

## **Hiking and Biking near the Campground**

Southern Vermont is a favorite destination for fans of the outdoors. You can walk or bike from the campground to trails and dirt roads that offer a variety of distances and elevations. In addition, nature preserves, national and state parks, and winter ski parks (some with warm weather chair lifts) offer hiking trails for different levels of abilities. Some of the most diverse hiking terrain in New England can be found within short driving distance of the campground. The office will be happy to provide trail maps and/or directions to these spots.

## **Black Mountain Natural Area**

Black Mountain rises abruptly from the West River in Dummerston to a horseshoe ridge with a summit of 1,280 feet. The ascent to the summit is a difficult, 1.5-mile climb. The mountain originated as a mass of molten rock deep beneath the surface of the earth between 345 and 395 million years ago. Magma rose from beneath the crust of the earth and intruded into the native rock, forming a granite dome. Over the past 350 million years or so, erosion has exposed the granite that forms the core of the mountain.

Four plant species found at Black Mountain are very rare in the state of Vermont including pitch pine and scrub oak trees, which are at the northern end of their range here. Black Mountain's high plant diversity is due in part to the horseshoe shape of the mountain, which creates a water collecting bowl that produces ideal conditions for moist forests, streams, and wetlands different from the drier portions of the mountain. A large population of mountain laurel produces a magnificent display of showy pink flowers in June.

## **Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center**

BEEC's land and facilities are located in West Brattleboro, and include 100 acres of mature forests, open pasture lands, hiking trails, sweeping hilltop views, and a classroom and office, all situated in beautiful rural setting less than 10 minutes from downtown Brattleboro. It has 2 miles of trails that are open for easy hiking from dawn until dusk. BEEC has two interpretive trail guides to make your walk informative, one on tree identification and one on wildlife habitat.

## **The Long Trail**

Built by the Green Mountain Club between 1910 and 1930, the Long Trail is the oldest long-distance trail in the United States. The Long Trail follows the main ridge of the Green Mountains from the Massachusetts-Vermont line to the Canadian border as it crosses Vermont's highest peaks. It was the inspiration for the Appalachian Trail, which coincides with it for one hundred miles in the southern third of the state.

A Long Trail branch begins in Townshend State Park on Route 30 one mile south of Townshend, Vermont. Here the Long Trail passes an alder swamp, a brook, and a hemlock forest as it runs to the top of Bald Mountain (two hours, a vertical climb of 1,100 feet). Geological features along the trail include waterfalls, chutes, and pools. From the top of the mountain, vistas provide views to the north, south, and east.

## **Mount Monadnock (dogs are not allowed)**

Mt. Monadnock, claimed to be the second most climbed mountain in the world (after Mt. Fuji in Japan), is covered with hiking trails. Many of these trails climb the southern faces of the mountain. Mt. Monadnock has been a Mecca to hikers since at least the mid-eighteenth century. Henry David Thoreau was just one of the champions of this peak's grandeur.

Much of the mountain's lower reaches are forested with a mix of hardwoods. As you ascend, the hardwoods are replaced by evergreens. Much of the upper third of the mountain is exposed rock, largely the result of fires that engulfed the peak.

## **Mount Snow**

Hikers can enjoy a challenging ascent of the Mount Snow peak with over 1,600 feet of vertical rise, or take a somewhat less intense walk on the Deerfield Valley Trail. Hikers at Mount Snow have access to more than 20 miles of trails through the Green Mountain National Forest. Summer chair lift rides and nature tours are available.

## **Putney Mountain**

Putney Mountain is a favorite destination for hikers and bird watchers. It is an easy-moderate climb to the summit from the trail head kiosk. Views of Mt Snow and Mt. Monadnock are rewards for the ascent. In September and October, on a daily basis you will find Putney Mountain hawk watchers. Through their binoculars they spot raptors, identify those raptors by species, and to report what was seen and when it was seen to the Hawk Migration Association of North America.

## **Retreat Trails**

The Retreat Trails is a nine mile recreational trail network that is owned and maintained by the Windham Foundation and Brattleboro Retreat. Trails are open year-round for walkers, hikers, bikers, equestrians, Nordic skiers and snowshoers. Pets welcome on leashes.

The trails were originally created by the Brattleboro Retreat in the 1800s and have been used by the Brattleboro community for years. In the past two years, the Foundation and Brattleboro Retreat worked with the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps to revitalize the trails to make them more environmentally sound and easier to follow.

## **Swimming Holes**

When summertime arrives, people seek out swimming holes and picnic spots along Vermont's rivers and streams.

### **Indian Love Call, Newfane**

A well-known and often-enjoyed riverfront property is Indian Love Call. The property, located near the Newfane and Dummerston town line, contains a series of pools along a 4,200-foot stretch of the Rock River. Other outstanding features include whitewater and ledges. A town trail provides access to the river's edge. Use of the property is limited to non-commercial and non-motorized recreational activities.

### **Under the West Dummerston Bridge**

The West Dummerston Bridge is the second longest covered bridge in Vermont and the longest that still supports automobile traffic. On the west side of the bridge is a parking area and steps that lead down to the West River and a popular area swimming in the river's pools and sunning atop its boulders.

### **Tarzan's Retreat, Putney**

A truly off the beaten path spot, Tarzan's Retreat in Putney is a shaded rock waterfall. It is a spectacular setting to explore and cool off.