22 Hikes in Philipstown

A sampling of the many trails within our community.

Prepared by the Philipstown Greenway Committee
2005

MAP LEGEND

- Existing Trail
- Selected Hike
- Road
- Public Park Land
- Easy - relatively flat or gently rising terrain
- Moderate - hiking trail with sections of rising terrain
- Difficult - trail with sections of rough, rising terrain or steep ascents

All distances and trail representations are approximate. Best efforts have been made to describe these hikes accurately. Over time, things change. Trees with blazes will fall; a trail may be rerouted. Use your best judgment when a description does not seem precise.

We suggest that this hike brochure be used in concert with the detailed trail maps by the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, East Hudson series. Purchase them at www.njtc.org or from the Merritt Bookstore or Hudson Valley Outfitters, both located on Main Street in Cold Spring.

Map brochure created by: Philipstown Greenway Committee, 2005

Digital versions of this brochure are available at www.philipstown.com

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ENJOY THE TRAILS!!!
A steep, difficult loop hike with the most dramatic views in the Highlands. Exhilarating, although not recommended in windy or slippery conditions.

Park (4 cars) at the pull-off on the west side of Route 9D, just beyond the Breakneck Tunnel, 2.1 miles north of Cold Spring. Additional parking for 8 cars is available a few hundred yards further north. The Breakneck Ridge Trail (white blazes) begins just south of the parking area, ascends a hill and reaches the Breakneck Tunnel. At the first lookout, view access stations for the Catskill Aqueduct and Storm King Mountain directly to the north. The Catskill Aqueduct bridges the Gap made by Storm King and Breakneck mountains. The trail then zigzags up to a high point on the ridge before descending into the gap made by Storm King and Breakneck mountains. The trail then descends gradually. Some views of the Catskill Aqueduct (access buildings are visible on either side). Continue on the Nelsonville Trail (white), then crosses a stream and there is a short, open woods along a woods road. At 0.4 mi it turns left. Straight ahead is private property; please do not enter the posted area. At 0.5 mi, the trail crosses a stream and there is a short, unmarked side trail to Jordan Pond overlooking a pond.

A loop hike through woods with a couple of great views. This hike is in the Hubbard-Perkins Conservation Area. Drive north on Route 9 and, shortly past Route 301, turn right at the sign for the Hubbard Lodge. Follow the signs to the lodge where there is ample parking along the road. Then take the path to the right of the lodge a short distance and turn left onto the School Mountain Trail (white blazes). At 0.1 mi this woods road crosses two steel-decked bridges in quick succession. Just before a third bridge, a woods road runs between stone pillars on the left and leads to the site of the former Hubbard mansion. On the other side of that bridge at 0.6 mi, the Fennostudio Trail (blue) turns right. Do not turn: this is where you will come out at the end of the hike. Keep following the white blazes for another 1.3 mi, looking for the Perkins Trail (yellow) on your right. Turn on the Perkins trail and the Perkins Trail for 0.5 mi following a stream and across a series of stone walls until it joins the Fishnostudio Trail (blue). The two trails run together along a woods road for 0.4 mi. Follow the blue trail as it turns to the right and begins to ascend. After 0.9 mi, the trail reaches a westward view of the interior of the conservation area. Keep ascending for another mile as the trail contours along the south slope of the top of Round Hill with several switchbacks and occasional views until it reaches a view to the north (Bear Mountain Bridge over the Hudson River. The variety of beautiful grasses at this spot include blues, greens, browns, and reds. Watch carefully for the markers, as the grasses make them difficult to see. At this point you will see many trees that have been hit by lightning, creating stunning natural sculptures. After this, the trail gradually descends the hill for 1.6 mi until it reaches the white-blazed School Mountain Road. Take a left and return to the start of the hike. (NYNJCT East Hudson Map 103)

A loop hike with a spur to the summit, at Lead Company), which was built in the early 1800s. Edward G. Cornish (a president of the National Greenway Committee) who, along with the Undercliff Trail (yellow), turn left (north) on the Undercliff or continue another 0.4 mi to the summit and then return to this junction. To climb to the summit, stay on the Washburn (white blazes). At the top, continue until the trail turns left and take the small herd path to a clearing on the right for a view south over Putnam Valley and deep into Westchester. Back on the Washburn, walk another 200 feet for a view down the full length of the Fishkill Ridge, including the Catskills and the Shawangunks on a clear day.

To return to the junction and turn right (north) onto the Undercliff Trail (yellow) to reach a view north into the gap made by Storm King and Breakneck mountains. Continue through birch, mountain laurel, maples and rhododendrons. After 1.6 miles, turn left (west) onto the Brook Trail (red). Do not follow the yellow markers across the bridge. Pass the remains of the Cornish estate, with huge tulp poplar trees on both sides of the trail. The extensive runs are from the estate of Edward G. Cornish (a president of the National Lead Company), which was built in the early 1900s. The old millsite, which was destroyed by fire in 1956, a greenhouse, swimming pool, formal gardens and, farther up the valley, a stone dam, which was built to retain the rushing waters from Breakneck Ridge. Soon you will be near to among the points known as a “blaze.”

A double blaze indicates a turn, with the upper blaze indicating the new direction.

A triple blaze marks the beginning or end of a trail.

A loop hike through woods with a couple of great views.

This out and back hike is in the Hubbard-Perkins Conservation Area. Drive north on Route 9 and, shortly past Route 301, turn right at the sign for the Hubbard Lodge. Follow the signs to the lodge where there is ample parking along the road. Then take the path to the left of the lodge a short distance and turn left onto the School Mountain Trail (white blazes). At 0.1 mi this woods road crosses two steel-decked bridges, which might be troublesome for horses. Just before a third bridge, there are stone pillars on a roadway across the bridge. The left which leads to the site of the former Hubbard mansion. The white-blazed trail continues past many intersections with the other trails. The trail is well marked generally in good shape for horses, but a couple of bridges may require searches for fordable water. In particular, the new direction.

A sampling of the many trails within our community.

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Wear comfortable shoes or boots with sturdy non-slip soles.
A stroll through the West Point Foundry Preserve preserves the ruins of the historic foundry.

In operation from 1818-1912, the West Point Foundry played an important role in industrialization. One of four national armories established after the War of 1812, it manufactured cannons, including the famous Parrott gun, during the Civil War. In 1969, the National Park Service declared the “West Point Foundry” in Jules Verne’s 1865 book, From the Earth to the Moon. Non-military cast-iron products included machinery for coal mining, sugar mills, America’s earliest steam engines, and masts for the De Witt Clinton. The Foundry also cast cannons for the Spanish-American War.

CLAUDIUS PTOLEMY

A loop on the Glenclyffe property in Hudson Highlands State Park at the top is a spectacular view south of the Hudson River, Bear Mountain Bridge and Anthony’s Nose.

Parking for 8-10 cars is available at an official hiker’s parking lot. To reach it, drive between two stone pillars entitled “Wing & Wing” and “Cinderella-style castle built in 1881 by William Tecumseh Sherman”. It was built by Cold Spring resident Avril Merandy Arnold’s famous flight. The trail continues southwest along a woods road until it turns right and ascends a hill. At the top, the trail goes both north and south. Turn left (south) and walk a short distance to be on a plateau that overlooks the Hudson where the dock was located. From here, you can see the magnificent view of the ocean and the dew point. While the bridge winds around the former Hamilton Fish mansion and ends at the entrance to the Glenclyffe Community Center. An arrow indicates a left turn on the road for a short distance where the path turns right and follows the trail through a thicket of mountain laurel (beautiful in June). It crests a ridge, giving a marvelous view of the Osborn Loop Trail (blue). Turn left to follow the AT (white) and Osborn Loop (blue). After a short way, turn onto a viewpoint trail to the right (west) which takes you to “Rocky Run” for an excellent view of the Heron’s Rock (good place for a snack. Return to the Osborn/AT, turn left and retrace your steps to the original junction with the Osborn Loop Trail. Now, to complete the loop, continue straight on the blue-blazed Osborn Loop Trail down to the road, cross the road to join the Osborn Loop Trail (blue). Turn right onto the Carriage Connector Trail (do not follow an unmarked trail bearing off to the right which is a private driveway). Horses and mountain bikes are permitted on hill 3, School Mountain Road.

10. Constitution Marsh Trail (moderate, 2 mi., 1 hr.)

This out and back hike in the Constitution Marsh Audubon Center and Sanctuary has a short difficult section leading to a boardwalk into the marsh.

Take precautions by wearing light-colored clothing with long sleeves, tucking pants into socks, using insect repellent on your insect clothing and checking for ticks at the end of your hike.

The deer tick, which can transmit Lyme Disease, is common in this area.

Horses and mountain bikes are permitted on hill 3, School Mountain Road.

11. Philpstown Park Trail (easy/mostly flat, 3 mi., 3/4 hr.)

The Trail of Trees in Philpstown Park has a couple of wetland crossings on stepping stones or a narrow plank, then passes through forested woodlands with a view of West Point.

The Philpstown Park is located on the west of Rd. 9J just south of the Hastings Center and 5.7 miles south of the Bear Mountain Bridge. The large parking lot is very busy during the spring and fall soccer seasons. A large green arrow points to the way to the “Trail of Trees” and the trail was built by Cold Spring resident April Merandy in 1998 as her senior environmental education project at the University of Vermont. Small directional arrows bring you through a pine woods and across a small field. Descend into a ravine by way of a handmade staircase of logs. A plank walkway crosses a wet area. The trail is not marked, but is clear through the woods to a rocky outcrop that overlooks West Point. The trail continues along a ridge with views and winds through a hemlock forest. The disastrous effect of the hemlock woolly adelges, maple tar, can be seen in the numbers of dead hemlocks here. This introduced insect, believed to be a native of Asia, has been in the United States since 1954 and is a serious pest to the eastern hemlock. The trail exits the woods west of the large soccer field in the park. At this point you can follow the trail south and back to the parking area, or take a left around the edge of the pond. Return via the woods to the parking area.

12. Sugarloaf Rock (moderate, 3.2 mi., 2 hr.)

An out and back hike in Hudson Highlands State Park at the top is a spectacular view south of the Hudson River, Bear Mountain Bridge and Anthony’s Nose.

Parking for 8-10 cars is available at an official hiker’s parking lot. To reach it, drive between two stone pillars entitled “Wing & Wing” and “Cinderella-style castle built in 1881 by William Tecumseh Sherman”. It was built by Cold Spring resident Avril Merandy Arnold’s famous flight. The trail continues southwest along a woods road until it turns right and ascends a hill. At the top, the trail goes both north and south. Turn left (south) and walk a short distance to be on a plateau that overlooks the Hudson where the dock was located. From here, you can see the magnificent view of the ocean and the dew point. While the bridge winds around the former Hamilton Fish mansion and ends at the entrance to the Glenclyffe Community Center. An arrow indicates a left turn on the road for a short distance where the path turns right and follows the trail through a thicket of mountain laurel (beautiful in June). It crests a ridge, giving a marvelous view of the Osborn Loop Trail (blue). Turn left to follow the AT (white) and Osborn Loop (blue). After a short way, turn onto a viewpoint trail to the right (west) which takes you to “Rocky Run” for an excellent view of the Heron’s Rock (good place for a snack. Return to the Osborn/AT, turn left and retrace your steps to the original junction with the Osborn Loop Trail. Now, to complete the loop, continue straight on the blue-blazed Osborn Loop Trail down to the road, cross the road to join the Osborn Loop Trail (blue). Turn right onto the Carriage Connector Trail (do not follow an unmarked trail bearing off to the right which is a private driveway). Horses and mountain bikes are permitted on hill 3, School Mountain Road.

13. White Rock Walk (moderate, 3 mile, 1.5 hr.)

This loop hike features a swampy meadow boardwalk, dramatic stone walls, a pretty Hudson overlook, and varied terrain, on the Appalachian, Osborn Loop, and Carriage Connector Trails.

Park on Cross Road (5-8 cars), which is east of Route 403, just north of the intersection of Routes 9 and 403. Walk back to the intersection and look for a tall wooden marker on the west side of Route 403, which designates the white-blazed Appalachian Trail. Follow the trail through a swampy meadow into woods. At this point, turn left onto the blue-blazed Osborn Loop Trail. After a short distance, the trail divides again. Do not keep walking straight on the yellow-blazed Carriage Connector Trail, but turn left following the AT. The AT crosses through a break in an impressive stone wall on a very steep slope, turns south and wanders through a thicket of mountain laurel (beautiful in June). It crests a ridge, giving a marvelous view of the Osborn Loop Trail (blue). Turn left to follow the AT (white) and Osborn Loop (blue). After a short way, turn onto a viewpoint trail to the right (west) which takes you to “Rocky Run” for an excellent view of the Heron’s Rock (good place for a snack. Return to the Osborn/AT, turn left and retrace your steps to the original junction with the Osborn Loop Trail. Now, to complete the loop, continue straight on the blue-blazed Osborn Loop Trail down to the road, cross the road to join the Osborn Loop Trail (blue). Turn right onto the Carriage Connector Trail (do not follow an unmarked trail bearing off to the right which is a private driveway). Horses and mountain bikes are permitted on hill 3, School Mountain Road.

17. Sugarloaf Mountain (moderate, 3.2 mi., 2 hr.)

An out and back hike in Hudson Highlands State Park at the top is a spectacular view south of the Hudson River, Bear Mountain Bridge and Anthony’s Nose.

Parking for 8-10 cars is available at an official hiker’s parking lot. To reach it, drive between two stone pillars entitled “Wing & Wing” and “Cinderella-style castle built in 1881 by William Tecumseh Sherman”. It was built by Cold Spring resident Avril Merandy Arnold’s famous flight. The trail continues southwest along a woods road until it turns right and ascends a hill. At the top, the trail goes both north and south. Turn left (south) and walk a short distance to be on a plateau that overlooks the Hudson where the dock was located. From here, you can see the magnificent view of the ocean and the dew point. While the bridge winds around the former Hamilton Fish mansion and ends at the entrance to the Glenclyffe Community Center. An arrow indicates a left turn on the road for a short distance where the path turns right and follows the trail through a thicket of mountain laurel (beautiful in June). It crests a ridge, giving a marvelous view of the Osborn Loop Trail (blue). Turn left to follow the AT (white) and Osborn Loop (blue). After a short way, turn onto a viewpoint trail to the right (west) which takes you to “Rocky Run” for an excellent view of the Heron’s Rock (good place for a snack. Return to the Osborn/AT, turn left and retrace your steps to the original junction with the Osborn Loop Trail. Now, to complete the loop, continue straight on the blue-blazed Osborn Loop Trail down to the road, cross the road to join the Osborn Loop Trail (blue). Turn right onto the Carriage Connector Trail (do not follow an unmarked trail bearing off to the right which is a private driveway). Horses and mountain bikes are permitted on hill 3, School Mountain Road.
12. Cedar Ridge Trail (moderate, 1.5 mi., 1 hr.)
An out and back hike through fields of a working cattle farm and woods to a ridge with a view of the Hudson. Not recommend-
ed for hikers.

Park at the intersection of Philipse Brook Rd. and Old Albany Post Rd. (2 cars) Walk west along Philipse Brook Rd. (50 yd.) to a small gate for hikers on your right. Throughout this hike, follow the yellow blazes. Enter through the gate, turn left and go straight up the hill fenced on left to the ledge near the field corner. (The cows you may see are part of Saunders’ Farm. They will not bother you if they are not provoked.) Pass through the Cedar Ridge blue-blazed trail parallel to the fence on your right. At the corner of the road and the blue-blazed trail, look left across to open field and creek; cross the fence near the end of the field to a hill. The trail continues to the left, passes through the field to the left, and descends into a woods. After 50 yards the trail follows another fence that turns right 90 degrees north toward the ridge. At the knoll, turn right again toward the ridge, follow an off-shoot with white blazes to a view of the Hudson. Return the same way. This trail is an easement agreement with the Open Space Institute. (NYNJTC Map 101)

13. Chimney Trail (moderate, 3-4 mi., 2 hr.)
An out and back hike with a gradual ascent, about 40 minutes each way. Sweeping views to the west of mountains, and a peek at the Hudson River.

Parking (2 cars) on South Highland Road across from the private Boscobel Estate. Walk through the Additional parking along the road further east. This unblazed trail is well maintained and relatively easy, though you may encounter a game club and follow the trail into the woods. At the first intersection, take the right hand path, which will lead you to the blue-blazed trail. Take the right hand path again at the second intersection, at a grove of tall pines, and a stone wall. Continue past the third intersection, about another 1/2 mile along the trail. The trail ends in a clearing where a chim-

20. Manitoga Paths (easy/moderate, 2.1 mi., 1-3 hr.)
Three hikes follow lovely loop paths at Manitoga, the former home of renowned designer Russel Wright. The hikes include steep cliffs, rock outcrops, and a variety of unusual rock formations, with a repeated sound of water falling over rocks, and a connection to the Appalachian Trail.

Manitoga is located on the eastern side of Route 9D, 2 miles south of Route 403 or 2.5 miles north of Route 22. Follow Route 403 to the entrance drive to the parking area, where there are brochures and trail maps. Follow the path sign, which will take you to the entrance to the property. The parking lot is sign, where Lost Pond Loop (1.7 miles), White Pine Loop (1.2 miles), and Deer Run Loop (0.84 miles) are accessible. Yellow markers lead to off-

21. Manitou Point Nature Preserve (easy, 2 mi., 1 hr.)
A loop path along a path paralleling the Hudson River.

Enter the Manitou Point Nature Preserve on the west side of 9D, south of Route 403 at the Rotary Park parking lot. About 30 feet in, there is a hiker’s parking area on the left (10 cars). Walk down to the river to follow the blue-blazed trail. In about a mile, the tracks is the former Livingston Manor, now the headquarters of Outward Bound, Inc. Cross the stone bridge over the tracks, and keep straight ahead towards your second intersection, and the mansion to your left, look for the grassy mowed path down to the Hudson. The path forks: turning right will take you to a charming riverside perch with a view north up the Hudson. Turn left to continue beside the Hudson heading south. The path parallels the river, becoming a narrow, moss covered trail where hikers are required to walk in single file. Several steep drop-offs could cause problems for small children and people uneasy about heights. The trail is flanked by mountain laurel, with views of the river and the hills and houses on its western shore. You will eventually come upon a cabin (pile of rocks indicating a trail turn), after which the path will occasionally be marked with yellow blazes as you continue following the river. There is a cabin at the intersection where several trails merge. Take the path to the right which leads back to the more river views seen through the woods. The trails loops to the east, runs along the railroad tracks once more, and leads back to the Manor house. At the Manor retrace your steps and the tracks merge on the river side of the blue trail. Continue on Route 403 to the entrance, where you can see a cairn in the middle of the woods. At the cabin, turn off the blue-blazed trail and take a right (south) this will lead west down across an open field to the summit of the ridge. The blue-blazed trail passes a trail marker, and continues to descend to the (white) AT again, take a right (south) over looking Bear Mountain and the Hudson River.

The trailhead is on South Mountain Pass off Route 9D, 1.6 miles north of the Bear Mountain Bridge (5 mi., 1 hour after the Roundout Boundary entrance). Drive 0.7 mile on South Mountain Pass. The Appalachian Trail crosses the river from this viewpoint (look for white blazes) and there is a pull-off (4 cars) on the south side of the road. Walk south to observe the red-beside trail, before it begins to descend, yellow-blazed trail. Continue on the AT (white blazes) as it traverses up the mountain. Be sure you do not follow the AT as it begins to descend towards the summit of the mountain. The blue-blazed trail passes a trail marker, and continues to descend to the (white) AT again, take a right (south) over looking Bear Mountain and the Hudson River.

Dear Residents of Philipstown:

On behalf of the Town Council and in conjunction with the Philipstown Greenway Committee, it is a pleasure to be able to present this brochure to Philipstown’s residents and visitors. The brochure and map describe more than twenty different hikes that you can take within our borders. These hikes are but a sample of the many miles of trails within our community, perfect for hiking, biking and horsecback riding. We hope you will be encouraged to find and enjoy them all.

I wish to thank the many individuals and organizations that have contributed to making this map a reality and hope that you take the time to discover and enjoy the beautiful nature that has provided in this beautiful region.

Sincerely,

William Mazzucca
Town Supervisor

Thank you to the following people and organizations for their support of this Hike Guide:

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