Family Hiking Day

September 28, 2013

Call, email or stop by the ATC in Boiling Springs to get a free Family Hiking Day Adventure Packet with a complete list of hikes and activities.

Take a guided hike or find your own adventure, then join us from 2:00-4:00 p.m. along the Appalachian Trail at Children’s Lake in Boiling Springs for a Family Hiking Day celebration filled with music, activities for all ages and a visit from Smokey Bear. All events are free and open to the public.

717.258.5771  atc-marlo@appalachiantrail.org

Held on National Public Lands Day, and coordinating with the Let’s Move initiative, Family Hiking Day is an opportunity to introduce your children to America’s premier footpath, and all of the benefits that come from being active and spending time outdoors.

To plan an A.T. hike for your family visit: appalachiantrail.org/FamilyHike
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Adventure Packet

Hike Suggestions - family friendly hikes with fun, unique themes that will engage each member of your family

Guided Hikes – wide variety of hikes led by members of the Susquehanna A.T. Club and Cumberland Valley A.T. Club

Where to Hike Along the Appalachian Trail - detailed descriptions and terrain overview for each hike

Planning & Safety Tips – plenty of ideas, tips and precautions to help make your hike a wonderful experience for the whole family

Family Hike Wrap-Up sheet – tell us about your hike, bring your wrap-up sheet to the celebration to be entered into the prize drawing

Family Hiking Day Celebration – join us for a celebration at Children’s Lake in Boiling Springs on Sunday, September 28th from 2:00-4:00 p.m. for a family friendly event with plenty of activities for all ages
Suggested Themes for Family Friendly Hikes

Rainbow Hike

“Can you paint with all the colors of the wind?” – Disney’s Pocahontas

Interact with the rainbow of colors found in the natural world, with a little help from your local hardware store. Bring along a stack of paint chips in a wide variety of colors and use them as inspiration to rediscover familiar items in nature while also keeping an eye out for the more unexpected colors. Challenge everyone in the family to find as many things as they can and count the number of paint chips they can match to nature. Remind them to look up, down, around, next to and anywhere else they can think of while being respectful of the living things they are observing.

Questions to Ask:

- How many colors have you seen?
- What did you see that had the most colors?
- What did you see that was closest to being just one color?
- How many times did you use the green chip? Brown? Yellow?
- Which color did you see that was most surprising?

The Lorax Hike

“Now that you’re here, the world of the Lorax seems perfectly clear. Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.” - Dr. Seuss’s The Lorax

Let this hike serve as an inspiration to discovering ways for your whole family to become “greener.” Take breaks along your hike to read from the book. Consider having each member of the family be responsible for reading a portion of the story. Younger children can be official page turners! At the end of your hike, have each member of the family come up with an idea for how they can “speak for the trees” or perhaps they will lend their voice to something else from nature.

Explorer Hike

“We live in a world that is full of beauty, charm and adventure. There is no end to the adventures we can have if only we see them with our eyes open.” - Jawaharlal Nehru

Let this hike be a quiet respite from all of the images that bombard us on a daily basis. Focus your eyes on nature through your looking tube and behold all the wonders that lay hidden in the great outdoors. Collect cardboard tubes (paper towel, toilet paper, etc.) and have everyone decorate their own unique looking tube before the hike with paper, stickers, paint, etc.

Keep your eyes open as you look up, down and all around. Give each member of the family a few basic things to look for with their looking tubes to get them started. As the hike moves along, call out more challenging things to look for or additional parts to find on items you’ve already “discovered.” Give everyone a chance to be the leader and call out things to look for.

Questions to Ask:

- How many items can you see at one time while looking through your tube?
- By stepping back and looking from a distance, how does it change what you see?
- What was your favorite thing seen through the looking tube?
Alphabet Hike

“You only need sit still long enough in some attractive spot in the woods that all its inhabitants may exhibit themselves to you by turns.” – Henry David Thoreau

Take your time on this hike and use the tranquil nature of the Trail to take in everything possible. Use the list below or set your creativity free and make your own list. Circle all of the items that you and your hiking buddies come across and see if you can complete the entire alphabet. Bring along pictures of some of the more challenging items so you can share them as a point of reference once you’re out on the Trail.

Set aside some time at the end of the hike for everyone to their biggest surprises and the letters that had the most items listed next to them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Aster, Apple Tree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Boulder, Butterfly, Birch Tree, Blaze, Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Chipmunk, Corn, Chicory, Clover, Crayfish</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Deer</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Elm Tree, Eagle</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Fern, Feather, Frog, Fir Tree</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>Goldenrod</td>
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<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Hay, Hiker, Hawk</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Inkwood</td>
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<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Joe Pye Weed, Jewelweed</td>
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<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Knotweed, Knapweed</td>
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<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Leaf, Lake, Ladybug</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Maple Tree, Mosquito, Milkweed, Mouse, Mountain Laurel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>National Park Service sign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Oak Tree, Owl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pinecone, Poison Ivy, Privy, Pokeweed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Queen Anne’s Lace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Red Clover, Rabbit, Rhododendron</td>
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<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Spring, Stream, Snake, Shelter, Salamander, Squirrel, Scarlet Tanager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Trail, Toad, Tadpole, Turtle</td>
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<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>Underpass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Vibernum, Vulture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Woodpecker, Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Yetti, Yellowthroat, Yellow Ladyslippers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>Zipper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Guided Hikes**

Join one of our guided hikes led by experienced members of local Trail clubs including the Cumberland Valley A.T. Club and Susquehanna A.T. Club. Learn from the volunteers who take care of the Trail each and every day!

**Ice Cream Rewards**
This is a wonderful section for beginning hikers, as well as those who wish to enjoy the Trail without a lot of ups and downs. This area of the Trail passes through a portion of the Cumberland Valley, which is some of the flattest terrain along the entire Trail. Ample parking is available in the municipal lot on Bucher Hill Road at the end of Children's Lake. Join your fellow hikers after the hike for a sweet treat at a local ice cream shop. Wear comfortable hiking shoes and bring plenty of water and snacks.

Hike Leader: Dennis Hurley, Susquehanna A.T. Club  
Starting Point: Fisherman’s Parking Lot, Bucher Hill Road, Boiling Springs  
Meeting Time: 8:45 a.m.  
Length of Hike: 4 miles (2-3 hours)

**White Rocks Scramble**
Meet at the Kuhn Road Trailhead in Boling Springs for a 2.5 mile hike up the White Rocks trail. This is a steep trail with lots of rock scrambling to keep things interesting. Once at the top, enjoy the fabulous view of the valley below from atop huge boulders. Wear comfortable hiking shoes and bring plenty of water and snacks.

Hike leader: Christine Lauriello, Cumberland Valley A.T. Club  
Starting Point: White Rocks Trailhead Parking, Kuhn Road, Boiling Springs  
Meeting Time: 8:45 a.m.  
Length of Hike: 2.5 miles (2-3 hours)

**Whiskey Spring Rock Maze**
This hike offers lots of fabulous rock formations that are fascinating to look at. You’ll hike up and over, as well as around and through as you travel along the Trail. Although there are a lot of rocks, this is a moderate hike that is lots of fun. Wear comfortable hiking shoes and bring plenty of water and snacks.

Hike leader: Katie Barker, Susquehanna A.T. Club  
Starting Point: Whiskey Spring Trailhead Shoulder Parking, Whiskey Spring Road, Boiling Springs  
Meeting Time: 8:45 a.m.  
Length of Hike: 3 miles (2 hours)

Register for free by:
1. calling 717-258-5771
2. emailing kmcginley@appalachiantrail.org
3. online at atcfamilyhikingday.eventbrite.com
Where to Hike Along the Appalachian Trail

Each hike includes a description and directions to the trailhead, but be sure you feel comfortable with where you’re going before you set out. You can use Google maps to create a map to the trailhead, for instance, and ATC also provides an interactive map at www.appalachiantrail.org/hiking/find-a-hike/interactive-map which lists some parking areas and shelters.

**Easy Hikes**

1. Boiling Springs to Route 74 (four miles round trip) or Trindle Road (eight miles round trip) - This is a wonderful section for beginning hikers, as well as those who wish to enjoy the Trail without a great deal of physical exertion. This area of the Trail passes through a portion of the Cumberland Valley, which is some of the flattest terrain along the entire Trail. Ample parking is available in the municipal lot on Bucher Hill Road at the end of Children's Lake, as well as the Trindle Road trailhead in Mechanicsburg.

2. Michaux Road to Tom's Run Shelter (two miles round trip) - This hike is short and easy on the legs. It passes last year’s halfway point of the Trail and gives you the opportunity to take a look at an A.T. shelter. Parking is available on Michaux Road.

**Moderate Hikes**

1. Scott Farm Trail Work Center to the top of Blue Mountain (six miles round trip) - Start your hike by parking at the Scott Farm or along Sherwood Drive and follow the Trail northbound. After an enjoyable stretch of flat terrain, begin your climb to the ridge where you'll be rewarded with an exceptional view of the Cumberland Valley. When you reach the intersection of the A.T. and the Darlington Trail/Tuscarora Trail, turn around and head back.

2. Boiling Springs to Center Point Knob (six miles round trip) - Start your hike along the Yellow Breeches Creek after parking in the municipal lot at the end of Children's Lake and enjoy the flat terrain for about two miles as the Trail meanders through active farmlands. Once the Trail enters the woods, you'll start your ascent of Center Point Knob, the halfway point of the Trail in years past. Look for the replica of the original A.T. sign marking the halfway point and then turn and head for home. Want to see the original? Head to the Appalachian Trail Museum in Pine Grove Furnace State Park.

**Moderate to Strenuous Hikes**

1. Whiskey Spring to Rocky Ridge (three miles round trip) - Are you up for some rock scrambling? Then this is the hike for you. After parking along Whiskey Spring Road, follow the Trail southbound through the famous Rock Maze. But remember, all of those rocks are waiting for you on the return trip. After you pass through the second large grouping of rocks and see that the Trail begins to descend, turn around and head back through.

2. Pine Grove Furnace to Pole Steeple (seven miles round trip) - History, magnificent views and plenty of exercise are what make this hike special. Park at Pine Grove Furnace State Park and follow the Trail northbound past Fuller Lake and up Piney Mountain. Turn left on the blue-blazed side trail to Pole Steeple, and enjoy the view of Laurel Lake from the top of the rocks! Take a few minutes on your way back to stop at the Appalachian Trail Museum, the historic Pine Grove Furnace and the Ironmasters Mansion.
Planning & Safety Tips

(adapted from the Family Hiking Guide at www.appalachiantrail.org)

As noted above, choosing a hike depends upon the age and experience of the people in your family.

- Consider a maximum of 3 or 4 miles for an all-ages hike
- Especially when very young children are participating, aim for loop hikes or out-and-back hikes rather than shuttles that are difficult, or impossible, for juggling car seats

When hiking with children or inexperienced hikers, don’t be afraid to change your plans – in fact, try to build options into your hike that will allow you to adapt if needed.

- Don’t wear them out on their first time. Make them feel like they can do it.
- It’s the journey, not the destination. Be willing to modify the hike. If you planned a 4 mile hike that was an out-and-back and the pace of toddlers means you are only going to walk half the distance, do so without making it feel like a concession. Adjust the hike to the comfort and enjoyment of all participants.
- Be flexible enough to stop and explore the natural world along the way – animal tracks, frogs, turtles, mushrooms, ants, flowers, wild raspberries, or evidence of beavers. Compare different ecosystems you pass through – a meadow, deciduous forest, or a pond.

Hiking with children requires additional preparation before the hike, and careful attention to hikers during the hike.

- Make frequent stops to rest and refuel.
- Set ground rules that includes who is the leader and who is the sweep.
- If toddlers or very young children are participating, the pace may slow significantly as they explore everything; go at a speed that is comfortable to everybody.
- Adapt your first aid kit for youth and first-time hikers. Add children’s sunscreen, children’s Tylenol, liquid antihistamine, Band-Aids, tweezers, hand sanitizer, blister treatment (moleskin, etc)

**FOOD & WATER** - For day hikes, you can pack whatever foods you like best. Some suggestions include energy bars, trail mix, crackers, fruits and vegetables. You can bring a supply of water from home or from other treated domestic sources. The amount of water needed depends upon length and difficulty of the hike, and the temperature. ATC recommends that adults bring at least one quart of water in cool weather and two to three quarts in hot weather. Remember that even though water sources may look, smell, and taste good they can still be contaminated by microorganisms, and you shouldn’t drink untreated water. Keep an eye on young children when they are near water sources.

**CLOTHING AND GEAR** - Hiking boots are optional for day-hikes, particularly when the terrain is not that rough. Many hikers wear trail runners or lightweight boots. The most important thing is that shoes or boots fit well and are well broken-in before you hit the Trail—nothing ends a hike quicker than blistered feet! Layer your clothes—layers will keep you both warmer and drier than a single heavy overcoat in cold, damp weather. · Encourage children to wear bright colors as it will be easier to keep track of them. Bring a hat to protect from the sun and rain. If your family is not sure what to bring, reassure them that packing for a day-hike is relatively simple.

- Water (at least 1 quart for adults, and 2–3 on longer hikes in hot weather)
- Cell phone
- Warm clothing, rain gear (a large trash bag can be adapted for use as a rain coat), and a hat
- Food (including extra high-energy snacks)
- A trowel for burying human waste and toilet paper (see the Sanitation section)
- A first-aid kit with blister treatments
- A whistle (three blasts is the international signal for help) – teach children that whistles are not toys.
- A garbage bag to carry out trash
- Sunglasses and sunscreen—especially when leaf cover is gone
- A first-aid kit – adapted for youth and first-time hikers. Include children’s sunscreen, children’s Tylenol, Band-Aids, tweezers, hand sanitizer, blister treatment and any required medications.

HEALTH AND SAFETY - Hiking on the A.T. is a fun and healthy activity – millions of people use the A.T. safely each year. With that said, you will be out of doors and you may face some risks uncommon in more settled areas. Take sensible precautions to have a safe day. Some common health and safety concerns are listed below.

Weather - Check the weather before you leave, and watch the skies during your hike to be prepared for sudden changes – which may happen along many parts of the Trail. During a thunderstorm, protect yourself from lightening by staying off of ridges and exposed areas. Avoid tall structures, tall trees, boulders, rocky overhangs and shallow caves. Ideally, enter a hard-roofed car or large building if you can. If not take shelter in a group of smaller trees or in the forest. Avoid the problems caused by heat by wearing a hat and sunscreen and stay well hydrated as you hike. As young children are especially susceptible to sun exposure and exhaustion; make frequent stops to rest and refuel.

Wildlife – Animals and Plants - Spotting animals can be one of the most exciting parts of a hike on the Appalachian Trail, but use caution when you see wild animals. Don’t approach or attempt to touch an animal, and watch where you put your hands and feet. Also watch out for Poison Ivy, common on some parts of the A.T. When climbing on rocky outcrops, take care to look where you place your hands and feet so as not to surprise a snake. Central Pennsylvania is home to a large variety of poisonous and non-poisonous snakes. Typically, they will try to avoid you so take care to provide them the same courtesy.

Sanitation - Don’t expect flush toilets on the A.T.! Most A.T. shelters have privies, but you may need to "go in the woods." Proper disposal of human (and pet) waste is not only a courtesy to other hikers, but is a vital Leave No Trace practice for maintaining healthy water supplies in the backcountry and an enjoyable hiking experience for others. No one should venture onto the A.T. without a trowel or wide tent stake, used for digging a 6”–8” deep "cathole" to bury waste. Bury feces at least two hundred feet or eighty paces away from water, trails, or shelters. Use a stick to mix dirt with your waste, which hastens decomposition and discourages animals from digging it up. Used toilet paper should either be buried in your cathole or carried out in a sealed plastic bag.

Emergencies - Preparation will help you avoid emergencies, but if you do have an emergency be prepared and take the following steps: Know where you are on the A.T. Bring the description of the hike and any maps/guidebooks with you. Use your cellphone to call 911 – identify yourself as an A.T. hiker and describe where you are. If you cannot get reception on your cellphone – reception is usually best on ridges - use a whistle and make three short calls – the standard distress call. You can also use a flashlight, mirror or puffs of smoke for distress signals.
Thanks so much for getting together and getting outdoors for Family Hiking Weekend. Tell us about how your family spent the day, turn in the form at our Family Hiking Day Celebration and be entered to win a fantastic prize!

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

Email Address

Who hiked with you today?

Name

Relation

Age

Where did you hike?

What was your favorite part?

☐ Check here if you do not wish to receive information about the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and upcoming events.