



# TRAIL WALKER

New York-New Jersey Trail Conference – Maintaining 1,716 Miles of Foot Trails

In this issue: More on Bikers & Hikers...pg 2 • Marauding Salamanders...pg 7 • Darlington Update...pg 10 • Cautionary Tales...pg 11

## The First Place to Go When You Want to Get Outside



Our new website is a gateway to hiking and trail volunteering in our region.

The "old" Trail Conference website, which comprises thousands of pages, many still to be adapted to the new site, will continue to be available through the new website. Just scroll down to "Old TC Pages" in the left column of the new site, and click on "Home"; you will be returned to the old website. Old pages will disappear as information is transferred and users will be redirected to new pages accordingly.

## Walkable Westchester

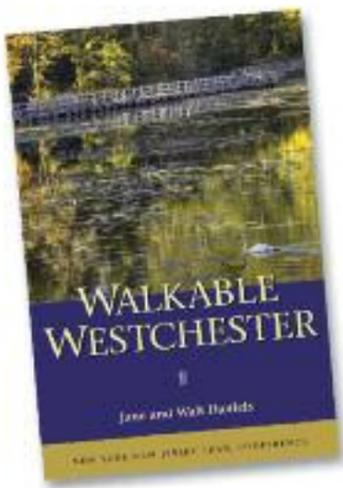
If Westchester County is not high on your list of hiking destinations, maybe it's time to think again. The Trail Conference is pleased to announce publication of a brand-new title: *Walkable Westchester*, by long-time hikers, trail activists, and Westchester residents Jane and Walt Daniels. The book is expected to be available for purchase in mid-March. The Danielses have compiled (and uncovered) a wealth of hiking opportunities in this sub-

urban county. Their one-volume resource identifies and describes 180 parks, preserves, sanctuaries, and protected open spaces and almost 600 miles of hiking trails in Westchester County.

The authors reveal that the county is something of a walker's heaven. "Aside from property in and near Heritage Hills in Somers and two isolated tiny pockets elsewhere in the county, all homes in Westchester are within one mile of a park boundary or place to walk," they note. Hard to believe given the county's proximity to New York City.

"*Walkable Westchester* is a 'must have' for New York City hikers without a car," reports Robert DeCandido, Urban Park Rangers. "Many places in Westchester are easily reached by public transportation and the authors even tell you exactly how available it is. Bravo!"

The book details a range of hiking opportunities in the county, from handicapped accessible to rugged terrain, through woodlands, wetlands, fields, and meadows; along streams, ponds, lakes, and Long Island Sound. Trails include paved paths, woods roads, dirt roads, or narrow woodland footpaths in urban, suburban, rural, and natural settings. "Who would have known there are so many parks in Westchester?" asks Suse Bell, the book's volunteer indexer and a resident of New Jersey. "I had thought it was just endless suburbs as depicted in a John Cheever novel."



continued on page 9

It's our public face to the world, a resource for hikers, and a tool for our volunteers. It's nynjtc.org and on March 1 look for the launch of the first phase of what ultimately will be a wholly redesigned website. Our goals are to:

1. be the best, super user-friendly source for information about hiking and trails in the New York-New Jersey region;
2. provide opportunities to get involved;
3. make it easier to get maps and books.



We invite Trail Conference members to explore and test the new site. Register so that you can give us feedback via comment features and access forums, where registered users can share info about hikes, trails, and related topics. **Our home address stays the same: www.nynjtc.org.** If you have bookmarked this address on your Favorites list, there is no need to change it. The following features, and more, will be available on March 1.

- **Find a Hike** by checking features that appeal to you and sorting the results by Park, State, Length, Difficulty, or Features. This resource will launch with information on 200 hikes provided by Daniel Chazin through his Hike of the Week columns for *The Record* (Hackensack, NJ). More hikes from additional authors will be added over time, so be sure to check in regularly.
- **Find information about parks, preserves, and other open spaces**, and links to their websites, by using our Find a Park tool.
- **Renew your membership, make a donation, buy one of our maps or books** (and get your 25% member discount) by using our new easy and simplified purchase process.

- **Connect with a local hiking club** by searching our list of member organizations and the list of upcoming scheduled hikes.

- **Volunteer** by finding the job that meets your needs and indicating your interest immediately.

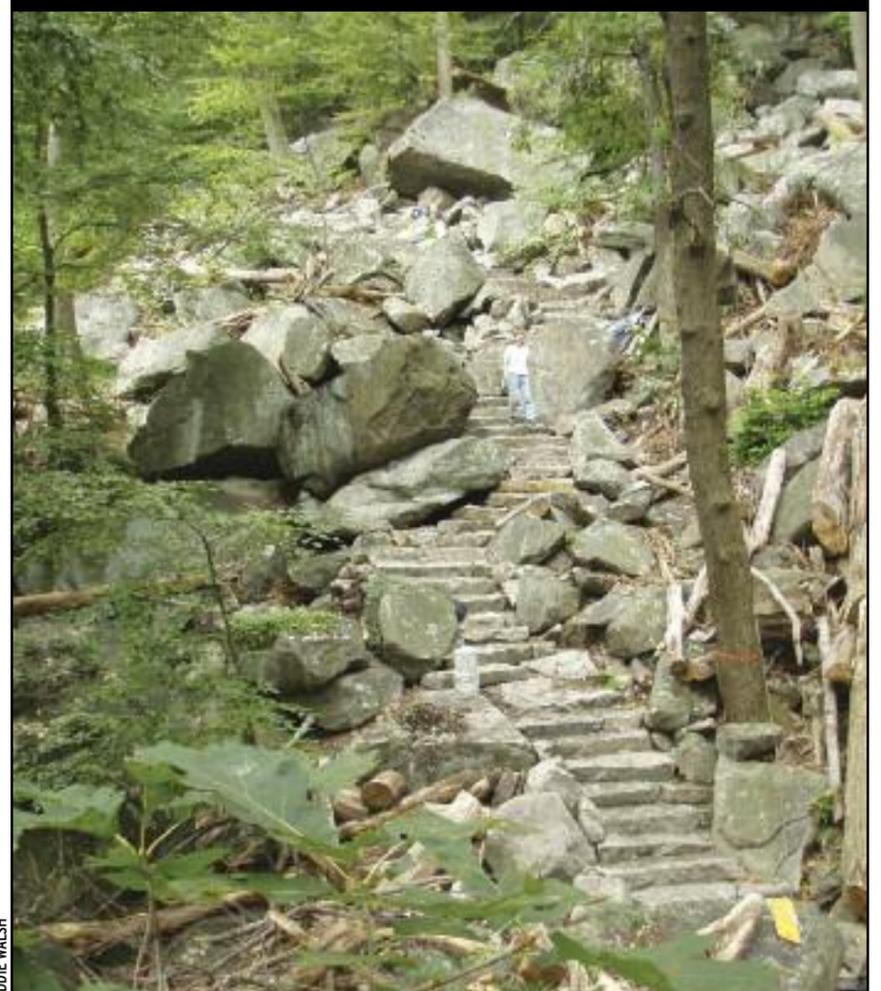
In the future, we plan to add exciting new social-networking capabilities for our members, volunteers, and potential members to work and engage with one another online. In this first phase, our objective is simply to make it easier for people to get outside and have fun.

Our redesigned website has one further goal: to attract new revenue to support our trail work—through ads prompted by increased website traffic. In both good economic times and bad, every penny counts for the Trail Conference, an independent, volunteer-driven, not-for-profit organization that otherwise relies entirely on dues, donations, and grants for funding.

As with all Trail Conference projects, development of this new website has been accomplished largely through the efforts of dedicated volunteers. Meet this extraordinary crew on page 3.

Continued development of the site will require additional volunteers. If you are interested in getting involved, click on Volunteer and indicate your interest.

### New Trail U. and Trail Crew Season Opens (See page 5)



EDDIE WALSH

A birds-eye view of some of the work accomplished last year on the Bear Mountain Trails Project.

# TRAILWALKER

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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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## Letters to the Editor

### Hikers and Bikers: Room for Both?

The following letters respond to Jane Daniels' column, "Hikers and Bikers in Common Cause?" published in the January/February 2009 issue of *Trail Walker*.

### Alliances are in Hikers' Interest

Kudos to Jane Daniels for her article. Building bridges with mountain biking organizations, horseback riders, and trail runners is clearly in our best self interest. Like us, they are firsthand witnesses to the trail damage caused by motorized vehicles. But not long ago, many disgruntled mountain bikers were more closely aligned with ATV riders than with hikers.

The good news is that this trend appears to be reversing itself, albeit slowly. Communication and the willingness to seek common ground have led to mountain biking groups' building separate trails and urging their members not to ride on hiking-only trails.

One such example is at the former Jungle Habitat property in West Milford, NJ. The most developed part of the property almost became an ATV and mountain biking park in 2002. Nowadays, the same land houses a network of trails for walking, running, horseback riding, and biking. The trails, built by mountain bikers from JORBA (Jersey Off Road Bicycle Association) are kept separate from our nearby Hewitt-Butler and Burnt Meadow trails by the old Jungle Habitat perimeter fence.

NJ Trail Runners also schedules work days with the South Mountain Conservancy for trail building and maintenance activities. Trail runners, who generally stick to woods roads, represent a young and rapidly growing new source of potential Trail Conference members.

As non-traditional trail use continues to grow and enforcement of trail use rules remains virtually non-existent, the Trail Conference is wise to be reaching out to its newest potential allies. User groups will not always agree and we must continue to stand up for hikers' interests. But by looking for common ground, non-motorized trail user groups can present a united front in the battle to protect our trails and pass meaningful off-road vehicle legislation.

Don Weise  
West Milford, NJ

### Hiking-Only Trails Are Essential

Having spent the years 1998–2001 monitoring trail use and trail conditions in northern New Jersey, and still hiking and maintaining those trails usually twice a week, I feel I should comment on Jane Daniels' interesting account of her day doing trail work with mountain bikers.

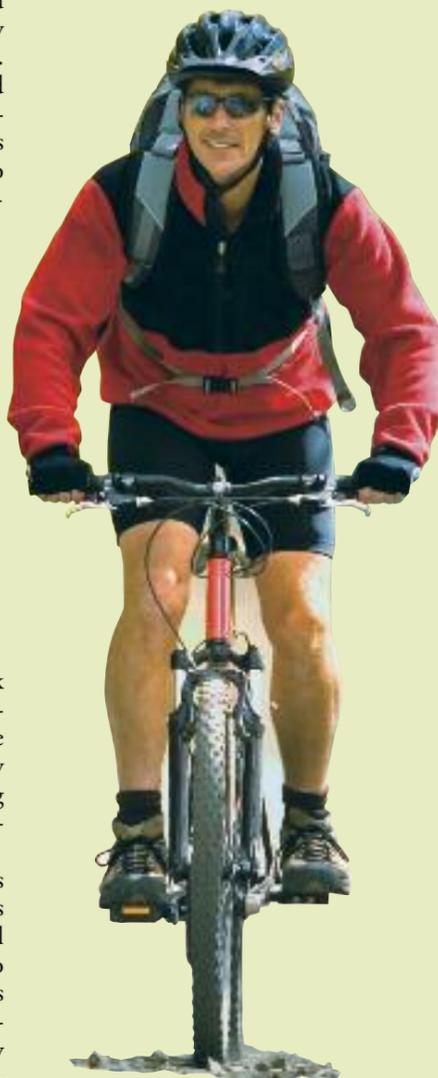
First, Jane provides a puzzling and incomplete description of the "differences between footpath standards and bicycle [trail] standards." She lists only two: wider curves on switchbacks, and ramps instead of steps. We all know that hiking trails have steps on very steep sections. In these places, building a ramp instead would result in a somewhat massive structure. I have never encountered such a structure on any of my woodland excursions.

Perhaps more important, Jane missed two critical features of a well-designed bicycle trail. The data from my surveys demonstrated conclusively that trails with rocky treadways, which are typical of those in northern New Jersey and nearby New York, widen significantly under moderate bicycle use. Therefore, they

need to be lined somehow, with rocks or logs, to keep the path narrow. This was done successfully on the Ramapo Valley Cycle Club race route, the first bicycle trail built in Ringwood with the approval of the park's management.

The other feature is the requirement of a fairly smooth, hard-surfaced way over wet areas. Round rocks spaced two feet apart, excellent for pedestrians, provide bicyclists with no way to avoid damaging the wet ground.

The requirements for a proper bicycle trail, taken together, add up to one that is more intrusive than a footpath. This is one of two basic reasons why hiking-only trails should be available in all major parks.



Second, Jane's remarks about bicyclists' attitudes were quite unexpected. She seemed surprised that they "love being in the outdoors and exercising in a way that is fun." I always thought that Jane had lots of interactions with mountain bikers during her years as East Hudson Chair.

While I believe that bicyclists' behavior has improved much since the early '90s, Jane is missing a key point. Of course they're friendly when you meet them on the trail and chat, or help them build their trails. However, to this day, they generally turn prickly or hostile the moment the subject of trail use restrictions is broached. There are still far too many who feel it is their God-given (or at least Constitutional) right to ride where they please.

In the 1990s, the Trail Conference wasted hundreds of staff and volunteer hours trying to get the State Park Service to designate trail uses and enforce those designations, in the face of clear evidence that the Park Service had no intention of enforcing any such thing. Jane doesn't tell us what the current trail use policies are. From the tone of her article, and my past experience, I would guess that the 1990s designations are dead letters, or have been formally jettisoned, and the bicyclists can ride anywhere.

That is a shame. I have always wanted increased bicycle access to be tied to increased compliance with trail use restrictions. Back in 1998, that was considered too accommodationist by many active Trail Conference members. Now, it sounds like the same position would brand me as an anti-bicycle dinosaur. But the desire for hiking-only trails is not an extremist position. The Wilderness Act prohibits bicycles in wilderness areas. They are a high-tech intrusion which, for many of us, conflicts with the backcountry experience we seek to enjoy.

Bob Moss  
Bloomfield, NJ

Bob Moss is former Trail Chair and Trail Supervisor of the Highlands Trail (HT). He is currently a maintainer on the HT.

### Trail Protection Requires Collaboration

I am a long time hiker and mountain biker but a new member of the Trail Conference. I want to support your conservation efforts and trail maintenance efforts. I hope we can all co-exist on the trails and tolerate a similar type of user group that would like to help conserve and protect what's left of our forests and trails.

Not every trail is suitable for bicycle use; however, there is enough space to share with other trail lovers who choose to use wheels instead of heels.

Current scientific data supports the research that hiking and biking have similar impacts on the trails.

With the rising costs of fuel and the need to reduce greenhouse gases, I think it is a good idea to create nearby recreation opportunities for mountain bicyclists in areas that are appropriate for their use. We need to encourage more young folk to get outside for the health benefits, which would also increase our volunteer base.

The local economies can get a little benefit from trail tourism and, together, I know we can make a greater difference towards making this planet a better place.

Michael Vitti  
Glen Head, NY

The author is a Trail Conference member, president of CLIMB (Concerned Long Island Mountain Bicyclists), New York State IMBA (International Mountain Bicycling Association) Representative, and a member of the New York State Trails Council.

### Wheels & Heels: Different Trail Experiences

Jane Daniels claims there are similarities and common cause between biking and hiking. If [such claims] would promote separate biking and hiking trails for widely different trail experiences I could agree. Otherwise they only serve as an attempt for bike acceptance on the hiking trails.

The real hiking trail similarity and common cause is with the nation's wilderness areas. The absence of wheels here is a basic principle because wilderness areas and hiking trails aim to bring back the old North America that existed before wheels came from another part of the world.

You can see the true meaning of this if you slow your journey to a walk.

Bill Coffin  
Chittenango, NY

### Hikers Need to Work with Bikers

I just wanted to let you know that I just renewed my membership. I have been a member and supporter of the Trail Conference for a few years now, but I was hesitant in renewing my membership this year. My main concern was where the Trail Conference stood on the issue of mountain biking on the New York-New

continued on page 11

### 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.

Visit Our New Site Today!  
www.NYNJTC.org

From the Executive Director

## Finding an UPSIDE to the Downturn

For people who have been affected, and all of us have but some more than others, this economy is no joke. Certainly, we at the Trail Conference are seeing the giving ability of our members decline and having to revise our budgets and tighten our belts accordingly.

The crunch we find ourselves in is similar to that of nonprofits in other sectors. Revenues from our traditional sources of support—members, donors, and sales—are tracking the downward trend of the economy. At the same time, state and local cuts to park and open space expenditures mean that we have to do more with less.

Even so, and not to diminish the very real hardships that come with a down economy, there are some silver linings.

Many people are finding excellent vacation and weekend destinations close to home, sometimes adjacent to their own back yard. Even while our cash strapped



On New Year's Day, 20 hikers joined an ADK club outing for a half-day hike on the Wappinger Greenway Trail, constructed by Trail Conference volunteers and staff.

parcs are reducing hours and “front country” services, trail conference volunteers are maintaining extensive networks of trails that offer a whole world of backcountry experiences for the intrepid hiker. Individuals and families are discovering the delights offered by our region’s treasure trove of parks, preserves, and other open spaces. Many are venturing for the first time onto the trails that our members know, love, and care for so well.

This trend points to opportunities for our member clubs. Joining a guided hike

offered by a club is one of the best ways to sample new hiking areas and meet other hikers. By offering outings to the public and getting the word out, including in this newsletter (see Hikers Almanac, pages 8-9) and on our new website, clubs that seek to grow their membership can expand their reach and effectiveness. Hiking clubs are reporting larger numbers showing up for mid-winter, weekday hikes that were previously the domain of hardy retirees. Hikes on community trails close to home and involving a commitment of just a few hours rather than an entire day are, some say, proving to be especially popular.

Another example of a dividend of the economic downturn is the seeming uptick in volunteering. Attendance at our monthly orientations for volunteers is growing and waiting lists are getting longer due to a lack of vacancies in certain areas. We are seeing more people volunteer as a way to give back, keep busy, and maintain balance during prolonged job searches. Thorny projects that once seemed to be on the back burner forever (updating management agreements with our agency partners, for

example) now are being actively managed by highly competent volunteers.

It is not clear as I write this but the federal stimulus plan may help with green infrastructure including trail construction. Also, according to a January 23, 2009 Op-Ed in the *New York Times*, the Serve America Act is “a bipartisan solution ready to go” that “would rapidly expand the number of full-time and part-time National Service volunteers.” The Trail Conference could attend to a great many identified trail projects if there were incentives for people to become full-time volunteers.

Another piece of good news is that, even though state and local park budgets are likely to get worse before they get better, as long as we have the financial support of our members, Trail Conference volunteers will still be doing their jobs keeping trails open!

People struggling with hardship will continue to enjoy access to places where they can exercise their bodies and rejuvenate their spirits at little or no expense.

— Ed Goodell, [goodell@nynjtc.org](mailto:goodell@nynjtc.org)

## Volunteer Profiles Meet the Web Redesign Team

Development of a new and complex website may not top the list of volunteer opportunities associated with the Trail Conference, better known for its “Get Dirty” pitch to potential new recruits. But as many of our volunteers know, trail work happens inside as well as outside.

Our redesigned website (launch date March 1) is a particularly complex indoor project. It uses open source content management technology (the platform is called Drupal) with the capability of supporting a “community driven website.” The Trail Conference aims to ultimately offer a website where volunteers can meet and work together, and hikers can share information, stories, hike plans—all online.

It has been a long trek to Phase 1 launch and big thank-you’s go to the project’s core volunteers.

**Walt Daniels**, of Mohegan Lake, NY, TC’s technology guru. Walt has shouldered virtually the entire technology load during the site’s development, with some support provided at the end by a contracted website developer. He has volunteered as the Trail Conference’s webmaster since 1996, when, working with friend and fellow volunteer Ed Clarke, they launched TC’s first website. (This, essentially, is the site that is now being replaced.) Walt is the model of an “early adopter,” enthusiastic about new technology offerings. He became a computer programmer in 1956, earned a PhD in physics in 1968, is retired from IBM, has long been an active trail builder, especially on the AT, and with wife, Jane, became an AT 2000-miler in 2007. In his down time these past few years, he and Jane authored *Walkable Westchester*, also being launched this March.



**Doug Cleek**, of Mahwah, NJ, designer and internet strategist. “Doug is a classically schooled designer with a thorough understanding of technology.” That’s what his company website says, and we have lots of cause to believe it. Past clients of Doug’s include AOL, Bayer, MCI WorldCom, Lexis-Nexis, ABB, Hilton, AT&T, American Express, Chase, Toys ‘r’ Us, and Sheraton. In 1993 Doug charged into the world of new media by founding the agency K2, dedicated to interactive design and marketing. The firm became a leader in the field, winning awards for web designs and putting Doug on the speaker’s

circuit. Today he is a partner and creative director for Magnitude 9.6 ([magnitude9point6.com](http://magnitude9point6.com)). Doug has been generous in volunteering designs, graphic elements, and web strategy advice to the Trail Conference web team. He is active with his son’s Boy Scout troop and occasionally enlivens meetings with tales of their adventures into nature.

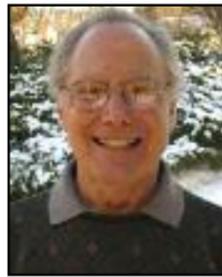
**Ann Gruhn**, of Mount Kisco, NY, project manager. With her pre-retirement experience in information technology and project management, Ann was a natural volunteer for the web design team. She assumed a project management role in 2008 and also assists in some of the site development efforts. She has been instrumental in keeping the team focused on Phase 1 goals and with her excellent management skills has gently enforced accountability. Ann was elected to the Board of Directors of the Trail Conference in June 2008 and is co-chair of the Technology Committee. Ann is an avid hiker in our region and abroad. Her current favorite destination is Rockefeller State Park Preserve in Westchester County, “with an after-hike stop at the Blue Hill Café at Stone Barns.”



**Phil McLewin**, of Mahwah, NJ, content developer. Phil is a professor emeritus of economics, who taught at Ramapo College for nearly 35 years. A long-time hiker (he favors Harriman State Park), after retiring he attended a trail maintenance workshop, “thinking, as many of us do, I could now give back for all those years of hiking TC-maintained trails. I even tried a work crew, moving small boulders to build steps. But then I saw a call for volunteers to help develop the new web site. As a professor I designed and maintained my own professional web site and thought—gee, here’s a novel way to maintain trails by maintaining a website of parks and trails. It was also much easier on my back.” Phil took the lead on researching and writing descriptions of parks, preserves and public open spaces in our region for the new website. He also introduced subsequent volunteers to the effort. “I take great satisfaction knowing I am responsible for adding so much content to the new web in the hopes it will help other hikers find parks they want to explore. I know I did.”



**Ken Malkin**, of Hillsdale, NJ, content developer. Ken, already a trail maintainer and volunteering in the TC office as an assistant to the TC regional representatives, was soon also attracted to the web project. He joined Phil on developing content for the Find a Park feature, concentrating on parks and public open spaces in New York. Ken is a former merchandising executive with “heavy computer use.” He has been hiking for more than 30 years throughout the TC region, and beyond. “I told my wife that if we’d complete the White Mountain 4000 footers, we’d hike next in Switzerland. We did, and we did, many times.” He notes, “I always wanted to return some of the joy my family had because of other TC volunteers and now I can.”



**Gayle Edgerton**, of New York City and Dutchess County, NY, content developer. Gayle describes herself as a fairly new volunteer with the Trail Conference. She started working on trail building just this past fall, joining the team that is putting in a new trail at Wonder Lake State Park in Putnam County, NY. That’s a long way from her “real world job” as a clothing designer. During the winter trail building hiatus, Gayle volunteered for the web team, writing up

descriptions of Fahnestock State Park, and parks in Dutchess County and New York City. In addition to hiking, Gayle enjoys trail running and mountain biking. Her favorite local hike is on the AT in Putnam County, between Hortontown Hill Road and Fahnestock State Park.



**Arthur Gardineer**, of Congers, NY, data input. Arthur has been a do-it-all office volunteer for the Trail Conference for the past year. He agreed to take on the daunting task of inputting all the information compiled in Daniel Chazin’s seven years of Hike of the Week columns for *The Record* into our new, searchable Find a Hike database, one of the new features on our new website and one we hope will be a popular resource for the public.



Staff support for the project is provided by Georgette Weir, communications specialist, and Ed Goodell, executive director.

## Attend the Trail Conference’s ORIENTATION WORKSHOP!

Are you thinking about volunteering for the Trail Conference, but don’t know where to start?

Would you like to have a better understanding of the Trail Conference and the volunteer opportunities available?

Join us for one of our VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION sessions to:

- Learn more about the details of our volunteer programs.
- Meet new and experienced volunteers.
- Discover the many ways you can contribute to your trails and give back to the open space you enjoy so much.
- Gain a better understanding of how the Trail Conference Connects People with Nature.

Register now for our next Orientation to be held on Tuesday March 17, 2009, 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm at our Mahwah office by:

- Visiting our website: [www.nynjtc.org/volunteers/vif.html](http://www.nynjtc.org/volunteers/vif.html),
- Emailing: [volunteers@nynjtc.org](mailto:volunteers@nynjtc.org) with “Orientation” in the subject line, or
- Calling the office at 201-512-9348

Anyone interested in learning more about who we are and what we do is encouraged to attend one of our monthly ORIENTATION workshops. You must register to attend.

**Additional Upcoming Orientation Dates:** Tuesday evenings, April 21, May 19, June 16 from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at locations to be announced.

# Conservation & Advocacy



From the  
Conservation Director:  
William P. O'Hearn

## Obama and Congress to the Rescue?

As we all know by now, the land trust community is facing the frustration of plenty of land available (at great prices), but no money to pay for it. At the same time, we are watching the green infrastructure in our parks—parking lots, camp sites, woods roads, foot bridges, etc.—degrade because of state, county, and local funding cuts. So, when we hear about the new President and Congress proposing an \$815 billion stimulus package, we have to ask: How green is it? How much will it help us at the state and local level?

The answer, which will probably change by the time you read this, is that the package will help to some degree. Our four U.S. senators and our congressional delegation, especially Representatives Hinchey and Hall in New York, are already engaged in gathering good “shovel-ready” projects that will fit into the \$3.1 billion allocated (in the draft version) toward “improvements on public lands, including new roads, trails, and facilities.” There is also \$400 million budgeted for flood control efforts, which will include purchases of open space that will improve water quality. And last, but certainly not least, there is \$30 billion for highway construction, a portion of which could be used to fund bicycle and pedestrian programs.

Beyond the stimulus package itself, we continue to work on federal legislation that would fund a feasibility study for the designation of the Long Path as a National

Scenic Trail, and we hope for more funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Forest Legacy program, and the Highlands Conservation Act. These federal programs have suffered under the previous administration but may finally be coming back to life, even in this challenging economic environment.

Lastly, we can expect and should demand to see a new attitude at EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), the Dept. of Interior, U.S. Forest Service, Army Corps of Engineers, and other federal agencies that cover environmental issues. The Democrats are now firmly in control of our federal government; let's make sure they don't forget that the environmental community helped put them there.



## 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 Contact:

**NJ Regional Representative** Brenda Holzinger,  
holzinger@nynjtc.org or 973-303-3538

### NEW YORK

#### TC Contacts:

**West of Hudson Regional Representative**  
Larry Wheelock, Wheelock@nynjtc.org,  
201-512-9348, ext. 16

**East of Hudson Regional Representative**  
Christie Ferguson, Ferguson@nynjtc.org,  
201-739-4434

### River, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Awarded to East Hudson

The East Hudson Community Trails program has been selected to receive a grant, in the form of technical assistance, from the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA). Christie Ferguson, the East Hudson Regional Representative, will collaborate with Karl Beard, the Upstate New York NPS staff member, on a plan to achieve

objectives identified for the Hudson Hills and Highlands Community Trails Program, a joint venture of the Trail Conference and Teatown Lake Reservation.

This grant of NPS expertise and resources will facilitate and result in the documentation of the process of developing community trails in three areas: Wonder Lake State Park (Putnam County), Angle Fly Preserve (Westchester), and Teatown Lake Reservation's Northern Westchester Eco-Trail. Each project is at a different stage of trail planning, design, construction, and maintenance.

Goals for the collaboration also include linking communities to existing parks, trails, and linear parks—including the major state park complexes and the Appalachian Trail.

Beard brings experience in facilitating park-community connections, such as in the town of Hyde Park, where the NPS has been part of a concerted plan and effort to connect trails and parks in the town, including the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt

National Historic Site.

The Trail Conference's East Hudson Community Trails Program and the Hudson Hills and Highlands Community Trails Program will benefit from the development of an overall strategy for engaging and fostering communities' involvement in creating, promoting, and adopting community trails.

The HHH area is depicted in the map below.

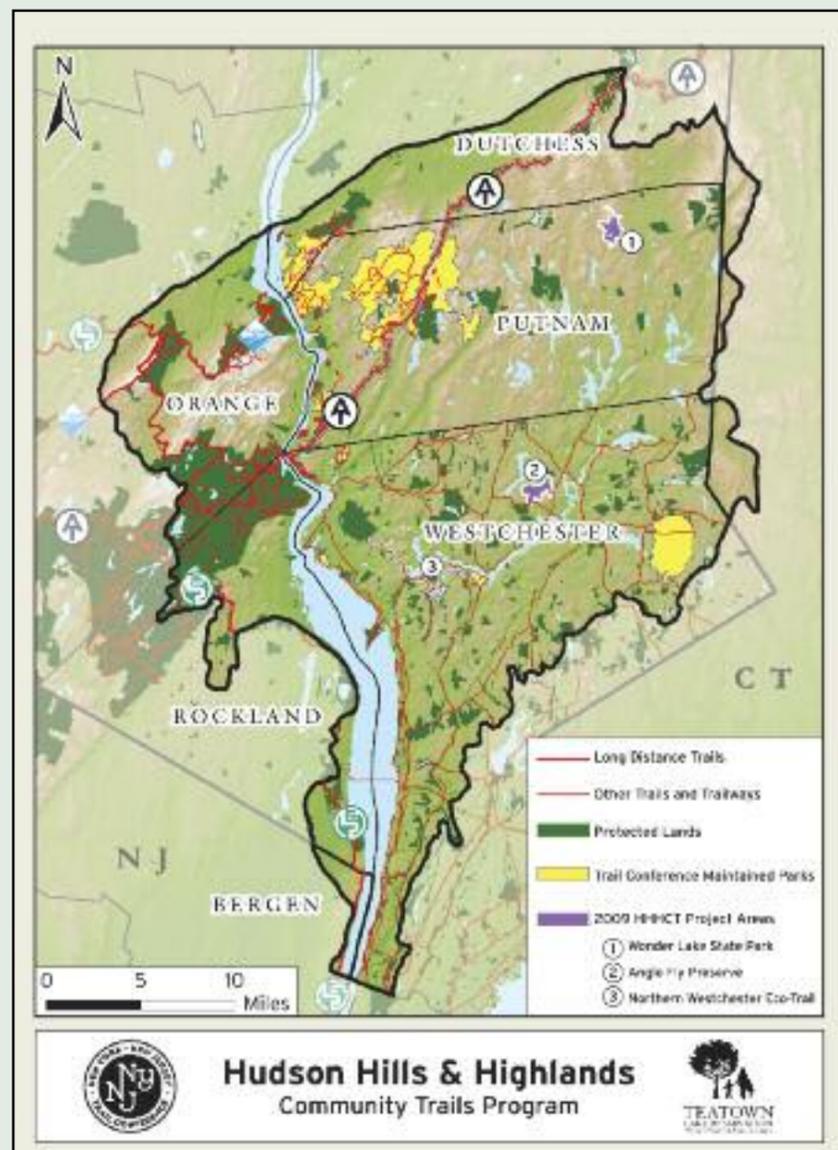
### Hudson River Improvement Fund will help the Eagles

The Trail Conference has been awarded a grant from the Hudson River Foundation's Improvement Fund to provide educational signage regarding trail closures and eagle protection efforts on the trails at George's Island County Park in Westchester County. In the proposal, Christie Ferguson, the East Hudson Regional Representative, detailed the need for additional measures to protect Bald Eagles roosting in the park during winter.

Hiking in certain areas of George's Island is curtailed during winter months in order to minimize disturbances to roosting eagles. This is to be more fully explained with the new signs. At the same time, eagle viewing will be promoted at other locations at the park and neighboring properties.

The new signs will advance the aims of the George's Island Park Bald Eagle Roosting Site Protection Project, which seeks to enhance access to Hudson River habitat for the local community and visitors to the area while providing opportunities for environmental education and enrichment and generating awareness about Bald Eagle use of the Hudson River and the Hudson River Valley.

The sign project was a good match for the Hudson River Foundation, which seeks to repair habitat along the Hudson River and improve facilities and shore-front access points. The Trail Conference is working closely with Westchester County Parks, NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation, and Teatown Lake Reservation on this project.



## Trail News

### Blowdowns Hit West Hudson Area Hard

Hikers and maintainers should be prepared to find significant blowdowns on trails above 700-foot elevation in parks west of the Hudson River and along the Kittatinny Ridge in New Jersey. A mid-December ice storm wreaked havoc on many parks and preserves at these elevations; the Catskills, however, seemed to be largely spared.



A Storm King trail in January

One of the hardest hit parks was Minnewaska State Park Preserve, which, with its staff reduced by budget cuts, closed entirely for one month as the remaining staff worked to clear primary carriage roads. Trail Conference volunteer crews joined the efforts in January.

Though all parks are open, not all hiking trails have yet been cleared. This winter's frequent snow and ice storms have further delayed clearing. Maintainers are encouraged to visit their trail sections as soon as possible; clear where it's safe and report bigger problems to your trail supervisor. Trail and chain-saw crews will be assigned as needed.

Trail problem reports can also be made to the Trail Conference's regional representatives:

**West Hudson:** Larry Wheelock,  
Wheelock@nynjtc.org  
**East Hudson:** Christie Ferguson,  
Ferguson@nynjtc.org  
**New Jersey:** Brenda Holzinger,  
Holzinger@nynjtc.org



Hikers pick their way through blowdown atop the Fishkill Ridge in mid-December.

### Celebrate Highlands Trail Crossing the Delaware, May 16

The Highlands Trail (HT) "Welcome to Pennsylvania" Celebration, a joint venture between the AMC and the TC, will be held Saturday, May 16, at the Delaware River in Reigelsville, NJ, and PA. There will be an official walk of the HT across the bridge from New Jersey into Pennsylvania. Exact time is to be determined, but there will be refreshments, afternoon hikes, and possibly even canoeing and kayaking on the river.

There will also be a Hunterdon County HT opening celebration in mid-late June. Please check the May/June 2009 issue of the TW for details and join us!

Get the "Hike of the Week"  
[www.NYNJTC.org](http://www.NYNJTC.org)

# TRAIL U

Teaching Practical Skills to  
Trails Volunteers at Locations  
Throughout the NY-NJ Area

March – May

To register for a class, go to our website. The Trail Conference offers workshops in Trail Building and Trail Maintenance at locations across our region. Register online or by calling the office, 201-512-9348, ext. 14.

#### To register online:

1. Go to [www.nynjtc.org](http://www.nynjtc.org)
2. Click on Get Involved
3. Click on Trail University
4. Select Register Now

#### Descriptions of workshops can be found on our website:

1. Go to [www.nynjtc.org](http://www.nynjtc.org)
2. Click on Get Involved
3. Click on Trail University
4. Select Trail U Courses



**March 28 – 29 (Saturday, Sunday)**  
**Stone Cutting, Splitting and Shaping**  
**Location:** Bear Mountain State Park  
**Time:** 8:30am  
**Coordinator:** Eddie Walsh,  
[bearmountaintrails@verizon.net](mailto:bearmountaintrails@verizon.net)

Participants may register for only one day or both days. March 28 is devoted to general instruction on stone splitting using rotary hammer drills, rifting hammers, and feathers and wedges. On March 29, we will split into two groups. Group 1 will learn the basics of splitting and cutting. Group 2 will work with hand hammers and chisels and learn to finely shape stones as we install step and crib walls.

**April 4 (Saturday)**  
**Trail Maintenance 101**  
**Location:** Teatown Lake Reservation, Ossining, NY  
**Time:** 9:00am  
**Instructor:** John Magerlein  
**Coordinator:** Christie Ferguson, East Hudson Regional Representative, [ferguson@nynjtc.org](mailto:ferguson@nynjtc.org), 201-739-4434

**April 4 (Saturday)**  
**Stone Step Construction and Rock Moving Basics**  
**Location:** Bear Mountain State Park  
**Time:** 8:30am  
**Instructor:** Eddie Walsh

**April 11 – 12 (Saturday, Sunday)**  
**Stone Crib Wall Construction**  
**Location:** Bear Mountain State Park  
**Time:** 8:30am  
**Coordinator:** Eddie Walsh

**April 19 (Sunday)**  
**Corridor Monitor Workshop**  
**Location:** RPH Shelter on AT in Dutchess County  
**Time:** 9am to 4pm  
**Instructors:** Ollie Simpson and Ron Rosen  
**Coordinator:** Christie Ferguson, East Hudson Regional Representative, [ferguson@nynjtc.org](mailto:ferguson@nynjtc.org), 201-739-4434

**April 25 (Saturday)**  
**Trail Construction and Restoration**  
**Location:** Sterling Forest or Harriman State Park  
**Time:** 9am to 4pm  
**Instructors:** Monica and David Day  
**Coordinator:** Larry Wheelock,  
[wheelock@nynjtc.org](mailto:wheelock@nynjtc.org), 201-512-9348, ext. 16

**April 26 (Sunday)**  
**Trail Maintenance 101**  
**Location:** Schunemunk Mountain State Park  
**Time:** 9am to 4pm  
**Instructors:** TBD  
**Coordinator:** Larry Wheelock,  
[wheelock@nynjtc.org](mailto:wheelock@nynjtc.org), 201-512-9348, ext. 16

**May 9 (Saturday)**  
**Trail Maintenance 101**  
**Location:** North/South Lake Campground Pavilion, Catskills  
**Time:** 9am to 4pm  
**Instructors:** TBD  
**Coordinator:** Larry Wheelock,  
[wheelock@nynjtc.org](mailto:wheelock@nynjtc.org), 201-512-9348, ext. 16

## Trail Crew Schedules

March – April 2009

For the latest schedules and additional details, go to our website.

#### BEFORE March 1:

1. Go to [www.nynjtc.org](http://www.nynjtc.org)
2. Click on "Trail Crews/Work Trips" in right column

#### AFTER March 1:

1. Go to [www.nynjtc.org](http://www.nynjtc.org)
2. Scroll to "Old TC Pages" in left column and click on "Home"
3. Click on "Trail Crews/Work Trips" in right column

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](mailto: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](mailto:westjerseycrew@trailstobuild.com)  
**Website:** [www.trailstobuild.com](http://www.trailstobuild.com)

Bring your lunch, plenty of water, gloves and sturdy work shoes, and be prepared to get dirty. All tools, materials and training will be provided. Beginners are welcomed on all work trips.

All events begin at 9:00am. Please phone/email the leaders for meeting location and driving directions. There is usually a walk to the work site, so please be there on time (call the leaders' cell phone if you are coming to an event and are running late). Rain cancels – if in doubt, call the leaders between 6:00 and 6:30 that morning.

Carpooling: if anyone is interested in carpooling (offering a ride or riding), please let the leaders know and we will try to arrange a shared ride. (Passengers please be prepared to contribute for gas.)

**April 18 (Saturday)**  
**Warren Trail, Jenny Jump State Park**

We will continue work on the new Warren Trail in Jenny Jump State Park, extending it towards Buzzard's Glory Road.

**May 2, Saturday**  
**Douglas Trail, Worthington State Forest**

We will continue our work installing water bars and check dams on the Douglas Trail in Worthington State Forest.

#### HIGHLANDS TRAIL CREW

**Leader:** Glenn Oleksak, [htsupervisor@verizon.net](mailto:htsupervisor@verizon.net)

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.

For details on trips:

1. Go to [www.nynjtc.org](http://www.nynjtc.org)
  2. Scroll to "Old TC Pages" in left column and click on "Home"
  3. Click on "Trail Crews/Work Trips" in right column
- Please contact leader if you are coming on a trip so that you can be notified of cancellations.

#### METRO TRAILS CREW

**Leaders:** Joe Gindoff, 718-614-2209,  
[joeghiker@nynjtc.org](mailto:joeghiker@nynjtc.org); Linda Sullivan 347-721-6123,  
[marmilinda@yahoo.com](mailto:marmilinda@yahoo.com)

No experience is required. We provide the training, tools, gloves and the fun! Please bring a lunch and plenty of water. A day pack to carry your lunch and supplies is suggested. Sturdy work boots or other hiking footwear is mandatory. All participants must sign in to perform trail work. **RSVP is a must.**

#### March/April

**Additional work dates may be announced.** Please check the website, or contact Linda Sullivan to be put on the Metro Trail Crew notification list: [marmilinda@yahoo.com](mailto:marmilinda@yahoo.com).

**March 21, 28, April 25, May 2 (Saturday)**

#### Pelham Bay Park

**Leader:** Liz Gonzalez

Join the Friends of Pelham Bay Park in restoring wetlands, building footbridges and waterbars, removing invasive plants, planting trees and maintaining trails at New York City's largest park, comprised of 2,765 acres and over 13 miles of shoreline. We work on Saturdays from 10am to 2pm. Transportation to work site may be by foot, with canoes and on horseback. Confirm meeting place with leader.

**April 18 (Saturday)**

**Location TBA; 9am**

**Leader:** Joe Gindoff

#### EAST HUDSON CREW

**April 25 (Saturday)**

#### Trail Maintenance Mini-Course at Ward Pound Ridge

**Contact:** Brenda Bates, Park Manager, 914-864-7317  
**Meet:** 9:30am at the Trailside Nature Museum Ward Pound Ridge.

Join Ward Pound Ridge's trail volunteers\* for a brief update meeting about the park's 40 miles of trails followed by hands-on learning while doing clearing, trail blazing, maintenance and/or erosion control.

\*Ward Pound Ridge Volunteer Trail Maintainers meet weekly year round and do trail work. If you would like to be put on their email list for notifications, contact Christie Ferguson, EH Regional Representative, at [ferguson@nynjtc.org](mailto:ferguson@nynjtc.org)

#### AT Restoration in Fahnestock State Park

#### With RPH Cabin Volunteers Club

**Beginning in March; Dates TBA**

**Leader:** Tim Messerich, [bascomgrillmaster@yahoo.com](mailto:bascomgrillmaster@yahoo.com)  
Fifteen stone steps need to be installed on the Appalachian trail. This section of trail has been washed out for many years. The work site is about one mile north of the Rt. 301 crossing. No experience necessary, just your willingness to help preserve the trail. Contact the leader for details. For other projects, visit [timtrek.mikentim.com](http://timtrek.mikentim.com).

#### WEST HUDSON SOUTH CREW

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

**April 19 (Sunday)**

#### AT at Orange Turnpike

**Leader:** Chris Ezzo

**April 23 (Thursday)**

#### Ramapo/Dunderberg Trail at Tuxedo

**Leader:** Bob Marshall

**April 25 (Saturday)**

#### Beginner Workshop

See Trail U for details

**Leader:** Chris Ezzo

#### WEST HUDSON NORTH CREW

**Leaders:** Denise Vitale, 845-738-2126,  
[WHNTrails@aol.com](mailto:WHNTrails@aol.com)  
Dave Webber, 845-452-7238,  
[webberd1@yahoo.com](mailto:webberd1@yahoo.com)

Work dates TBA.

#### NEW JERSEY APPALACHIAN TRAIL FIELD CREW

**Leader:** Gene Giordano,  
[trailwork@appalachiantrail-nj.org](mailto: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:** Eddie Walsh,  
[bearmountaintrails@gmail.com](mailto:bearmountaintrails@gmail.com), 845-591-1537  
**Volunteer Coordinator:** Christopher Ingui,  
201-783-3599

#### Work begins March 22 (Sunday)

General work days are planned Thursdays through Mondays. Training will be provided according to participant's skill level, interest, and project needs.

Meet: 8:30am at Bear Mountain Parking Lot A for all days, unless other arrangements have been made. Preregistration with the Bear Mountain staff is required.

#### April 3 through May 4 (Thursdays through Mondays)

**For experienced crew members only**  
**Special Worktrips with Peter Jensen and Associates**

Contact Bear Mountain Project Staff to sign up and for more information. Skills-building workshops are listed under Trail University, to the left on this page.

#### SHAWANGUNK RIDGE CREW

**Leaders:** Jakob Franke, [jf31@columbia.edu](mailto:jf31@columbia.edu), 201-768-3612  
Andy Garrison, [srtmaintainer@gmail.com](mailto:srtmaintainer@gmail.com), 845-888-0602

Bring water, lunch, gloves, and tools if you have them. Extra tools will be available.

#### April 25 (Saturday) Shawanga Lodge Road Connector

We'll be sidehilling.  
Meet: 10am at the corner of Shawanga Lodge Road and Ferguson Road in the town of Mamakating.

#### May 17 (Sunday)

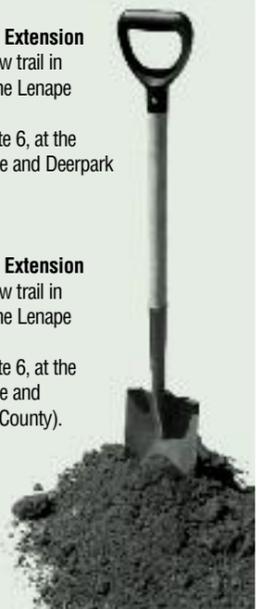
#### Lenape Ridge Trail Extension

We will be cutting new trail in Deerpark to extend the Lenape Ridge Trail.  
Meet: 10 am on Route 6, at the town line of Greenville and Deerpark (in Orange County).

#### June 6 (Saturday)

#### Lenape Ridge Trail Extension

We will be cutting new trail in Deerpark to extend the Lenape Ridge Trail.  
Meet: 10 am on Route 6, at the town line of Greenville and Deerpark (in Orange County).



## West Hudson South Crew Summary for 2008

The West Hudson South Crew finished up another busy year of trail construction. All told they spent 950 hours rebuilding and repairing damaged and eroded hiking trails. In Harriman-Bear Mountain State Parks, the crew built several stream crossings in Popolopen Gorge, completed trail relocations on the Diamond Mountain Tower Trail, and performed erosion control work on the Seven Hills and Fawn Trails. In Sterling Forest State Park the crew completed a relocation on the Sterling Lake Loop Trail.

I'd like to thank everyone who came out and contributed time and sweat to all these projects. Without these people we wouldn't have such great trails. Thank you:

Victor Alfieri, Gail Brown, Jim Brown, George Batten, Roland Breault, Brian Buchbinder, Chris Connolly, David Day, Monica Day, Kelly Dwyer, Chris Ezzo, Charles Silver-Frankel, Robert Foldes, Joyce Gallagher, Claudia Ganz, Joe Gindoff, Mary Hilley, Joan James, Andrea Kellner, David Kellner, Richard Lynch, John Mack, Kim MacLeod, Bob Marshall, Gay Mayer, Lori Maynard, Doug McBride, Trudy Pojman, Bob Randhane, Kevin Riley, Bruce Shriver, Trudy Schneider, Erwin Schaub, Robert Weber, Hans Wong, Elizabeth Zeldin, and Steve Zubarik.

—Chris Ezzo, Crew Chief

**Trail Conference members can take advantage of exclusive discounts and benefits with participating retailers and businesses!**

**You can recoup the cost of your membership in one visit!**



**NY-NJ Trail Conference BENEFITS**

The Trail Conference is proud to offer a Membership Benefit Program, which was created to provide our members with money-saving discounts at area retailers and service providers – **benefits only available to Trail Conference members.**

As part of your Trail Conference membership, you are issued a card identifying you as a Trail Conference member, making you eligible for all program discounts. To receive your member discounts, you must present your valid membership card at the time of purchase. Some stores offer the discount only on select items, so be sure to ask.

We encourage our members to take advantage of this incredible opportunity that comes with a Trail Conference membership. New discounts and offers are continually being added so be sure to visit our website's membership benefits area at [www.nynjtc.org/commerce/discount.html](http://www.nynjtc.org/commerce/discount.html) for current offers.

**25% Discount** on Trail Conference publications and clothing when purchased directly from the Trail Conference.

**FREE Subscription** to the *Trail Walker*, the Trail Conference's bi-monthly newsletter filled with timely articles and columns that will enhance your hiking experiences.

**Money-Saving Discounts** at participating retailers and businesses.

**Workshops and Seminars** on trail maintenance and construction, leadership training, wilderness first aid, chainsaw operation, environmental monitoring and GPS operation.

**Volunteer Opportunities** to "learn by doing" in areas as varied as trail maintenance, construction, publications, environmental monitoring, and cartography.

**Access to the Hoeflerlin Library** at the Trail Conference office that includes more than 1,000 books on hiking round the world, along with maps, guides and a historical archive.



**Some of Our Discount Partners**



**VISIT [WWW.NYNJTC.ORG/COMMERCE/DISCOUNT.HTML](http://WWW.NYNJTC.ORG/COMMERCE/DISCOUNT.HTML) FOR COMPLETE LIST OF MONEY-SAVING DISCOUNTS!**

**Volunteer Classifieds: Get Involved!**

Contact [volunteers@nynjtc.org](mailto:volunteers@nynjtc.org) or 201-512-9348, ext. 14, to indicate your interest or get more information about these or other volunteer opportunities. Information is also available at [www.nynjtc.org](http://www.nynjtc.org); click on Volunteer.

**Become a Trail Volunteer! Opportunities abound!**

Help to keep our region's footpaths accessible, pristine, and protected.

**Shelter Caretakers Needed!**

Help maintain shelters in the Catskills by doing minor repairs and reporting their condition to the park managers.

**AT Corridor Monitors: Appalachian Trail in New York**

Anyone with an adventurous spirit, a love of getting off-trail, and a strong land conservation ethic is encouraged to sign up for training to become a volunteer. Appalachian Trail Corridor Monitors are needed in New York to monitor the boundaries of the AT trail lands, maintaining boundary markings and reporting conditions to the land managers. Training is required - find out if monitoring is the right volunteer opportunity for you by taking the course offered on April 19 (see Trail U schedule on page 5).

**Maintainer Assignments Available!**

Adopt a segment of a trail to keep clear and blazed by walking it two or more times a year.

**Catskills:** We have 24 vacancies for trail maintainers in the Catskills area. Get in early to get your choice of trail!

**Black Rock Forest:** There are also vacancies for trail maintainers in the beautiful Hudson Highlands in New York.

**Staten Island Trails:** Maintainers are needed for sections of the Staten Island Greenbelt. Help maintain the trail, clean up litter, trim plant growth, clean out water bars, refresh blazes, and work with Trail Conference volunteers, Boy Scout groups, and park employees to repair these beautiful trails!

**On-trail leadership opportunities!**

**Trail Supervisor for Westchester**

We have a rare opportunity for an individual with the skills to oversee the Trail Conference maintainers in Westchester. Trail Supervisors are expected to collect and summarize the Trail Maintainers' reports twice yearly for the regional Trail Chair, work with trail maintainers on trail concerns, and help coordinate with Trail Crews on work projects identified by trail maintainers. In addition, this position asks you to walk all of the trails we maintain in the area once a year to be familiar with them and the problems reported by trail maintainers. If you enjoy working with others and are interested in dedicating your time to support the trail maintainers in Westchester, then this is the role for you!

**Trail Crew Chief for East Hudson**

Supervise and work with regional Trail Chairs and Trail Supervisors to lead Trail Crew trips throughout the East Hudson area. Trail Crews provide the construction and trail restoration needs in order to ensure that trails are built or repaired to Trail Conference standards. Determine the work schedule, help identify and plan projects, build your team of volunteers, and mentor new leaders.

**Appalachian Trail Overseer or Supervisor**

For the volunteer who likes to organize as much as hike, the job as an AT Trail Overseer might be just right. Hike the entire trail in your assigned area (about 20 miles) at least once a year to evaluate its condition, report problems, recommend trail relocations, and provide trail information. Supervise trail maintainers on your section.

**Appalachian Trail Corridor Manager**

This is an exciting job for someone who has AT corridor boundary monitoring and maintenance experience. Supervise boundary monitors, coordinate semi-annual reporting, work with the monitors to maintain neighbor and government contacts and with the local management committee to stop illegal boundary activities, and assess environmental and development impacts.

**Trail work not your thing?**

You can still donate your time and support the Trail Conference or by working in our office or from home.

**Trail Crew Chief Assistant (work from home)**

Are you not inclined to do the heavy work of trail building but would like to support our trail crews? Here is an opportunity to take on an important part of building and repairing our hiking trails by becoming a Trail Crew Chief Assistant. The work will involve contacting prospective recruits for the crew, keeping records of the work done and the people who volunteered, as well as other duties as requested by the Trail Crew Chief. If you're comfortable working with people, have some organizational skills and time during the spring, summer, and fall, then this kind of work could be just right for you.

**Web Writers:**

**Maintain a part of our new website**

Work from home or in the office. Adopt a part of our new online database to add information, monitor or maintain. Required: a computer, online access, commitment to accuracy, ability to be concise, willingness to learn and use online tools that are still in development. A great opportunity to support trails without getting dirty.

**VBA Programmer**

Work with Fulfillment Coordinator to write project specs and algorithms. Project includes creating an interactive application that uses caller's information as input and creates a Word file with directions to existing stores in his/her area. Need VBA programming experience for Excel, Access, Word; ability to learn a new API (MS MapPoint).

**Executive Assistant**

Do you have good organizational and clerical skills? Are you proficient with Microsoft Office software? The Trail Conference Executive Director is looking for someone help to manage his workload to ensure the most efficient and effective use of his time. If you have the above skills and can come into the office on a regular basis 4-20 hours a week, let us know!

**Data Entry and Clerical Support**

Office help needed for our office in Mahwah, 2-3 hours a day, twice a week. Duties include: Internet research, processing and shipping orders, and stocking of our books, maps and supplies.

**Publications Volunteers Needed**

The Publications Committee is looking for volunteers to help with upcoming book and map projects. If you have skills in the areas of writing, editing or proof-reading, you can help us produce a new or revised trail guidebook. We are also looking for volunteers to serve as project managers for our books and maps, and for people who can field check trail descriptions or GPS trails to ensure that we have the most up-to-date information.

Science & Ecology

# Marauding Salamanders: The Earliest Sign of Spring

By Jeremy Feinberg



Tiger salamanders up close

When most people think about spring, they probably envision the arrival of warm weather, bright sunshine, birds calling, and flowers blooming. However, if you consider things from a slightly different perspective, there is an alternate universe of spring awakenings that people are seldom aware of. While the idea of thawing ice, rainy nights, and temporary puddles of waist-high water (known as “vernal pools”) may not sound spring-like or exciting to most people, to some, especially herpetologists, these conditions are ideal for observing one of the first true signs of spring. A herpetologist is someone who

studies reptiles and amphibians, and if you find one (or more) herpetologists out in conditions such as these, they are likely to be searching for one thing in particular – salamanders.

There are approximately 15 species of salamander living in the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area. Some species breed over extended periods of time and in unique habitats, such as the redback salamander (*Plethodon cinereus*), which breeds on land, or the spring salamander (*Gyrinophilus porphyriticus*), which breeds in isolated springs and small tributary streams.

However, most of the largest, best known salamanders in our region are members of the genus *Ambystoma*, commonly referred to as “mole salamanders.” There are four members of this group in our region (or five depending on the outcome of a debate over two species that hybridize). These salamanders are characterized by explosive breeding migrations during the first few nights of thawing spring rain, usually in March.

Explosive migrations involve a mass terrestrial movement of adult salamanders to their breeding wetlands, often the same pond where they themselves were born. Male salamanders may arrive before females, and leave behind a sperm packet known as a spermatophore. Females will follow in search of spermatophores. After fertilization, the female deposits a jelly-like egg mass. Within a few hours to a few days, the adult salamanders disappear and return to their subterranean upland habitats.

Aquatic salamander larvae (similar to tadpoles) emerge from the eggs after several days. The predatory larvae develop quickly and, if lucky, survive to lose their gills and venture onto land as young adults after several months, hopefully before their pond dries during summer.

Mole salamanders are typically associated with vernal pools and other temporary wetlands (e.g. wet meadows, agricultural wetlands, ditches) where predatory fish are not an issue. In addition to this essential

aquatic breeding habitat, adjacent terrestrial upland habitat is also critical for nearly all the remaining non-breeding needs of the adults. Salamander populations cannot persist in one habitat without the other.



A vernal pool in spring

Depending on where you are in our area, there may not be any habitat for salamanders or there may be dozens or even hundreds of different breeding wetlands scattered within a particular area. At night, people with a little knowledge, care, and keen eyesight may even witness a breeding migration over a roadway. While roads make it easy to see a breeding migration, they are usually catastrophic for the salamanders, as cars rarely if ever stop for slithering salamanders. Juveniles may meet the same crushing fate as they migrate away from their pond later in the year. Some towns have constructed special passageways or have enacted road closures on heavy migration nights.

One of the earliest species to breed is also one of the rarest amphibians in the mid-Atlantic region. The eastern tiger salamander (*Ambystoma tigrinum*), endangered in both New York and New Jersey, is also the second largest terrestrial salamander in North America. Primarily restricted to pine barrens habitats in our region, this species will breed on any warm, rainy night, even as early as November, December, or January.

The spotted salamander (*Ambystoma maculatum*) follows on the heels of the tiger. However, they are much more common and widely distributed in our area,

especially throughout deciduous forests. Many people have encountered these black, yellow-spotted salamanders at least once in their life.

No discussion of our regional mole salamanders is complete without mentioning one last species that is a bit of a rogue among the others. Marbled salamanders (*Ambystoma opacum*) follow many of the same rules as the other *Ambystoma* except for the fact that they breed in the fall, when the wetlands first fill with water after the summer drought, instead of spring. They probably do this to get a jump on the other salamanders they compete with. Marbled salamanders are the smallest of our *Ambystoma*, so if they were to breed at the same time as the larger species, they would not stand a chance. By breeding in the fall, the aquatic larvae are already well-developed when the other species arrive the following spring.

Other species in our area include: the blue-spotted salamander (*Ambystoma laterale*) and Jefferson salamander (*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*) hybrid group as well as the two-lined salamander (*Eurycea bislineata*), longtail salamander (*Eurycea longicauda*), northern dusky salamander (*Desmognathus fuscus*), mountain dusky salamander (*Desmognathus ochrophaeus*), northern red salamander (*Pseudotriton ruber*), mud salamander (*Pseudotriton montanus*), four-toed salamander (*Hemidactylium scutatum*), red-spotted newt (*Notophthalmus viridiscens*), and slimy salamander (*Plethodon glutinosus*).

Explosive migrations! What a great excuse for an evening hike in early spring!

*Jeremy Feinberg is a herpetologist and doctoral candidate in the Graduate Program in Ecology and Evolution at Rutgers University. He is interested in understanding the specific factors that lead particular species to become rare or extinct.*



## Keeping Up with the Sedges

By Michael Alcamo

Sedges (genus *Carex*) present the usual classic paradox of botany and hiking: we walk through them or over them, yet few hikers are able to point them out.

From a distance, sedges look like their plant cousins, the grasses; however, they have important structural differences. First, a sedge has a clearly defined triangular stem; grasses are usually round. And, looking closer, you'll see that a sedge's leaves are spirally arranged in three ranks, while grasses have alternate leaves in two ranks.

Sedges prefer wet areas and are found either rooted in moist ground or rooted in the sediment of shallow water at the edges of a pond or lake. They are vitally important parts of the ecology of a marsh, bog, or fen.

Sedges are flowering plants—and what flowers they have. For such modest plants, the range of flower structures is quite dramatic and beautiful. The flowering part—or “inflorescence”—is a group of small florets, which may have some missing parts. The “staminate floret,” or male portion, is at the top of the structure, and the pistillate florets (female) are beneath. Wind carries the pollen grains to the stigmatic surfaces of female florets on another plant.

The sedge has a fruit, which is a dry *achene* bearing one seed, which is sometimes enclosed in a *perigynium*, a small inflated structure.

Once the seed forms, it can remain dormant for quite some time before germinating into a new plant. Generally, the seed will germinate only in the presence of sunlight and temperatures above 10 degrees Celsius.

Sedges reproduce in annual cycles by means of seeds, but are also perennials—at the end of the growing season, they die back to the ground level, and the following year, they will sprout from underground rhizomes or roots. In this way, a sward of sedges might actually be one large organism.

Sedges depend on the wind, not insects, for pollination, though their flowers nevertheless attract insects. Sedge flowers are considered delicacies by sedge grasshoppers, leaf beetles, aphids, billbugs and some plant bugs, caterpillars, and moths. In wetlands, the seeds or seedheads of sedges are food sources for ducks, rails, certain songbirds, small rodents, and some turtles.

There was great excitement in the sedge-loving community recently when the Large-Headed Sedge (*Carex macrocephala*) was discovered in New Jersey. This sedge is native to Russia, Japan, and the Pacific coast of Canada. In summer 2005, New Jersey botanist Louise Wootton discovered three populations growing in a coastal area of the state. Professor Wootton hypothesized that dried sedges had been used as shipping material, and that a few grains had blown into the wind when someone in New Jersey opened a box of something made in Japan many years ago.

Many sedges are listed as endangered or threatened in New York and New Jersey, so unless you know that a species is very common, it's better to enjoy them from a distance, and to let them continue to live their placid sedge lives.

*Michael Alcamo is a writer and naturalist and a member of ADK's Mid-Hudson Chapter as well as the Trail Conference.*

### Look out for these sedges



Carex conjuncta



Carex blanda



Carex comosa



Carex scoparia



Carex blanda



**March**

**Sunday, March 1**

**GAHC. Palisades & Hudson Shore, NJ.** Leader: Helly deLiz, 201-592-6377. Moderate hike; preregistration requested. Meet: Linwood Park Shopping Center, west side of Rt. 9W, Fort Lee, NJ, at 10am.

**IHC. Terrace Pond to Echo Lake, NJ.** Leaders: Guy and Jen Percival, 973-590-7437. Meet: 9am at Echo Lake parking, Newark Watershed, W. Milford, NJ. Strenuous hike. The Highlands Trail and many others will take us from secluded Terrace Pond in Wawayanda State Park to Echo Lake in the Watershed. Shuttle required; bring crampons and walking pole.

**Monday, March 2**

**RVW. Westkill Mountain (3880'), Catskills, NY.** For information: 973-994-2314. Strenuous hike: 7 miles, 5.5 hours. Meet: 8am. Inclement weather date, following Monday. Note: snowshoes and crampons required.

**WEC. Surprise Lake Hike for Young Adults, NJ.** Leader: led by associate naturalist; call Weis Ecology Center at 973-835-2160; must preregister. Meet: 11am. 7-mile moderate, social hike for adults ages 18-30. We'll follow Bearfort Ridge up to Surprise Lake in Abram S. Hewitt State Forest; fantastic views of Greenwood Lake. Carpool required. Hazardous driving conditions cancel. \$5 fee.

**UCHC. Jockey Hollow National Park, Morristown, NJ.** Leader: Mae Deas, 908-233-6641. Meet: 10am at visitor center parking. 4-5 miles at moderate pace with some hilly sections.

**Tuesday, March 3**

**UCHC. Garret Mtn. Hike and More, NJ.** Leaders: Wally Koenig, 973-684-5528, and Dave Sutter, 973-778-0992. Meet: 10am at Lambert's Castle in West Paterson, NJ. After climbing the short but fairly steep road to top of Garret Mtn. we'll do 4 easy miles on wide paths. Then carpool to Paterson to visit the Great Falls and some antique locomotives. Steady downpour cancels.

**Thursday, March 5**

**UCHC. Reeves Meadow, Harriman State Park, NY.** Leader: George Pullman, 973-773-2678. Meet: 10am at Reeves Meadow visitor center, Seven Lakes Dr. Moderately strenuous 8+ miles at a brisk pace; for experienced hikers.

**Saturday, March 7**

**UCHC. Watchung Trail Maintenance, NJ.** Leader: call Betty Kelly, 908-527-4900, ext. 4231, to preregister. Meet: 9:30am; we'll work until noon. Have fun while giving back to the trails; meet people while working outdoors. Bring clippers, trash bag, and good working gloves. Severe thunderstorm/rain cancels.

**AFW. Round Valley, NJ.** Leader: call 973-644-3592 to register or go to [www.adventuresforwomen.org](http://www.adventuresforwomen.org). Meet: 10am. Moderate hike; out by 2pm.

**SW. Statues and Monuments of Hoboken, NJ.** Leader: Tom McBreen, 516-812-0156. Meet: 10am at PATH Train entrance at 6th Ave. and 33rd St., Manhattan. 5 miles at a fast pace with some hills; out in about 4 hours. Bring binoculars or camera with zoom lens. Heavy rain/snow cancels. Call eve before until 9pm if in doubt. Donation requested.

**Sunday, March 8**

**IHC. Allamuchy Mtn. State Park, NJ.** Leader: Jim McKay, 973-538-0756. Meet: 9:30am at Sussex Branch Trail, southern parking lot on Waterloo Rd., Stanhope, NJ. Moderate 6-8 miles in the north section of the park.

**TLR. Last Chance for Eagles!, NY.** Leader: expert naturalist Charlie Roberto; preregistration required: call 914-762-2912, ext. 110, or go to [www.teatown.org](http://www.teatown.org). Meet: 9am. Catch one last glimpse of wintering eagles before they leave for their northern home. Croton Boat Ramp and will travel to other sites along the river. Dress warmly and bring binoculars. Children welcome; must be accompanied by an adult; free program.

**SW & NYHC. Staten Island Beaches, NY.** Leader: Ray Krant, 718-435-4994. Meet: 10:15am at waiting room on Manhattan side of Staten Island Ferry terminal. 6.5 miles at a moderate pace. We'll walk on boardwalk and beach from South Beach to Oakwood Beach. Donation requested.

**UCHC. South Mtn. Reservation, NJ.** Leader: Louise White, 973-746-4319; call before 9pm. Meet: 10am at Tulip Springs parking, Brookside Ave., Millburn. 4 easy miles through pine forest, overlooking a beautiful gorge and crossing the Raritan River.

**Tuesday, March 10**

**UCHC. Black Rock Forest, NY.** Leader: Arnie Seymour-Jones, 201-768-3864. Meet: 10am; call for directions. Moderate 6-7 miles with very good views and some steep pitches.

**Wednesday, March 11**

**SW. Rockland Lake to Haverstraw, NY.** Leader: Oliver Wayne, 917-415-2567. Meet: Take the 9A bus from Port Authority Bus Terminal; call leader for details. Hilly 8 miles at a moderate pace. Long Path partly around Rockland Lake, see NYC from Hook Mtn. State Park, steep White Trail, then through Haverstraw State Park to commuter ferry to Ossining (additional cost), where we get the train to NYC. Donation requested.

**Thursday, March 12**

**UCHC. Ringwood State Park, NJ.** Leader: Dave Hogenauer, 973-762-1475. Meet: 10am at second lot past Manor. 7 miles at a fast pace; not many hills. Cooper Union Trail to Governor's Mtn., with its wonderful view of the reservoir.

**Saturday, March 14**

**SW. Bay Head to Manasquan Inlet, NJ.** Leader: Craig Nunn, 551-206-6823; call before 10pm. Call morning of hike after 6am if weather doubtful. Meet: 11:20am at Bay Head, NJ, RR station (take 9:07 North Jersey Coast train from Penn Station to Bay Head; leader boards at Secaucus). Easy 8 miles on streets. Walk past inlets and ponds along Jersey shore, stopping from time to time to look for birds. Donation requested.

**UCHC. Watchung Reservation, Mountainside, NJ.** Leader: Joan Lepselter, 908-273-4188. Meet: 10am at Trailside Center on Coles Ave. at N. Providence Rd. 4-5 miles at a brisk pace. Steady rain cancels.

**RVW. Woodstock Town Hall Property, NY.** For information: 845-246-7174. Easy walk: 3 miles, 2 hours. Meet: 10am.

**Sunday, March 15**

**GAHC. Wards Pound Ridge Reservation, Cross River, NY.** Leader: Brian Kassenbrock, 718-748-0624. Moderate and easy hikes with possible x-country skiing; preregistration requested. Entrance fee. Meet: museum at 10am.



AMC hikers pause during a weekend of ambitious fall hiking in the Catskills.

**IHC. Patriots' Path - Fosterfields to Morris Co. Arboretum, NJ.** Leader: Claire Bransfield, 908-240-1479. Meet: 9am at Fosterfields Historic Farm, Kahdena Rd., Morristown, NJ. Moderate hike using newly acquired rights-of-way to use the Patriots' Path to make a country and city hike ending with a visit to the arboretum.

**AFW. Goshen, Letterrock and Stevens Mts. Harriman State Park, NY.** Leader: call 973-644-3592 to register or go to [www.adventuresforwomen.org](http://www.adventuresforwomen.org). Meet: 10am. Moderate hike; out by 3pm.

**Monday, March 16**

**RVW. Balsam Lake Mountain (3600'), Catskills, NY.** For information: 607-363-7267. Moderate-plus hike: 5.5 miles, 5 hours. Meet: 9:30. Inclement weather date, following Monday. Note: snowshoes and crampons required.

**Thursday, March 19**

**AFW. Ramapo Mtn. State Forest Almost-Equinox Hike, NJ.** Leader: call 973-644-3592 to register or go to [www.adventuresforwomen.org](http://www.adventuresforwomen.org). Meet: 4pm. Easy hike; out by 7:30pm.

**UCHC. Stokes State Forest, NJ.** Leader: Alan Breach, 973-875-4376. Meet: 10am at Stony Lake parking. Moderate 7 miles on Swenson, Tinsley, and Blue Mtn. Trails.

**Saturday, March 21**

**SW. Bridges and Waterways of Central Park, NY.** Leader: Matthew Brozyna, 917-912-9533. Meet: 9am at atrium entrance to Time Warner complex, 59th St. and Columbus Circle. Moderately paced 8 miles. Under, over, around, and through many of the architectural wonders of Central Park, up to Harlem Meer then ending at Sheep's Meadow. About 5 hours. Donation requested.

**UCHC. Pyramid and Turkey Mtns., NJ.** Leader: Al Verdi, 973-263-8569. Meet: 10am at Pyramid Mtn. parking. 4-5 miles with some steep, rocky sections; not for beginners. Includes detour to Tripod Rock.

**ADK-MH. Overcliff Trail, Mohonk Preserve, NY.** Leader: Lalita Malik, LalitaMalik@aol.com, 845-592-0204. Enjoy magnificent views of Shawangunks Mountains, Mohonk, and Minnewaska on this easy 5-mile loop on carriage roads in Mohonk Preserve. Meet at New Paltz Diner parking lot at 10:00am. Please confirm participation. Fee for nonmembers of Mohonk Preserve.

**NYHC. Staten Island Greenbelt, NY.** Leaders: Steve and Bettye Soffer: call 7-9pm, 718-720-1593; on day of hike, 917-270-9967. Celebrate spring in the Greenbelt, but wear good shoes; it might be muddy. Bring lunch and beverage. Take 10:30 boat from South Ferry and meet leaders at the S74bus, B ramp. Drivers and people from Brooklyn, call for directions. (\$3 nonmembers)

**Sunday, March 22**

**IHC. Lake Skannatati, Harriman State Park, NY.** Leader: Roy Williams, 570-828-6207. Meet: 9am at Lake Skannatati, Seven Lakes Drive. Moderately strenuous. We'll visit the little cemetery on Beech Trail, Hasenclever Mine, and Lakes Askoti and Skannatati. Bad weather cancels.

**Saturday, March 28**

**UOC. Birding at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Area.** Leader: George Pitcher, 732-828-1890. Meet: must preregister. Morning hike on level ground around Jamaica Bay and a large pond that offers many sightings of shorebirds.

**SW. East Hudson Highlands, NY.** Leader: Marvin Malater, 718-376-3608. Meet: 8:20am at Grand Central Terminal information booth for 8:50 train to Garrison, NY (RT). Moderately paced 10 miles, with climbs. Forested, rolling hills along the Appalachian Trail, Curry Pond Traverse, and Arden Point river overlook of West Point. Donation requested.

**UCHC. Tourne Park, Boonton, NJ.** Leader: Susan Jacobs, 973-402-2555. Meet: 10am; call for directions. Moderate hike to top of the Tourne, with wildflowers, a stream, and lake. Some ups and downs. Steady rain cancels.

**ADK-MH. Appalachian Trail, MA.** Leader: Pete McGinnis: 845-454-4428 or [pmcgini@aol.com](mailto:pmcgini@aol.com). Contact leader for details.

**NYHC. Cranberry Lake, Westchester County, NY.** Leader: Mayer Wiesen, 516-671-2095; call before 10:30pm. Hike along marked trails in a Westchester County Park. Cross boardwalks and eat at picnic tables; a trip for the civilized. Bring lunch and an extra pair of socks. Meet: 9:30am, Grand Central Terminal information booth. No smoking on trip. Joint with Outdoors Club and Shorewalkers.

**Sunday, March 29**

**GAHC. Rockwood Hall Park & Old Croton Aqueduct, Briarcliff Manor, NY.** Leaders: Manfred Janowski, 914-428-4573 or cell 914-949-4933, and Evelyn Hoyer, 718-457-8319. Moderate and easy hikes with x-country skiing; preregistration requested. Meet: parking lot at end of Rt. 117 West in North Tarrytown at 9:30am.

**IHC. Highlands Trail-Byram to Stephens State Park, NJ.** Leader: Ursula Davis, 973-786-7087. Meet: 9am at Shop Rite Plaza, Rt. 206N, Byram (Stanhope), NJ. Moderately strenuous 8 miles through Allamuchy State Park, along the Musconetcong River. Steep descent to visit an old Indian village, and Old Historic Waterloo Village. Shuttle required.

**TLR. Popolopen Torne, Harriman State Park, NY.** Leader: preregistration required; call 914-762-2912, ext. 110, or go to [www.teatown.org](http://www.teatown.org). Meet: 10am. Get a 360-degree view of the Highlands and the Hudson from this gem of a little peak. Adults only; \$5 fee. Rain cancels. Out by 2pm.

**WEC. Pancake Brunch Hike, NJ.** Leader: Don Weise; call Weis Ecology Center at 973-835-2160; must preregister. Meet: 9:30am. Strenuous 8-9 miles with steep climbs, great views, and a short bushwhack. Out by 1pm, when you can join us for a full pancake brunch (extra fee for brunch). \$8 fee.

**NYR. Pawling Nature Preserve, NY.** Leader: Lee Ruelle, 212-388-0354. Meet: 7:30am at Grand Central Terminal for 7:46 train to Appalachian Trail stop, one-way (we'll return from Harlem Valley/Wingdale). We'll head north on the AT onto Hammersly Ridge, then descend to a waterfall and a remnant of Great Swamp. After other loops on the AT and other trails, we'll head out to Harlem Valley train station via local roads.

**Monday, March 30**

**RVW. Bearpen (3600') and Vly (3529'), Catskills, NY.** For information: 845-246-8616. Strenuous hike and bushwhack: 8 miles, 6 hours. Meet: 8am. Inclement weather date, following Monday. Note: Snowshoes and crampons required.

**April**

**Wednesday, April 1**

**UCHC. Allamuchy South, NJ.** Leaders: Don and Jeane McLellan, 908-464-6246. Meet: 10am at Scenic Overlook off I-80 East, Hackettstown, top parking lot. Fairly level 5 miles around the lake.

**Thursday, April 2**

**AFW. The Palisades.** Leader: call 973-644-3592 to register or go to [www.adventuresforwomen.org](http://www.adventuresforwomen.org). Meet: 10am. Moderate hike; out by 2pm.

**UCHC. Sterling Forest, NY.** Leader: Katya Hansen, 732-530-5213. Meet: 10am; call for directions. Moderately strenuous 7 miles including an interesting mine site; for experienced hikers.

**Friday - Sunday, April 3-5**

**SW. Cape May, NJ, Weekend.** Leader: Walt Wright, 917-783-6540. Meet: Contact leader well in advance so we can plan accommodations and carpooling. Easy walks with a focus on birding (renowned location on the Atlantic flyway), beach walks (Atlantic Ocean and Delaware Bay), and admiring the Victorian architecture (the town is a National Landmark). Spend 2 or 3 nights; call early for details and to register.

**Saturday, April 4**

**UCHC. Watchung Trail Maintenance, NJ.** Leader: call Betty Kelly, 908-527-4900, ext. 4231, to preregister. Meet: 9:30am; we'll work until noon. Have fun while giving back to the trails; meet people while working outdoors. Bring clippers, trash bag, and good working gloves. Severe thunderstorm/rain cancels.

**AFW. Appalachian Trail.** Leader: call 973-644-3592 to register or go to [www.adventuresforwomen.org](http://www.adventuresforwomen.org). Meet: 9am. Strenuous hike at a moderate pace; out by 5pm. Rt. 94 to State Line by Greenwood Lake, NJ.

**SW. Croton-Harmon to Teatown Lake, NY.** Leader: Dorothy Lourdou, 212-685-6443. Meet: 8:30am at Grand Central Terminal info booth to take 8:56 train to Croton-Harmon, arriving 9:51am. Moderate 10 miles with one steep up and down. Pleasant woods walk on Croton Aqueduct, returning the same way. Mud likely, so boots recommended. Donation requested.

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

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

**Club Codes**

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

ADK-MH	Adirondack Mountain Club-Mid Hudson	TLR	Teatown Lake Reservation
AFW	Adventures for Women	UOC	University Outing Club
GAHC	German-American Hiking Club	UCHC	Union County Hiking Club
IHC	Interstate Hiking Club	WEC	Weis Ecology Center
NYHC	New York Hiking Club		
NYR	New York Ramblers		
RVW	Rip Van Winkle		
SW	Shorewalkers		

Clubs wishing to have hikes listed in Hikers' Almanac should send their schedules to [tw@nynjtc.org](mailto:tw@nynjtc.org) or to the Trail Conference Office. The deadline for the May/June issue is March 15.

TRUDY POJMAN

**SW. The Jersey-Hudson River Saunter, NY-NJ.** Leader: Matthew Brozyna, 917-912-9533. Meet: 9:15am at info booth in GW Bridge Bus Terminal (178th St. @ Broadway). Amazing 14+ mile medium-paced walk. After crossing the GW Bridge, we spiral south along the Palisades and shores of NJ, passing through Hoboken and ending at the newly rebuilt pier near the tip of Jersey City, NJ. A visually stunning 7+ hour mini-saunter. Return to Manhattan on PATH train. Rain cancels! Donation requested.

**UCHC. South Mtn. Reservation, Millburn, NJ.** Leader: Lee Fanger, 973-376-3160. Meet: 10am at Locust Grove parking, Glen. Ave. across from RR station. Moderate 4-5 miles at steady pace. Bad weather cancels.

**NYHC. Great Kills to Staten Island Mall, NY.** Leader: Ray Krant: 718-435-4994. Moderate hike at steady pace through Greenbelt on White, Yellow, and Blue Trails with nice scenery. Bring lunch and water. Meet at 10:15am, Manhattan side of Staten Island Ferry. (\$3 nonmembers)

**Sunday, April 5**

**AFW. Bunker Hill.** Leader: call 973-644-3592 to register or go to www.adventuresforwomen.org. Meet: 10am. Easy hike; out by 1pm.

**IHC. Harriman State Park, NY.** Leader: Roy Williams, 570-828-6207. Meet: 9am at Elk Pen Parking, Arden Valley Rd., Arden, NY. Strenuous 12 miles, visiting many mines throughout the day. Bad weather cancels.

**UCHC. Jockey Hollow, Morristown, NJ.** Leader: Dave Bennett, 973-701-0248. Meet: 10am at visitor center parking. Moderate 5 miles in this historic park.

**Monday, April 6**

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

**Thursday, April 9**

**UCHC. Bearfort Ridge, Hewitt, NJ.** Leader: George Smith, 973-778-3586. Meet: 10am at A&P for short shuttle to trailhead; call for directions. 8 miles, strenuous morning followed by a moderate afternoon; for experienced hikers.

**Saturday, April 11**

**UCHC. Jockey Hollow National Park, Morristown, NJ.** Leader: Mae Deas, 908-233-6641. Meet: 10am at visitor center parking. 4-5 miles at moderately fast pace with some hilly sections.

**Sunday, April 12**

**UCHC. Watchung Reservation, Mountainside, NJ.** Leader: Ellen Jeydel, 908-232-2413. Meet: 10am at Trailside Center on Coles Ave. at New Providence Rd. Moderate 5-6 miles.

**Monday, April 13**

**UCHC. Great Swamp, Chatham, NJ.** Leader: Len Shnitzer, 732-499-9176. Meet: 10am; call for directions. Easy, level walk along the boardwalk and Laurel Trail.

**Tuesday, April 14**

**UCHC. Popolopen Gorge, Harriman State Park, NY.** Leader: Arnie Seymour-Jones, 201-768-3864. Meet: 10am at Bear Mtn. Inn. 6-7 miles up the gorge to Popolopen Torne (optional climb) and back Timp-Torne Trail to Fort Montgomery.

**Thursday, April 16**

**UCHC. Kittatinny Valley State Park, Andover, NJ.** Leader: Mae Deas, 908-233-6641; must call to register day before the hike. Meet: 10am at visitor center on Goodale Rd. Fairly level 5-6 miles.

**Friday-Sunday, April 17-19**

**ADK-MH. Backpack the Old Loggers Path, PA.** Leader: Russ Faller, russoutdoors@yahoo.com. The Old Loggers Path is one of Pennsylvania's premier loop trails because it showcases some of the state's most scenic areas. A 27-mile loop of moderate difficulty with mostly gradual ascents/descents and some steep sections. Limited to 10 in good physical condition. Fit beginners welcome. Participants need own gear and food. Meet at trailhead at 1pm on Friday. Contact leader to register.

**Saturday, April 18 - Sunday, April 19**

**AFW. Backpacking in Harriman State Park, NY.** Leader: call 973-644-3592 to register or go to www.adventuresforwomen.org. Meet: 9am Saturday; out by 3pm Sunday. Moderate hike with some difficult sections; for experienced backpackers.

**Saturday, April 18**

**TLR. Celebrate Earth Day at Teatown, Ossining, NY.** Leader: preregistration required; call 914-762-2912, ext. 110, or go to www.teatown.org. Meet: 8am. Teatown's first hike-a-thon fundraiser to help raise funds for Teatown Lake Reservation. Out by 2pm.

**UCHC. Branch Brook Park, Newark, NJ.** Leader: Lynn Gale, 973-763-7230. Meet: 10am at parking on Franklin Ave.; call for directions. Easy hike on Lenape Trail and some sidewalks through this beautiful gem designed by Olmsted; we may see cherry blossoms.

**Sunday, April 19**

**AFW. Long Mountain, Harriman Mountain State Park, NY.** Leader: call 973-644-3592 to register or go to www.adventuresforwomen.org. Meet: 9:30am. Moderate hike; out by 2:30pm.

**GAHC. Sterling Forest State Park, NY.** Leader: Mathias Wuethrich, 908-253-9042. Moderate hikes. Meet: Frank Lautenberg Visitors Center at 9:30am; call for directions.

**IHC. Silvermine, Harriman State Park, NY.** Leader: Roy Williams, 570-828-6207. Meet: 9am at Silvermine Picnic area, Seven Lakes Dr. Strenuous hike. Bad weather cancels.

**SW. Garrison to Manitou, East Hudson Highlands, NY.** Leader: Marvin Malater, 718-376-3608. Meet: 8:20am at info booth at Grand Central for 8:50 train to Garrison, NY (RT). 7-9 miles at moderate pace, with hills. Osborn Loop, Appalachian Trail, then descending into Manitou where we follow the road northward for an extended shore view. Return is from Manitou Station at 5:05pm. Donation requested.

**UCHC. Pyramid Mtn., Montville, NJ.** Leaders: Jeffrey Sovelove, Hiker\_Dood@yahoo.com and Lee Ousley, Ousleycl@mindspring.com. Meet: 10am at visitors center parking. 4-5 miles with significant climbing. Bad weather cancels.

**NYHC. Van Cortlandt Park to Downtown Yonkers, NY.** Leaders: Helen Mangione-Yee and George Glatz; call between 7-8am only, 212-533-9457. Hike via Putnam Trail and Tibbetts Brook Park on easy trails at moderate, steady pace; some ups and downs. Meet: 10:45am in the Bronx at 242nd Van Cortlandt Park/Broadway (park side), last stop of #1 train; sit in first car of train, right token booth and right staircase. Return via Metro North or bus. Rain, ice, snow, or temperatures below 20 degrees cancels. (\$3 nonmembers)

**Tuesday, April 21**

**SW. Wantagh Nature Trail, Long Island, NY.** Leader: Robert Kess, 631-225-0297. Meet: 9:59am at Wantagh RR station, west end of platform; take 9:06am LIRR train from Penn Station to Wantagh (RT). 6 miles at an easy pace. We'll see freshwater wetlands, a former NYC reservoir, and waterfowl. Donation requested.

**UCHC. Reeves Meadow, Harriman State Park, NY.** Leader: Bob Bieri, 201-664-3813. Meet: 10am at Reeves Meadow visitor center, Seven Lakes Dr. Moderately strenuous 6 miles with many hills and one rock scramble. Reeves Brook, Raccoon Brook, Poached Egg, and Pine Meadow Trails.

**Thursday, April 23**

**UCHC. Schunemunk Mtn., NY.** Leaders: Jim and Carolyn Canfield, 973-728-9774. Meet: 10am at Black Rock Fish and Game lot; call for directions. Moderately strenuous 8+ miles; for experienced hikers. Long Path and Jessup Trail will give us sweeping views along the ridge and unforgettable conglomerate rock beneath our feet.

**Saturday, April 25**

**SW. Annual Doggie Stroll, NY.** Leader: Mayer Wiesen, 516-671-2095. Meet: 1:30pm corner of Queens Blvd. and Kew Gardens Rd.; take E or F train to Union Turnpike, exit front car. 3 miles at a relaxed pace. Afternoon stroll in Forest Park, Queens, for doggies escorted by their owners (those without dogs are welcome too). Donation requested.

**UCHC. Watchung Reservation, Mountainside, NJ.** Leader: Joan Lepseter, 908-273-4188. Meet: 10am at Trailside Center on Coles Ave. at New Providence Rd. 4-5 miles at a brisk pace. Steady rain cancels.

**Sunday, April 26**

**IHC. Trail Clearing on Sterling Ridge Trail, NJ.** Leader: Jim Canfield, 973-728-9774. Meet: 9am at south end of Sterling Ridge Trail, Rt. 511, Hewitt, NJ. Moderately strenuous day working on another spring cleanup. Bring clippers and good working gloves; you can also use the club's tools. We need everyone's help! Rain date is Saturday, May 2.

**AFW. Mahlon Dickerson Reservation, NJ.** Leader: call 973-644-3592 to register or go to www.adventuresforwomen.org. Meet: 10am. Easy hike; out by 2pm.

**TLR. Fishkill Ridge, NY.** Leader: preregistration required; call 914-762-2912, ext. 110, or go to www.teatown.org. Meet: 10am. Hike this rugged 1,900-acre park preserved by Scenic Hudson. The climb up the Overlook Trail is steep and strenuous in places, but affords great views of the Catskills, Hudson River, and the foothills of the Taconic Range. Out by 2pm. Adults only; \$5 fee. Rain cancels.

**Tuesday, April 28**

**UCHC. Apshawa Preserve, West Milford, NJ.** Leaders: Carolyn and Jim Canfield, 973-728-9774. Meet: 10am at Macopin Rd. parking; call for directions. 6 miles. Explore the trails and lakes in Passaic County's 512-acre preserve in the Highlands region.

**Thursday, April 30**

**UCHC. Pine Meadow Lake, Harriman State Park, NY.** Leader: Ellie King, 908-233-8411; must call day before hike to register. Meet: 10am at Reeves Brook visitor center on Seven Lakes Dr. 6 miles to this beautiful lake, with some hills and rock scrambling in the morning.

# 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.



## Outdoor Bound Adventures

Outdoor Bound Adventures (OBA), a travel and adventure business based in New York City, became a member organization of the Trail Conference last June. In early January, 11 guides employed by OBA were out getting lessons in trail maintenance from Supervisor Ollie Simpson and staff member Christie Ferguson on the Beekman Uplands Loop, a 1.7-mile side trail to the AT in Dutchess County. They clipped away encroaching brush and got the trail ship-shape for hikers. Afterward, Christie Ferguson, East Hudson Regional Representative for the Trail Conference noted their high level of enthusiasm for lopping and clearing. "Despite the cold temperatures and snow on the ground, they arrived at the trailhead at 10am and jumped into the work. Of course, being experienced guides, they were well prepared, wearing lots of layers and donning new work gloves."

By mid-day, most of the trail was clear and Ollie was happy to designate OBA as its permanent maintainers. OBA has also



volunteered to help with trail crew projects on the AT and elsewhere in the East Hudson area, and work trips are being planned for them this spring and summer.

Outdoor Bound Adventures was founded in 1982 as a day-hiking company. Today, under owners Kirk Reynolds and Connie Magee, who purchased the business in 2003, OBA's experienced guides take people on a wide variety of outdoor adventures, covering day, weekend, and longer international trips. Hiking, rock and ice climbing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, mountain biking, rafting, and volunteer service trips abroad and close to home are among the activities on their calendar. They also offer active outdoor programs for young people.

For Kirk, Connie, and the other OBA guides, the focus is on pursuing not only their own passion for outdoor adventure, but also sharing these experiences with people living in the city.

The Trail Conference is pleased to have this dynamic and active outdoor business working with us to preserve our network of trails and ensure quality hiking opportunities for the future. The company is also a retail partner, offering discounts to Trail Conference members.

Learn more at Outdoor Bound Adventures' website: www.outdoorbound.com.

## WALKABLE WESTCHESTER continued from page 1

*Walkable Westchester* has been a labor of love for Jane and Walt. They began their project in late 2001, initially thinking that the county had 70-80 parks, preserves, and sanctuaries with 200-250 miles of trails. By 2005, they had identified 150 places, and by 2008 the list of parks had grown to 180. Half of the parks they had never heard of, and 22 of those parks did not exist when the project started.

The authors have been assisted by many volunteers in the course of this project. "Without them, the book would not have been possible," they note. Thanks for helping to bring *Walkable Westchester* to publication go to:

**Project manager:** Ruth Rosenthal  
**Providers of information, advice, and general assistance:** Christian Lenz Cesar, Daniel Chazin, Lindsay Cochran, Don Derr, Carol Jensen, and, from Westchester County Dept. of Parks, Recreation and Conservation, David DeLucia, Bob Del Torto, and Paul Gisando.

**Manager of trail checkers:** TJ Mancini  
**Editors:** Daniel Chazin, Barry Fingerhut, TJ Mancini, Ruth Rosenthal

**Indexer:** Suse Bell  
**Trail checkers,** "who like astronauts, went out on missions in poorly charted areas under the guidance from mission control (the authors)": Rochelle Auslander, Michael Bennett, Daniel Chazin, Nora Cheng, Don



Co-author Jane Daniels on Dancing Rock

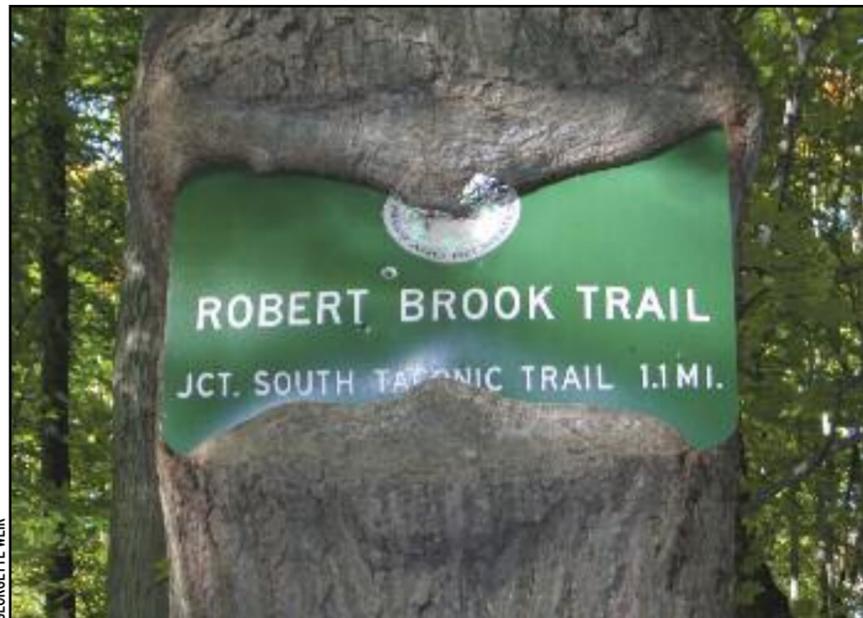
Derr, Margaret Douglas, Ann Gruhn, Peter Hibbard, Herb Hochberg, Erik and Carol Jensen, Irwin and Paula Levine, Mark H. Linehan, Bruce Lucas, Priscilla Lucas, TJ Mancini, Barry R. Mark, Naomi K. Mark, Mary Anne Massey, Mary Mallonee, Chip Meakem, Paul Meck, Catharine and Will Raffaele, Kate Ray, Bob Ross, Dietrich Schmidt, Carol Stix, Tom Sullivan, Jim Stirbis, and Robert Willimann.

Professional services were provided by cartographer Allison Werberg and book designer/layout artist Nora Porter. Photographers included Herb Chong (cover photo), Marie Barcia-Marcy, and Paul Meck.

To order your copy of *Walkable Westchester*, see Hikers' Almanac on page 12 or visit www.nynjtc.org. List price: \$24.95. Trail Conference members get a 25% discount.



Lasdon Gardens is among the places to walk described in *Walkable Westchester*.



A hungry tree in the Taconics

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*In memory of Harry Bott*

Rita Boyd, Ronald Fecher

*In the name of Ms. Lisa Weiss & Dr. F. Kenneth Zadeck*

Donald J. Zadeck

*In memory of my grandfather, Frank Napolitano,*

*born 1900, who attended the Darlington Schoolhouse*

Lisa Carlson

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

*In honor of our dear friend George Petty's 80th birthday*

Louis & Helen Lowenstein

*In memory of Raymond H. Torrey*

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*In honor of my father, Torleif Meloe*

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Vicki Steinhart

*In loving memory of my mother, Dorothy Proctor Jonas*

Robert J. Jonas

*In memory of my father, Frank Napolitano*

Harold & Shirley Baird

*In memory of Cleo Sterngold*

David Sutter & Naomi Sutter

## Progress Report on the Darlington Schoolhouse



Because of the continuing interest in the rehabilitation of the Darlington Schoolhouse as our future headquarters, we have decided to provide updates from time to time on our progress toward our move-in date. We are now in the "permit" phase of the project, during which we need to provide our site plan and architectural drawings to state, county, and local regulators to obtain the approvals needed before we can start construction.



Fortunately, we have assembled an excellent professional team:

- Tibor Latincics, PE and PP, of Conklin Associates and Trail Conference Life Member, is generously donating his time to develop the site plan and engineering drawings that demonstrate to the land use authorities how the rehabilitated Schoolhouse will enhance the community and improve water quality on the site.
- Andy Norin, land use attorney with the law firm Drinker, Biddle & Reath, is providing pro-bono counsel and coordinating the overall compliance with regulations of NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection, Bergen County, Mahwah, and Highlands land use authorities.
- The Colgan Perry Lawler Aurell Associates (CPLA) architectural firm, in the person of Win Perry as Partner Emeritus and Project Leader, and Walter Aurell as Managing Partner, have taken

hold of this project and are very visible and very hands-on in directing this project. An associate, Blair Hines, is the landscape architect. All three individuals have put their mark on the project.

- Conservation Director Bill O'Hearn has joined the committee as the coordinator in charge of managing the permitting process. He is currently working with the team of project supporters to help us work through the necessary approvals.

CPLA has created a sketch design of the finished building (see above) that features a two-story addition at the rear of the structure. This planned addition captures the classic lines of the schoolhouse while providing the space for an environmental education center on the first floor and a large meeting room for public presentations on the second.

At the same time, Conklin Associates is developing a site plan that will add parking along an existing roadway and turn the area in front of and behind the building into rain gardens that will hold and clean storm water runoff before releasing it to adjacent wetlands.

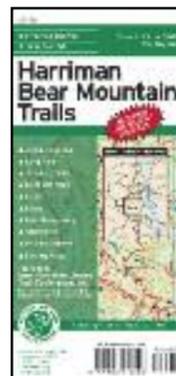
The volunteer Darlington Steering Committee is under the new leadership of Eddie Saiff, professor of Biology at Ramapo College, who has served on and chaired the Mahwah Environmental Commission as well as the Mahwah Board of Education. Eddie would like to acknowledge the great accomplishments of the former chair, Chris Tausch, in keeping the project moving forward.

### Own a TC Trail Map? Take Our Trail Map Survey!

As our organization is continually updating our trail maps and looking to expand our offerings of maps for new areas, we would like to obtain a better understanding of how people use our maps and what map features people prefer.

Your input in this survey can help us to improve our current maps and also ensure the production of new top-quality trail maps in the future.

The survey is available online at <http://tinyurl.com/TCmapsurvey>



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### Wednesday Speaker Series

The Trail Conference and Campmor are teaming up for another series of presentations relating to outdoor topics. The talks are free and will take place at the store in Paramus starting at 7 pm.

**Wednesday, March 11**  
North Forest Canoe Trail - details TBA

**Wednesday, March 18**  
Hike New York City  
Chris and Catherine Brooks

**Wednesday, March 25**  
Hiking the New Jersey Highlands  
George Petty

**Wednesday, April 1**  
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# Appalachian Trail Festival 2009

The 37th Biennial Meeting of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy

July 17-24, 2009

Castleton State College, Castleton, Vermont

Hosted by the Green Mountain Club

## Here are some of the week's highlights:

- 2,000-miler reception
- Early morning birding
- Appalachian Trail Conservancy membership meeting
- Hikes on the Appalachian Trail in southern Vermont
- Appalachian Trails and Tales
- Lessons on "going light"
- Trail magic discussion
- Virtual tour of the Long Trail Lodge
- Climate change and the Appalachian Trail
- Rattlers and Ribbons, a workshop on northeastern snakes
- Greenwall Shelter roof replacement
- Trail maintenance from Kent Pond to Thundering Falls
- Ice cream run to Ben & Jerry's factory in Waterbury
- Narrated M/V Carillon cruise on Lake Champlain
- American Revolution sites including Hubbardton, Saratoga and Ticonderoga

## And in the evening...

**Friday, July 17:** GMC Executive Director Ben Rose and Director of Field Programs Dave Hardy present "Vermont from A to Z" and "A Short Look at the Long Trail."

**Sunday, July 19:** Author and long-distance hiker Cindy Ross entertains with her multi-media show: "A Family's Journey Along the Continental Divide," about her trek with four llamas, two children, and one husband.

**Monday, July 20:** The Honeymooners Quartet, a mixed a cappella group from the Upper Valley, perform old favorites with a new twist. Plus, Chris Hanna and Mary Lou Recor show slides from their adventure, "Hiking the Pacific Crest."

**Tuesday, July 21:** Sam Jamke presents "New Zealand's Great Walks," and the town of Castleton sponsors its weekly Concert on the Green.

**Wednesday, July 22:** Mike Tougias gives a talk: "There's a Porcupine in my Out-house." The Vermont Institute of Natural Science staff presents: "Coyotes in New England."

**Thursday, July 23:** Paul Houchens shows slides from his adventure: "Hiking and Paddling through Alaska and the Yukon Territory." John Mudge talks about the "History and Names of the White Mountains."

For more information or to volunteer, see [www.vermont2009.org](http://www.vermont2009.org). Registration begins March 1.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*continued from page 2*

Jersey trail network. But in the January/February issue of *Trail Walker* I was happy to see an article in which Jane Daniels speaks about meeting and working with the mountain biking community.

I look forward to more work done side by side with the Trail Conference.

*Evan Fineman  
Fair Lawn, NJ*

### On Another Topic...

#### Improve Delegates Meetings, Don't Cut Their Number

Re Bob Boysen's "From the Chair" column in the September/October 2008 *Trail Walker*, "Proposed: That There Be Fewer Delegates Meetings."

The original and continuing basis for the esteem and reputation of the Trail Conference rests with our trail work, and that derives directly from the strength, energies, and devotion of the volunteer base. To continue that positive interaction, it is important to maintain the impression that members (or their representatives, the Delegates) have the opportunity to comment, advocate, and if necessary, direct the actions of the Trail Conference. *Whether they do or do not exercise this opportunity is not relevant; that they believe they can is all-important.* Reducing the number of delegate meetings will create the impression that the leadership, be it volunteers or staff, wants to discourage member inputs.

Bob Boysen comments that the attendance at Delegates meetings has been steadily declining. And to counter that trend, he recommends reducing the number of annual meetings from three to two. Other solutions are possible, but have not

been extensively considered or attempted.

Those meetings must be made more interesting. Topics should be scheduled which will encourage audience participation. Consider recent Trails Council meetings which had very spirited discussions on incursions of trail and motor bikes on the hiking trails, and another meeting that dealt with a proposed new trail that originally was planned with a good deal of road walk. Extensive member interchange resulted in interesting, exhilarating, and productive meetings. Surely, there are appropriate topics which will result in comparable participatory and exciting delegate meetings.

The Delegates, through their club affiliations, represent over 100,000 hikers. It would be very valuable, both to the clubs and to Trail Conference environmental and conservation efforts, if a significant percentage became motivated to become involved in these matters. They could become a very potent local political force. Discussions at the Delegates meetings to draw out methods by which such involvement could be encouraged could be very helpful.

My main point is that there must be a number of alternative therapies, short of the radical surgery of reducing the number of meetings, to make Delegates meetings more interesting.

*Jack Driller  
Ridgewood, NJ*

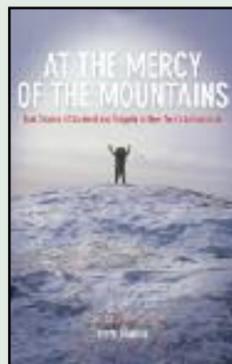
*The writer serves as Trail Supervisor for Bear Mountain-Harriman SW (since 1998) and was First Vice President of the Trail Conference Board of Directors in 1980 and 1981. In 2005, he was presented with the William Hoefler Award, which recognizes Trail Conference volunteers who have demonstrated exemplary service to trail maintenance, management, and/or trail land protection.*

## Book Review

### At the Mercy of the Mountains

*True Stories of Survival and Tragedy in New York's Adirondacks*

By Peter Bronski



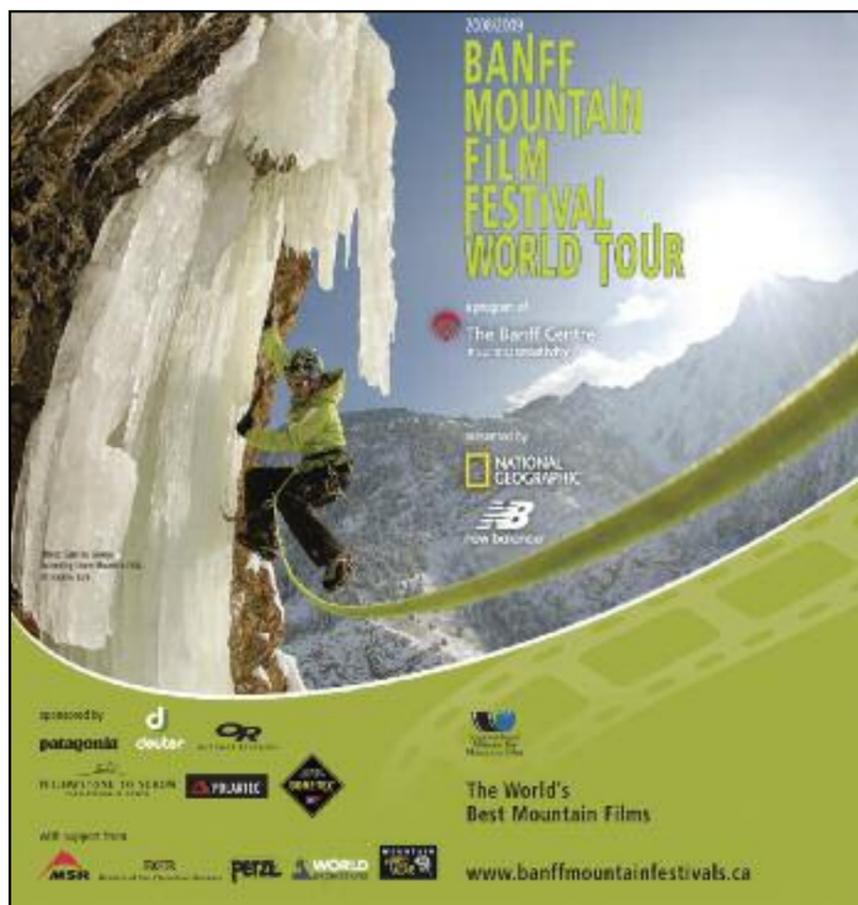
The Lyons Press, 2008  
*Reviewed by Jean-Claude Foure*

This compilation of ill-fated outings and a good number of successful rescues in the Adirondacks might make one think twice before adventuring into the wilderness. It did me. I read this absorbing but sobering set of tales just prior to a planned weekend of backcountry skiing and snowshoeing in the Adirondack High Peaks. I didn't change my plans and head instead to a beach in the Caribbean, but I did inventory my clothing, pack equipment, and readiness more carefully than I might have otherwise.

We often hear the message, "Weather can change rapidly. Be Prepared." Author Peter Bronski makes the case vividly with chronicles of tired or lost hikers ill-prepared for the onset of rain, snow, cold, or wind. Hypothermia and accidents resulting in broken limbs or worse are the common stories. Anxiety plays a big role as well, and an increasing one as hikers equipped with cell phones or personal locator beacons call for help when facing the slightest challenge. Bronski reminds us that our own carelessness or bad luck may put others at risk too, when emergency personnel are called out for rescues.

Bronski makes some careless errors in his introduction. He reports, for example, that Marcy was first climbed in 1837 and that by then "buildings already stood atop Mount Washington and an auto road led up to the top." Yet according to Mount-Washington.org the first building was constructed there in 1852 and the road certainly was not traveled by autos at that time!

Nevertheless, this is a must read for anyone thinking of enjoying the great outdoor experience, in the Adirondacks or elsewhere. It offers good reminders of the importance of experience, preparation, and humility in approaching the great Adirondack outdoors. As Bronski shows us, when things go wrong in the wilderness, one can be very close to heaven, and yet very far.



## Coming to our area in March!

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Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Suffern, NY – Lafayette Theater

Sponsors: Leki, Ramsey Outdoor, NJ Rock Gym, Mirror Lake Inn Resort & Spa

Tuesday, March 10 and

Wednesday March 11

New York City – Peter Norton Symphony Space

Programs on March 10 and 11 are entirely different.

Sponsors: Gore Mountain, Leki, Paragon Sporting Goods

Find ticket information, film lists, and directions, at [www.chestnutmtnproductions.com](http://www.chestnutmtnproductions.com) click on "Banff Mountain Film Festival"

Tickets for Suffern, NY available at all Ramsey Outdoor locations and at [www.ramseyoutdoor.com](http://www.ramseyoutdoor.com)  
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# Featured Hike



By Georgette Weir

## Marshlands Conservancy on Long Island Sound



JANE & WALT DANIELS

Marshlands Conservancy offers a rare public access to Long Island Sound from Westchester.

Hiking isn't just about backcountry trails anymore, and neither is the Trail Conference. The Hudson Hills and Highlands Community Trails Program, our one-year-old partnership with Teatown Lake Reservation, focuses on developing and maintaining networks of trails in densely populated Westchester, Putnam, and southern Dutchess counties.

The latest book from the Trail Conference, *Walkable Westchester* (see story on page 1), is another manifestation of this new orientation toward promoting hiking opportunities close to home. Jane and Walt Daniels have written a one-volume encyclopedia of 180 places, large and small, to hike in a county better known for its bedroom communities and proximity to Manhattan than for its hiking trails.

A preserve known as the Marshlands Conservancy is an example. This modest-size property—170 acres—is on Long Island Sound in the town of Rye, is owned and managed by Westchester County Parks, and is accessible both by car and public transportation. A network of nearly three miles of trails traverse the site and connect varied habitats, including meadow, deciduous forest, and salt marsh. Perhaps most appealing, Marshlands offers one-half mile of shoreline on the Sound, one of the few such places accessible to the public in New York.

Trails are unmarked and Marshlands is a great place to meander or go birding. For those who prefer directions, the Daniels describe (but not in the book) a 1-mile walk that starts from the Nature Center.

Take the trail that begins at the right side of the Nature Center (as you face it), cross a small bridge and take the trail to the left along the meadow. (The large white house overlooking the meadow is the Jay Heritage Center. John Jay, the first chief justice of the United States, grew up on the property. He is buried nearby on land still owned by his descendants.) Follow the left edge of the meadow; at its far end take a side trail to the left and a view of the marshlands and an osprey nest platform.

Retrace your steps back to the meadow and then head left downhill. Cross through a salt marsh and go out onto a spit, known as Marie's Neck. Take the right fork and circle the end of the spit. Just before reaching the trail junction to return to the mainland is a fireplace chimney. For those wishing to explore less-used trails, turn right at the chimney and continue towards the shore. Otherwise the return trip is to retrace your route back to the meadow and then take the first trail on the right into the forest. Pass a trail that comes in from the left, and at the next junction, go left to return to the Nature Center.

Street. Turn left onto Park Avenue and at the end turn right onto Boston Post Road. The entrance to Marshlands Conservancy is about 200 yards on the left.

To learn about the other 179 places to walk in Westchester County, buy *Walkable Westchester* from the Trail Conference (see Hikers' Marketplace below) or your favorite book store.

**Driving:** From the New England Thruway, take Exit 19, Playland Parkway. Take the first right off the Parkway, turn left, and then right at the next intersection. In 0.3 mile, merge with the Boston Post Road. The entrance to Marshlands Conservancy is to the left just past the Rye Country Club (0.5 mile).

**Public transportation:** Metro-North New Haven Line, Harrison Station. Cross Halstead Avenue and walk down Purdy

## Hikers' Marketplace



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**Maps (TC published except where noted. Discounted shipping available for orders of 8 or more.)**

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Shawangunk Trails (2008) & see combo	\$10.95	\$ 8.21	+\$1.50	_____
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NEW!! Old Croton Aqueduct (Friends of OCA, 2008)	\$ 4.95	\$ 3.71	\$1.00	_____

**Books**

NEW!! Walkable Westchester (2009)	\$24.95	\$18.71	+\$3.50	_____
Appalachian Trail Guide to New York & New Jersey (2007)	\$19.95	\$14.96	+\$3.00	_____
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Day Walker (2002)	\$16.95	\$12.71	+\$3.00	_____
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