

Trails and Tales

NEWSLETTER

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“Dedicated to the conservation and enjoyment of our valuable natural resources.”

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Welcome to the Network!

As your editors, we sincerely want to welcome you to a new and exciting network of people, organizations and professionals who all have the single-minded purpose of preserving and enjoying our natural resources. We are the custodians of the future and this newsletter will help us to unite in our common cause. We are birders, wildlife enthusiasts, nature lovers, hikers and bikers. We all want to preserve what we have, and leave the environment a better place than when we found it.

This newsletter is the voice of your network. If you can contribute to its success, then we welcome your input. Share with your fellow nature and conservation enthusiasts any environmental news, activities or fundraising activities. We are your voice. And, we'll try to keep you entertained with news, feature stories and fascinating facts about the natural world. We will also keep you advised about new regional trail guides and other resources from our sponsor, Common Man Books.

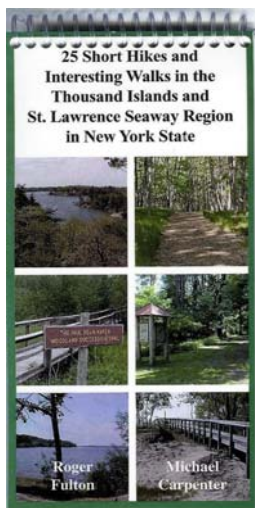
Again, welcome to the network!
The Editors – Roger and Mike

Northern New York Trail Guide Books Released

Two new regional trail guides have just been released by our sponsor. Both are part of the Common Man Exploration Series of regional trail guides. That means that the average man or woman can actually do these trails.

More than 75 full color photographs add to the interactive nature of these books. Their unique size and top spiral binding will allow you to carry them in your back pocket for easy reference on the trail. More than 100 pages of photos, directions, special attractions and cautions are contained in these directories of North Country trails.

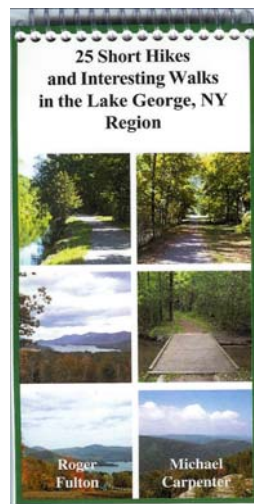
25 Short Hikes and Interesting Walks in the Thousand Islands and St. Lawrence Seaway Region in New York



get to share with you, the secrets of hidden and out-of-the-way places where everyone can go out and enjoy the scenery, freedom and wildlife of the North Country. From Massena to Lake

Ontario, we explored trails along the St. Lawrence River and beyond. We also traveled inland to explore hiking trails along rivers and wetlands. We enjoyed our treks and now you, too, can experience more than 25 of these interesting, yet doable trails. This trail guide is available now.

25 Short Hikes and Interesting Walks in the Lake George Region of New York



The Lake George Region of upstate New York is one of the most scenic areas that you will ever find. It is the "gateway" to the beautiful Adirondack Mountains. One of the highlights of living here, or traveling here for a vacation, is a

chance to spend time on, in and around Lake George. Called the "Queen of American Lakes," it extends for 32 miles into an area that is rich in history, rich in scenic beauty and rich in outdoor activities. Whether hiking up a small mountain, or seeking out a hidden waterfall, we thoroughly enjoyed hiking each and every one of these trails. Now you can, too. This trail guide is available now.

The retail price for each book in the series will be \$21.95 plus S&H. For additional information, or to order, go to: www.commonmanbooks.com If you prefer, you may also call, toll free, 877-429-3651 to talk or order.

On The Internet

If you find yourself in Northern New York and want something interesting to do, you can do some eco-exploring, on foot, by bike or by canoe. Author Roger Fulton is available for personalized eco-tours of the 1000 Islands Region.

Contact him about these eco-tours, including the fascinating historic tour by canoe of the site of the Battle of Cranberry Creek in the War of 1812. You can contact him through his webpage at www.RogerFulton.com for more information.

Want to know about endangered species in your area? Simply go to www.enature.com and search on their extensive database. They also have many other features for the nature lover.

Questions Answered

Q: I see hunters in camouflage clothing in the fall, supposedly to hide from animals. If that's so good, why don't we wear camouflage to view wildlife all year?

A: Good question! Hunters feel it is necessary to 'break up' their profile by wearing camouflage clothing in the woods. They may have a point as they virtually disappear into the woods at a distance of thirty yards, or so. Neither humans nor animals can detect them at that distance. Unless they move!!!

Movement is the key to spotting animals; and for animals to spot you. I've had deer within feet of me when I was in full camouflage, yet they did not detect me. But, I was also motionless. But if you move, or they detect your scent, those deer will snort and bolt. Other wildlife, including turkeys, squirrels and other critters will flee as soon as you move, camouflaged or not.

Man and Nature

So which came first? The beaver or the chainsaw? Your guess is as good as ours.



Sponsorship

Trails and Tales is a publication sponsored and published by Common Man Books, 2024 Falcon court, Bellingham, WA 98229, 877-429-3651, www.commonmanbooks.com

It is a public service to promote recreational use of the outdoors, and to promote the conservation of our natural resources for future generations.

Common Man Books publishes "Outdoor Books for Ordinary People."

Material for possible inclusion in this newsletter should be sent to the editors at P.O. Box 123, Alexandria Bay, NY 13607.

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"Man must go back to nature for information."

Thomas Paine

Featured Critter – The Beaver



General Info:

The beaver is New York's official state mammal. It is found in streams and ponds nearly everywhere in the state. An adult beaver can be more than 3 feet in length and weigh as much as 60 pounds. They are primarily nocturnal, using the cover of darkness to fell trees for food and lodging. They are very vulnerable to predators on land, but once in the water are excellent swimmers. You will seldom see beavers on land, but you may catch them swimming in the early morning or late evening hours.

Where they live:

Beavers will fell trees near a pond or stream. If the stream is too shallow to build a good lodge, they will build a dam of logs, rocks and mud to hold back the water and make it deep enough. In established ponds they build lodges as their homes, again out of logs, and mud. Once a mound, or lodge, is built, they will go underwater to cut out underwater entrances to it. They will also hollow out, above water, living and sleeping chambers, leaving a vent hole at the top so they can breathe while "in their house."



What they eat:

In spite of having large front teeth, beavers only eat plants. Most commonly they eat the bark of certain trees including poplar, aspen, birch and others. They may just eat the bark off a standing tree, or they may cut the tree down and use it for both food and lodging. In the fall, beavers will earnestly harvest their favorite species of trees to store as food for the winter. They do this **AFTER** the sap has left the trees so that those stored trees don't ferment and sour before the end of winter. A beaver lodge can require 1 to 2 tons of trees and branches to make it through the winter.



A beaver must continually keep chewing in order to wear down his constantly growing teeth.

Featured Trail

Hike #21- Perimeter Trails Wellesley Island State Park Nature Center

Three and 1/2 miles, moderate to difficult



General description:

Bring your walking stick for stability on some of the hills on this hike around this 3 ½ mile outer perimeter of the more than eight miles of trails on the 600-acre Nature Center grounds. This hike requires some up and down climbs and you will want to be in reasonable shape to challenge it.

What you may see:

Wildlife abounds on the Nature Center grounds. Whitetail deer, turkey and small game are often seen. This hike is great for bird watching as orioles are often seen, as well as song and shore birds from the scenic vistas.

How to get there:

Wellesley Island is an American island that sits in the middle of the St. Lawrence River near Alexandria Bay, NY. It is the second largest of the 1000 islands. Take I-81 north from Syracuse for about 100 miles and you will run right into it. There are signs to the state park and the nature center.



Caution:

Watch for wet leaves and loose dirt on some of the climbs and descents. Use your walking stick effectively.

What we found:

This trail will give you a pretty good workout by our standard. Yet, it is likely to be an enjoyable experience. Wildlife abounds, and the views are wonderful. Take time to enjoy the views, the sounds and the smells of nature. The Nature Center is a nice place to learn about the flora, fauna and geology of the island. Enjoy!



This featured trail is an abbreviated version of the description in the newly released, *25 Short Hikes and Interesting Walks in the Thousand Islands and St. Lawrence Seaway Region of New York*.

Future Publications

Central Florida will be the focus of the next titles in the Common Man Exploration Series. And, for the first time, a biking book is involved. To be officially released in the winter of 2004, the following books are scheduled to be released.

25 Short Hikes and Interesting Walks in Central Florida

25 Interesting Bicycle Trails in Central Florida

25 MORE Short Hikes and Interesting Walks in Central Florida

(Actually, if you have an interest in any of these titles, you might get them early by going to www.commonmanbooks.com and sniffing around. Or, call 877-429-3651 and talk nice to whoever answers the phone.)

Longer term projects in the works include:

25 Short Hikes and Interesting Walks in the Saratoga Springs Area of New York

Wildlife Viewing in the 1000 Islands Region of New York

25 Interesting Bicycling Trails in the 1000 Islands Region of New York

And, we'll have many more reliable guides after these. Stay tuned!

Amazing Nature

This large tree appears to be growing out of solid bedrock. It is a testimony to the survivability of nature in a harsh environment.

What you can't see is that a chipmunk actually has its den at the base of this tree. Nature will provide for all of its creatures.



The Last Word

We're here to help you to enjoy and preserve the environment. But we can't do it alone. We need your help and support. We can be your voice, but only if you are willing to stand up and let US speak for you to help save the environments of Northern New York and Central Florida.

Rest assured that we will be expanding our recreational and conservation efforts to include other areas of the country as well. We have a 5 year plan in place and are ahead of schedule. So we are moving forward quickly. We would like to take you along with us if you are willing.

Thanks for your support and please be in touch.

Your Editors – Roger and Mike