

Lake Trail

CLARK RESERVATION STATE PARK

The Facts
 DISTANCE: **4 Miles**
 DIFFICULTY: **Easy**
 ELEVATION GAIN: **Varies**
 REGION:



Clark Reservation State Park is a geologic wonder of the last ice age and a botanist's paradise. The park's natural features include rugged cliffs and rocky outcrops, woodland and meadow, a wetland and a glacial plunge basin lake in which the surface waters and bottom waters do not mix. The Lake Trail provides an overall picture of the nature within the park. From the parking lot, you'll descend a dramatic stone staircase to the start of the Lake Trail, which encircles the lake and surrounding wetland, providing plenty of views of the water and native wildlife. The trail is not suitable for strollers, but can be completed by almost any skill level of hiker. Allow two hours to complete the Lake Trail Hike on your own, or inquire about guided nature walks, which leave from the Nature Center building, where you can also enjoy educational exhibits. **For more information, contact: (315) 492-1590.**

Beacon Hill Footpath & Carriageway Loop

MINNEWASKA STATE PARK PRESERVE

The Facts
 DISTANCE: **2 Miles**
 DIFFICULTY: **Easy**
 ELEVATION GAIN: **200'**
 REGION:



The famous Shawangunk mountain ridge soars more than 2,000 feet above sea level, and this park is one of the best ways to experience it. The terrain is wild and rocky, blanketed by dense hardwood forest encircling two lakes. Clear streams cut into valleys, incising sheer cliffs and ledges and emerging in waterfalls. The Beacon Hill Footpath and Carriageway is the perfect means to sample this amazing landscape. The park occasionally offers interpretive hikes led by a naturalist. And you can also snowshoe on the trail in winter. If you want to extend the adventure and up the challenge, you can take a side trip down Gertrude's Nose Path. This trail climbs through a dense evergreen forest, along rock ledges (sometimes exposed—be careful with small children), and takes you to views over the Palmaghatt Ravine. You'll eventually come out at Gertrude's Nose, the southern tip of the ridge, which features broad views to the east and south. **For more information, contact: (845) 256-0579.**

Breakneck Ridge Trail

CLARENCE FAHNESTOCK STATE PARK / HUDSON HIGHLANDS STATE PARK

The Facts
 DISTANCE: **5.5 Miles**
 DIFFICULTY: **Difficult**
 ELEVATION GAIN: **1420'**
 REGION:



Up for a challenge? Take a hike on the Breakneck Ridge Trail, a rugged trail that offers wide, stunning views of the Hudson River, Palisades Park, some Catskills peaks and the Shawangunks. During the spring and summer season, wildflowers bloom near the trail. The views don't always come easily, since portions of the trail require scrambling and some steep ascents. But the payoff is well worth the effort. There are great views from the ridge at the end of the trail, and there are some impressive vistas along the way, especially if you save the easier but longer bypass trail for the return. Locals call this one of the best hikes in the state. You can also break this hike into two days and camp overnight, call for reservations. The Breakneck Ridge trail is accessible by train from NYC with a Metro-North stop near Beacon. **For more information, contact: (845) 225-7207.**

Copake Falls Trail

TACONIC STATE PARK

The Facts
 DISTANCE: **1.5 Miles**
 DIFFICULTY: **Easy**
 ELEVATION GAIN: **400'**
 REGION:



The rolling, heavily wooded Taconic Mountain Range shares a border with New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. Taconic State Park stretches for 11 miles along the range, and includes two developed areas: Copake Falls and Rudd Pond. For this hike, you'll be in the Copake Falls Area, which offers an extensive multi-use trail system with terrain that varies from easy to challenging. All of it accesses spectacular views. The highlight, of course, is the Copake Falls Trail, which showcases the beautiful waterfalls. Bring your camera or sketchbook and plan to spend some time enjoying the serene vistas. When you're done hiking, grab your bathing suit and cool off at the swimming beach, or visit the Copake Falls picnic area, playground, museum, and campground **For more information, contact: (518) 329-3993.**



Indian Ladder Trail

JOHN BOYD THACHER STATE PARK

The Facts
 DISTANCE: **.5 Mile**
 DIFFICULTY: **Easy**
 ELEVATION GAIN: **200'**
 REGION:



Situated along the unique Helderberg Escarpment (a long rock cliff), John Boyd Thacher State Park is one of the richest fossil-bearing formations in the world. The park features six miles of limestone cliff-face, rock-strewn slopes, woodland and open fields, and it also provides an awesome panorama of the Hudson-Mohawk Valleys and the Adirondack and Green Mountains in the distance. Interpretive programs are offered year-round, including guided tours of the famous Indian Ladder Trail. The trail is a great way to learn about the area's rich geologic and cultural history, and is suitable for the whole family. There are benches, bridges and stairs where needed. And if you want to explore further, there are more than 12 additional miles of trails for summer hiking and mountain biking, and winter cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, and snowmobiling. **For more information, contact: (518) 872-1237.**

Seal Haulout Trail

MONTAUK POINT STATE PARK

The Facts
 DISTANCE: **1.5 Miles**
 DIFFICULTY: **Easy**
 ELEVATION GAIN: **0'**
 REGION:



One of the unique highlights of Montauk Point State Park is viewing its native seals basking on the rocky shorelines. The Seal Haulout Trail is a short hike that winds its way to Rocky Point. In late winter and spring, the harbor seals sun themselves on warm rocks near the shoreline. The trail also accesses a viewing blind at Rocky Point (or Stepping Stones). The maritime woods surrounding the trail are also beautiful and home to other wildlife. Keep an eye out for migrating shorebirds. Bring your whole family, but please respect the seals and observe from a distance. The entrance to this trail is on the shoulder of Montauk Highway and the Montauk Point East Overlook (also known as the Oyster Pond Overlook). Contact the park office about parking options and guided seal hikes, which are offered periodically in winter and spring. **For more information, contact: (631) 668-3781.**



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