

Hudson-Fulton-Champlain
Quadricentennial

Grand Walkabout

In celebration of
Four Hundred Years
Four Hundred Miles
Four Counties

Dutchess
Orange
Putnam
Ulster

Trail Resource Directory
October 2008

www.grandwalkabout.com/

Introduction to the Resource Directory

Following are definitions used in the Trail Directory. We have provided websites and phone numbers for you to inquire about the particular places you would like to explore. In addition, many of the guidebooks and map sets listed also provide information about accessibility, parking, hours and what you can expect to see.

SP - State Parks/State Forests

New York State maintains an exemplary system of state parks, preserves and forests for public enjoyment. The Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and the Department of Environmental Conservation are the key state agencies responsible for protecting these lands. The four counties featured in this Grand Walk About are home to several state parks, each with many miles of hiking trails. These trails pass through deep woods, across rocky outcroppings, skirt lakes and ponds, and attain significant elevations with views of the Hudson River as well as distant mountains. The variety of landscapes makes for an endless variety of hiking experiences.

Hiking the trails in state parks and forests requires planning and caution. The hikes are almost always listed as Difficult because of changing elevations, long distances and few amenities along the way if the weather changes. Trails in the Catskills are particularly challenging and should only be considered by those in the best physical condition. If you choose to explore these trails we recommend always wearing sturdy shoes, bringing lots of water and snacks, using maps and/or guide books and informing others where you will be. Ideally you should be hiking these trails in groups - both for safety concerns and for the added value of sharing the experience. Many area hikes are listed with the Hudson Valley Ramble, and local chapters of outdoor clubs often lead hikes in the area.

PP - Other Parks and Preserves

In addition to state lands, many private organizations, foundations and local entities have protected significant natural lands as well. Thousands of acres of sensitive and scenic forests and viewpoints can be explored. We have included in this directory only those parks and preserves that have marked trails open to the general public. As with state parks hiking in many of these lands is serious business, so be adequately prepared when you choose to hike the difficult trails. In other cases, short scenic loops can be found highlighting the unique features of these lands and are usually listed as moderately difficult.

LDT - Long Distance Trails

Many trail systems are linear in nature extending for many miles and encompassing even greater variety of hiking experiences. The four counties contain several important long distance trails, the best known being the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. In addition, there are the Long Path, the Highlands Trail and the Shawangunk Ridge Trail. These trails can be hiked in day-long segments or in longer stretches as backpacking trips. Consult the appropriate Guidebooks for trail details and parking locations so you can plan your hikes effectively.

UT - Urban Trails

Municipalities are increasingly encouraging their residents to walk - for pleasure, for health, and for reconnecting with local history. These tend to be on sidewalks and along roads and are classified as easy. We have included only those localities where routes have been described,

mileages calculated and brochures are available to describe the historical and scenic features along the route.

HS - Historic Sites

New York State is rich in history dating to the earliest days of the nation's settlement and many significant historic sites have been protected by the National Park Service as well as NYS OPRHP, counties and towns. As a matter of fact, the entire Hudson River Valley is a National Heritage Area. While there are a large number of such sites, we have included only those that have marked trails where mileages have been calculated and maps are available to guide the walks.

RT - Rail Trails (including Canal Towpaths)

The history of transportation in America is written in bold letters in the four counties, where some of the most daring canal and railroad projects dating from the early to late 1800's were situated. The abandoned rights of way have in many cases been preserved for pedestrian use and several are featured in this resource guide. With the opening of the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge, these opportunities are likely to expand to highlight their regional and national significance; some extensions of existing rail trails are currently in progress. As these linear parks are level they have been classified as easy and are often handicap accessible.

Definitions of Trail Difficulty

E: Easy - these trails are level, often paved, and are most suitable for beginners, families with young children and those in less than ideal health. They pass through a variety of built environments, historic settings and scenic points offering both healthful recreation and a connection with features of local and regional importance.

M: Moderate - these trails are either dirt roads or hiking trails and will generally feature some elevation change or require walking for longer distances. Many small local park preserves have short trails that require some exertion to attain settings of unique scenic value.

D: Difficult - these trails are not for everyone. These are what most people consider traditional hiking trails and are narrow with uneven surfaces, sometimes great elevation gains and rugged terrain. They provide the greatest rewards but require the most care and preparation. It is recommended that hikers on these trails go with others, such as a hiking club, to maximize the experience.

Accessibility

Only a few of the places we included are accessible to people with mobility handicaps, and we were not able to assess the remainder. Their websites should provide this information. National historic sites are generally mandated to be accessible, as are many of the state historic properties. In addition, urban trails following streets are likely to be accessible. Sometimes portions of trails are fully accessible, such as paved rail trails, but are not so identified.

Fees

Parking fees may be charged in many of the listed places (sometimes only in the summer months). We have noted those where individuals must pay an entrance fee to use the trails.

Books and Maps

Books

Appalachian Trail Guide to New York - New Jersey (w/4 maps) 16th ed. 2007 ATC

Chazin, Daniel (Ed). New York Walk Book 2005, 7th ed. Revised. NYNJTC

Chong, Herb. Guide to the Long Path. May 2002. 5th ed. Revised 2005. NYNJTC

Fagan, Jack. Scenes & Walks in the Northern Shawangunks 2006. 3rd ed. NYNJTC

Green, Stella and Zimmerman, H. Neil. 50 Hikes in the Lower Hudson Valley. 2008, 2nd ed. Backcountry Press

Kick, Peter. Catskill Mountain Guide. 2002 1st ed. AMC

Lewis, Cynthia and Lewis, Thomas. Best Hikes with Children in the Catskills and Hudson River Valley. 2002. 2nd ed. The Mountaineers Press

Myles, William. Harriman Trails: A Guide & History. 1999. 2nd ed. NYNJTC

Turco, Peggy. Weekend Walks in Westchester & Putnam Counties, 2nd Edition 2005. Countryman Press, Woodstock VT

White, Carol and White, David. Catskill Day Hikes for All Seasons. 2002, 1st ed. ADK Press

White, Carol, White, David and Burdick, Neal (Eds). Catskill Trails Book. 2005, 3rd ed. ADK Press

Maps

[East Hudson Trails](#) Three-Map Set - May 2008 8th ed. NYNJTC

[Shawangunk Trails](#) Three-Map Set - January 2008 7th ed. NYNJTC

[Catskill Trails Map Set](#) Five-Map Set - 2005 8th ed. NYNJTC

[Harriman-Bear Mountain Trails](#) Two-Map Set - 2007 11th ed. NYNJTC

[South Taconic Trails](#) One Map - May 2006. 2nd ed. NYNJTC

[Sterling Forest Trails](#) One-Map - June 2005 3rd ed. NYNJTC

[West Hudson Trails](#) Two-Map - May 2006 4th ed. NYNJTC