Spring is here and it’s time to welcome back those of our feathered friends who winter in warmer climes. So when you head out the door for a hike, take along a pair of binoculars. The John Burrows Natural History Society is a great resource for birders. They recommend these hikes for seeing interesting birds in our area. (For a more extensive list, and for a schedule of organized bird walks with knowledgeable leaders, visit jbnhs.org.)

Vernooy Kill Falls Trail, in the Sundown Wild Forest in the Town of Denning, provides hiking access to Vernooy Kill Falls and to Balsam Swamp, a unique and extensive balsam fir-mountain laurel swamp and sphagnum moss bog. A 1.8-mile walk from the Cherrytown trailhead crosses two streams and gains 600 feet elevation to reach the falls. There are two other trailheads: one from Yeagerville Road in Greenville, and another from Trails End Road. Balsam Swamp is nearer the Greenville trailhead. Warblers (Blackburnian, black-throated blue, Canada, yellow-rumped, and hooded) nest in the laurel and hemlock thickets along the trail. Veery, hermit thrush, yellow-bellied sapsucker, and several species of vireos and flycatchers breed in the surrounding forest. Northern waterthrush, white-throated sparrow, and dark-eyed junco breed in the swamp.

Slide Mountain, at 4,180 feet, is the Catskill’s highest peak and the site of the original discovery of Bicknell’s thrush. At higher elevations there is an extensive balsam fir/red spruce boreal forest where Bicknell’s thrush, Swainson’s thrush, blackpoll warbler, white-throated sparrow, and yellow-bellied flycatcher nest. The lower-elevation deciduous forest hosts numerous species of breeding thrushes, warblers, woodpeckers, and scarlet tanager, winter wren, and yellow-bellied sapsucker.

Shaupeneak Ridge, in the Town of Esopus, has 500 acres of second-growth woodlands criss-crossed with moderately easy trails and a mountain-top pond with a bog. Passerines migrate along the ridgeline in spring. Vireos, winter wren, ovenbird, scarlet tanager, ruffed grouse, and other woodland species nest throughout. Worm-eating warbler and Louisiana waterthrush prefer the east-facing slope.

Balsam Lake Mountain, at 3,720 feet, offers many of the same species found on Slide Mountain. An old jeep road provides a moderate three-mile hike, followed by a short, steep climb on a foot trail to a fire tower on the summit. There is extensive fir-spruce boreal forest in the upper elevations and a semi-open habitat at the foot of the tower. Blackpoll warbler is common near the summit and mourning warbler may be found at mid-elevations.

www.midhudsonadk.org
Elected Officers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>EMAIL</th>
<th>PHONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Chair</td>
<td>Daniel Jones Jr.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Jones.daniel.jr@gmail.com">Jones.daniel.jr@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>845-797-9161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Chair</td>
<td>Peter McGinnis</td>
<td><a href="mailto:PMcgin1@aol.com">PMcgin1@aol.com</a></td>
<td>845-454-4428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Ellen Zelig</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ellenzeligcrs@aol.com">ellenzeligcrs@aol.com</a></td>
<td>845-518-0488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Ralph Pollard</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ralphpollard@verizon.net">ralphpollard@verizon.net</a></td>
<td>845-462-3389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Director</td>
<td>Bill Beehler</td>
<td><a href="mailto:WBee@aol.com">WBee@aol.com</a></td>
<td>845-473-5557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Director</td>
<td>Christopher Cring</td>
<td><a href="mailto:christopher.cring@gmail.com">christopher.cring@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>845-249-5305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club Director</td>
<td>Jean-Claude Fouere</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jcfouere@gmail.com">jcfouere@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>845-462-0142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past-Chair Chair</td>
<td>Lalita Malik</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ajalitamalik@aol.com">ajalitamalik@aol.com</a></td>
<td>845-592-0204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Committee Chairs & Other Volunteers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>EMAIL</th>
<th>PHONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Sayi Nulu</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sayileela@gmail.com">sayileela@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>845-264-2270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Members</td>
<td>Jennifer Anderson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:djanderson@fairpoint.net">djanderson@fairpoint.net</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity</td>
<td>Skip Doyle</td>
<td><a href="mailto:skipnewyork@yahoo.com">skipnewyork@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Media</td>
<td>Michele Van Hoesen</td>
<td><a href="mailto:michelevh@yahoo.com">michelevh@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>845-691-7442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Chair</td>
<td>Don Urmston</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mrurmston@gmail.com">mrurmston@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>845-457-4552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Events</td>
<td>Carole Marsh</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Nanagrace91@aol.com">Nanagrace91@aol.com</a></td>
<td>845-849-2044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webmaster</td>
<td>Georgette Weir</td>
<td><a href="mailto:georgette.weir@gmail.com">georgette.weir@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>845-462-0142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter Editor</td>
<td>Dana Bennet</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dana.f.bennet@gmail.com">dana.f.bennet@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>845-247-7259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database Admin</td>
<td>Eli Cohen</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Ebc12533@yahoo.com">Ebc12533@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>845-264-2270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outings Co-Chair</td>
<td>Sue Mackson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:suemackson@gmail.com">suemackson@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>845-471-9892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outings Co-Chair</td>
<td>Ginny Fauci</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gefauci@gmail.com">gefauci@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>845-399-2170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trails Chair</td>
<td>Tom Amisson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tamisson@aol.com">tamisson@aol.com</a></td>
<td>845-592-1572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Trails &amp; Paddles</td>
<td>Russ Faller</td>
<td><a href="mailto:russoutdoors@yahoo.com">russoutdoors@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>845-297-5126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY-NJ Trail Conf. Del.</td>
<td>Salley Decker</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sadeccker2002@yahoo.com">sadeccker2002@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>845-454-4206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MeetUp</td>
<td>Sayi Nulu</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sayileela@gmail.com">sayileela@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>845-264-2270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MHADK funds “Little Free Library”

In February, our chapter received a thank-you letter from the executive director of the Stony Kill Foundation, for funding the “Little Free Library” kiosk project at three sites on DEC-owned lands just north of Beacon. We gave $500 for the project, which was constructed by Girl Scout Chailyn Schroll last autumn.

Books pertaining to hiking, gardening, cooking, nature, environmental studies, farm life and children’s books are housed in each kiosk, encouraging visitors to take a book and leave a book.

Chailyn started the library project in September of 2017, as part of her Gold Award. In addition to our chapter’s $500 donation, she raised more money to fund the building of all three libraries. She was able to construct the kiosks using plans found online and secured additional labor from her Girl Scout troop, family and a carpenter. She also collected enough books to fill each library. Look for them the next time you are in the area to hike or ski the trails.

Chailyn Schroll built the book kiosks using plans found online.

2018 Kayak Presentations

How to Get Started Kayaking program by Don Urmston

All ADK members are welcome to attend and volunteers are needed to help carry gear and promote the ADK. (No kayaking experience needed!)
Contact: mrurmston@gmail.com

www.midhudsonadk.org
Lots of cancellations this winter, some due to weather (of course), some to lack of interest or leader illnesses. The signal character of the season was serious cold after a warm and welcome autumn.

Nov 11
Lemon Squeeze Hike at Mohonk
Leader: Lou Rudisch
Although the day was cold, the air was crisp and our views were clear. A few days before the hike, Marty Carp offered to serve as co-leader, and to bring in additional hikers from AMC. With Marty’s help we were able to quickly locate the faintly marked Birchen Trail, which I couldn’t find on an earlier scouting. After following it up to the Lemon Squeeze, we continued up to the Skytop Tower for crystal clear views of the remaining fall foliage. Marty then pointed out another trail leading down to the Labyrinth, which I had not originally planned. After thoroughly enjoying that scramble, we looped back past the beautiful Duck Pond on the way to our cars. Thank you, Marty, for your input! Participants included Weston (Trent) Fenner, Lawrence Anderson, Marie Cantu, Marty Carp, May Tia, and the leader.

Nov 19 Arden Point and Glenclyffe
Leader: Sue Mackson
I was joined on this lovely and gentle woods trail by Howard Spilke and Connie Haven. Weather was dry and calm, and we started out from the Garrison train station, stopping several times along the way to creep close to the shore for views of the Hudson and beyond. The trail passes the lovely building and landscaped grounds of the Garrison Institute and includes passage through a bamboo thicket (not native). I was delighted that, heading downhill from those grounds, we were able to locate the route and marker of Benedict Arnold’s escape route from the Hudson Shore and east. If I lived near Garrison and had a dog, I’d walk it there.

Nov 25 Zaidee’s Bower
Leader: Roberta Forest
A beautiful day, Saturday after Thanksgiving—brought out a good crowd for a morning full of scrambles and an afternoon of hikes. Morning scrambles included Giants Workshop, Arching Rocks, and Zaidee’s Bower. We had lunch just above Zaidee’s Bower and then made our way to the Undivided Lots Trail and to the Old Minnewaska Trail. We were back before 4 PM.

Dec 2 Moonlight Hike at John Burroughs
Leader: Shari Aber
The somewhat overcast evening did not deter fourteen of us from attempting a moonlit hike. Donning headlamps or using flashlights, we met at the Floyd Ackert entrance and followed the mainly level trail out toward Chodikee Lake. In a magical moment, the trail opened up at the marsh at the Black Creek and the moon came out from behind the clouds. We lingered there for a while before making our way back. When we reached the open field near the Pond House, once again the moon came out full. Participants: Tonda Highley, Joe Ferri, Jill Abrahamsen, Anthony Sorace, Roberta Forest, Judy Mage, Ginny Fauci, Sue Mackson, Sayi Nulu, Joann Murphy-Genter, Kevin Genter, Karen Snowman and George Hulsair and the leader.

Dec 17 Palisades Parkway, NJ
Leader: John Ragusa
There was a dim sun, and dry weather conditions with no wind and moderate temperatures. There were seven participants including the leader. We began at the Rockefeller Lookout at 11:30 AM...
and proceeded north on the Long Path which parallels the parkway. The path had some ups and downs but was mostly flat. There was about 2 inches of snow on the ground, so we took our time. We had a nice lunch about a mile and a half into our hike. We had beautiful unobstructed views of the Hudson and across to the Bronx, Westchester County and the northern tip of Manhattan. Along the way, we passed the stone foundations of big mansions that used to line the Palisades before the parkway was built in the 1930s. On one of the promenades, we saw a lovely table and two chairs beautifully decorated with rose petals and candles on the ground. When inquired, we were told that a young couple was to be engaged there at any moment, so we quietly slipped away. We passed the Alpine Lookout and finally ended at the Park Headquarters at 3:15 PM for a total of 4.5 miles. All had a wonderful time. Participants: Doug Kramer, Paul Rich, Connie Haven, Ellen Kelly, Joan Billows, Skip Doyle and the leader.

**Dec 17  Big Indian and Fir**

Leaders: Shari Aber and Joseph Ferri

We met at the Biscuit Brook Parking Area and snowshoed two miles to the shelter—following someone’s tracks. At that point, the previous hikers had headed up Fir, but we continued on the Pine Hill Trail, breaking trail all the way to Big Indian. From there we bushwhacked more than two miles to Fir, and picked up the already broken tracks down to the main trail. It was a difficult hike, especially in winter conditions, and we got back to the cars after dark, using our headlamps for our final descent. Participants: Anthony Sorace, Paul Winke, Pat Halprin, Marybeth Merkel, Colette Levinstein, Emily Whans and the leaders.

**Dec 23  Falling Waters Preserve**

Leader: Carla Barrett

On Dec 23rd, five ladies experienced the beauty of two Hudson River sites: Falling Waters Preserve (FWP) and the Saugerties Lighthouse. The temperature hovered around 33 degrees but the day was clear with some sun. Both places allowed us to experience the magnificent Hudson in all its glory with many views. FWP’s trails are well maintained. The river trail is steep and rocky in spots, which required close attention to avoid a sudden fall and splash. It is possible to totally enjoy FWP without going on the steep, tricky trail. The “falling waters” were two spots where the water flows artistically and harmonically over broken shelves of Catskill rock. Scenic Hudson has placed some beautiful benches in strategic places for future enjoyment when weather is warmer. The Lighthouse deck sits in the middle of the river and has picnic tables and benches for lunch or meditating in moderate weather. The half-mile trail to the lighthouse is well maintained and level with several footbridges and elevated walkways. Check tide tables to make sure the trail is not under water in spots. Total distance covered was about
3.5 miles. Participants: Glenda Schwarze, June Finer, Sue Mackson, Sayi Nulu and the leader.

**Jan 1 Vassar College New Years Day Walk**  
**Leader: Sue Mackson**

In the Adirondacks, first-day walks were canceled. The Walkway canceled its planned New Year activities. The previous week had been in the teens and twenties and it got colder as the week progressed into the weekend. There was a dusting of snow on Friday, and on Monday, the day of the walk, it was down around zero in the morning. Fortunately, our walk was scheduled for 1 PM, and by then temps had risen to the teens. With clear, sunny skies and very little wind, New Years walk stalwarts John Ragusa, Judy Ahrens and Dough Kramer, were joined by Carol Gray, Liz Luzz and Sayi Nulu, and by guests May and John Rossi for something over an hour’s walk around the flat part of the campus. We then repaired to the leader’s home for some delicious panettone contributed by Carol Lee and other refreshments. Pleasant folks with whom to spend the beginning of 2018.

**Jan 24 Peach Hill**  
**Leader: Sue Mackson**

It was a very clear day, but cold, with enough snow for the trails to be crunchy. The leader meandered and we passed through the northeastern part of the park, where several dog walkers enjoyed the sun with us. We were somewhat sheltered from the wind, so the cold was bearable. For several participants, it was a first trip to this old orchard, which is being cleared of all sorts of overgrowth by Friends of Peach Hill. We walked slowly sometimes and a bit faster at others and that seemed to satisfy Jean McAvoy, Karen Flaherty, John Ragusa, Connie Haven and me. I proceeded alone to College Hill for a short walk up to the columned building at the top. Sun is so wanted in winter; so is air and exercise.

**Jan 27–28 Beginners’ Winter Backpack**  
**Leader: Russ Faller**

A base-camp trip in the Mt. Washington State Forest (S. Taconic Mtns., MA) was offered, but no ADKers came. Four AMCers had a wonderful time even though there was no snow and temps never got below freezing. We know, because a water container left outside a tent did not freeze!

---

**From our archives...**

**Jan 13, 1948**

“The trip to Mount Beacon planned for this date had to be indefinitely postponed because of heavy snow. Instead a small group consisting of Earl Boat, John Gardner, Everett Sweet, John Miller and Madalene Pierce set off from the Boats’ house for a cross country trip on skis and snowshoes. We went south toward the Dutchess County Golf course, skied there for a while and then retraced our steps and turned toward the Vassar Outing Cabin on the IBM property. Here we stopped for lunch. Circling back through the Vassar College farm, around Pig Hill, we came out on Cedar Avenue. We arrived back at our starting point at about 4:30. The day was beautiful and everyone enjoyed it. The Boats served light refreshments when the hike was over.”

---

**THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY**

**Jan 19 Mohonk Ski Tour**  
**Leader: Martin Carp**

GOOD: On Friday, January 19 at 10:20 AM, six of us started out on our ski tour from Mohonk’s Spring Farm trailhead. On our first uphill it became clear that we had three distinct categories of skiers in terms of speed. On the downhill we were more evenly matched. The snow conditions where great! One of our local ADK members helped by hanging back with the slower skiers, providing company and cohesion.

BAD: We reached the second of Guyot Hill’s two peaks (skiing from the golf course toward Bonticou Crag) at about 1250 feet and took a break. A couple of participants removed their skies. At break’s end, one skier could not get one of the skies to stay on. A binding failure!

GOOD: One of our participants, a great sportsman, who had a similar binding, traded skis with the unlucky skier—and traded back again—and again on the right boot, then the left, and so on, trying to find a combination where the faulty binding might work. The two managed to make OK progress while the rest skied and then waited. It was a beautiful day and no one minded a bit.

UGLY: At a convenient point on the course for some participants to find their way to their cars after a 3 hour ski, the skier with the broken ski decided to walk out and the Leader told him to take a short steep connector trail and wait at the next intersection while the others skied a longer, less steep trail. When they reached the intersection, there was no walker in sight. Where had the person gone? Fallen? In trouble? At the cars? As a result, all skiers returned to the cars and the ski ended. Some of the participants, who had driven two hours, wanted to ski longer but were denied the extra because the walker didn’t wait. Once you’re at the cars the trek up again to the trails is not appealing.

GOOD: Understandably, the skier with the broken binding wanted to get home, but the rest of us had a fine time at the Gilded Otter—where I removed the canoe tape holding my knee brace in place and relaxed for the first time in hours.

LESSON: So, dear reader, if you are supposed to meet-up at a junction—do so! More trail etiquette:

1. Do not walk in ski tracks as an organized hike group did last month
2. Do not make everyone aware that a skier has fallen by laughing loudly and pointing out the snow stuck on that skier’s back
We climbed Alander Mountain on Saturday, but couldn’t cross the raging Ashley Hill Brook on Sunday to climb Brace. So we just left early and had a nice lunch at The Chief Diner.

Feb 3 Graham and Balsam Lake
Leaders: Shari Aber and Joe Ferri
Despite single-digit morning temps in the western Catskills, nine of us hiked first to Graham Mountain, where there’s the base of an old tower, and on to Balsam Lake Mountain, which has one of the five remaining fire towers in the Catskills. The day turned beautiful, and as we summited Balsam Lake we were treated to the trail winding through a fir forest overhung with snow. Participants: Tonda Highley, Ted Shemella, Jill Abrahamsen, Anthony Sorace, Dana Bennet, Yon Ae Moens, Wayne Ouderkirk and the leaders.

Feb 3 Cathy and Barry Skura led a hike at Rockefeller State Park in Westchester. Three AMC members joined them, but no one from our club.
Elm Ridge Wild Forest
Windham, NY

We often think of the Elm Ridge Wild Forest as just a pretty area to pass through on the Escarpment trail on the way to or from Windham High Peak. But this year it has a lot to offer in its own right, especially if you like to mountain bike.

Tucked in the upper reaches of the Catskills just two miles from the town of Windham, Elm Ridge now provides twenty-five miles of trail for hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Five miles of those trails are new, created last year as part of the Adventure NY initiative, which seeks to connect more New Yorkers with nature.

The new trails were made possible through a partnership between the State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Windham Area Recreation Foundation (WARF), and our own Adirondack Mountain Club. WARF and ADK professional trail crews constructed the bulk of the new network, with DEC operations crews rounding out the project.

The trail system is well marked and easy to navigate, and although it was built specifically for mountain biking, hikers and skiers are welcome. The scenic trails offer something for everyone, from seasoned mountain bikers to those just getting started.

Closest to the Route 23 parking area, you will find the section known as the “FUN Loops.” The FUN Loops gently climb and flow along some small streams and hidden rock walls and within deep forest. Entry-level bikers tend to spend most of their time exploring this area.

For bikers seeking a bit more pitch and push, the Levitate trail will take you to the top of the ridge and open the door for many miles of outback flowy single-track fun. Once they reach the top, riders can choose whether to continue pleasantly along the ridge or drop down one of many heart-pounding descents. Each trail down has a unique feel and flow, most offer a challenging assortment of optional jumps and kicks. And there’s no reason hikers and skiers can’t enjoy them at their own pace.

Ready, set, mark your calendars...

Friday, April 20
Earth Day Fair
Dover Junior-Senior High School, Dover Plains, NY, 9:30 AM to 1 PM
Details to follow in weekly email updates. Contact: Salley Decker
Call (845) 454-4206 and leave message and contact information or email Salley at sadec2002@yahoo.com no later than April 16th.
There will be many interesting displays from numerous organizations, so it’s worth attending this event.

Saturday, April 21
Celebrate Earth Day
• By “recycling” at the Hyde Park Drive-In Theater. This event is sponsored by the National Park Service. Time to be announced. All Dutchess County residents welcome!
• Hyde Park Trails annual “kick off” the hiking season with the introduction of the new patch. There will be a short guided hike on the Farm Lane Trail and side trails. Scheduled events start at about 1 PM. Meet at the sign-in table at the Hyde Park Drive-In Theater.
• National Park Day (and beginning of National Park Week). Free admission to all national parks on Saturday, April 21 only. More events are scheduled during the week of April 21-29.

Sunday, May 20
Trail Maintenance workshop
The New York/New Jersey Trail Conference is sponsoring a trail-maintenance workshop on May 12 from 10 AM to 3 PM at the Hubbard Lodge in Farnesstock State Park. The workshop is free and you need not be a NYNJTC member. For more information, go to www.nynjtc.org

Saturday, June 2
National Trails Day
End2End annual hike from Top Cottage to the Vanderbilt National Historic Site. Shuttle provided to the starting point. Pre-registration required. Details will be included in weekly email updates. Distance: 9 miles, with one dropout point. This is not a guided hike!
Stay Connected...

Adirondack Mountain Club: www.adk.org
Mid- Hudson Chapter: www.midhudsonadk.org
NY/NJ Trail Conference: www.nynjtc.org

To make a change of address, phone, or email, send a message with specifics to adkinfo@adk.org or call 1-800-395-8080 x2

To be included in the Mid-Hudson Chapter email list or to change your email, please send a message to ebc12533@yahoo.com