



UNCLE ANDY'S DIGEST

## Let's Take A Hike!

*It's always fun to get out and experience the natural beauty of our Lakes Region on foot. There are hikes for all ages and abilities. Here are a few of our favorites ...*

### **Douglas Mountain 2.3 miles**

Douglas Mountain in Sebago gives you some aerobic activity and very rewarding views at the top. The path starts up under tall pines, with the scent of their fallen needles crushed underfoot. It then winds over gnarly roots and spongy moss, around ancient glacial boulders and past stands of sprightly wildflowers until you reach the bald granite outcropping at the top. Spread out before you is your reward: the peaks of the White Mountains to the west and the vast, sparkling waters of Sebago Lake to the east. There is even a stone tower with an observation platform where you'll find a map telling you what you're looking at. The Nature Conservancy maintains a three-quarter mile nature trail at the summit, with identifying labels for plants and trees.

To get to Douglas Mountain, take Rt. 11 & 114 south from the center of Naples. Drive about 8 miles then turn right onto Long Hill Road, right onto Rt. 107 North, and left onto Douglas Hill Road. There is limited parking at the end of the road by the trailhead.

### **Bald Pate Mountain 2 miles**

Bald Pate Mountain (about 1,000 feet), an interesting mountain with a double peak, was probably not well known by many hikers until it became the Bald Pate Mountain Preserve. It's a two-mile round-trip

hike on a well-marked trail. On the first peak, you'll be treated to fine westerly views toward Pleasant Mountain. At the main summit, there is a registration box and a monstrous rock outcrop -- the Bald Pate -- from which there are broad views of Sebago Lake.

To get to the trailhead, take Rt. 302 W from Naples 2.5 miles to Perley Road on the left. Turn right on Fosterville Road to Route 107. Turn left and look for the sign for the Bald Pate Mountain Preserve, with parking on your left.

### **High Country Mission / Hacker's Hill**

Drive up Quaker Ridge Road off Rt. 302 in Casco (across from Cry of the Loon) to this service overlook, small park and national geodetic benchmark. It is said to be a spiritual stepping stone. By all accounts it is one of southern Maine's finest viewpoints. Once there, you can walk around the area on short trails. The park is open Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat & Sun from 8:30 AM to Dusk.

### **Rattlesnake Mountain .5 mile**

This is an easy hike from the parking lot to the best view that looks over Panther Pond toward Raymond. This short walk with rewarding views is a good hike for small children. There is only one spot where it is a little steep. Trail bears left where there appears to be a choice (right is a logging path). The trail begins on the left side of Route 85 heading north out of Raymond (identified as Bri-Mar Trail).

[Parking lot is less than 2 miles from the Crescent Lake boat launch.](#)

P.S. Don't worry about the name ... there are no rattlesnakes in Maine!



D.L. DUNTON PHOTOGRAPHY

**Mt. Washington from Sebago Lake**

### **Mountain Division Trail – Windham, Gorham, Standish**

Relatively flat, wooded 3.7 mile walk connecting three towns. Trail is open for hiking, biking, horseback, fishing, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. Dogs are allowed on leash. Mile markers each quarter mile help you judge distance as this is not a loop trail, but rather a straight out and back.

Standish trailhead is on Rt. 35 between Rts. 237 & 114 at Johnson Field. The Windham trailhead is on Gambo Road. Northbound on Rt. 202, turn left onto River Road, go .5 miles and turn left onto Gambo. Go .4 miles and turn right onto access road to parking lot.



**Gambo Mill, Mountain Division Trail**

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### **Pleasant Mountain - Bridgton**

With spectacular views of NH Presidential Range to the west and that rare, clear day glimpse of Portland's skyline to the east, Pleasant Mt. on Moose Pond is an ideal day hike in the Lakes Region.

On Rt. 302, look for Mountain Rd on the left after crossing Moose Pond west of town. Start at the Shawnee Peak Beginner's Slope that extends under the far right chair lift looking from the main ski lodge. The trail follows that lift to the top of the run, then juts left, up again, then extends across several more advanced slopes as it climbs.

**Nature/Wildlife Preserves in Windham** (directions at Chamber office)  
Claman Bird Sanctuary - Nature trails. Best place for blueberry picking.  
Deer Hollow Sanctuary - Nature trails, mud pond, observation platform, fishing.  
Otterbrook Sanctuary - Nature & hiking trails, observation platform, x-c skiing.  
Lowell Preserve - Hiking trails, spring fishing, nearby playground.  
Dundee Park - Swimming, picnic area, volleyball, basketball courts, restrooms.  
Black Brook Preserve - Walking, x-c skiing & snowmobile trails.

### **Libby Hill Forest**

Over 6 mi of recreational trails in Gray managed by the town Recreation Dept. Trails begin behind the chain link fences that surround the Middle & High School athletic fields. Walk around the driveway in back of the Middle School to the trailhead welcome kiosk where you'll find maps. From Gray Village, take Rt. 26 north 1.4 miles or the bypass (26A) off Rt. 115. Turn left on Libby Hill Rd; follow until the paved road ends at Gray-New Gloucester Middle School. Park in the gravel lot at right. Don't continue up gravel road and don't use the ATV trail at the left corner of lot.



**Pleasant Mountain / Shawnee Peak**

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### **Sawyer Mountain Highlands**

1,400 acres of land owned by the Francis Small Heritage Trust in Limington is open for hiking, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling on existing trails, cross-country skiing, and horseback riding.

Best access to trailhead is at a sharp turn on Rt. 117, 2.5 miles south of the junction with Route 25 near Cornish, or 2.4 miles north of Limington on Route 117. Small parking area; hiking maps available in a map box there.

### **Pineland Public Reserve Land**

Over 15 mi of trails to explore beginning on the beautiful Pineland campus in New Gloucester, featuring fields, woods, streams & views of Mt. Washington.

From Gray Village, follow Rt. 115 east for 1.6 mi; turn left on Depot Rd, go 2.8 miles to stop sign; turn left onto Rt. 231, then immediately left again onto Morse Rd. Turn right into the Pineland Campus. Maps are at the Visitors' Center, the first building on the right, 15 Farm View Drive.

### **Holt Pond**

The Holt Pond hiking trail system is a beautiful yet short hike around the wetlands, (bring your bug juice in the summer!) between Holt Pond and the Muddy River in Bridgton. The area is maintained by the Loon Echo Land Trust. The trails are flat and include many raised bridge-style walkways. Easily reached by children, but dogs are not allowed.

Parking is on Perley Road, a left turn off Route 302, 2.5 miles west of Naples. Road turns to dirt and may be muddy.

### **Pondicherry Park**

Pondicherry Park is a protected 66-acre landscape of woods, wildlife habitat, wetlands and streams attracting people to low-impact recreation, education, and study—a unique public park in the center of Bridgton. Hiking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, fishing and nature observation are available to residents and visitors only seconds from downtown. Loon Echo Land Trust and Lakes Environmental Association have partnered to develop the park and give it to the town. The final phase of a fundraising campaign to complete the park by installing two covered wooden entry bridges is underway.

Park access is across from Bridgton Hospital on South High Street (park in the hospital's back lot) or from the public parking lot on Depot Street

behind Magic Lantern Theatre. The trails are marked as construction is taking place. Visitors must take caution and enter at their own risk.

### **Sebago Lake State Park**

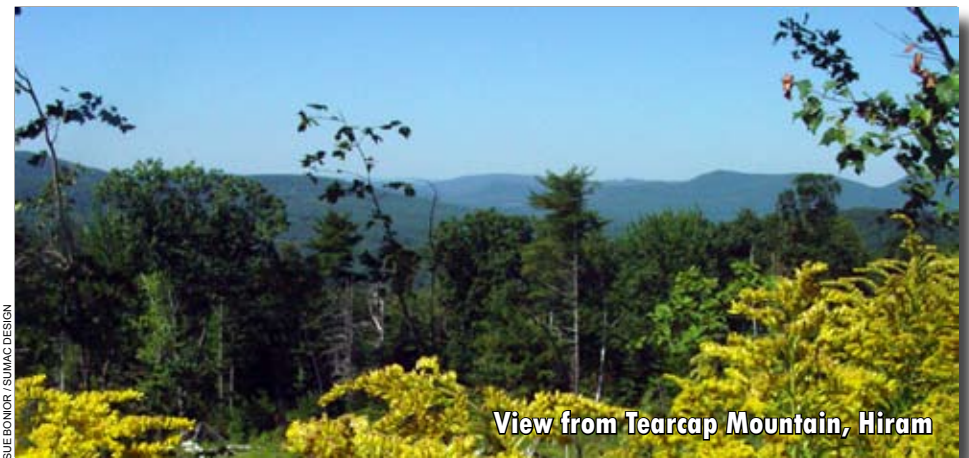
Five marked nature trails, ranging in difficulty from leisurely to moderate, loop through the wooded areas of the park on the north shore of Sebago Lake. Along the trails look for a beaver lodge, notice animal tracks, listen for calls and watch carefully; you might spot white-tailed deer or even a moose. The State Park provides all-season enjoyment for pedestrians. In winter, the park offers 6 miles of groomed trails, providing a peaceful sanctuary for long walks or cross-country skiing.

Park access is via Route 302 west in Casco - watch for sign and turn left 1/2 mi. beyond onto State Park Road; or via Route 114 north, turn right on Clement Rd to State Park Road.

### **Poland Spring Preservation Park & Range Pond State Park, Poland**

Three miles of groomed ski, snowshoe & hiking trails at the Preservation Park plus several miles of mostly flat trails at nearby Range Pond through woods and alongside the pond. The combination makes for a rewarding day of outdoor activity for all ages.

The Preservation Park is on Rt. 26, about 8 miles west of Gray village. A few miles beyond, take a right on Aggregate Road then first right onto Plains Road to get to Range Pond. Coming from Raymond, Casco or Naples, take Route 11 north (via Route 85 in Raymond). At junction with Route 26, turn right (east). Turn left on Aggregate Road.



View from Tearcap Mountain, Hiram