

DAY HIKES in the Saugerties Area

ESOPUS BEND NATURE PRESERVE

Highlights: Esopus Creek, Stony Point
Near: Barclay Heights in Saugerties, NY
Distance: 1.2 mile loop
Difficulty: Easy
Trail Condition: Maintained trail
Hike Type: Loop

Summary: The 156-acre preserve is located partially within both the village and town of Saugerties along a dramatic bend in the Esopus Creek. The Schroeder Trail (1.2 mile loop) follows an old farm road and footpath down to and along Esopus Creek, looping back over a historic Carriage Road, which was once used to gain access to a scow ferry that crossed Esopus Creek at Stony Point. Spur trails lead to viewpoints of the creek and Stony Point.

Trailhead: From 9W take Overbaugh Street. Make a left onto Simmons Drive, a Right onto Appletree Drive and a Left onto Shady Lane. There is a parking lot that can accommodate a few cars.

FALLING WATERS PRESERVE

Highlights: Hudson River views, waterfalls
Near: Glasco, NY
Distance: roughly two miles of trails
Difficulty: Easy
Trail Condition: maintained trail
Hike Type: Loop

Summary: Falling Waters Preserve is an excellent place to explore the rugged beauty of the Hudson River, hiking atop rock ledges that slant precipitously into the water while occasionally descending to the shoreline. On your way to (or from) the mile-long trail hugging the river, you'll pass other scenic treasures, including a meadow affording outstanding views of the Catskills and a picturesque waterfall.

Trailhead: From Saugerties, drive south on Route 9W; turn left onto Joseph's Drive, then turn right at the T intersection onto York Street. Dominican Lane will be your first left.

PLATTEKILL FALLS

Highlights: secluded waterfall, Hudson River School Art Trail stop
Near: Elka Park, NY
Distance: 2/3 mile round trip
Difficulty: Easy
Trail Condition: maintained trail marked with yellow tags
Hike Type: Out and Back

The Waterfall Trail is an approximately 1/3 mile, one-way trail to the base of Plattekill Falls. Use the trailhead for Huckleberry Point and walk along Platte Clove Rd uphill a short distance to a road sign for Long Trail where a path descends to the informational kiosk just above the Red Cabin.. From here the trail goes eastward and slopes downward to the edge of the clove and then turns and descends to the base of Plattekill Falls. CAUTION: trail is narrow and descends through a steep gorge. Proper footwear is required. Swimming is prohibited in the waterfall. Return to the kiosk the same way you came.

Trailhead: See Huckleberry Point Trailhead driving directions.

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HUCKLEBERRY POINT

Highlights: Moderate hike to outstanding views. Great for the kids.

Distance: 4.5 miles round trip; Elevation Gain: 1100 ft; Hike Time: 2.5 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

Trail Condition: OK, but a few difficult spots

Hike Type: Out and Back

Summary: A hike to a beautiful overlook that doesn't involve a vigorous, 3-4 hour climb. The blue blazed trail (Part of the Long Path) starts at the parking area on Platte Clove Road. It begins as a gentle climb up a heavily eroded woods road. After about 3/4 mile it reaches a junction with the yellow blazed Huckleberry Point trail. Turn right here. The trail is more pleasant here, as it's now a narrow path through the forest. It crosses a stream, then climbs a bit before descending towards Huckleberry Point. Here you will find outstanding views of the Hudson Valley to the east and Indian Head, Plattekill and Twin Mtns to the south.

Trailhead: From NYS Thruway Exit 20, take NY-212 West to Centerville. Slight right onto Blue Mountain Rd/CR-35, then slight left onto CR-33/West Saugerties Rd. Continue onto Platte Clove Rd (steep and narrow ascent). Parking area is near the crest on right at 2425 Platte Clove Rd, Elka Park, NY. Winter: Platte Clove Rd between parking and West Saugerties is closed in the winter so you will have to approach this from the west during the winter months. In winter take Route 23 through Palenville and Tannersville. Make left on Bloomer Rd. Bear left onto Platte Clove Rd. Parking area will be on left just as the road starts its descent.

KAATERSKILL FALLS

Highlights: highest two tiered waterfall in New York

Near: Haines Falls, NY

Distance: 1 mile round trip; Elevation Gain: 300 ft; Hike Time: 1 hour

Difficulty: Easy

Trail Condition: Well maintained trail

Hike Type: Out and Back

Summary: Kaaterskill Falls is the highest two-tiered waterfall in New York state. It is a very popular spot - especially during the warmer summer months. From the parking area, walk down to the bridge. Be cautious walking along the shoulder of the road. Near the bridge is Bastion Falls. Continue on the trail (yellow markers) for about 0.5 miles to the base of Kaaterskill Falls. The water drops 260 feet in two stages. The first drop is 180 feet while the second is only 80 feet. The official trail ends here. Turn around and head back.

Trailhead: Take NY Route 32 North. Veer left onto 32A. Left onto 23A going west through Palenville. In about 3 miles you will get to a sharp hair-pin turn where you will cross a bridge and see some nice falls on the right). The parking area is up the road on the left.

OVERLOOK MOUNTAIN

Highlights: great views, ruins of old hotel, fire lookout tower

Near: Woodstock, NY

Distance: 5 miles round trip; Elevation Gain: 1400 ft; Hike Time: 3 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

Trail Condition: Fire road/pavement

Hike Type: Out and Back

Summary: This is a very popular hike that can be combined with a visit to the village of Woodstock. The trail follows the jeep road to the summit. The gravel road is blazed with red markers. After 2 miles of steady climbing, you reach the ruins of the old Overlook mountain hotel. Only the concrete shell remains. A trail comes in from the left which leads to Echo Lake. Continue straight ahead to the fire tower. Near the cabin is a short trail that leads to a scenic overlook with a grand view of the Hudson valley and the Ashokan reservoir.

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Trailhead: Take NYS Thruway (87) to Exit 20. Get on Rte 212 heading west. When you reach the center of Woodstock, take right on Rock City Road. This road becomes Mead Mountain Road after crossing Glasco Turnpike. The parking area is on the right across from the Buddhist Temple - about 1.5 miles from Rte 212 .

DIBBLE'S QUARRY

Highlights: great view, stone benches and structures, great picnic location

Distance: 1.5 miles round trip; Hike Time: 1 hour

Difficulty: Easy

Trail Condition: Maintained trail

Hike Type: Out and back

Summary: This is a magical spot, located at the remnants of an old quarry. Follow the trail to the first junction. Take the left fork.

Trailhead: Take 212 West to Centerville. Right on Rt. 35. Left on Rt. 33, which become Rt. 16. Left on Dale Road. Right on Roaring Kill Road. Trailhead on left.

POET'S LEDGE

Highlights: mountain views

Distance: 6.5 miles round trip; Elevation Gain: 2200 ft; Hike Time: 4 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

Trail Condition: Well maintained trail

Hike Type: Out and Back

Summary: Poets Ledge, perched above the Kaaterskill Clove, has a view that has inspired artists for centuries. It is a steady climb for most of the way. You reach the first view point with a view of the Catskill Escarpment and Hudson Valley. Continue until you reach a yellow trail which branches off to the right. It leads to Poets Ledge in 1/2 mile.

Trailhead: Take Rte 32A West to Village of Palenville to Rte 23A. About 0.5 miles past the intersection with Rte 23A, there is small forest preserve parking area on the right (just before the "Entering the Catskills" sign). From the parking area, continue walking west along Rte 23A. After the bridge over Kaaterskill Creek, turn left onto Malden Ave. Continue past both barricades. Turn right onto the old road (Red Gravel Hill Road) which is after the house past the Inn. The trail is marked with blue DEC markers.

POETS' WALK PARK

Highlights: Hudson River views

Near: Barrytown, NY

Distance: varies

Difficulty: Mild

Trail Condition: Well-maintained

Hike Type: Out and back

Summary: The park celebrates the connection between landscape and poetry. The park's mown and gravel paths provide access to the 120 acres of fields and forest. The Park's design reflects 19th century picturesque style of American landscape design. The extraordinary vistas, sunlit fields and thick forest were the focus of landscape architect Hans Jacob Ehlers vision for the property in 1849. Using walls of foliage and breaks in the rise of a fields or a stone wall, he created several "outdoor rooms", each evoking a different atmosphere. As you walk the Park, you will see the maturity of his design which has endured through the efforts of previous landowners. Today, the visual integrity of the Park and its setting is protected by The Scenic Hudson Land Trust's conservation easements on the surrounding 800 acres.

Trailhead: Take 9W South. Take Hwy 199 East across the Hudson at the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge. At the first traffic light after bridge, turn left onto River Road, County Route 103. Drive about 1/2 mile until you see the signs for the park. Poet's Walk Park is on the left side of the road.

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FERNCLIFF FOREST

Highlights: Lookout tower with Hudson River views

Near: Rhinecliff, NY

Distance: varies

Difficulty: mild

Trail Condition: well-maintained

Hike Type: loop or out and back

Summary: Forested area with trails and camping areas. A fire lookout provides spectacular views of the river and surrounding area.

Trailhead: Take 9W South. Take Hwy 199 East across the Hudson at the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge. At the first traffic light after bridge, turn right onto River Road, County Route 103. Drive 0.7 miles and take a slight left at Mount Rutsen Rd. Drive 0.8 miles to trailhead parking on right side of road.