

Taconic Hiking Club Spring Bulletin 2020

Grafton Lakes State Park to hold “EARTH DAY: 5 for 50” April 14 thru April 18

Earth Day’s 50th anniversary is April 22, 2020. It was started in 1970 as a result of rivers that were so polluted that they burned, smog, acid rain, oil spills, etc. The Environmental Protection Agency was created the same year and the Clean Air, Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts soon followed as a result of the event. So many accomplishments have been made, but there are new threats to be addressed. This year the theme is Climate Action. Be a part of it!

Grafton Lakes State Park will host the “**Earth Day: 5 for 50**” on Tuesday-Saturday, April 14th-18th. The 5 for 50 will involve five days of events in honor of the 50th year anniversary of Earth Day. The events will include a lecture series where you can learn more about climate change, a citizen science fair, and a trail work and weed removal day. All events taking part during these days are free of charge.

- April 14th- Tuesday- evening talk “What is Climate Change?”
- April 15th- Wednesday- evening talk “Why Should You Care About Climate Change?”
- April 16th- Thursday- Day time- Trout Stocking, Evening talk- “What Can You do About Climate Change?”
- April 17th- Friday afternoon/evening- Citizen Science Fair with tables and workshops
- April 18th- Saturday morning- Trail Maintenance The THC, ADK, AMC and many other organizations in the area will be assisting with trail work.

End to End Volunteer Opportunity

Do you have a camper and enjoy working with others? We are looking for someone with a camper that can spend the night of May 8 at the Berry Pond Campsite with the End to End Challenge participants that are camping there and help make breakfast for the group bright and early on May 9. Preferably, someone who has previously driven on Circuit Rd in Pittsfield State Forest. Other volunteers will be available to help set up, cook and clean up afterwards. We have a couple with a camper already, but we are looking for a backup. Please contact Martha Waldman for more information at martha829r@aol.com

Upcoming Outings

For the most up to date information and new outings check the [Outings page](#) of the Taconic Hiking Club website. Also check out the THC Facebook page to see pictures from past outings! Please take care to match your physical condition and abilities to the stated length and elevation gain of the outing you choose. It is your responsibility to have appropriate equipment and clothing for an outing. See you on the trail!

The club has a rating system for the outings, from a C for the easiest to B-, B, B+, A to an A+ for the most difficult. See the [outings page](#) on the web site for the chart.

MARCH

Saturday, March 7: Grafton Lakes State Park, Grafton NY C 5+ miles

This will be a circular snowshoe from Mill Pond Parking Lot over rolling forested terrain: Spruce Bog Trail-Chet Bell-Long Pond Rd-NIMO-Cut Over-Mill Pond. Bring water and lunch. Bring snowshoes and micro-spikes.

Leader: Sharon Bonk, 518-674-0042; scbonk@gmail.com contact leader for carpool info and time.

Sunday March 8: Lost Pond and Berrymill Pond, Ticonderoga B

These two ponds are real gems. Both are accessed from the Putnam Pond campground road. We'll first hike into Lost Pond. This hike is roughly 4 miles including the hike around the pond, 3 miles without the hike around the pond After returning to the cars we will drive a short distance to Berrymill Pond, another 4 mile hike. Berrymill pond has a lean to for a more comfortable rest stop. There is some nice bushwacking around the pond with beautiful views. Neither hike has much elevation gain. Total trip distance 8-10 miles depending upon how much poking around we do. Snowshoes and traction required. Contact leader for meeting time and location.

Leader: Leslie Siegard, email lsiegard2@gmail.com

Friday, March 13: Prospect Mtn. XC

We'll take advantage of the groomed trails and usual great snow at this southern Vermont area east of Bennington. Now owned by a nonprofit, it offers good food, rentals if needed, a cozy old-fashioned lodge, and a variety of terrain. We'll explore 5-6 miles over several hours. Bring layers, food, and water. Contact leaders for meeting time and place

Leader: Karen Ross, kcoyross@aol.com, 518 794-7474

Saturday, March 21: Merck Forest, Rupert, VT C

This outing, which includes a generous pancake breakfast, has become an annual event. We can do a moderate walk or snowshoe first, depending on trail conditions. The trail conditions are unpredictable, but the pancakes, maple syrup, sausage, and eggs, have always been in excellent condition. The animal barns are always a good side attraction. Food is served from 9:00 to 2:00 and is still \$10 for adults. Length: A few miles of moderate terrain, depending on conditions and desire.

Contact: Bob Armao at bob_armao@yahoo.com or 518-271-6512 (home) or 518-322-6889 (mobile)

Saturday, March 21: Tongue Mountain Traverse B

We will spot cars and hike/snowshoe the northern portion of the Tongue Mountain Range starting from the Clay Meadow trail-head and ending at the trail's northern terminus on Route 9N. Total distance will be approx. 7.5 miles with 1800 feet elevation gain. Contact leader for meeting time and location.

Leader: David Pisaneschi, email: dapadk@gmail.com phone: 518-227-5630

Wednesday March 25: Hopkins Memorial Forest Loops and Birch Brook Trail, Williamstown B

We will start out on the two loop trails from the parking area at Hopkins Memorial Forest. We will be able to catch a glimpse of the tree top work platform used to study the tree canopy on the way (remind me to point it out!). Near the top of the upper loop we will take a right at the Birch Brook and hike up the Birch Brook Trail (BBT) to the Taconic Crest Trail. We will return via the BBT and complete the two loop trails at Hopkins Memorial Forest. I expect we may need micro-spikes for some of the hike, especially on the BBT. If this is a snowshoe, we will probably skip the BBT. Total length 7 miles, total elevation gain 1600+ feet. Contact leader for meeting time and location.

Contact: Martha Waldman email: martha829r@aol.com phone: 518 869 5109

APRIL

Saturday, April 4: Spring or snow on the Rensselaer Plateau (hike or snowshoe), Dyken Pond Environmental Center C+/B-

Reschedule of Feb 2 which was rained out. Five mile loop, late lunch at the shelter. Trail is relatively flat but prepare for wet or icy conditions. Meet at head of the Dyken Pond Environmental Center Rd, & Rens. Cty Rte. 80. Contact leader for meeting time.

Leader, Sharon Bonk, scbonk@gmail.com, 518 674 0042

Tuesday, April 7: Hollyhock Hollow Sanctuary, Bethlehem, NY C+

This 140 acre Audobon Society site in Bethlehem has 7 easy, scenic trails covering a variety of woodland, meadow, and creek habitats. If winter doesn't linger too long, it should feature good early wildflower and birding opportunities along with a very pleasant springtime walk. Contact leader for meeting time and location.

Contact: Bob Armao at bob_armao@yahoo.com or 518-271-6512 (home) or 518-322-6889 (mobile)

Saturday, April 11: Trail Work, Berry Pond to Potter Mtn. Rd section B

Hoping for the snow and ice to be gone 4/11! We will spot cars and work from Berry Pond down to Potter Mtn. Rd if Circuit Rd is open, if we cannot spot cars, we will start at Potter Mtn Rd and work towards Berry Pond. We will remove blow-down and do side trimming as needed. Bring loppers and/or folding saws, work gloves, eye protection as well as food and drink. Contact leaders for meeting time and location.

Contact: Martha Waldman, email: martha829r@aol.com phone: 518 869 5109, or Coleader: Cliff Prewencki, email: cprewencki@aol.com

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Friday, April 17: Spring or snow at the Huyck Preserve (hike or snowshoe) Rensselaerville.

This is a beautiful site in all seasons with impressive waterfall, woods, and lake. Approx. 5-mile loop. Lunch at research area or lakeside depending on conditions. If insufficient snow, expect ice and or wet conditions. Steep at the beginning, poles useful in these conditions. Contact leader for meeting time and location.

Leader, Sharon Bonk, scbonk@gmail.com, 518 674 0042. Register early to plan carpool.

MAY

MAY 9: END to END CHALLENGE

Wednesday, May 13: Olana to Cedar Grove, a hike crossing the Hudson River.

Although we will not tour Church's and Cole's houses, we will hike trails on both sites and use the "new" bridge to connect the two. Details about length etc. will be updated on the website.

Leader, Sharon Bonk, scbonk@gmail.com, 518 674 0042

Thursday, May 14: Albert Family Community Forest C+

This is a new Rensselaer Plateau Alliance property. We should see lots of early spring flowers in bloom. We will explore each of the four different trails on the property which cover a variety of terrain. We will hike along a stream with multiple waterfalls for over ½ mile, see several rock walls, remains of old homestead buildings, an old orchard as well as well as old evergreens. Length approximately 5 miles, elevation gain about 700 feet. Contact leader for meeting time and location.

Contact: Martha Waldman, email: martha829r@aol.com phone: 518 869 5109

Saturday, May 23: Mount Tremper – Fire Tower B+

We will use the Phoenicia trail to hike up to the fire tower. The trail takes us past an old quarry and a lean to. Hopefully there will be some late spring flowers in bloom along the way. Areas may be rocky and wet. There are nice views of the Catskills from the tower. Length is 6.2 miles RT with 2000 feet of gain. Contact leader for meeting time and location.

Contact: Martha Waldman, email: martha829r@aol.com phone: 518 869 5109, or Coleader: Cliff Prewencki, email: cprewencki@aol.com

Wednesday, May 27: Mount Greylock B+

Greylock is a gem in all seasons but especially when the streams and waterfalls are full. We'll hike up the Roaring Brook Trail (RBT) from the west side along Rt. 7 south of Williamstown to the Hopper Trail and join the A.T. to the summit. We'll descend either RBT or make a loop out of it via the Stony Ledge Trail out of Sperry Road and Stony Ledge Lookout. Expect 8-9 miles (depending on possible detours to two waterfalls) with about 2400' vertical. This is a co-list with ADK. Contact leader for meeting time and location.

Leaders: Karen Ross, 794-7474 or kcoyross@aol.com or Lori McCarron, 587-1957 or mmccarr2@nycap.rr.com

Saturday 5/30 Ashokan Rail Trail bike ride B

We will explore this newly opened rail trail by bike. The trail is 11.5 miles in length with some beautiful vistas of the Ashokan Reservoir. We intend to bike the entire length and return for a total of 23 miles. Minimal elevation change. The trail is "highly compacted crushed stone" so hybrid or mountain bikes are more suited than road bikes. It should be a great early season ride.

Leader: Leslie Siegard 518-577-3468 or lsiegard2@gmail.com

Sunday May 31: THC Annual Pot-luck PICNIC, Grafton Lakes State Park, Grafton, NY, 11:30 - 4:00

We will be at the Deerfield Pavilion, which is about 1 mile from the main entrance, on the left. In addition to mingling and meeting new members and catching up with old friends, our activities for the day include: (Check back as we get closer regarding hiking opportunities.)

- Noon to 1:00 PM **POTLUCK APPETIZERS.**
- 1:00 PM **POTLUCK** salads, desserts and treats along with THC supplied hot dogs, hamburgers, cold drinks (lemonade and iced tea) and condiments. Please bring your own beverage.
- 2:00 PM short THC update meeting
- Enjoy the park for the rest of the day. There are several trails for hiking as well as kayak rentals.

Please note: There is a fee per vehicle to enter the park on weekends.

Reservations: Contact Margaret Parks at margaretparks123@gmail.com or 518-250-5452 to let her know how many people are coming and what your contribution to the picnic will be (appetizer, salad or dessert).

JUNE

Tuesday, June 2: Berlin Mt. Loop, Williamstown MA B

The Williamstown Rural Land Foundation has greatly improved parking space and continue to develop trails that offer good access to the Taconic Crest. We will take the Berlin Pass trail to the crest and onwards to the summit of Berlin Mt. After a lunch break, we can return on the Class of 33 Trail, or possibly take a less steep descent back to our cars. This is a 4.8 to 5 mile loop with 1450 feet of vertical. Note that the descent is somewhat steep.

Contact: Bob Armao at bob_armao@yahoo.com or 518-271-6512 (home) or 518-322-6889 (mobile)

Saturday June 13 Race Brook Falls & Mt Race B+

I'm hoping the timing of this will catch the falls with plenty of water and the mountain laurel in bloom. What could be better?! We will drop a car at the Jug End trailhead and proceed to the Race Brook Falls trailhead where we will begin our hike. We will hike up the Race Brook Falls trail admiring the falls and perhaps cooling in their spray. Once on the ridge we will turn right onto the Appalachian Trail. We will summit Mt Everett and continue down the ridge to Jug End with many view spots along the ridge. There are a couple of crossings of Race Brook, only one on a bridge. The section down to Jug End Trail head is quite steep. Total distance roughly 9 miles and 2200'. If we don't have enough participants to spot a car we will amend the hike to begin and end at the Race Brook Falls trailhead.

Leader: Leslie Siegard 518-577-3468 or lsiegard2@gmail.com

Saturday June 27: Alcove Reservoir Bike B

This is a beautiful bike ride in southern Albany County. In about 20-25 miles we will circumnavigate the Alcove Reservoir, catching views of the reservoir and the Black Heads in the Catskills. There are some hills but we can take our time with them. Except for a short time on Route 32 we will travel on lightly trafficked roads.

Leader: Leslie Siegard 518-577-3468 or lsiegard2@gmail.com

Saturday, June 27: Alford Springs [for BNRC and THC] B-

We'll do an outing of 5-6 miles at this BNRC property in Alford, covering both the Father and Mother loops at a time when the abundant mountain laurel might be in bloom. Expect nice woods and vistas. There is some up and down of a few hundred feet. Find out more at www.bnrc.org and check the map at https://www.bnrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Alford_springs_trailmap.pdf This is a joint outing with Berkshire Natural Resource Council (BNRC) and the Taconic Hiking Club. Contact leaders for time and meeting place.

Leaders: Mariah Auman mauman@bnrc.org; Karen Ross, 518 794-7474 or kcoyross@aol.com