

A Brief Guide to
Hiking Trails
near
The Hedges
on Blue Mountain Lake



Hike Safely and Comfortably

The following list of items is a good place to start when preparing for a trip. It's mainly geared toward hikers but is applicable to other backcountry activities, such as paddling.

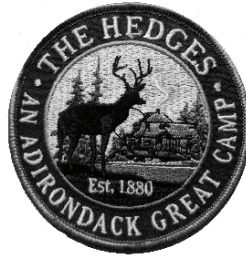
- Map & compass. Don't rely on internet, use paper (or photo)
- Whistle
- Pocket knife
- Wear quick-dry clothing and bring extra layers. **Avoid cotton!** Wool or synthetics are better. It gets cold even in August-cotton stays wet!
- Bring extra food and **water**: There should be plenty left when the hike is done.
- First-aid kit: (Moleskin, bandages, Benadryl, ibuprofen, athletic tape, latex gloves, antibiotic cream, sunscreen, **tick remover**).
- Fire starting kit
- Duct tape: Wrap a few feet around a hiking pole or pencil for emergency repairs.
- Headlamp or flashlight
- Emergency blanket
- Cell phone: On Airplane Mode to conserve power for when needed!
- Emergency phone numbers: NYS DEC Ranger Emergency Dispatch 518-891-0235 (often more familiar with backcountry trails than 911.)
- Tell someone your planned route and expected return time. Sign in at trailheads with contact info.

Did we mention an **extra bottle of water**?

Resources

National Geographic and the Adirondack Mountain Club have produced a series of definitive trail maps and guide books for hikers. You can find these at most area bookstores and outfitters, or order them at www.adk.com

Green Goat Maps based in Saranac Lake has begun producing a series of high quality maps for outdoor activities in the Adirondacks. See the latest at www.greengoatmaps.com



Patches

Hiking patches are an Adirondack tradition. Patches are sponsored by towns or hiking groups and you can earn them by completing a series of hikes. There is a small fee for each patch; see the websites for details.


Here are three near The Hedges:

Tupper Lake Triad- 3 hikes: Mount Arab, Coney Mtn., and Goodman Mtn. <https://www.tupperlake.com/recreation/tupper-lake-triad>

Indian Lake 4-3-2-1 Challenge- 10 hikes from their list: 4 easy, 3 moderate, 2 difficult, 1 major <https://www.adirondack.net/hiking/challenges/indian-lake-4-3-2-1/>

The Fulton Chain Trifecta- 3 hikes near Old Forge: Black Bear Mtn., Rocky Mtn., and Bald Mtn. <https://www.adirondack.net/hiking/challenges/fulton-chain-trifecta/>

Icon Key for List and Maps

 Drive Time from The Hedges



Out and Back Hike



Loop (Circular) Hike

 Elevation Gain



Suggested for Kids



Trailhead Parking



Mountain View



Fire Tower



Lean-to



Waterfall/ Cascade









Picnic Area






Grill






Public Restrooms

1. Castle Rock:  5 min  3.0 or  3.5 miles  580'  






A classic hike at The Hedges, there is an open summit that rises above Blue Mountain Lake with a spectacular view. The hike is generally moderate except for one short, very steep section just below the top. Park in the lot on Maple lodge Rd., just before the entrance to the Minnowbrook Conference Center. GPS coordinates are N43 52.383 W74 27.023. The trailhead is at the end of the road. From the summit, you can either retrace your steps for a three mile out-and-back hike or you can utilize the Upper Sargent Pond Trail for a 3.5-mile loop hike.

2. Blue Mountain:  5 min  4.0 miles  1523' 

The 3,759-foot summit has excellent views of the lake and entire area. The trail has moderate to very steep grades, especially near the top. The fire tower provides superb lake views. Do not expect to be alone on this very popular hike. A large parking area for the Blue Mountain and Tirrell Pond Trails is located on the east side of NY 30/28N one-tenth of a mile north of the Adirondack Experience Museum. GPS coordinates are N43 52.506 W74 25.886.


3. Tirrell Pond:  5 min  6.0 miles  500' 





The trail starts from the north end of the Blue Mtn. trailhead off NY 28/NY 30 and runs three miles to the pond and the Northville-Placid Trail. Follow the yellow trail markers. About halfway, the trail begins a long descent on its way to the pond and the Northville-Placid Trail. Turn right, and in another 0.3 mile is the Tirrell Pond Lean-to, a very scenic location with sand beach. The N-P Trail goes south along the west shore of the pond and in just over 1.1 mile is the O'Neil Flow Lean-to. The GPS coordinates of the parking area are N43 52.506 W74 25.886.

4. Cascade Pond:  5min  5.6 miles  300'  

There are three trails to this picturesque mountain pond. We suggest the one off Durant Road, County Route 19 right in Blue Mountain Lake.

There is a short DEC dirt road that leads to a few campsites near Lake Durant and a place to launch small boats. Before reaching these there is a small parking area. This starting point leads over the “floating bridge” at Rock Pond; at just 1.2 mile out-and-back it is worth just hiking to the bridge. The GPS coordinates for this trailhead are N43 50.891 W74 25.439 and it is right by the cemetery.

5. **Grassy Pond:**  5min  0.8 mile  0' 

Wilson's Pond:  5min  5.5 miles  600' 

Grassy Pond is a short hike, while Wilson Pond is a remote destination with a lean-to for a wilderness camping experience. The trailhead is marked Grassy Pond on NY 28 toward Inlet. The GPS coordinates are N43 50.593 W74 28.618. Follow the red DEC FOOT TRAIL markers. The yellow trail which appears after about a mile is a connector trail to the Cascade Pond Trail. The slope of Blue Ridge is opposite the lean-to site.

6. **O'Neil Flow/ Northville-Placid Trail:**  5min  5.8 miles  150' 

A peaceful section of the famous N-P Trail, this hike is an easier and less traveled way to visit Tirrell Pond, though you arrive at a smaller beach on the southern end. There are a lean-to and small falls at the pond's outlet. You may even run into a few “through-hikers” attempting the 135 miles from Northville to Lake Placid. The trailhead parking is on westbound side Route 28 just before the entrance to Lake Durant State Campground as you leave Blue Mtn. Lake.

7. **Rock Lake Trail:**  10min  1.6 mile  250' 





This is an easy hike along Johnny Mack Brook to a scenic lake with views of Blue Mtn. and Dun Brook Mtn. There is a campsite at the end and another along the shore to the right following a snowmobile trail which soon meets up with the Rock River Trail. Leaving Blue Mtn. Lake, if you reach the Rock River Trailhead Parking Area, you've gone too far.

8. Rock River Trail:  10min  6 miles  350'

This hike skirts Rock Lake (a short bushwhack leads to shore) before following a snowmobile route to an old campsite on the Rock River. The trailhead parking is just before the one for Sawyer Mtn.

9. Sawyer Mtn.:  10min  2.2 miles  630'  

Relatively easy to hike, this peak is popular with families. The summit is wooded but there is a lookout as you climb, as well as one 250' beyond the peak. Several larger mountains can be seen from here, including Panther, Wakely and Snowy Mountains. The trailhead is on NY 28/30, 6.7 miles east of Blue Mountain Lake. GPS coordinates are N43 48.657 W74 19.251.

10. OK Slip Falls Trail:  30min  6.4 miles  150' 

This trail leads to an overlook for a 200-foot high waterfall. As in all waterfall/gorge areas it is important to watch your step, mind children and wear proper shoes. This is a popular hike and the viewing area is small so expect company on busy weekends.

The parking area for the trailhead is located on the south side of Route 28, approximately 7.5 miles east of Indian Lake. The trailhead, which also provides access to Ross, Whortleberry and Big Bad Luck Ponds, is across Route 28 about 1000 feet to the west, so there is some walking along NY 28. The GPS coordinates for the parking area are N43 46.296 W74 07.849.

11. Death Falls:  15min  0.6 mile  0'   

This is a small stream so there is not much volume unless it has rained, though the water tumbles 100' off the scarp. The trailhead is on the left as you leave Blue Mtn. Lake on Rt. 28 south. Park where you see a "closed" sign on a yellow gate, meaning closed to vehicles, not hikers. The right fork goes to the top of the waterfall, the left to the base. The GPS coordinates are N43 48.758 W74 35.774.

12. Sagamore Lake Loop: 🚗 20min ↻ 3.7 miles ↗0' 🚶🚶

A beautiful trail which follows the shore of Sagamore Lake, this is an easy hike for families. Most of the trail consists of old logging and carriage roads and there are many spots to stop and take in the view. The trail is on public land, but to enter the Great Camp Sagamore grounds and buildings, you must be a guest. However, tours are given and could be added to the hike for a full day's outing. You must reserve the tours in advance. Park in the large DEC lot across Sagamore Road from the camp's outbuildings.

13. Sagamore Cascades: 🚗 20min ↔ or ↻ 3.1 miles ↗0' 🚶🚶🚶





This trail follows an old road on the west bank of the South Inlet stream. There is a gentle descent until a series of small cascades mark the end. Below this point you could canoe or kayak upstream from Raquette Lake. Forging the stream would allow a loop return on the east bank, but there are several muddy sections along this route. The trailhead is on Sagamore Lake Road about 2.9 miles from NY 28. The small parking area is on the left, just before the one-lane bridge over South Inlet.

14. Ferds Bog: 🚗 35min ↔ 0.6 mile ↗100' 🚶🚶

A fairly steep descent through woods leads to a long plastic boardwalk out over a true Adirondack bog. There are tamaracks, pitcher plants and other bog flora, as well as boreal birds who frequent bog areas. Stay on the walkway here! Once in Raquette Lake, pass their small library (rainy day stop?) and travel about 4 miles on Uncas Rd. This road is unpaved, so the driving is slow. The trailhead is on the right.

15. Rocky Mtn. Trail: 🚗 35min ↔ 1.2 mile ↗445' 🚶🚶





The open summit on this short but steep hike has views of Fourth Lake, making it popular with camp groups. There is a large parking area on the right along Route 28 coming from Blue Mtn. Lake for both Rocky Mtn. & Black Bear Mtn. GPS coordinates are N43 45.897 W74 47.702.

16. Cascade Lake Trail:  35min  5.5 miles  250' 






A gentle hike over rolling terrain, mostly along wide old camp roads. Hike the trail counter-clockwise and you'll find a pretty 40' waterfall near the far end of the lake, just before the inlet. On the north shore is the site of a former girls' camp. The structures have been removed but the lawn area makes for a great picnic or tent camping spot. You may encounter a few riders from Adirondack Saddle Tours in Eagle Bay! The trailhead is located on Big Moose Rd. north of Eagle Bay off NY 28. Be sure to use the "new" parking lot with the kiosk and trail sign-in.

17. Moss Lake Trail:  40min  2.5 miles  150'  

An easy hike over rolling terrain, Moss Lake has picturesque views of the surrounding hillsides. There are a number of popular tent camp sites (some handicap accessible) and a natural sand beach. The broad trail makes for a pleasant walk. The trail goes left or right from the sign-in kiosk; straight ahead is the short path to the lake. The trailhead parking is on the left just over 2 miles along Big Moose Rd. from Eagle Bay.

18. Queer Lake Trail:  45min  7 miles  250' 

A fairly long hike with not much elevation change that brings you to a remote campsite along the lake, and further on to a nicely placed lean-to. There are a series of trails that cross this area, so be sure to consult a trail guide and have a trail map and compass before you go. The trailhead is on the right, along Big Moose Rd. past Moss Lake.

19. Bald (Rondaxe) Mtn.:  45min  2 miles  500'   

Bald Mtn. is far from The Hedges, but it has a fire tower and would make a nice "leg-stretch" while traveling from central NY. The actual ascent to the summit is short but steep on this hike, and follows an open ridge line with plenty of viewing points. Close to Old Forge, it can draw a crowd. Just off Route 28, the trailhead is a short distance up Rondaxe Rd. (Rt. 93) and there are other trail options from here.

20. Buttermilk Falls: 🚗 30min 0 miles ↗️ 0' 🏞️ 🏠 🚰 | 🧑🏿🧑🏻

Not a trail but a must-see cascade along the Raquette River above Long Lake. There are plenty of rocks for those who like to scramble and a small picnic area at this popular spot. Bring your own grill grate. The trailhead is a short drive down North Point Rd. Use care making the sharp left off Route 30/28N heading north from Blue Mtn. Lake.

21. Owl's Head Mtn.: 🚗 35min ↔️ 6.2 miles ↗️ 1300' 🗼

A strenuous hike with fantastic views from the fire tower and far fewer hikers than at Blue Mtn. The hike is longer, but the trail is much less worn here. It includes a few steep scrambles near the top. Bonus: you can stop for an ice cream in Long Lake on the way back to The Hedges (or a cold draft in the bar at the Adirondack Hotel!). The trailhead is a short drive down Endion Lane just across the Long Lake bridge.

22. Goodnow Mtn.: 🚗 35min ↔️ 3.8 miles ↗️ 1040' 🗼



The mountain and adjacent property are owned and maintained by the NYS College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF). The fire tower is 60' (on Blue Mtn. the tower is only 35') and offers amazing views toward the High Peaks. If any in your group are not up for a peak climb, there is the ESF Adirondack Interpretive Center (AIC) and trails nearby (see number 23).

23. NYS ESF AIC: 🚗 35min ↻️ Various Dist. ↗️ 75' 🏞️ 🚰 🚻 | 🧑🏿🧑🏻







The NYS College of Environmental Science and Forestry Adirondack Interpretive Center (whew) is a great place to introduce small kids to ADK hiking. The modest center has typical nature displays and activities, is clean and inviting, and has restrooms! Check their website for times. They have maps of the numerous well-maintained trails on their property with several bridges over picture-perfect ADK waterways.

24. Coney Mtn.:  40min  2.2 miles  525'  






A great peak hike for beginners, it is short enough that people often pair it with Goodman Mtn. just down the road. It's near enough that you can wave to friends there. The summit provides a full 360-degree view. The trailhead is just north of the snow plow turnaround at the Hamilton/Franklin County line. The GPS coordinates are N44 06.033 W74 31.782.

25. Goodman Mtn.:  40min  3.2 miles  500'  

This is another great hike for beginners. The trail goes for nearly a mile by following the remains of an old paved road with a slight grade. The first quarter mile is wheelchair accessible. There are more great views to Tupper Lake and back to Coney Mtn. from the summit. The trailhead is at the next pull-off past the Coney Mtn. parking area heading north.

26. Mount Arab:  1 hr.  1.9 miles  700'   

This hike is fairly far from The Hedges, but for those going through Tupper Lake, it is well worth considering. The fire tower on the summit offers commanding views of the lakes below and the High Peaks to the east. An added bonus is the reconstructed observer's cabin on the summit. Interpreters regularly open the cabin and give brief tours. To reach the trailhead from Tupper Lake take Rte. 3 West, then left on Conifer Rd. and left on Mt. Arab Rd.

27. The Wild Center:  1 hr.  Various Distances   

Along with their many exhibits, the Wild Center also has several nice trails through the property. Especially nice is the switchback trail down to the Raquette River.

Leave No Trace - Find out more at LNT.org and ADK.org.

Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
- Always leave your itinerary with someone at home; sign in at trailheads.

Hike on Durable Surfaces

- Hike in the middle of the trail; walk through (not around) puddles/mud. Stay off of vegetation; walk on rocks where possible.

Dispose of Trash and Human Excrement Properly

- Use existing privies, or dig a 6-8 inch deep “cathole” off-trail at least 150 feet from water. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.

Leave What You Find

- Leave rocks, plants, and other natural objects as you find them. Let photos, drawings, or journals help capture your memories.
- Do not build structures or furniture or dig trenches.

Respect Wildlife

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Avoid wildlife during mating, nesting, and other sensitive times.
- Control pets at all times, and clean up after them.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

- Respect other visitors. Let natural sounds prevail; avoid loud sounds and voices. Be courteous and yield to other users; take breaks to one side of the trail.