical or authorized biological control. It looks like we'll have to do the all-summer-long-vigilant-mechanical-removal and carefully-applied-end-of-season-chemical treatment. Much as this "no poison in my garden" granny hates to admit defeat, this may be a required albeit diluted "final solution."

Anne Todd Osborn, TC Program Manager of USDA Invasive Plants Study



Some Minnewaska Trails to Stay Closed After Fire



The need for ecological restoration will keep some areas of Minnewaska State Park Preserve closed indefinitely.

As this issue went to press, patches of green were beginning to emerge amidst the ashes at Minnewaska State Park Preserve. The fire that started there April 17 ultimately burned nearly 3,500 acres in an area roughly bounded by Route 44/55, the Lower Awosting Carriageway, the Smiley Carriageway and a firebreak built between Rock Haven Road and Smiley Carriageway. It was, according to Roy Yancy, spokesman for the state Dept. of Environmental Conservation, the biggest wildfire in New York in 13 years and the biggest on the Shawangunk Ridge in 50 years.

A portion of the burn area can be seen along Route 44/55 beginning just north of the entrance to the park (photo). The high-

way, the park, and connecting trails at Mohonk Preserve and Sam's Point were closed for several days. Most trails and carriageways reopened by the end of April.

Still closed until further notice: Jenny Lane/Long Path (at press time, a detour for the LP was being worked out with park officials), Smiley Carriageway, and the whole of the Stony Kill Falls area. Park officials have indicated these areas will likely remain closed, perhaps for several years, to allow for ecological restoration.

Jenny Lane maintainer Patty Lee Parmalee reflects on the loss of 'her' trail on page 6.



Saturday, August 9

UCHC. Watchung Reservation Trail Maintenance, NJ. Leader: preregister by calling Trailside at 908-789-3670. Meet: 9:30am. Have fun while giving back to the trails; meet people and learn a new skill; no experience needed. Bring water, gloves, bag for trash and clippers/lopping shears if you have them. Trail work is held unless severe weather occurs. We work until noon.

SHO. Tallman Mountain State Park, Piermont, NY. Leader: Marvin Malater, 718-376-3608; call to confirm. Meet: 9am at Port Authority Bus Station (south wing by commuter statues) for 9:22 bus #9A to Piermont. 7 miles south from Piermont, then return on Long Path. Then walk the mile-long Piermont Pier, which goes half-way out across the Hudson River. Donation requested.

UCHC. South Mountain Reservation, Millburn, NJ. Leader: Ellie King, 908-233-8411. Meet: 10am at Tulip Springs, Brookside Ave., Millburn. Moderate 4-5 hike using shady trails and woods roads.

HHC. Cushetunk/Round Valley, NJ. Leader: Rich, 908-638-6813. Meet: 9:30am at Clinton commuter parking lot. Unhurried ramble up a long, steep climb followed by a walk along a high ridge and descend to reservoir. About 4 miles, 4 hours. Bring water, lunch; wear hiking boots.

Sunday, August 10

WEC. Castle Point, Ramapo State Forest, NJ. Leader: contact Weis Ecology Center in Ringwood, NJ, for info and to register; 973-835-2160. Meet: call for location; meet 9:30am; out by 2:30pm. Moderate 5 miles led by Charlie Toole. Revolutionary War-era trails, an old castle, views of Ramapo Lake and Wanauque Reservoir, even NYC skyline. Cost: \$8.



PETE HECKLER

"Profile Rock" along the Wanauque Ridge Trail in New Jersey

IHC. Glen Gray or Bust, Ramapo Mountain State Forest, NJ. Leader: Jane Egan, 973-636-0809; call before 9pm. Meet: 9am at upper lot, Ramapo Mountain State Forest, Skyline Dr., Oakland, NJ. Moderately strenuous. Hike by some of the old Scout camps, each with a lake view; also views from the ridges.

SHO. Riverdale-Fieldston, NY. Leader: Mayer Wiesen, 516-671-2095. Meet: 1:30pm at Broadway and 207th St., Manhattan (A train). 3 easy miles, 2 hours, through Riverdale Estates, Wave Hill woods, and Fieldston streets. No smoking. Bring Metrocard for bus. Donation requested.

UCHC. Lewis Morris Park, Morristown, NJ. Leader: Louise White, 973-746-4319; call before 9pm. Meet: 10am at Sunrise Lake upper lot; call for directions. Moderate hike but some rough sections and hills.

Monday, August 11

UCHC. Deer Paddock, South Mountain Reservation, NJ. Leader: Cherryl Short, 973-299-0212. Meet: 10am; call for directions. About 3 miles. Fairly level hike to Washington Rock.

Tuesday, August 12

UCHC. Stony Lake, Stokes State Forest, NJ. Leader: Wayne Frey, 732-537-9190. Meet: 10am; call for directions. About 7 miles at a moderate pace. Includes visit to unique Tinsley Trail Geological Area; bring bathing suit if you wish to swim in Stony Lake after the hike. Park entrance fee.

Thursday, August 14

UCHC. Reeves Meadow, Harriman State Park, NY. Leader: George Pullman, 973-773-2678. Meet: 10am at Reeves Meadow Visitor Center parking. Moderately strenuous 8+ miles at a steady pace; for experienced hikers.

NYHC. Parks of Washington Heights Evening Walk, NY. Leaders: Sam and Esther Dorfman. Meet: 6pm at subway entrance 173rd St. and Fort Washington Ave. (take A train to 175th St. and exit south side of station). Easy 3 miles with some small hills. Three beautiful parks with spectacular views: J. Hood Wright Park, Bennett Park (highest natural point on Manhattan), and Fort Tryon Park (home of The Cloisters). Rain cancels.

Saturday, August 16

UCHC. Watchung Reservation, Mountaintop, NJ. Leader: John Jurasek, 845-365-3618. Meet: 10am at Trailside Nature Center on Coles Ave. at New Providence Rd. Moderate 5 miles. Explore the northern end of the park; appropriate for beginners. Steady rain cancels.

HHC. Columbia Trail/Lockwood Gorge, NJ. Leader: Al, 908-647-3417. Meet: 10 am at High Bridge parking lot. An easy, family friendly 8.2 mile scenic walk on the Columbia Trail to Hoffman's Crossing and return via the gorge. Bring lunch, water, bug spray; wear hiking boots.

Friday - Sunday, August 15-17

WEC. Adirondacks Weekend, NY. Leader: contact Weis Ecology Center in Ringwood, NJ, for info and to register; 973-835-2160. Head north for a weekend of strenuous High Peaks hiking. Plans include Whiteface, Giant, Rocky Peak Ridge, and Esther, all well over 4,000 feet.

Sunday, August 17

IHC. Apshawa Preserve, W. Milford, NJ. Leader: Steve Rikon, 973-962-4149. Meet: 9am at Stop & Shop, Rt. 23N, Butler, NJ. Moderately strenuous. Explore one of the newest additions to our parkland.

SHO. Rockaway Park Beach Hike and Swim, NY. Leader: Edward Leibowitz, 201-332-1709; call to confirm. Meet: 10:45am at street outside station, last stop on S train (Rockaway Park Beach at 116th St.). 5-7 hours, walk along boardwalk; bring bathing suit. Rain cancels. Donation requested.

UCHC. South Mountain Reservation, Millburn, NJ. Leader: Ellen Jeydel, 908-232-2413. Meet: 10am at Locust Grove parking, Glen Ave. at Lackawanna Pl. (across from Millburn RR station). Brisk 4-5 miles with hill at start. Steady rain cancels.

NYHC. State Line Lookout to Nyack, NY. Leader: George Glatz, 212-533-9457; call 7-8am. Meet: 10:15am at George Washington Bridge bus terminal, upper level near ticket booths, to take 10:40 bus (take A train to 175th St. and exit at north end). Moderate 8 miles, including the pier at Piermont.

Monday, August 18

UCHC. Mills Reservation, Cedar Grove, NJ. Leader: Joe McLaughlin, 973-263-2799. Meet: 10am; call for directions. About 3 miles. Lenape Trail, return on Blue Trail.

Tuesday, August 19

UCHC. Turkey Mountain, Montville, NJ. Leader: Terry Kulmane, 908-665-2672. Meet: 10am at Pyramid Mountain parking; call for directions. About 6 miles at a moderate pace. Lunch in a cool, shady spot by the scenic falls.

Wednesday, August 20

UCHC. Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, NJ. Leaders: Don and Jeane McLellan, 908-464-6246. Meet: 10am at Great Swamp; call for directions. Level 4 miles at a moderate pace. Trails could be muddy, with more logs/branches than usual due to Wilderness Area restrictions. Heavy rain cancels.

Thursday, August 21

UCHC. Kittatinny Valley State Park. Leader: Mae Deas, 908-233-6641; must register with leader day before the hike. Meet: 10am at visitor center on Goodale Rd. in Andover. Moderate 5-6 miles with some hills; for experienced hikers.

Saturday, August 23

UCHC. Watchung Reservation, Mountaintop, NJ. Leader: Mae Deas, 908-233-6641. Meet: 10am at Trailside Nature Center on Coles Ave. at New Providence Rd. 4-5 miles with hills and some level sections. Steady rain cancels.

HHC. Bulls Island to Stockton, NJ. Leader: Carol, 908-782-6561. Meet: 9:30am at first parking lot at Bulls Island. An easy, family friendly walk of 6 miles on a towpath. Bring water, snacks. Rain cancels.

Sunday, August 24

NYR. Terrace Pond and Surprise Lake, NJ. Leader: Clive Morruck, 212-242-0931. Meet: 7:30am at Port Authority Bus Station for 7:45 #197 NJT bus to West Milford (one-way). Moderately strenuous. Terrace Pond trails, cross Warwick Turnpike to Bearfort Ridge Trail and Surprise Lake; out to Rt. 210 on newly blazed State Line Trail.

UCHC. South Mountain Reservation, West Orange, NJ. Leader: Jim Schlegel, 973-731-4339. Meet: 10am at Turtle Back Rock parking on Walker Rd. in West Orange. Moderate 2-3 hours.

IHC. Black River County Park, Chester, NJ. Leader: Claire Bransfield, 908-240-1479. Meet: 9am at Cooper Mill Historical Site, Rt. 24, Chester, NJ. Moderately strenuous 8 miles, mostly level; shuttle required. Hike on the Patriots' Path to Cooper Mill, Bamboo Brook with its formal gardens. Has been known to have raspberries along the trail.

Monday, August 25

UCHC. Cedar Grove Park, Cedar Grove, NJ. Leader: Roz Bloom, 973-364-0186. Meet: 10am; call for directions. About 3 miles; easy, level hike along a railroad bed, hemlock gorge, and the reservoir.

Tuesday, August 26

UCHC. Turkey Mountain, Montville, NJ. Leader: Terry Kulmane, 908-665-2672. Meet: 10am at Pyramid Mountain parking; call for directions. About 6 miles at a moderate pace. Lunch in a cool, shady spot by the scenic falls.

Wednesday, August 27

UCHC. Tulip Springs, South Mountain Reservation, NJ. Leader: Ellie King, 908-233-8411. Meet: 10am at Tulip Springs parking; call for directions. 4 miles at an easy to moderate pace.

Thursday, August 28

UCHC. Anthony Wayne to Pynggyp Mountain, Harriman State Park, NY. Leader: Hank Perrine, 212-666-0694. Meet: 10am at Anthony Wayne parking; call for directions. 8+ miles, moderately strenuous; for experienced hikers.

Saturday, August 30

UCHC. Turkey Mountain, Montville, NJ. Leader: Al Verdi, 973-263-8569. Meet: 10am at Pyramid Mountain parking; call for directions. Brisk 4-5 miles with hills; not for beginners. Pass historic limestone quarry, waterfalls near Bott's Pond, a wetlands area, and natural rock stairs (100 of them). No lunch stop.

HHC. Byram Township Sussex County Hike. Leader: Peg, 908-996-4790. Meet: 9am at Clinton commuter parking lot. The Charity Hike from several years ago on private land owned by Peter Kellogg. The trails are open for hiking when it is not hunting season. A moderate, family friendly hike of 6 miles. Bring snacks, water; wear hiking boots.

Sunday, August 31

IHC. Lewis Morris Park, NJ. Leaders: Guy and Jen Percival, 973-590-7437. Meet: 9am at Sunrise Lake parking, Lewis Morris Park, Morris Twp., NJ. Strenuous 10 miles. Grand Loop Trail through Jockey Hollow to the Audubon Center; lunch while bird-watching.

SHO. Over and Under Three Bridges of Brooklyn, NY. Leader: Cy Adler, 212-330-7686. Meet: Noon at Municipal Building, south side, across from City Hall, Manhattan. 7 miles over and under Brooklyn Bridge, under Manhattan Bridge through DUMBO to Fort Greene, ethnic lunch, then over Williamsburg Bridge to Delancey. Donation requested.

Monday, September 1 (Labor Day)

SHO. Jones Beach, NY. Leader: John Socolick, 516-791-6453; call 6-10pm. Meet: Noon at LIRR station waiting room, Freeport, NY (11:02am LIRR train from Penn Station to Freeport); bring Metrocard for bus. 4-6 miles on boardwalk and some trails; bring suit for possible swimming. Donation requested.

Member Club Profile

The Trail Conference comprises 10,000 individual members and more than 100 member clubs with a combined membership of 150,000 hikers. We invite club representatives to submit photos from hikes or maintenance outings or other events (please set your digital camera for highest resolution). Email your photos, along with complete caption information to: tw@nynjtc.org; put "TW club photo" in the subject line.



PHOTOS COURTESY FLAT ROCK BROOK NATURE CENTER

Youth programs and summer camps are among the many offerings at the Flat Rock Brook Nature Center.

Flat Rock Brook Nature Center

At the Flat Rock Brook Nature Center in Englewood, NJ, 3.6 miles of trails meander across 150 acres on the western slope of the Palisades. Woodlands, a cascading stream, a quarry pond, and wildflower meadows are among the features. Small informal gardens showcase native plants that attract birds and butterflies. It's a pocket of nature in an urban area, open to anyone who wants to walk in solitude, study native plants, or introduce children to nature.

Nature education workshops and camps make use of the Nature Center building (available for event rentals), a small playground and picnic area is a treat for families, and a short boardwalk trail is wheelchair accessible. Other trails, says Executive Director Stephen Weissner, "are generally narrow and free of structures. We want to maintain a sense of wildness and solitude, as best we can just two miles from New York City."

The nature center is managed by the Flat Rock Brook Nature Association, which leases the land from the city of Englewood. (They are in year nine of their second 25-year lease.) It was founded in 1973 and today its membership numbers 800.



Trails wander 3.6 miles across 150 acres of woods and fields just 2 miles from Manhattan.

The building is open Monday – Friday, 9am to 5pm; Saturday and Sunday, 1pm to 5pm; between Memorial Day and Labor Day, the hours are extended on all days to 6pm.

A trail map can be viewed online; printed trail maps are available at the Nature Center building.

Learn more about the Flat Rock Brook Nature Center at their website, www.flatrockbrook.org.

Hike-a-thon Set for October 4, 2008 to Support 'Hiking Museum' at Bear Mountain

The Trail Conference plans to construct a public exhibition about hiking and trail building at Bear Mountain State Park. Called Trails for People, the proposed exhibit is conceived as a publicly accessible, high visibility, engaging and entertaining interactive exploration of the fundamentals of hiking trail design, construction, and maintenance.

We believe that this represents the first-ever attempt in the United States to introduce general audiences to hiking and trail-building in a hands-on, whole-body, interactive style.

To build support for this project, we have set a People for Trails celebration October 4, 2008, in Harriman State Park.

The centerpiece of the celebration is a hike-a-thon, which will raise awareness and support for volunteers who build and maintain the hiking trails in the New York-New Jersey metropolitan region. Participation will be limited to 300 individuals, so mark your calendars, start training now, and keep your eyes open for the sign-up form.

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The Trail Conference office staff

In honor of Marilyn Katz
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In memory of Marty Last, Paul Leiken, Anna Parker, and Anne Silberberg
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GEAR CHECK

An occasional series that will review gear appropriate for hiking.



Vargo Triad Titanium Stove

Suggested retail price: \$29.95

Reviewed by Howard E. Friedman DPM

The Vargo Triad alcohol stove is a small, light-weight stove that can boil up to two cups of water at a time. The stove burns denatured alcohol, an inexpensive fuel readily available. It is useful for one or two people who plan to cook simply.

Compared to other alcohol stoves I have used, this one is well constructed and designed. It has six folding 'legs,' three that swing down to create a base and three that fold up to create a pot stand. The stove has small holes around the circumference that serve as jets for the flames, and a central hole into which fuel is poured.

The stove is easy to light; just one match ignites a small pool of fuel that collects in the center of the stove. The center flame 'primes' the stove for 3-4 minutes until the rest of the fuel ignites and shoots small flames around the perimeter of the stove. Like many alcohol stoves, the Vargo Triad does require the use of a windscreen. I made one from folded aluminum foil. The screen keeps the flame from blowing out and helps it burn more efficiently.

I have used the stove to boil water for hot drinks and cook macaroni and quinoa. In a recent test I brought 2 cups of water to a boil in about 5 minutes after the stove was primed, and cooked a cup of macaroni in a rolling boil for another 13 minutes before the flames sputtered. This was all on 1 ounce of fuel. I cooked in a 0.9 liter titanium pot. Any pot, however, should be more than about 3.5 inches in diameter to fit the pot stand. Results will vary with colder temperatures, windy conditions and, perhaps, a less conductive metal.

When cooking is completed, the flame can easily be blown out. With a little practice, excess fuel can be poured back into your container by letting the fuel run down one of the legs like a spout. An alcohol stove cannot get as hot as a gas stove nor can the flame be controlled. And the lightweight stove sometimes tips easily and sometimes flares up. But, for simplicity, weight, size, and an inexpensive fuel, the Vargo Triad is worth considering.



Rating: 3.5 boots out of 5

* LAST CHANCE! * LAST CHANCE! *

Contribute Your Club, Trail Project T-Shirt to TC Quilt Project

Quilt maker and Trail Conference member Carolyn Canfield has offered to construct a wall-hanging for the new New York-New Jersey Trail Conference offices at the Darlington Schoolhouse. To accomplish this project, she will need a collection of new or nearly new T-shirts appropriate to Trail Conference activities in the New York-New Jersey area. These could include, but are not limited to, club T-shirts, project T-shirts, park T-shirts. The size of the wall-hanging will depend upon the space available at the schoolhouse and the number of usable donated T-shirts. To become part of Trail Conference history, drop off your T-shirt donation at the Trail Conference office before September 1, 2008. Donated T-shirts will not be returned.



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By naming the Trail Conference as a beneficiary of your estate, you will help secure our future. Your gift is private and not made public until your death (or you can request your gift remain anonymous) and can be designated for a specific program or be an unrestricted gift. You can choose to donate a specific sum from your estate, for example \$10,000, or you may allocate a percentage of your estate.

Please contact Development Director Joshua Howard for bequest language or help with any questions you may have at 201-512-9348, ext. 13, or josh@nynjtc.org.

The Trail Conference recommends that you contact an accountant or lawyer for professional assistance.

Taking Digital Pictures for Trail Walker?

File sizes needed for print are larger than those required for the web. Set your camera for a high or highest resolution. The smallest size photo that we can use is 3 inches x 2.25 inches @ 300dpi (900 x 675 pixels). Larger sizes are recommended and should be saved as RGB jpeg files.



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Check Out a Book from the TC Hoeflerlin Library

Most books reviewed in *Trail Walker* make their way to the shelves of the Trail Conference's Hoeflerlin Library—a collection of more than 1,400 books and guides on hiking and outdoor subjects. Trail Conference members may borrow up to three books for up to three weeks at a time. Either visit the office or check the online catalog by going to www.nynjtc.org and clicking on Hoeflerlin Library in the left-hand column. For questions, send an email to office@nynjtc.org with "Library" in the subject field.



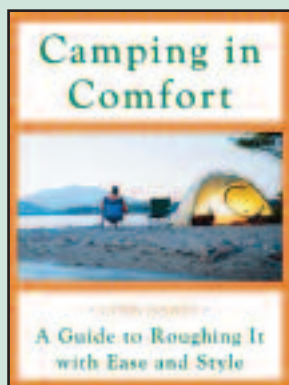
A wall of books about hiking and related subjects resides at the TC office.



Book Review

Camping in Comfort: A Guide to Roughing It with Ease and Style

By Lynn Haney



McGraw Hill, 2007

At 146 pages, including index, pages of resources and suppliers, and three pages of camping checklists (marshmallow forks?) this slim guide covers a lot of ground—from backpacking to RVing—probably more than most individuals will be interested in. Chapter heads include: Modern Camping, Safety and First Aid, Tents, Sleeping Bags and Pads, Backpacks, Clothing and Footwear, Cooking, Bicycle Camping, Boat Camping, and RVing. There is useful information here, especially for novices. The author describes, for example, the differences among various kinds of backpacks and among sleeping pads/cots/mattresses. In fact, this might be a good text to give as homework to "associates" in outdoor retail stores, or for stores to have available for customers to peruse to get some tips on what features they really want in a tent or camping stove or sleeping bag.

A Fork in the Trail: Mouthwatering Meals and Tempting Treats for the Backcountry

By Laurie Ann March

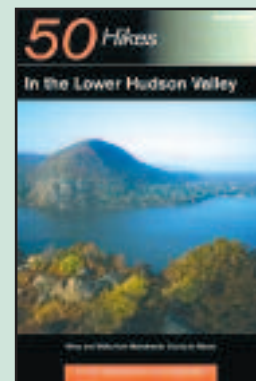


Wilderness Press, 2008

Chai Tea Breakfast Cake, Maple Peach Crepes with Custard, Steak and Strawberries with Balsamic Reduction, etc. Author Laurie Ann March's dishes really do look tasty. The key here is that each recipe is explained in two parts: At Home and At Camp. The At Home part often involves traditional if gourmet-style cooking, followed by hours of dehydrating (March leads off with dehydrating time for those recipes that need it) and packing food in zip lock bags. She tells you just how to prepare the dish for travel, and how to put it back together when you are in camp. The quantities are not single portions, but typically make two, four, or more servings. Not all the recipes are complicated and time-consuming, but this book is primarily for people who value nutrition, savor good food, and enjoy the challenge of preparing it in the field.

50 Hikes in the Lower Hudson Valley Second Edition

By Stella Green and H. Neil Zimmerman



The Countryman Press, 2008

First off, it's useful to know that the authors take an expansive view of "the Lower Hudson Valley." Though the majority of the described hikes are located in Westchester, Rockland, and Orange Counties, Stella Green and H. Neil Zimmerman reach all the way to Albany and Schoharie Counties, essentially touching down throughout the entire region known as the Hudson Valley, and even a bit east and west. Thus the inclusion of a few Catskill peaks in Ulster and Greene Counties as well as Vroman's Nose in Schoharie County, Thacher State Park in Albany County, and the Taconic Mountains at the convergence of New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts.

Green and Zimmerman—respectively past vice-president and past president of the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference—know their material, and the presentation here is crisp and clear. Each entry includes directions on how to get to the trailhead, detailed trail descriptions, clear and useful maps in black and white with trails superimposed over contour lines, and a photo.

A few pages of introduction cover the basics of hiking etiquette, notes about being prepared, a caution about Lyme Disease, and "Other Helpful Information."

In short, *50 Hikes* is a solid resource for anyone interested in exploring hiking trails in the Hudson Valley region. And there may be more such people next year. This new edition is well-timed to take advantage of the 2009 Quadracentennial commemoration of Henry Hudson's 1609 sail up the river that today bears his name. New York State plans to seize on the anniversary as an occasion to promote the region's outdoor recreation opportunities.

THE HUDSON HIGHLANDS

continued from page 1

The area also weighs heavily in environmental history. The well-organized popular campaign from 1936 onward to preserve the river's natural scenery from being ravaged by quarrying and power plant installation was the *cause célèbre* that catalyzed the modern epoch of aggressive third-party environmental litigation in the United States, initiated by such organizations as the Hudson River Conservation Society and Scenic Hudson.

The painters of the Hudson River School made the view here their signature landscape. The area is celebrated in the stories of Washington Irving (e.g., Bull Hill is featured in Dolph Heyliger, 1822) and the poems of George P. Morris and William Cullen Bryant.

Improved Access Is Goal

It is clear what makes the area so popular for visitors of the past and modern day hikers. But getting onto the trails safely is a problem. Parking at the trailhead areas is very limited and the busy highway is regularly lined with the cars of outdoor enthusiasts of all stripes. Families must cross the highway to reach the footpaths and beach at Little Stony Point across the street from the parking area. Hikers march to trails single-file along a narrow shoulder, buzzed by vehicles traveling at the posted limit of 55 miles per hour and likely faster—truly "breakneck" speed.

"We live so close to Little Stony Point, when we first moved here I thought it would be nice to take the baby in the stroller and walk there," said Cold Spring resident Eugenie Milroy, who lives just a quarter of a mile from Little Stony Point. "It was so harrowing with the cars flying by, that I never tried it again. From then on, we drove."

Milroy is not the only resident who, rather than take a chance with young children, drives the short distance to walking trails, a disappointing reality that flies in the face of today's eco-friendly trends.



Breakneck Ridge and other trails in Hudson Highlands State Park draw thousands of visitors to an area not designed to welcome them.

"In the summer when it's nice and warm, people are flocking to the beach [at Little Stony Point] and the lot fills up to the point where people are parked along the road," said Rich Anderson, caretaker for Little Stony Point Park. From his vantage point occupying one of the few homes on that stretch of road, Anderson says he has witnessed half a dozen serious accidents over the past ten years, two involving fatalities. "That doesn't include countless smaller accidents," he adds. "And it's just a matter of time before a pedestrian is killed."

He and other members of the Little Stony Point Citizens Association, the group that under a cooperative agreement with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation oversee the park that is part of the Hudson Highlands State Park System, have been advocating for years to have a crosswalk and flashing lights installed at Craigsides Drive, just south of access point to Little Stony Point.

"The hiking trails have become very, very popular over the past ten years. It can be very dangerous in terms of blind trails and people crossing back and forth. Something should be done to protect the motorists and the pedestrians."

With the help of a grant from Hudson River Valley Greenway Conservancy, the Philipstown Greenway Committee has completed the first step in a solution that would make the road safer for pedestrians and cyclists. Committee Chair McKee said, "We got the grant and the feasibility study was completed by John Folchetti and his team. There are feasible engineering solutions. The New York State Department of Transportation has reviewed the results and recommends a design solution that takes the trail off the road and adds connections to trail systems to the north and south. We think these are great suggestions and we are taking steps to revise our plan. But we need the public's help as we move into the design and planning stages to shape the area. Our goal is to make it safe."

The Committee is interested in hearing from visitors to the parks and trails. Hikers can help by completing a short survey that is posted by the Philipstown Greenway Committee at this site: www.PhilipstownGreenway.org

Maria Leiter is a member of the Philipstown Greenway Committee.



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Featured Hike



By Georgette Weir

Blackhead Range, Northern Catskills



Hikers from several ADK groups enjoy lunch and a view from Black Dome.

The Blackhead Range in New York's Greene County is currently classified as a Wild Forest area in the Catskill Forest Preserve; but it is due to get even stronger forest protection if a DEC proposal to make it an official Wilderness area is approved. The proposal is part of the Catskill State Land Master Plan now under review. (See page 4.)

With three peaks over 3900 feet—Blackhead (3940), Black Dome (3980), and Thomas Cole (3940)—at least five spectacular scenic outlooks among them, the Blackhead Range is a popular destination. Early this spring, groups of hikers from three Adirondack Mountain Club chapters (Mid-Hudson, Mohican, and the Albany groups) unexpectedly found themselves leapfrogging between scenic outlooks and rock scrambles on the Blackhead Range in the northern Catskills. They weren't the only ones on the trail.

Opinions about the difficulty of hiking the Blackhead Range vary from "moderate with some steep climbs" to "one of the most strenuous hikes in the Catskills." But there is no disagreement that the views, including over the Escarpment Trail north and south and toward the range of the Devil's Path to the south are spectacular. Mid May offered the bonus of trails lined with an abundance of wildflowers: red trillium, Dutchman's breeches, spring beauties were everywhere.

Access to the Black Dome Trail (also called the Blackhead Range Trail) is possible from both sides of the range as well as from the Escarpment Trail/Long Path

between North/South Lakes and Windham High Peak. One very nice feature is that a quick and easy car shuttle can be arranged by leaving cars on one side of the mountains and starting from the other side, making possible a one-way day hike of nearly 8 miles over all three peaks.



Dutchman's breeches blooms in May along the Blackhead Range Trail.

Two of the three ADK groups chose to set up a car shuttle, leaving cars at the Barnum Road parking area and driving around to start from Big Hollow Road. To follow their steps, take the Black Dome Trail (red) 0.5 mile from the parking area to a junction with the Batavia Kill Trail (yellow). To hike all three peaks, turn left onto the yellow trail. (You can bypass Blackhead and climb straight to Black Dome by staying on the red trail.) In just under one mile, the Batavia Kill Trail ends at an intersection with the Escarpment Trail/Long Path (blue blaze); turn right on the ES for one mile, climbing steeply to the summit of Blackhead Mountain; turn right onto the yellow Blackhead Mountain Trail. Continue on the yellow trail until you reconnect with the red-blazed Black Dome

Trail. To head on to Black Dome and Thomas Cole, stay straight on the red trail; this, after the final peak, follows a generally gradual course down to Barnum Road.

Where

Northern Catskills: Route 23 A, Scribner Hollow Road (between Tannersville and Hunter), 23C to Maple Crest Road (Route 40) to either Hauser Road then Barnum Road for southern parking area; or Maplecrest Road to Big Hollow Road (Route 56) for northern parking area.

MAP

Northeastern Catskills Trails, Map 41 of the Catskill Trails map set, NY-NJ Trail Conference.

DIFFICULTY

Strenuous

SHUTTLE

Distance between trailhead parking areas is less than 6 miles



Hikers' Marketplace



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South Taconic Trails (2006)	\$ 4.95	\$ 3.71	+\$1.10	_____
Sterling Forest Trails (2005)	\$ 7.95	\$ 5.96	+\$1.30	_____
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