OTSEGO

WALKS & PADDLES

a sampler

Otsego County Conservation Association
Cooperstown, New York
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White-tailed Deer
PREFACE

Nationwide, abundant natural beauty and open spaces are rapidly disappearing as commercial development expands. In Otsego County, however, both residents and visitors still find peace and joy in the subtly varied landscapes, green hills, streams, and lakes of our immediate surroundings. To foster an appreciation of the many natural, scenic areas in and near Otsego County, the Otsego County Conservation Association (OCCA) has undertaken the publication of *Otsego Walks and Paddles*.

OCCA is extremely grateful to numerous people who volunteered professional and technical expertise or otherwise made possible the production of this guide. We are particularly indebted to Bill Brosseau, Joe Hart, and Nina Gunzenhauser Hart for seeing the project through from beginning to end, checking trails and maps and writing descriptions. We are also grateful to Robert Titus for the historical landscape piece and to Irwin Gooen for his assistance with the canoeing section. Maps of trails were provided by the Adirondack Mountain Club Susquehanna Chapter (Sleeping Lion, Hick State Forest, and Arnold Lake State Forest), Peter Blue (Mud Lake), Andy Mason (DOAS Sanctuary), the Oneonta Susquehanna Greenway Committee (Susquehanna River Park), and Tom Salo (Basswood Pond). The Bainbridge Chamber of Commerce provided maps for canoeing routes. Valerie Haynes reviewed the trail descriptions before publication, and Paul Wenner of the NYSDepartment of Environmental Conservation reviewed maps and descriptions of the trails in state forests. The following people field-tested both descriptions and maps: Danny Birnbaum, David Cox, Bill Elsey, Steve Herrmann, Johanna Koenig, Monica and Irv Peters, Linda and Stefan Seifried, and Lucille Wiggin. Terry Bliss, Leon Kalmus, and Bennett Sandler were of help in the early stages of this project. The following organizations gave permission to feature their properties: the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society (DOAS Sanctuary), Hartwick College (Mud Lake Trail, Pine Lake Campus), the SUNY-Oneonta Biological Field Station (Goodyear Swamp Sanctuary), and The Nature Conservancy, Eastern New York Chapter (Emmons Bog and Lordsland Preserve).

Teresa Winchester
OCCA Executive Director March, 2004
Our Otsego County trails take us into what approaches a wilderness experience. We trespass on nature and spy upon her much as she was many millennia ago before the coming of humans. But even the remnants of those old-growth forests that once covered the region are newcomers. It is the landscape beneath the trees that is truly old. Geology, that wonderful science, speaks to us of far more ancient wildernesses. A hiker cannot truly appreciate what is out there without an understanding of those more-than-ancient landscapes.

Geology is a science of three worlds. One is very real, the world of here-and-now; the other two are lands of the human imagination. Geologists see the real world around us just as anyone else does. It is no more colorful, no more beautiful to them. But their knowledge of those other two worlds brings an extra richness to the landscape. One of these worlds is very old indeed; it is the landscape of hundreds of millions of years ago, preserved in the bedrock and observed wherever the bedrock can be seen. The other is the world recorded in the landscape itself, for the landscape wears the scars of a more recent geological history, just thousands of
years ago. Much of geology is about those two other worlds; much of the appeal of hiking can be the same.

Our second world, the bedrock world, is seen in the ledges of sandstone along many Otsego County trails. The thickly stratified ledges are composed of sand that was deposited in streams of the Devonian period. Where you can find an unobstructed view to the east, gaze in that direction and hold one hand with its side on the edge of the horizon. Your hand defines the image of a great mountain range, the Acdians. These grand mountains rose up out of the crust of western New England during the Devonian. Look east again. Those mountains were as tall as the Himalayas. They were snow-capped, and probably gun-metal blue below.

As all mountains do, the Acdians weathered and crumbled. The rock slowly decomposed and turned into soil. Mountain streams eroded those soils and then descended their slopes and carried the sand, along with silt and clay, out onto a great delta complex: something called the Catskill Delta. Those rivers built the delta, and its sediments hardened into the bedrock that makes Otsego County. With its tropical climate, that second world had much in common with the landscape of modern-day Bangladesh, which lies on the great Ganges Delta, at the base of the Himalayas. The curious hiker should look bedrock ledges over carefully; the reward can be the petrified remnants of the Gilboa fossil forest, the tropical jungle that once grew here.

The third world is the landscape of the recently passed Ice Age. It can best be pondered where trails lie at the bottom of valleys and offer a view to the north. Twenty-five thousand years ago great forests covered our Otsego County, but slowly the climate cooled. Summers became short and cold; winters became snowy, and worse, they came to be long. Snows can be imagined as starting in September and ending in June. The climatic deterioration came at a great cost to the health of the forests. The pensive hiker can look north and imagine dying forests and then, above the trees, a field of advancing ice. Large fingers of ice, called valley glaciers, descended southward through all the valleys of the upper Susquehanna River system. The ice rose hundreds of feet and filled each valley to near its top.

But this was just the beginning. With time a single, much larger sheet of ice came to loom upon the skyline, from west to east as far as could be seen. With time, this glacier, the Wisconsin Ice Sheet, would bury Otsego County under thousands of feet of ice.

Nothing lasts forever, not the Catskill Delta and not the Wisconsin Ice Sheet. With a return to a temperate climate, the forests would grow again, and eventually hiking trails would pass through them.
INTRODUCTION

Have a Safe Trip and Leave No Trace

In order to ensure a safe and enjoyable trip and minimize impact on the land, always follow these principles, which are based on the national Leave No Trace program:

Plan Ahead and Prepare. Know the regulations of the area you are visiting, especially hunting seasons in state forests. Do not travel alone. Always sign trail registers. Wear sturdy hiking boots and bring rain gear. In cooler weather dress in layers of polyester, fleece, or wool with a polyester or nylon windbreaker and bring a hat and gloves or mittens. Avoid 100% cotton clothing like jeans or sweatshirts. Bring food, water, whistle, matches, first aid kit, and flashlight with extra batteries. These preparations may seem excessive for short hikes, but they are worth establishing as habits for longer trips. Even short trips can call for emergency equipment.

Be Prepared for Surprises. Some of the trails described are in state forests in active production of forest products. From time to time, logging operations necessitate closing or relocating trails. Blowdowns occasionally obstruct trails. Spring flooding and beaver activity may make streams impassable. Use care and common sense in dealing with obstacles, if necessary retracing your steps to the trailhead.

Trail work at Basswood Pond State Forest.
Photo: OCCA
Respect the Land. Stay on trails and respect private property. Leave rocks, plants, and other natural objects as you find them. Avoid inadvertently transporting and introducing non-native species. Do not build structures or dig trenches.

Dispose of Waste Properly. Adhere to the rule “Pack it in, pack it out.” Deposit human waste in holes dug 6-8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water and trails. Pack out toilet paper.

Minimize Campfire Impacts. Campfires can cause lasting impacts on the land. Use lightweight stoves for cooking. Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings. Keep fires small and use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.

Respect Wildlife. Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow, approach, or feed animals. Control pets at all times.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors. To protect the quality of other people’s visit, avoid loud voices and other noises and allow nature’s sounds to prevail.
How to Use This Guide

The areas covered in this guide are keyed to the locator map on pages 4 and 5. The information on each area includes driving directions to the trailhead or parking lot. Note that these directions give mileages as cumulative miles from the nearest state or county highway.

For each area, the guide provides a brief description of one or more easily followed routes for walking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. The accompanying map shows access routes as well as trails. The maps are keyed with the following legend:

Legend

- Preserve Property
- Roads (Year-Round)
- Roads (Seasonal)
- Forest Access Roads
- Marked Hiking Trails
- Barrier
- Parking
- Trail Markers (letter indicates color of marker)
Arnold Lake State Forest trails lie on New York State and Otsego County lands surrounding Arnold Lake. The main trail is a five-and-a-half-mile loop that crosses public highways at three places. Parking is available at each of these points, so hikes of differing lengths can be arranged if two vehicles are used. The trail has several short, steep pitches but can be skied comfortably by cross-country skiers of modest ability.

ACCESS: From State Hwy. 205, south of Mount Vision, follow County Hwy. 46 northeasterly 3.1 miles to Joe Cornell Road. From Milford, take County Hwy. 44 to 46 and travel west 4.4 miles. The trailhead parking lot is on the south side of 46, off Joe Cornell Road.

TRAILS: The trails, maintained by the Susquehanna Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club, are marked with yellow cross-country ski markers. They consist in part of forest access roads or logging roads and in part of narrow footpaths. There are several open fields that have been logged and are returning to tree cover. They will provide some nice views for a few years.

For a trip of about three and a half miles that starts and ends at the Joe Cornell parking lot, take the trail across County Hwy. 46 from Joe Cornell Road. It begins on the access road to a quarry, but after just a few yards it forks to the right on a footpath. In about a mile, the trail intersects an access road that leads to private property on the left. Cross the road and continue on an old road. About a half mile ahead, keep going straight where another old road goes to the right. The trail soon jogs north (left) and then east again, to a sign for the Joe Cornell Road trailhead. Continue straight ahead. The trail soon curves right. At the bottom of a short hill, turn right onto the access road, which will bring you back to the intersection with the footpath. Turn left and retrace your steps to the trailhead.

For an end-to-end hike from Joe Cornell Road to Arnold Lake Road, follow the above instructions to the sign for the Joe Cornell Road trailhead and bear left. This hike is about two and a half miles long.
The segment of trail on the east side of Arnold Lake follows a forest access road, good for cross-country skiing. It is a little less than two and a half miles long.

From the sign-in box at the Joe Cornell Road parking lot, a one-mile trail leads down to an intersection with County Hw. 46, across from the forest access road.
Basswood Pond State Forest offers varied outdoor recreational opportunities—fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing—along with an attractive picnic area and pit toilet. The pond site is handicapped accessible with a paved path to the water’s edge.

**ACCESS:** From the village of Burlington on State H wy. 80, take County H wy. 16 north 1.4 miles to Basswood Road and turn left. The southern trailhead parking area is at 1.5 miles, on the right. For the picnic area and pond, continue on Basswood Road to Conservation Road and turn right. Basswood Pond and the trailhead parking area are on the right at 2.9 miles.

In winter, Jacobs Road may be the only access. From State H wy. 80, continue on County H wy. 16 past Basswood Road and turn left on Jacobs Road, at 2.0 miles. The trailhead parking area is on the north side of Jacobs Road, 1.2 miles from County H wy. 16.

**TRAILS:** The trails in Basswood Pond State Forest are maintained by the Otsego County Conservation Association. The ones around Basswood Pond are relatively easy hiking, on level and gentle grades. Those north of Jacobs Road are somewhat steeper, but none are of more than moderate difficulty.

A loop hike of about two miles can be made beginning at the picnic area. From the kiosk at the lower end of the pond, cross the earthen dam. Bear left and enter a stand of Norway spruce trees, following blue trailmarkers. The trail soon comes to an intersection where the yellow-marked trail to Jacobs Road goes to the left. Bear right onto an old road and continue to follow the blue trailmarkers. The trail soon bears right again onto a path, while the road continues straight ahead. Near the southern trailhead parking area, the blue trail makes a very sharp right turn back toward Basswood Pond. It descends and crosses the outlet of the pond on a footbridge. Turning north and paralleling the stream, the trail passes a number of beaver dams and eventually reaches a beaver pond on the right. It then continues north to the trailhead parking area at Basswood Pond.
In winter, the blue trail can be reached from Jacobs Road via the yellow-marked trail that leaves the south side of the road across from the parking area. The trail descends steeply and crosses a brook. At the intersection with an alternative side trail to Jacobs Road, bear right. The trail soon connects with the blue-marked loop trail.
The Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society manages a 100-acre wildlife sanctuary on Franklin Mountain, near Oneonta. It is the site of the annual fall Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch, when volunteer counters tally the hundreds of migrating raptors flying over this point. While the area is small, it offers interestingly varied walking and a rewarding view.

ACCESS: From the traffic light at the intersection of State Hwy. 28 and Lower Main Street in Oneonta, take Southside Drive 0.9 miles to Swart Hollow Road. Turning south, follow Swart Hollow uphill to Grange Hall Road at 2.5 miles and make a sharp right turn. The DOAS Sanctuary is on the left at 2.6 miles. Park on the shoulder of the road. A visitor register and information about the sanctuary are located in the open area of the barn.

TRAILS: There are three trails, marked with red, blue, and yellow trailmarkers respectively. The longest is the red-marked Stephen Parker Nature Trail, about two-thirds of a mile long. Numbered signposts are keyed to a leaflet available at the kiosk near the entrance to the property. The trail begins directly behind the kiosk. It leads toward a wetland and a boardwalk over the water, where wildlife native to wetlands may be observed. The trail continues south through mixed forest, climbing gently to an open field, where it turns left at signpost #5.

The Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch, DOAS Sanctuary. Photo: Nina Hart
At this point the walk may be extended another half mile by crossing the field toward the telephone line and following the blue trailmarkers in a loop, rejoining the red trail at a signpost with red and blue trailmarkers. The red trail turns left again and leads north, emerging into the open at the Hawkwatch, which affords a panoramic view of Oneonta and the hills beyond.
Emmons Bog is a Nature Conservancy preserve near Oneonta that offers a close look at bog habitat. The walking distance is less than a half-mile round trip on an easy grade. A boardwalk provides access to the bog itself and close-up looks at the typical bog plants—pitcher plants, sundews, and leatherleaf—and invading white pine and red maple.

**ACCESS:** Follow the directions on page 16 to Swart Hollow Road. Turn right, drive to White Hill Road, at 3.6 miles, and turn left. The Emmons Pond Bog trailhead parking area is on the left at 4.6 miles from State Hwy. 28.

**TRAILS:** From the parking lot, a trail leading to an open meadow and a small kettle pond branches to the left. To go to the bog, take the main trail north, following the trailmarkers (yellow with red arrows). At the sign-in box, about a quarter mile from the trailhead, the trail onto the bog branches left. The main trail turns right, providing views of the pond before entering a mature hardwood forest. The Nature Conservancy preserve ends about a half mile from the parking lot, although the trail continues. Please respect the private land and return the way you came.
Goodyear Swamp Sanctuary, a wetland at the northwest end of Otsego Lake, is managed by the SUNY-Oneonta Biological Field Station for research and education. It provides protection to rare plants and animals and helps maintain water quality in Otsego Lake.

**ACCESS:** From Cooperstown, drive 8 miles north on State Hwy. 80 to Glimmerglass Opera. Park in the Opera parking lot on the west side of the highway and cross the highway to the south entrance to the Opera grounds. Do not park along this driveway. Access from the lake is also available, via a forty-foot dock.

**TRAILS:** A system of trails and boardwalks provides a moderate walk of over a quarter mile in which to observe more than 200 species of large vascular plants, thousands of invertebrate organisms, as well as waterfowl, fur-bearing mammals, amphibians, and reptiles. A tour booklet is available at the entrance. Do not leave the trails or walkways; soft mud two to six feet deep may appear firm, and poison ivy is the dominant plant in some spots. Please respect research sites, usually indicated by red-flagging of posts or vegetation.
The 1,293 acres of R. Milton Hick Memorial State Forest include all stages of the cycle of forest management: mature mixed hardwoods, softwood plantations, young growth, and recent logging.

ACCESS: From Pleasant Brook on State Hw y. 165, turn south on La Fleure Road. At 0.3 miles take a left fork onto Perry Hill Road and continue up a steep hill to the trailhead parking area on the right, at 1.8 miles from State Hw y. 165.

In winter, an alternative route with gentler grades is often preferable. From County Hw y. 34, 3 miles north of Westford or 3.5 miles south of State Hw y. 165, turn north on Josclyn Road, which becomes Perry Hill Road, and continue 1 mile to the trailhead parking lot. Most of La Fleure Road, which also bisects Hick State Forest, is not maintained in winter.

TRAILS: The Susquehanna Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club maintains the Roseboom Nordic Ski Trail here, marked with yellow trailmarkers. The trails mainly follow old logging roads and cross two low north-south ridges. They are generally easy walking, with occasional short, moderately steep climbs.

Beginning at the trail register, turn left and follow an old road, which soon ascends a short hill. At the T, the main trail goes to the left; the trail to the right deadends in a recently logged area. The main trail goes to La Fleure Road, turns right, and follows La Fleure for about a third of a mile to a turnoff to the left. At this point, a short detour to the right will bring you to a large pond.

For a loop of about two and a half miles from the trail register, continue straight on La Fleure Road for another quarter mile. Look for the trail sign on the right and follow the yellow markers back to the parking area.

For a longer loop (a little over three miles from the trail register), turn left from La Fleure Road. The trail leads to the top of a ridge offering nice views to the west. A t
the four corners, it turns right and continues back to La Fleure Road. Turn right on La Fleure and watch for the trail sign about 200 yards on the left; follow the yellow trailmarkers back to the parking area.

Skunk
Gilbert Lake State Park offers year-round recreational opportunities. In addition to trails for hiking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing, it has facilities for swimming, fishing, boating, picnicking, and camping. An entrance fee may apply.

ACCESS: From State Hwy. 205, turn at the flashing red light to the Village of Laurens. At the T intersection, turn left, proceed about a half mile through the village, and turn right on County Hwy. 12. The entrance to the park is on the right at 4.6 miles from State Hwy. 205.

From State Hwy. 51, travel east on County Hwy. 12 for 4.2 miles. The entrance to the park is on the left.

After the entrance station, bear left at the first fork (CCC Road). The parking lot on the left is kept open all year and provides access to all trails from the loop trail (approximately one mile long) around Gilbert Lake. During the late spring, summer, and early fall, parking for the Ice Pond Trail is available on Cabin Colony Road; continue on CCC Road to the bathing area and turn left across from the bathing beach. When Cabin Colony Road is closed for the season, parking may also be found at the bathing beach.

TRAILS: The park contains over twelve miles of trails available to hikers, skiers, and snowshoers. A map for the entire park is available at the park office.

The Ice Pond–Lake of the Twin Fawns Trail, a loop trail of about two and a half miles, traverses both wooded and open land. The wide trail is marked with signposts at intersections and easily followed. It is gently rolling, excellent for skiing and snowshoeing.

Beginning at the trailhead parking area on Cabin Colony Road, the trail follows a road north toward Ice Pond. It soon comes to a fork with the Deer Run Trail. Bear left, continuing on the road. After crossing a small stream, the trail meets the Wilderness Trail on the left. Continue straight ahead to Ice Pond. Cross the impoundment for the pond to the intersection with Spring Pond Loop. Turn left and continue straight...
ahead to Lake of the Twin Fawns.

The trail now begins its loop back to the trailhead, rising and then descending to the intersection with the Wilderness Trail to the left. Continue straight. At the end of the trail, bear left and continue along the road, keeping left at the next three intersections until you reach the parking area.
The Lordsland Preserve is a private, eighty-acre parcel owned by The Nature Conservancy. Day-use, low-impact hiking is encouraged. The two trails offer access to mature hardwood stands, overgrown fields, and several beaver flows. The diverse habitats sustain a wide range of plants. Spring birding can produce twenty to thirty species.

ACCESS: From the intersection of State H wys. 166 and 165 in Roseboom, drive 0.3 miles southeast on State Hwy. 165. Following the signs to Belvedere Lake, bear left to Stannard Hill Road at 0.4 miles and left again on Gage Road at 0.7 miles. Continue past Belvedere Lake to the west trailhead, on the right at 2.4 miles. To access the east trailhead, continue on Gage Road to the intersection of Doc Ahlers Road at 2.6 miles and turn right. Cross the valley and climb the hill. The east trailhead is on the right at 3.0 miles.

TRAILS: The two trails are each about three-quarters of a mile in length. The west trail, marked with red trailmarkers, provides open views of the beaver ponds and the surrounding wetland and offers more rewarding birding and autumn hiking. The west trail can also be skied comfortably. The east trail, marked with blue trailmarkers, is steeper, descending through a mature...
hardwood forest with larger trees and then climbing on an old road. Lordsland is a small preserve with a simple topography, surrounded by roads on three sides and, for the most part, open meadow on the fourth side. It is virtually impossible to be lost here for long, so a hiker can feel at ease off the trails. Exploring the preserve on snowshoes will also provide a nice outing.
The Pine Lake Campus of Hartwick College is devoted to environmental education and research. Its 914 acres consist of ecologically diverse lands and varied terrain and include Mud Lake, a high-altitude kettle-hole bog. The four-mile round trip hike to the bog entails wet feet; boots are recommended.

ACCESS: From I-88 exit 16 or State H wy. 7, take County H wy. 47 east to West Davenport, 2.8 miles. (The route number changes to County H wy. 11 in Delaware County.) Turn left on Charlotte Creek Road. The entrance to Pine Lake is on the right, at 4.6 miles. Drive in the main entrance and park on the left, opposite the Robertson Center. Visitors must register in the Center.

From the traffic signal at Pindars Corners on State H wy. 23, turn north on County H wy. 11 and turn right on Charlotte Creek Road. Continue 1.8 miles to the Pine Lake Campus and follow above directions.

TRAILS: The Mud Lake Trail begins at a sign on Charlotte Creek Road east of the Robertson Center. After a short, steep climb, the trail turns left at the sign-in box onto an access road. Follow this road uphill to a less-used road branching to the right, with a Mud Lake sign. The purple-blazed trail soon crosses a clearing where a logging road goes off to the right and the white-blazed Western Boundary Trail (under construction) begins on the left.

The Jacy Henderson Memorial Trail soon branches off to the right, at a large stone cairn and a yellow sign. Marked variously with yellow blazes, stone cairns, and stone-lined paths, it traverses several hills before rejoining the Mud Lake Trail.

The Mud Lake Trail continues straight through mostly level woods with many wet spots. After crossing a brook, it curves up and to the left, then turns right and begins a steady gentle uphill. A stone cairn on the right marks the terminus of the Jacy Henderson Trail.

In about a half mile, take a right fork to the hemlock and birch forest that surrounds Mud Lake. Follow
planks through the very old, small trees (some cored at more than 250 years old) to the floating sphagnum bog. Walk gently; protected and endangered plants are underfoot. Look for the relatively rare black spruce, tamarack, and yellow birch around the floating vegetation, as well as blueberries, sundew, and pitcher plants. Do not pick or damage any plants.
SLEEPING LION TRAIL
Glimmerglass State Park

Seen from the south, Mount Wellington, on the eastern shore of Otsego Lake, is said to resemble a sleeping lion. The loop trail that climbs it from Glimmerglass State Park offers a lovely forested walk through majestic white pines, hemlocks, and hardwoods. In addition to this trail, the park offers cross-country ski trails and other recreational facilities. An entrance fee may apply.

ACCESS: The entrance to Glimmerglass State Park is on County Hwy. 31, 4.3 miles south of US Hwy. 20 and 8 miles north of the center of Cooperstown. After the entrance booth, drive 0.7 miles, passing a service road on the right, and park on the left. To reach the trailhead, return to the service road, pass the gate, and bear left on the road, toward Hyde Hall. The trailhead is on the right.

TRAIL: The Sleeping Lion Trail, about two and a half miles long, is marked with orange paint blazes. It climbs moderately steeply through a hemlock forest and then levels out along the shoulder of the mountain. (The summit is on private land.) Parts of the trail are quite wet, even in summer; boots are recommended. This is also a good trail for snowshoeing. The descent on the west side of the mountain offers views of Otsego Lake through the trees. The trail comes out on a road just west of Hyde Hall, Otsego County’s only National Historic Landmark, currently under restoration. Turn left on this road, passing Hyde Hall on the way back to the parking lot.

Fallen tree along the Sleeping Lion Trail. Photo: OCCA
South Hill State Forest lies on the top of the ridge straddling Otsego and Delaware counties. Its 521 acres contain mixed hardwoods and a softwood plantation. It offers pleasant excursions in any season and is ideally suited to cross-country skiing, especially for beginners.

**ACCESS:** An all-season road borders the west boundary of the forest. It is known as Turner Hill Road in Delaware County and Davenport Road in Otsego County. From State H wy. 23 in the village of Davenport, take Mill Road and cross the bridge to Charlotte Creek Road at 0.5 miles. Turn right and at 0.7 miles turn left on Turner Hill Road. Continue up the hill, being sure to keep left at the fork with Garvey Road. The southernmost forest access road, marked with a NYS-DEC state forest sign, is on the right at 2.9 miles from State H wy. 23.

From State Route 7, 1.5 miles west of Schenevus and 1.6 miles east of Maryland, turn south on Stevens Rd. to County H wy. 56. At 0.7 miles from State H wy. 7, turn right on Burroughs Road, bear left up the hill, and bear left again onto Davenport Road. The northernmost access road to the state forest is at 3.8 miles.

There are three gravel forest access roads leading into the state land. Each one has a parking area for several cars, but in winter these roads are not plowed, so it may be necessary to park along the main road.

**TRAILS:** There are no marked trails, but the wide, well-maintained access roads are easily followed. They are largely flat, with only gentle rises, and therefore offer easy walking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. A walk might begin at the second of these access roads, which runs along the north side of private property. Continue to the junction of another road. Turn left and follow this road to where it bears sharply left.

↑ To make a short loop of about a mile, continue on this road back to Davenport Road and walk along the road 0.3 miles back to your starting point.
For a longer trip, return to the junction of the access roads and take the right arm of the T, turning right at the next intersection. Look for an old road on the right that leads to a small pond. After exploring this area, retrace your steps to the T and turn left to return to your starting point.
The Susquehanna River Park Trail, located in the City of Oneonta, is the first section of the Oneonta Susquehanna Greenway to be completed. A full circuit of the loop trail offers two miles of easy, flat walking or cross-country skiing. Interpretive markers, keyed to a leaflet obtainable at the trailhead, enhance the experience educationally. The trail was largely built by volunteer labor recruited by the Oneonta Susquehanna Greenway Committee.

ACCESS: The trail is reached from State Hwy. 205 extension at I-88 exit 13. Between I-88 and the river, turn on Silas Lane, bear right, and follow the road around to the Greenway parking lot on the right.

TRAIL: From the entrance to the trail at the parking lot, turn right and follow the grassy trail around several buildings. Just after the trail crosses Silas Lane, it passes a wetland on the left, with sycamores and silver maples. N ext, a beautiful wooded stretch of trail follows the riverbank, offering opportunities to see wildflowers, river birds, and a pine and spruce forest. Sections of the bank are being undercut by the river, so it is important to stay on the trail except where closer access to the river is provided.

As you leave the pine and spruce stand, a side trail to the right offers the option of a shorter loop back to the trailhead. The main trail continues straight ahead, skirting open fields where a variety of field birds may be spotted. N ative A mericans once camped here in summer. T urning right, the trail leads to a wetlands area, an old oxbow that was once part of the river. It then joins the short loop trail and returns to the parking lot between a chain link fence and the city parking garages.

Note: The next section of the Greenway will go from the state fishing access site off State Hwy. 205 (across from Silas Lane) to Neahwah Park. Designed as a two-mile, paved, handicapped-accessible trail, it is scheduled for completion in fall 2004. The entire Greenway is projected to extend to Fortin Park, near I-88 exit 16.
OTHER HIKING OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to the areas described in this guide, Otsego County has many other areas open to the public that offer attractive opportunities for outdoor recreation. The properties listed below are either state- or county-owned. In general, these areas do not have marked trails but have seasonal roads and logging roads that can be hiked and skied. They are offered here as choices for people who have more outdoor experience and like to explore.

These areas are shown on the Otsego County Highway Map, but they are not identified by name. To obtain more information and maps, contact the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and the Otsego County Highway, Forest and Parks Department (see Sources of Further Information, page 40). The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographical map for each parcel is identified here as an additional aid for exploration.

Cherry Valley State Forest (SF) 1,566 acres, in towns of Roseboom and Cherry Valley, USGS Quad Sprout Brook

Bear Swamp SF 1,759 acres, in towns of Roseboom and Decatur, USGS Quad South Valley

River Otter
Skiing the seasonal road through Texas School House State Forest. Photo: A D K

Maple Valley SF 801 acres, in towns of Westford and Decatur, USGS Quads South Valley and Westford

Decatur SF 582 acres, in towns of Decatur and Worcester, USGS Quad South Valley

Roseboom SF 630 acres, in town of Middlefield, USGS Quad Westford

Honey Hill SF 1,017 acres, in town of Roseboom, USGS Quads South Valley and Sprout Brook

Five Points (County Forest #3) 380 acres, in towns of Westford and Roseboom, USGS Quad Westford

Hooker Mountain SF 801 acres, in towns of Westford and Maryland, USGS Quad Schenevus

Susquehanna SF 422 acres, in town of Milford, USGS Quad Milford

Exeter SF 1,957 acres, in town of Exeter, USGS Quad Schuyler Lake

Plainfield SF 1,403 acres, in town of Plainfield, USGS Quad Unadilla Forks

Hartwick SF 1,242 acres, in town of Burlington, USGS Quad Hartwick

Calhoun Creek SF 730 acres, in towns of Morris and Pittsfield, USGS Quad New Berlin South

Texas School House SF 1,245 acres, in town of New Lisbon, USGS Quads Hartwick and Edmeston

Milford SF 512 acres, in towns of Laurens and Milford, USGS Quad Mount Vision

Wagner Farm SF 458 acres, in town of Butternuts, USGS Quad New Berlin South
The Susquehanna River begins its 440-mile journey to Chesapeake Bay at the outlet of Otsego Lake in Cooperstown. Its headwaters in Otsego County offer choice opportunities for canoeing and kayaking in a bucolic setting rich in native flora and fauna.

Any boating activity calls for safety measures, and moving water has its own hazards. Every occupant of a watercraft should wear a personal flotation device. Do not attempt to canoe the Susquehanna when the water is high. At any time, the river can present dangers. Rivers are not static; they change as they flood, and a new hazard can develop overnight. If you have never paddled on moving water, it is highly recommended that you paddle with someone with experience of the river.

A good place to begin familiarizing yourself with the river is the Crumhorn State Boat Launch Site, off County Hwy. 35 north of Portlandville (see next page). It is located on a cove that offers still water in which to get the feel of your abilities and your canoe. After paddling around the cove a bit, head out into the river, turn right, and paddle upstream to practice controlling your craft in the slowly moving waters before returning to the cove.

In planning a trip on the river, be sure to allow ample time to complete your trip by daylight. For a leisurely paddle, give yourself at least 20 minutes per river mile, plus time for lunch or other stops. It is best to go with at least one other watercraft; canoe rentals are available in Oneonta and Portlandville. Take an extra paddle, sunblock, plenty of water, and a snack. Wear sneakers or heavy rubber sandals; bare feet are not recommended.

The sections of the river described below have been chosen for their attractiveness, relatively easy paddling, and convenience of parking. In the descriptions, the terms river left and river right indicate left and right as you face downstream.
MILFORD TO CRUMHORN (ABOUT 6 MILES)

ACCESS TO PUT-IN SITE: From State Hwy. 28 in the village of Milford, turn east at the traffic light onto State Hwy. 166. Drive 0.7 mile to the parking area on the north side of the road, on the west side of the river.

ACCESS TO TAKE-OUT SITE: From the put-in site, continue east on State Hwy. 166 another 0.3 mile and turn right on County Hwy. 35. Turn right at the next intersection and continue south on County Hwy. 35 for 4.0 miles to the Crumhorn Public Boat Launch on the right.

From State Hwy. 28 in Portlandville, cross the bridge on County Hwy. 35A and turn left onto County Hwy. 35. Continue 2.6 miles to the Crumhorn Public Boat Launch on the left.

PADDLING NOTES: The waters are moving along at a good pace at the put-in point but soon become a bit sluggish as they are backed up by the dam that forms Goodyear Lake, some miles downstream. After about six miles of easy paddling, you will pass several riverside cottages on river left. Shortly past these cottages there is a narrow-necked entrance to a cove on river left. This leads to the Crumhorn State Boat Launch, your take-out point.

![6-mile paddle between boat launch sites](map.png)
COLLIERSVILLE TO EMMONS (ABOUT 3.5 MILES)

ACCESS TO PUT-IN SITE: From the blinking traffic light in Colliersville, drive east on State Hwy. 7 for 0.2 miles. The Public Boat Launch site is on the right.

ACCESS TO TAKE-OUT SITE: From the blinking traffic light in Colliersville, drive west on State Hwy. 7 for 2.7 miles to Emmons (I-88 exit 16). Turn south at the traffic light onto County Hwy. 47, cross over I-88 and the railroad, and turn left on Stillwater Road. The Public Boat Launch is on the right.

PADDLING NOTES: The water is fairly fast-moving at the launch site, so take extra care. You will soon pass under a Delaware and Hudson railway bridge. A little further on, the river bends sharply where the Schenevus Creek enters on the left. The river goes right at a Y and then makes a wide sweep to the left. Be on the alert here to maneuver if the current tends to pull you to the right toward shore. Soon after passing under a low bridge, you will pass under the high bridge of I-88. Watch for the Emmons take-out point, which is on the near (upstream) side of the next bridge, on river right.
STATE HWY. 205 TO OTEGO (ABOUT 10 MILES)

ACCESS TO PUT-IN SITE: From State Hwy. 205 extension at I-88 exit 13, between the exit ramps and the river, turn onto the access road to the Public Boat Launch, opposite Silas Lane.

ACCESS TO TAKE-OUT SITE: Take I-88 to exit 12 and turn south. At the T, turn right onto County Hwy. 48 and drive 1.0 mile to the Public Boat Launch on the right.

PADDLING NOTES: The large rocks along the parking area make launching tricky; it may be easier to carry your canoe downstream a few yards through the bushes. After passing under the State Hwy. 205 extension overpass, you will paddle alongside the Susquehanna River Park Trail for almost a mile. A little further on, the Otego Creek enters on the right. The river then makes several large loops, passing under I-88 at four miles; Mill Creek enters on the right just after the bridge. The village of Otego is at about eight miles. After passing under the I-88 access bridge at exit 12, the river bears left and comes close to the highway. As it bears right again, look for the Public Boat Launch on the left.
SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

A di r o n d a c k M o u n t a i n C l u b (ADK), Susquehanna Chapter
www.adk.org/html/adk_susquehanna_chapter.htm

D e l a w a r e - O t s e g o A u d u b o n S o c i e t y (DOAS)
Tel: 607-652-2162
http://clubs.homeearth.com/doas/

L e a v e N o T r a c e C e n t e r f o r O u t d o o r E t h i c s
Tel: 800-332-4100
www.lnt.org

N Y S D e p a r t m e n t of E n v i r o n m e n t a l C o n s e r v a t i o n
(D E C), Region 4
Tel: 607-652-7365
www.dec.state.ny.us/

N Y S D e p a r t m e n t of P a r k s, R e c r e a t i o n a n d H i s t o r i c a l P r e s e r v a t i o n
http://nysparks.state.ny.us/
  G i l b e r t L a k e S t a t e P a r k
  607-432-2114
  G l i m m e r g l a s s S t a t e P a r k
  607-547-8662

O t s e g o C o u n t y H i g h w a y s, F o r e s t r y a n d P a r k s
Tel: 607-547-4268
www.otsego county.com

O t s e g o C o u n t y R e a l P r o p e r t y T a x O f f i c e
Tel: 607-547-4222
www.otsego county.com

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Chapter Office
Tel: 518-272-0195
http://nature.org

U n i t e d S t a t e s G e o g r a p h i c a l S u r v e y I n f o r m a t i o n S e r v i c e s
Tel: 888-275-8747
www.usgs.gov