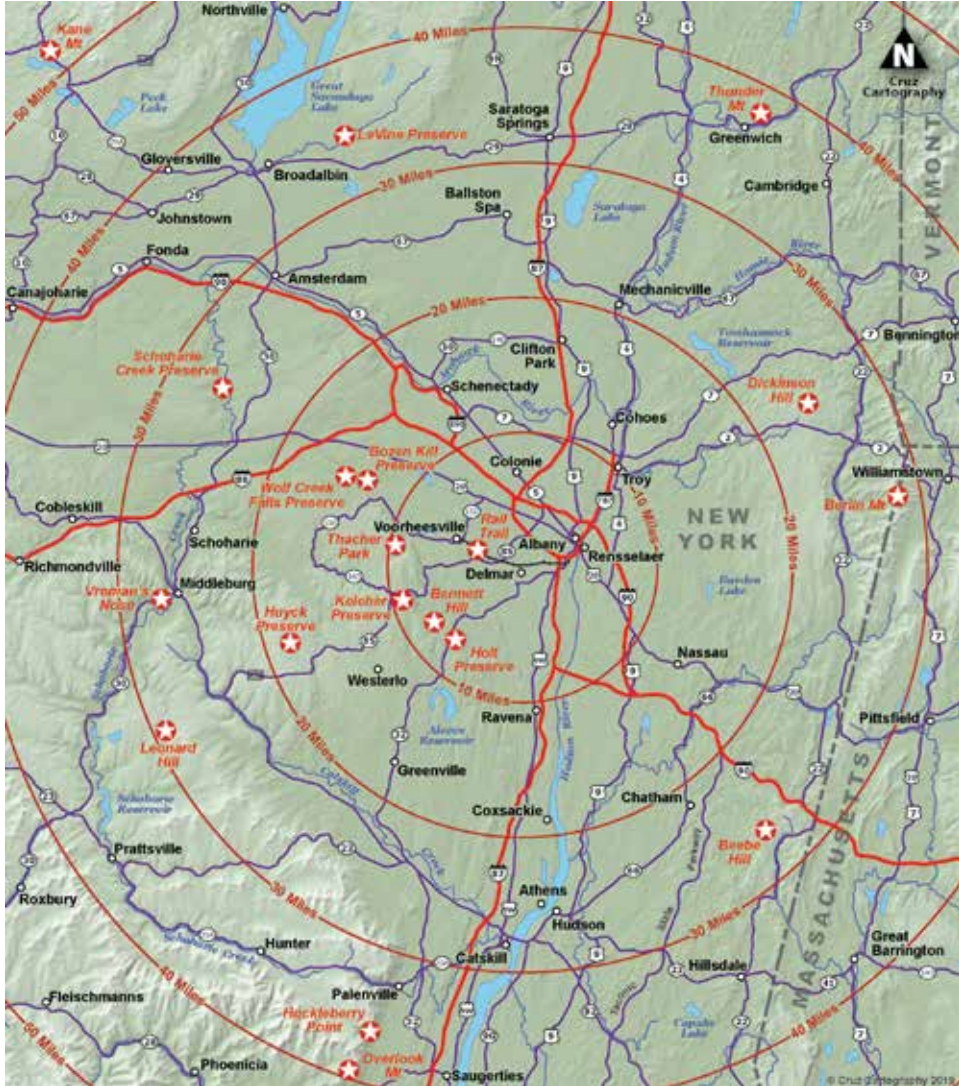


Great Hikes All Around Us

Outings to enjoy with Kids, Dogs or by Yourself

Author and outdoor enthusiast Alan Via shares some of his favorite easy hikes in the area — some with water where dogs or kids can splash and most within a short drive.



See reverse side for a description of the hikes.

The Hikes

Rail Trail – A little over 9 paved miles connecting Voorheesville to downtown Albany. Deer, birds, scenery, views of the Normanskill Creek. Some gentle ups and downs. Great place to bike for fitness or riding with the family. Great for skiing or snowshoeing.

Wolf Creek Falls – A Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy Preserve near Altamont. Three miles of easy trails, with streams, open woodlands, old stone walls, and waterfalls.

Bozen Kill Preserve – Another Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy Preserve outside of Altamont. A bit over 3 miles of trails with the first 0.25 miles along Bozen Kill Creek with scenic waterfalls and slow pools. There's a viewpoint with a bench. Great with kids and dogs. The trail ends near a large deep pool.

Thacher Park – Paint Mine trail – Minelot Creek, waterfalls, wildflowers, autumn scenery, great hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing.

Berlin Mountain – Rensselaer County highpoint on the border with Massachusetts. Wildflowers, fern glades, open summit with views of Mountain Greylock. 5.25-mile round trip with 1,300-foot ascent. Great dog hike.

Dickinson Hill – In Grafton State Park. A 3.2-mile round trip to a fire tower. Great views, easy hike with possibility to swim or kayak from a boat launch site near the hike. Great family hike.

Thunder Mountain – Located near Greenwich, it's really a hill not a mountain. Two easy miles of hiking with negligible ascent. Nice view near the summit, historic homesite and gorgeous pond.

Vroman's Nose – Just outside of Middleburgh in Schoharie Country. The loop hike is 1.3 miles with 400 feet of ascent. Spectacular cliff top views from the summit "dance floor."

Leonard Hill – Walk a scenic woods road to an abandoned fire tower that is scheduled to be restored and reopened. Wildflowers, fern glades, autumn foliage, skiing and snowshoeing. Perfect hike with kids and dogs.

Levine Preserve – Located east of Saratoga Springs. Five easy loop trail options. Trails follow and cross scenic streams. You can combine some or all of the loops.

Keleher Preserve – A Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy Preserve on 450 acres on the top of Wolf Hill in New Scotland. The only Conservancy preserve that allows mountain bikes. Kids will enjoy the musical bridge.

Beebe Hill – A gem located in Columbia County east of Chatham with 2-mile loop that includes a pond, lean-to, a historic graveyard, all capped off with a fire tower on the summit. A superb hike with kids and dogs.

Holt Preserve – Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy Preserve south of Feura Bush. A little over 3 miles of trails, gorgeous forest, spring fed pond, lots of wildflowers, deer and other wildflowers. Listen for barred owls in the early evening.

Schoharie Creek Preserve – A Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy Preserve near Amsterdam. An easy 1.3-mile loop starting at a pond with scenic stream and waterfall views along Wilsey Creek. The trail follows the Schoharie Creek for a quarter mile. Terrific hike with kids and dogs.

Kane Mountain – Short 0.75-mile hike to the fire tower or a 2.5-mile loop trail. Explore a gorgeous pond near the trailhead. Ferns, wildflowers, and huge glacial erratics near the summit. A wonderful family and dog hike.

Bennett Hill – A Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy Preserve right outside of Clarksville. 3-plus miles of trails, summit viewpoint, bathtub spring, wildflowers and autumn scenery. A personal favorite.

Huyck Preserve – Avoid the crowds near Rensselaerville and hike the Partridge Path loops in the north part of the preserve. Gorgeous hardwood trails, streams, waterfalls, few hikers. You can hike one, two or three different loops.

Huckleberry Point – A 5-mile hike in the northern Catskills near Hunter to a spectacular viewpoint. Great scenery, fall foliage and unusual pitch pine forest.

Overlook Mountain – A 5-mile hike and 1,300-foot ascent to a fire tower outside of Woodstock. Spectacular views, mountain laurel, American Chestnut tree remnants. Leave the dogs at home or leashed during warm weather due to a small and shy population of timber rattlers in the woods.