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Take a Hike for Connecticut Trails Day

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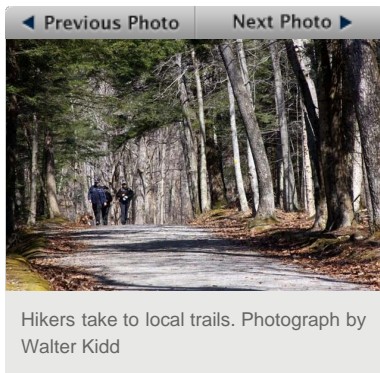
By Jaime Ferris

With the arrival this weekend of the 18th annual Connecticut Trails Day, the Connecticut Forest and Park Association suggests Nutmeggers dust off their favorite hiking shoes, fill their water bottles and hit the trails for one or more of the 162 events taking place in 88 towns June 5 and 6.

“Get ready to find your happy place in Connecticut.

Connecticut Trails Day is here,” said Chuck Sack, this year’s Connecticut Trails Day committee chairman. “Because of great participation by hundreds of volunteers, Connecticut’s celebration takes place over two fun-filled days and continues to be larger than any other state’s. ... Join your family, friends, and neighbors and enjoy the wonderful outdoor opportunities available throughout Connecticut ... whether it be a long or short hike, history walk, paddle, family walk, orienteering, letterboxing, trail maintenance, or cycling.”

Connecticut Trails Day, a facet of National Trails Day, a nationwide hiking initiative established by the American Hiking Society in 1993, is presented by the Connecticut Forest and Park Association (CFPA), founded in 1895 as a non-profit organization to protect Connecticut’s forests, parks, walking trails, and open spaces for future generations and maintaining 825-miles of the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trail system. CFPA is also trying to create healthier communities through its WalkCT initiative.



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"Trails Day is a true celebration of the state's trails, the joys they provide, their health benefits and raises awareness of the supporters and volunteers who make them possible," said James Little, CFPA's development director.

"We've participated in National Trails Day for 18 years," he continued. "We are one of the oldest and most eminent groups in Connecticut, and I think our longstanding relationships with other state groups and our membership contributes tremendously to our having the most events for Trails Day."

Residents ready to celebrate Trails Day can indulge in everything from hiking, biking and kayaking, to trail maintenance, educational walks, bird watching and geo-caching, among other activities. All events are led by knowledgeable volunteers who educate participants in the importance of nature, promote healthy living and mental well-being, and to protect and instill excitement for the outdoors. One of the CFPA's biggest partnerships this year is with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.

"Connecticut Trails Day really truly raises awareness about the state's trails through the statewide events," Mr. Little said. "What makes Trails Day unique is its success, thanks to strong participation by the DEP, the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC), local land trusts, town agencies, outdoors-oriented businesses, volunteers, and our dedicated financial sponsors—the DEP in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration, Connecticut Light and Power, and Stanley Black and Decker. They all come together to help people connect to the Connecticut landscape."

The annual Connecticut Trails Day booklet is a resource for people year-round to look for new places to explore, as has the CFPA's WalkCT online resource.

"Parents used to have to invite kids to come inside; now we have to invite them outside to explore the landscape," Mr. Little said. "Trails Day and other events throughout the year help us turn that around."

Connecticut Trails Day 2010 at a Glance

The following is a sampling of Connecticut Trails Day events in the region. To view the event booklet, visit the Connecticut Forest and Park Association Web site at www.ctwoodlands.org. Trails information is also available through CFPA's WalkCT initiative at www.walkct.org.

- BRIDGEWATER: Help construct a new, 1-mile connector trail June 5 (rain date June 12) from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for Sunny Valley Preserve/Blue Trail; meet Richard Jones on Hemlock Street, where it intersects the Blue Trail. Bring gloves and wear sturdy shoes; suggested tools: shovels, loppers, and rakes. Sponsored by The Nature Conservancy, Sunny Valley Preserve (svptrails.org). Pre-registration is recommended; call Wayne Woodard at Sunny Valley Preserve at 860-355-3716; woodard@tnc.org; www.nature.org.

- DANBURY: Activities at the Quarry Nature Preserve and Science Center June 5 (rain date June 12) from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Meet at the Field House (5 Maple Lane) at 9:45 a.m. At 10 a.m. Gio Ogno will give a history of Old Quarry and lead a geology walk. Dr. Tom Worden will lead an edible and medicinal plants walk, and Dr. David Gropper will identify invasive plants and how to fight them. Pre-registration is recommended; call Gio Ogno at 860-354-7592; GioOgno@aol.com; www.danbury.org/oldquarry.

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- **DANBURY:** Trail maintenance at Tarrywile Park, rain or shine June 5 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; lunch provided. Wear sturdy shoes and bring work gloves. Meet Sandy Moy and Becky Petro at Tarrywile Park (Southern Boulevard, Danbury) at the Red Barn Environmental Center in the farm area. Pre-registration required; call Sandy Moy at 203-744-3130; tarrywile.events@snet.net; www.tarrywile.com.

- **DANBURY-REDDING-RIDGEFIELD:** The grand opening of the 15-mile, multi-town Ives Trail, rain or shine June 5 from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. with Mike Cunningham. Bring a flashlight, two liters of water, a whistle and lunch. Sponsored by Appalachian Mountain Club. Pre-registration is required; for meeting place details and to register, call Mike Cunningham at 203-748-7233; hikermiker@yahoo.com.

- **GAYLORDSVILLE-NEW MILFORD:** Three-Trail Caravan to Weantinog's preserves, June 6 from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. First stop: James Morrissey Family Nature Preserve for a hike through varied landscape, including cliffs and young woodlands. Second stop: Alice McCallister Memorial Sanctuary for an easy 2-mile walk to an overlook of Mud Pond and past the state's biggest black ash trees. Final stop: Smyrski Farm for a tour of the historic red barn. Wear comfortable shoes; bring water and a snack and/or picnic lunch. Meet at the Morrissey Preserve trail head on Gaylord Road in Gaylordsville. Pre-registration is required; call Liba Furrman at 860-355-3500; liba@weantinoge.org.

- **KENT:** A 3-mile educational walk about the area's history and ecology along the Housatonic River via River Road, rain or shine June 5 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Meet at the junction of River Road and Skiff Mountain Road. Wear good walking shoes; bring water and a snack. Sponsored by Housatonic Valley Association (www.hvatoday.org) and the Kent Historical Society (www.kenthistoricalsociety.org). For information, call Elaine LaBella at 860-672-6678, elainehva@hotmail.com.

- **KENT:** A 4-mile hike at Bull's Bridge/Appalachian Trail along the Housatonic and Ten Mile Rivers, June 5 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., weather permitting; short car shuttle required. Bring lunch and a beverage. Meet Jim Malumphy at the parking area west of the covered bridge on Bulls Bridge Road. Sponsored by the Appalachian Mountain Club. For details, call Jim Malumphy at 203-206-0586; lump63@hotmail.com.

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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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