

18. Phoenicia to Silver Hollow Notch

Feature: Tremper Mountain

Distance: 11.50 miles

USGSMapQuads: Phoenicia, Bearsville, Hunter

Trail Conference Maps: Map 41, Northeastern Catskill Trails

General Description

The Long Path leaves Phoenicia on public roads, paralleling the Esopus Creek. The trail then climbs up the south side of Tremper Mountain, following an old tote road to the former state fire tower. From there, it heads toward Carl Mountain and circles it to descend to Warner Creek before going over Edgewood Mountain to Silver Hollow Notch. This section begins a long stretch between supply points. From Phoenicia to Palenville is over 40 miles. In this distance, only two roads are crossed. Neither has stores within 4 miles of the crossings. There is an unbridged stream crossing at the 6.95 mile mark (Warner Creek) that is dangerous to impassible at medium to high water.

Access

Take the New York State Thruway to Exit 19 (Kingston). Follow NY Route 28 west for 23 miles to Phoenicia. Turn right at the second turn to Phoenicia (Bridge Street). Follow Bridge Street across the Esopus Creek to Main Street in Phoenicia.

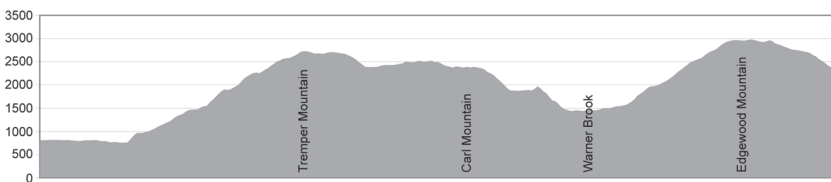
Parking

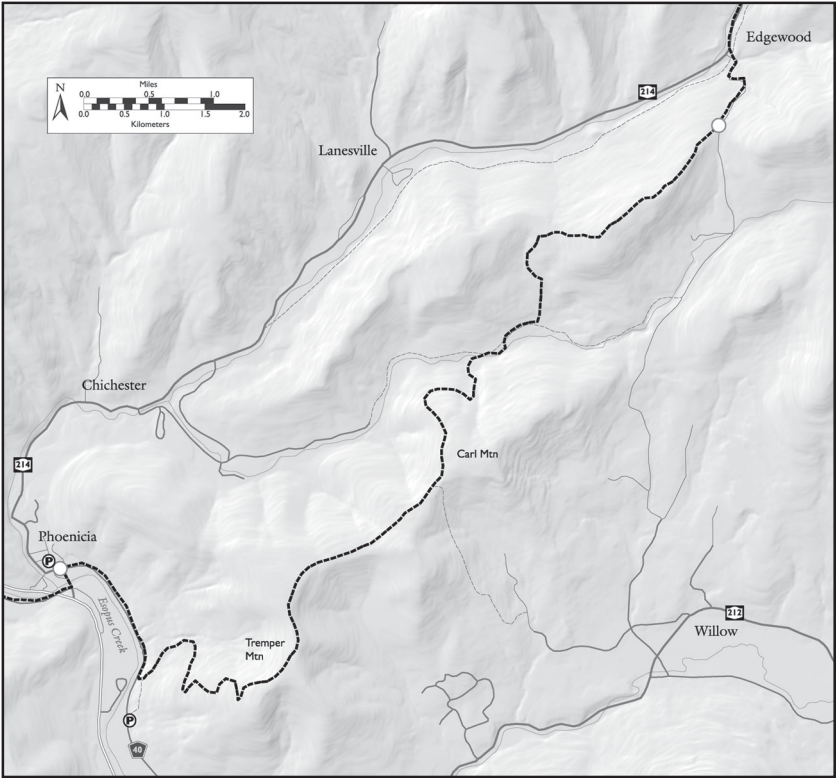
0.00 Village of Phoenicia (parking available on Main Street or behind the Phoenicia Pharmacy on NY Route 214). (18T 556830E 4659268N)

Camping

3.15 Baldwin Memorial Lean-to.

4.00 Tremper Mountain Lean-to.





Trail Description

0.00 From the intersection of Bridge Street and Main Street in Phoenicia continue east on Main Street (Ulster County Route 40), following the north side of Esopus Creek. In the spring, the Esopus is filled with white water canoers and kayakers, as well as trout fishermen. The Esopus is one of the most famous trout streams in America. In the summer, the primary recreational use of the creek is by people who ride lazily downstream in inner tubes.

1.30 The Long Path arrives at the unmarked beginning of the old fire warden's road leading up Tremper Mountain on the left. This was the trailhead for the Phoenicia Trail before it was moved 0.3 miles east to a new parking lot in the late 90s. Turn left following the wide road steeply uphill for about 100 yards to a junction with the Phoenicia Trail. Red markers to the right lead 0.3 miles to the parking area on Ulster County Route 40. Continue straight ahead on red markers following the fire warden's road to the abandoned state fire tower. The grade varies between steep and gradual. On the steeper sections, the trail is rocky and eroded. For most of the way, the trail passes through a mixed hardwood and hemlock forest.

2.05 Pass rock ledges on the left

2.15 Pass a seasonal spring on left, which is reliable in all but the driest times.

2.20 The trail passes an abandoned bluestone quarry on the left. Bluestone mining was once one of the primary industries in the Catskills. As you pass the quarry, you can see the layering that made bluestone an easy mineral to mine. Past the quarry the trail levels off, crosses several woods roads, and begins a series of switchbacks.

2.95 The trail sidehills through a steep slope with rock walls on the right and a steep drop on the left. After a short level stretch, the trail again begins a steep climb.

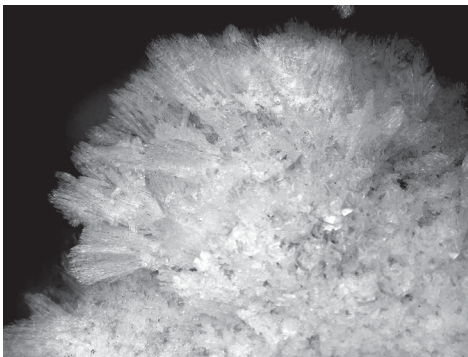
3.15 A side trail to the right leads to the Baldwin Memorial Lean-to. In another 250 feet, pass an undependable pipe spring 50 feet to the left of the trail.

3.65 After a switchback, the trail climbs to the top of the ridge, and then follows it the rest of the way to the summit. Here the forest is less mature; consequently, there is more undergrowth.

4.00 Pass the Tremper Mountain Lean-to on the left.

4.05 Reach the flat, level summit of Tremper Mountain, with an abandoned state fire tower, formerly used by fire observers with two-way radios. These towers were placed on top of selected mountains in the early 1900s after a series of fires devastated the mountains. More recently, the fire towers have been replaced by aircraft pa-

Frost growing from the rocks



HERB CHONG

trols. This fire tower has been restored and is open to the public. To the right of the tower is an open area that affords a view of the Devil's Path when the leaves are down. Continuing past the tower, the Long Path passes through a cleared area and then begins to descend, now following the blue-blazed Warner Creek Trail. It passes through a fairly open forest, with a base of blackberry brambles.

4.30The trail enters a more mature forest, with little undergrowth. It continues to descend along the ridge top towards the col between Tremper Mountain and Carl Mountain. Initially, the trail follows the eastern slope of the ridge, with seasonal views through the trees over the Devil's Path to the north.

4.95The trail levels out and then begins a gradual climb of the north peak of Tremper Mountain. For the most part, the trail stays about 200 vertical feet below the top of the ridge, following the western slopes.

5.80After passing through a hemlock grove, the trail descends along the eastern side of the ridge.

6.20Reach the col between Tremper Mountain and Carl Mountain. Here, the yellow-marked Willow Trail turns right, leaving the ridge, descending steeply 1.8 miles through Hoyt Hollow to Jessop Road and the Willow Post Office. Continue ahead on the blue-marked Warner Creek Trail following an old, gently sloping woods road with little elevation change.

6.60Bear left leaving the woods road and begin a moderate descent through open hardwoods. When the leaves are down, there are views to Tremper Mountain and the Central Catskills beyond.

7.00The trail eases onto a wide bench and contours to the right around Carl Mountain, slowly gaining elevation.

7.35Begin a steep descent to Warner Creek, passing a series of cataracts in the seasonal stream to the right of the trail. There are many switchbacks on the way down.

7.60The trail descends some stone steps into the bed of a seasonal stream. Continue across the streambed to meet the terminus of an old quarry road and follow it. In about 0.2 miles, there is a bluestone quarry on the right. Once past the quarry, the trail descends again for a few hundred feet.

8.80Pass a stone foundation to right. It is in open park-like surroundings. Continue gently downhill towards Warner Creek.

8.25The trail crosses Warner Creek on a gravel bar in a hemlock grove. There is no bridge for this crossing, making it dangerous at medium or high water.

8.30Reach a woods road and turn right to follow it. There is a small stream within 500 feet located in a hemlock grove.

8.60Turn left, leaving the woods road, and begin the climb to the summit of Edgewood Mountain. The ascent is moderate to steep through open hardwoods and an occasional hemlock grove.

9.25Pass a black birch tree with a large burl in its trunk. Just beyond, the trail joins a faint old quarry road and steepens.

9.55The trail reaches the broad ridge and turns right to follow it uphill.

10.00The trail traverses a grassy area.

10.50Pass a large bog on right.

10.70 The trail crosses the broad summit of Edgewood Mountain. There are no views. Shortly beyond, begin a steep descent through rocky ledges toward Silver Hollow Notch.

11.00 Reach a view into Warner Creek Valley with Olderbark Mountain opposite.

11.20 Reach a view to the south over Warner Creek Valley

11.50 Arrive at Silver Hollow Notch and the end of Section 18. To continue on the Long Path, turn left and descend, following aqua paint blazes along the severely eroded Silver Hollow Road. Turning to the right leads in 0.8 miles to the end of the drivable portion of Silver Hollow Road coming up from Willow.