

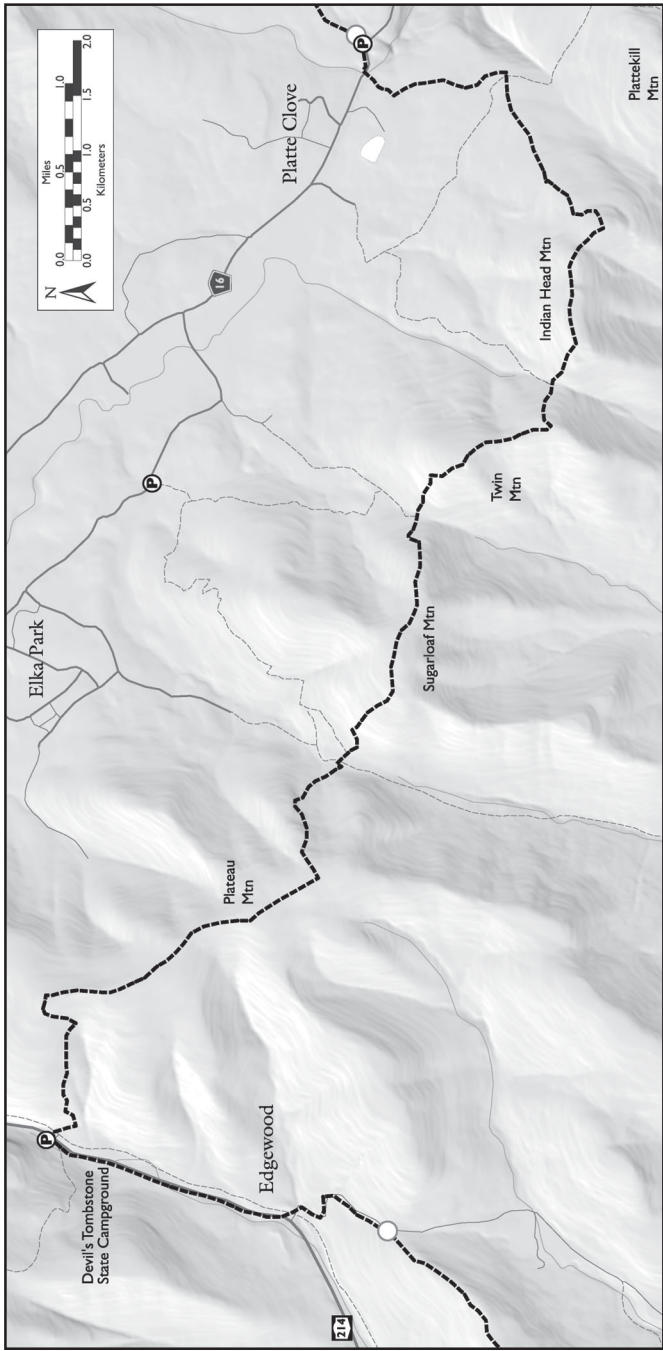
Central Catskills

Once out of the southern parts of the Catskills, the Long Path enters the more well traveled and civilized regions. The trail joins the Devil's Path, one of the most strenuous hiking trails in New York, and passes near the former sites of two large hotels. Both hotels played a huge role in the development and then subsequent protection of the Catskills as an area "forever wild" to be spared from logging and other encroachments of civilization on nature. North Lake State Campground now occupies the land owned by both hotels in order to preserve the landmarks and vistas seen by the rich and famous when the Catskills were "the" place to go to for travel and vacation. The trail also passes a bounty of waterfalls, some directly on the trail and some nearby. Kaaterskill Falls, a short distance from North Lake State Campground, has two major drops, each a major waterfall in its own right, that add up to the tallest falls in New York State.

Porcupine



HERB CHONG



19. Silver Hollow Notch to Platte Clove Road

Features: Sugarloaf and Twin Mountains

Distance: 14.55 miles

USGS Map Quads: Hunter, Bearsville, Woodstock, Kaaterskill

Trail Conference Maps: Map 41, Northeastern Catskill Trails

General Description

This section of the Long Path contains some of the most spectacular and rugged scenery in the Catskills. After descending from Silver Hollow Notch, it follows NY Route 214 to Stony Clove Notch and the Devil's Path. It follows the Devil's Path over Plateau, Sugarloaf, Twin and Indian Head Mountains. This trail ascends and descends in dramatic fashion, clambering over and through large rock ledges. Each mountain offers excellent views. The Devil's Path is the most dramatic trail in the Catskills, going up and over six major peaks. The Long Path traverses the four eastern peaks. As its name implies, there are tremendous drop-offs between the peaks. The hike of the entire Devil's Path (west to east) involves a gain of over 8,000 feet in total elevation, an elevation gain comparable to that of the Great Range in the Adirondacks!

Access

Take the New York Thruway to Exit 19. Follow NY Route 28 west to Phoenicia and then north on NY Route 214 to Edgewood. The beginning of the southern end of this section is not accessible by car.

Parking

1.25 Parking area on west side of Rt. 214, 0.30 miles north of Silver Hollow Road junction. (18T 565080E 4665688N)

2.25 Notch Lake in Stony Clove Notch (part of Devil's Tombstone State Campground – fee in season). (18T 565809E 4667842N)

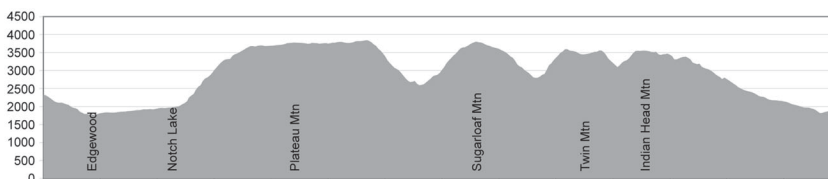
14.55 Steenberg Road. (18T 575825E 4665015N)

Camping

2.10 Devil's Tombstone State Campground (fee)

6.70 Mink Hollow Lean-to

13.40 Devil's Kitchen Lean-to



Trail Description

0.00 Silver Hollow Notch – The trail bears left from the col where Silver Hollow Road passes through the notch following the Long Path aqua blazes. Begin a moderate descent.

0.40 State land stops on the left side (downhill) of road. State land continues along right side.

0.60 Keep right, avoiding a woods road to the left.

0.70 There is a private house on the left. This is the end of the drivable portion of Silver Hollow Road on the north side of the notch.

0.80 At the bottom of the descent, the trail crosses a wooden deck bridge between stone abutments. This is a part of the old Stony Clove branch of the Ulster & Delaware Railroad that ran from Phoenicia to North Lake.

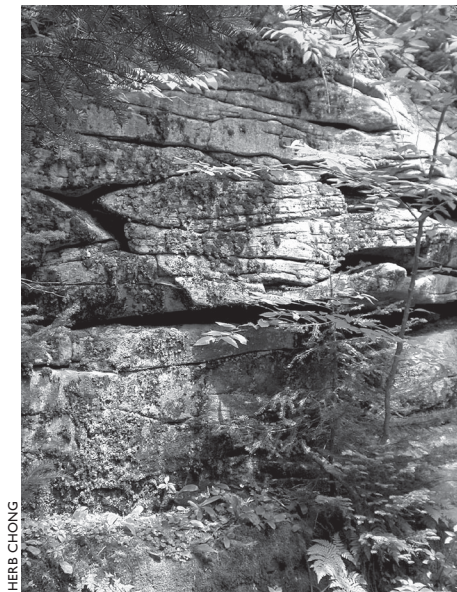
0.90 Bear right on Route 214.

1.25 There is a parking area on the west side of the highway opposite a large clearing.

1.35 Pass the state land boundary on right. State land continues from here to beyond Stony Clove Notch. Continue ahead on Rt. 214. An alternate bushwhacking route from here to Stony Clove Notch is to turn right, following the yellow blazes of the state land boundary about 250 feet to the old Stony Clove railroad grade, and then left (north) to the Devil's Path. The RR grade is never more than 100 yards away from the highway but provides a pleasant alternative to a mile of road walking. This alternate route is not maintained.

1.60 Cross Stony Clove Creek in a beaver meadow. There are good views up to Plateau Mountain in this area.

Rocks on Plateau Mountain



HERB CHONG



View from Sugarloaf Mountain

1.90 Pass the Devil's Tombstone Picnic Area on right. A fee is charged in season.

2.10 The Devil's Tombstone State Campground headquarters is on the left. The campground operates from Memorial Day to Labor Day with a fee charged. Camping is not permitted at other times. Purchase a day permit for the Notch Lake parking area from this facility.

2.30 The Long Path meets the Devil's Path at the Notch Lake parking area (fee in season). The Devil's Path continues west (left) to the summit of Hunter Mountain. Notch Lake is on the left just beyond the parking area. Turn right following the red markers. The climb up Plateau is very steep and steady beginning 200 yards from NY Route 214.

3.30 The climb abruptly ends at the open rock of Orchard Point Lookout. Here there are excellent views south through Stony Clove Valley and the southern Catskills. Directly across Stony Clove, Hunter Mountain dominates the view. Begin a pleasant 2-mile walk along the more or less flat summit ridge of Plateau through mature spruce/fir woods. Acid rain and other environmental factors have contributed to the high death rate of the largest trees, some of which exceeded 2 feet in diameter.

3.40 There is a wide view to the north/northeast with the Black Dome Range and mountains of the Northeast Catskills in the distance.

3.60 View northeast.

4.50 Pass an unmarked trail to left, a private trail, keep out.

4.80 Cross the summit of Plateau Mountain in dense spruce woods.

5.50 View east. The trail begins a steep descent.

6.30 Spring to the right of trail.

6.70 Junction with the southern leg of the Mink Hollow Trail, continue ahead on red markers. To the right, the blue-marked Mink Hollow Trail leads 3 miles to the end of Mink Hollow Road 3 miles north of Lake Hill on Rt. 212.

Mink Hollow Lean-to is located 200 feet to the right.

6.90 Junction with the northern leg of the Mink Hollow Trail. Left on blue markers leads 2.25 miles to a trail junction with the Pecoy Notch Trail. Continue ahead on red markers to reach the first of a series of 5 rock ledges that the trail climbs over.

7.25 The forest becomes primarily balsam fir and red spruce, with birch mixed in, as the grade begins to moderate.

7.45 Pass the sign indicating the 3,500-foot elevation line. The forest now becomes more open with views on the left of the Blackhead Range to the north. The trail passes a large rock on the right with excellent views of Plateau Mountain and Mink Hollow.

7.65 A yellow-blazed side trail leads to the right to a rock ledge with an outstanding view of the southern Catskills. Visible are the Burroughs Range, Giant Ledge and Panther Mountain, and the mountains along the Pine Hill–West Branch Trail. The Ashokan Reservoir can also be seen with the Shawangunks in the background. On a clear day, you can see all the way to the Hudson River valley.

7.70 Reach the flat, level summit of Sugarloaf Mountain. The trail continues through a mature balsam-spruce forest, beginning to descend in a series of steps, alternating with level sections.

8.30 Reach a viewpoint to the east over Pecoy Notch, with Twin and Overlook Mountains visible beyond and the Ashokan Reservoir and the Shawangunks in the distance. The trail now begins a very steep descent into Pecoy Notch.

8.45 Descend steeply over a series of rock ledges. There are many good views

Bluestone Quarry on Indian Head Mountain



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View from Overlook Mountain

over Pecoy Notch and towards Twin Mountain.

8.90 Descent ends abruptly shortly before reaching a junction with the Pecoy Notch Trail in the col between Sugarloaf and Twin Mountains. Left on blue markers leads 1.75 miles to the north end of the Mink Hollow Trail. The Long Path continues, beginning a steep climb of the west summit of Twin Mountain and climbing over large rocks and several rock ledges in the process. There are several good views back towards Sugarloaf during the ascent.

9.10 Pass a huge rock on the left that separated from the main ledge.

9.25 The trail goes through a narrow passage and climbs up a rock ledge.

9.45 Reach a rock ledge with a large overhanging rock, a good temporary shelter, on the left. The trail continues through a cleft in the rock ledge. At the top of the ledge, there is a good viewpoint of Sugarloaf Mountain with the fire tower on Hunter Mountain visible to the west, and the Blackhead Range, Stoppel Point and Roundtop visible to the north. The grade now moderates.

9.60 The trail turns left and climbs a small ledge to reach a viewpoint near the north or true summit of Twin Mountain. From this vantage point, one can see Sugarloaf, Plateau and Hunter Mountains to the west, the Burroughs Range to the south, and the Ashokan Reservoir and the Shawangunk Mountains to the southeast, with the Hudson Valley and the Hudson Highlands far in the distance. The actual summit of Twin is slightly beyond this viewpoint. The trail now descends through a mature spruce-balsam forest.

9.90 Reach the col between the two peaks of Twin Mountain. The trail now ascends gradually to the south peak of Twin.

10.25 Reach the south peak of Twin Mountain, with an excellent 180-degree view. To the west, Sugarloaf and Plateau Mountains are visible, and to the

south all the major peaks of the southern Catskills may be seen. To the southeast, the Ashokan Reservoir and the Shawangunks are visible, with the Hudson Highlands and the Hudson Valley in the distance. Overlook Mountain may be seen to the east, with the Hudson River and the Taconics in the far distance. This is one of the best views in the Catskills. The Catskill 3500 Club does not consider the south peak of Twin, though over 3,500 feet high, a separate peak, since the drop between the north and south peaks of Twin is less than the required 200 feet. The trail continues eastward, beginning to descend.

10.35 Reach a viewpoint to the east over Jimmy Dolan Notch and Indian Head Mountain. The trail now begins to descend more steeply.

10.50 Descend over a rock ledge and pass under a large balanced rock to the left.

10.65 The trail reaches Jimmy Dolan Notch, the col between Twin and Indian Head mountains, at a trail junction. This notch has the highest elevation of all the cols along the Devil's Path at 3100 feet. Left, the blue-marked Jimmy Dolan Notch Trail descends steeply at first, then moderately for two miles north to Prediger Road. Continue ahead following the red markers to begin a moderate to steep climb up Indian Head.

11.20 The ascent becomes gentler as the trail reaches thick spruce woods after a steep scramble up the final ledge to the summit of Indian Head Mountain. This is the highest of the three summits making up the summit ridge.

11.65 Reach a spectacular overlook after going over the second summit. Below is eastern summit with Plattekill Mountain beyond and Overlook Mountain to the right. Below and to the left is Platte Clove with Huckleberry Point prominent above the north side of the Clove. On the far horizon is Vermont to the north, Massachusetts to the northeast and Connecticut to the southeast. In between is the Hudson Valley from just south of Albany to the Highlands beyond Newburgh. A short but very steep descent brings one to the low point between the middle and east summits.

12.15 View to north with Kaaterskill High Peak and Roundtop across the upper Schoharie Valley with the northern Escarpment Mountains and Black Dome Range beyond. Begin a steep to moderate descent.

13.40 The trail meets the blue-marked Overlook Trail coming in from the right on a wide woods road. Turn left on the road, continuing to follow the red markers. The Overlook Trail leads in 0.15 miles to the Devil's Kitchen Lean-to.

13.45 Reach another trail junction. The Long Path continues ahead on the road following blue markers while the Devil's Path turns left. There is a large bluestone quarry on right.

13.70 Cross onto Platte Clove Preserve. The blue markers change to green metal Platte Clove Preserve markers. Camping is not permitted within the Platte Clove Preserve, which runs from here to beyond Platte Clove Road.

14.40 Cross Plattekill Creek on bridge at head of Platte Clove. Continue steeply uphill to Platte Clove Road. Turn right following paved Platte Clove Road east.

14.55 The dirt Steenberg Road and a state snowmobile trail lead to the left.



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Waterfall at Platte Clove Preserve

This is the end of Section 19. A large parking lot is located 250 feet north of this intersection on Steenberg Road. To continue on the Long Path, turn left on Steenberg Road.