

23. Batavia Kill to NY Route 23

Features:Northern Catskill Escarpment, Windham High Peak

Distance:8.55 miles

USGS Map Quads:Freehold, Hensonville

Trail Conference Maps:Map 41, Northeastern Catskill Trails

General Description

The Long Path continues along the blue-blazed Escarpment Trail to NY Route 23 in East Windham. The trail crosses several 3,000-foot peaks before making the final climb over Windham High Peak. There are many views along the way over the Blackhead Range to the south and the Catskill and Mohawk valleys to the north. On a clear day, one can see all the way to the southern Adirondacks. From Windham High Peak, the trail descends to NY Route 23, at the northern edge of the Catskill Park, passing through two groves of Norway spruce planted by the CCC in the 1930s. For the entire length of this section, the Long Path follows the Escarpment Trail, blazed with blue DEC trail markers.

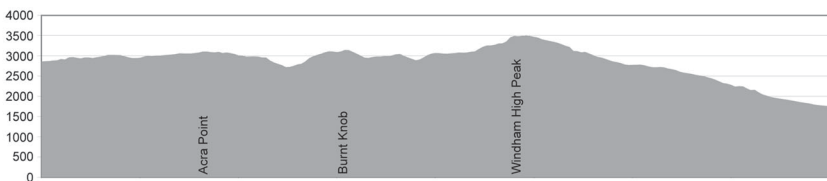
Access

Take the New York State Thruway to Exit 21 (Catskill). Continue on Route 23 west about 22 miles to Brooksbury. At a sign for Hensonville, turn left and proceed south on Greene County Route 65. In Hensonville, turn left onto Greene County Route 40 and follow it to Maplecrest. In Maplecrest, bear left onto Big Hollow Road, passing the Sugar Maples Resort, and continue about 5 miles to a parking area at the end of the road. To reach the beginning of this section of the Long Path, follow the red-blazed Black Dome Range Trail straight ahead for 0.5 miles to the intersection with the yellow-blazed Batavia Kill Trail. Continue ahead on the Batavia Kill Trail 0.9 miles to the Escarpment Trail.

Parking

0.00Parking area at end of Big Hollow Road. This is 1.4 miles along the red-blazed Black Dome Range Trail and the yellow-blazed Batavia Kill Trail from the beginning of this section. (18T 572932E 4682265N)

8.55Parking area on Route 23 in East Windham, at intersection with Cross Road. (18T 566761E 4684806N)





The Devil's Path from Blackhead Mountain

Camping

0.00 Batavia Kill Lean-to at 0.25 miles from the Long Path along the yellow-blazed Batavia Kill Trail.

7.45 Elm Ridge Lean-to.

Trail Description

0.00 From the intersection of the blue-blazed Escarpment Trail with the yellow-blazed Batavia Kill trail, the Long Path proceeds north along the Escarpment Trail, ascending an unnamed knob with a fine viewpoint over the Hudson Valley. Although the trail runs close to the edge of the Escarpment, there are



no other views on this section of the trail. The trail begins a gradual climb up to Acra Point.

1.80 Reach the open rock summit of Acra Point. The view here is somewhat obscured by low growth and is confined to the north. However, a short distance down the trail there is an open view to the west towards Big Hollow, with the Blackhead Range towering behind. As the trail begins to descend, a short side trail to the left leads to an open rock with another view toward Big Hollow and the Blackhead Range. There is also a view northwest along the ridge towards Burnt Knob and Windham High Peak. A little further down the trail there is a view to the north. The trail continues to descend to the col between Acra Point and Burnt Knob.



Windham High Peak from Burnt Knob

2.50 The trail reaches the col. Here, the red-blazed Black Dome Range Trail descends to the left to Big Hollow Road. Water is available from a stream 0.7 miles down this trail. The Long Path continues ahead to the west, beginning a steep climb up Burnt Knob.

2.80 At the top of the climb, the trail curves to the left and reaches the southern side of Burnt Knob, where a short yellow-blazed side trail to the left leads to a beautiful viewpoint over Big Hollow and the Blackhead Range.

3.45 After descending from Burnt Knob, the trail passes by a viewpoint to the north.

3.80 The trail reaches the summit of another unnamed knob, where a short side trail to the left leads to a viewpoint to the southwest over Big Hollow.

3.95 After descending from the knob, the trail begins its ascent of Windham High Peak.

4.35 The trail passes through an open area, with views of Windham High Peak directly ahead, and begins to ascend steadily.

5.05 The Trail reaches the summit of Windham High Peak. Just before the summit, there is a large rock outcropping to the right, with an open view to the north. Sometimes called the “Great Northern Viewpoint,” this is the last spectacular view from the Escarpment Trail. To the north, the lesser peaks of Ginseng, Hayden, Pisgah and Huntersfield, followed by the Long Path to the north, are visible. In the far distance, the Helderbergs and the southern Adirondacks may be seen on a clear day. The Hudson River valley is visible to the northeast, and on a clear day, the City of Albany, the Taconics and the Green Mountains of Vermont may also be seen. The trail bears left and contin-

ues along the level summit, with a partial view over the Blackhead Range to the southeast, and another partial view northwest at the west end of the summit. It then begins a steady descent.

6.75 The trail enters the first of two groves of Norway spruce trees planted by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. The trail climbs over the tangled roots of these trees. Between the two groves, the trail passes through a small open area.

7.40 Shortly after passing a short yellow-blazed side trail to a rock ledge (the view from this point is obscured by overgrown vegetation), the trail passes the Elm Ridge Lean-to, to the left of the trail.

7.45 The Long Path turns right at a junction, continuing along the blue-blazed Escarpment Trail, as the yellow-blazed Elm Ridge Trail descends to the left for 0.85 miles to the parking area at the end of Peck Road. The Long Path now follows a wide snowmobile trail, the route of an old turnpike across the mountains.

7.60 Turn left, leaving the old road, and continue to descend on a narrower path.

7.70 Turn sharply to the right and descend steeply.

8.55 After passing a trail register, the trail crosses a bridge over a stream and reaches NY Route 23 near East Windham. To continue, go across Route 23 and follow Cross Road to the northwest.