

catskill-3500-club.org

Catskill 3500 Club: High Peaks

15-19 minutes

Catskill High Peaks

Catskill Mountains above 3,500 ft in elevation

Introduction

According to our bylaws, there must be at least a 250 foot drop between the peak and any other peak on the list, or the peak must be at least ½ mile away from any other peak on the list. In all there are 33 peaks that meet these criteria with the highest peak being Slide Mountain topping out at 4,180'.

Interested in climbing these peaks? Please view our seasonal [hiking schedule](#) for Club led hikes or our [hiking resources](#) page for help striking out on your own.

Graham and Doubletop are closed to public access. After their closure, and prior to March 22, 2021 South Doubletop and Millbrook Ridge were required for membership. Effective on March 22, 2021 the number of required peaks was reduced from 35 to 33. Please click [here](#) for more information.

The Peaks

Peak Details

Descriptions below are not routes or instructions. They aren't intended to be a substitute for a map and compass or a guide.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Slide Mountain

Elevation: 4180'

Rank: 1

Trailed, NYNJTC map 143

The tallest mountain in the Catskills and the westernmost peak of the three-peak Burroughs range, Slide is traversed by the Wittenberg-Cornell-Slide Trail. Fantastic views are available from a number of ledges or openings around the peak, but the summit itself is viewless. The Summit Steward program began on this peak in 2015.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Hunter

Elevation: 4040'

Rank: 2

Trailed, NYNJTC map 141

Look down on skiers at Hunter Mountain Ski area from the fire tower at the true summit of Hunter Mountain. Multiple trails provide access to Hunter's summit. Fire tower, historic tender's cabin, and privy are located at the summit. The John Robb lean to and the Devil's Acre lean to are both located approximately one mile from the summit.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Black Dome

Elevation: 3980'

Rank: 3

Trailed, NYNJTC map 141

The center peak in the Blackhead Range, Black Dome is the tallest of the three. The Black Dome Range Trail traverses the peak, running east-west, and features some steep pitches and challenging ledges from both approaches. Fine views to the south are available from a small opening in the balsams at the summit.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Thomas Cole

Elevation: 3940'

Rank: 4

Trailed, NYNJTC map 141

Also accessed by the Black Dome Ridge Trail, Thomas Cole Mountain, named after the Hudson River School painter, is the westernmost peak of the Blackhead Range. While no views are available from the densely forested summit, the approach from Barnum Road in Maplecrest offers some nice views along the way.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Blackhead

Elevation: 3940'

Rank: 5

Trailed, NYNJTC map 141

One of three mountains in the northeastern Catskills' Blackhead range, Blackhead Mountain is one of the four required winter peaks. This peak is also the tallest of the peaks on the 24 mile Escarpment trail. The ascent from the east is one of the few places in the Catskills that typically requires crampons during winter conditions, which often continues past official winter dates. Excellent views are available from a number of places along the different trails.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Westkill

Elevation: 3880'

Rank: 6

Trailed, NYNJTC map 141

Westkill or West Kill, this peak is traversed by the Devil's Path. Easy to pick out from points north or south due to its craggy profile, Westkill offers fine views from Buck Ridge Lookout just east of the summit.

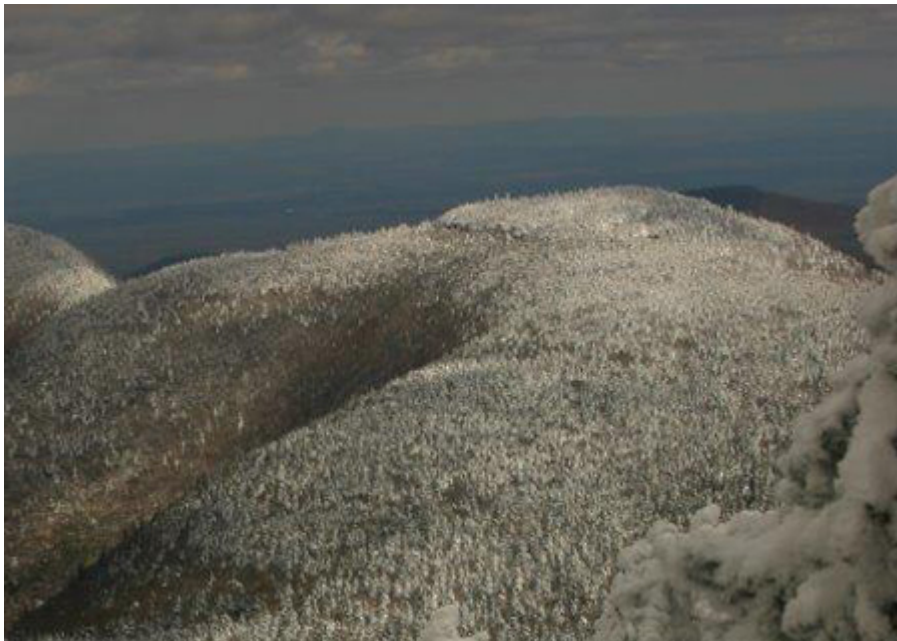


Photo: Anthony Versandi

Cornell

Elevation: 3860'

Rank: 7

Trailed, NYNJTC map 143

The center peak in the Burroughs Range, Cornell's summit lies just off the Wittenberg-Cornell-Slide Trail and one of the other two peaks must be climbed in order to reach Cornell by trail. Bushwack routes are extremely steep. A rock scramble just east of the summit called The Cornell Crack is one of the Catskills more difficult scrambles and can be treacherous in winter conditions. Excellent views are available from the top of this scramble.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Table

Elevation: 3847'

Rank: 8

Trailed, NYNJTC map 143

Named for its long flat summit plateau, Table Mountain is traversed by the Peekamoose-Table Trail.

Views from a small opening on the western end of the summit look south. The Bouton Memorial Lean To

is just west of the summit on the south side of the trail.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Peekamoose

Elevation: 3843'

Rank: 9

Trailed, NYNJTC map 143

Peekamoose's summit is marked by a large glacial erratic and traversed by the Peekamoose-Table Trail. Views to the south are available on the trail at the 3500 foot ledges, and an illegally cut view now exists near the summit.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Plateau

Elevation: 3840'

Rank: 10

Trailed, NYNJTC map 141

Plateau offers a number of hike options, with the Devil's Path providing a traverse and the Daley Ridge Trail leading up to the summit ridge from the south. Expect a stiff climb from all directions. Views are available at the eastern and western ends of the summit ridge.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Sugarloaf

Elevation: 3800'

Rank: 11

Trailed, NYNJTC map 141

Accessed from the challenging Devil's Path trail, Sugarloaf Mountain, also called Mink, is a classically beautiful Catskills peak, with its balsam fir dominated summit. Enjoy limited views from a ledge just west of the true summit and be sure to carry crampons during winter conditions – Sugarloaf is well known for its thick and dangerous ice.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Wittenberg

Elevation: 3780'

Rank: 12

Trailed, NYNJTC map 143

Accessed from the Woodland Valley Campground and traversed by the Wittenberg-Cornell-Slide Trail, this popular peak offers an open rocky summit ledge and fantastic views of the Ashokan Reservoir and beyond. The Romer Mountain Trail is a longer alternate route to ascend Wittenberg.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Southwest Hunter

Elevation: 3740'

Rank: 13

Untrailed, NYNJTC map 141

Also known as Leavitt in honor of the Catskill 3500 Club's first finishers, Bill and Elinor Leavitt, Southwest Hunter is a bushwack peak with a canister. An illegal trail was cut along the rail bed, but a much more satisfying bushwack experience may be had by eschewing that route and wacking in from a number of other locations.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Balsam Lake Mountain

Elevation: 3723'

Rank: 14

Trailed, NYNJTC maps 142 and 143

One of two high peaks that feature fire towers, Balsam Lake Mountain is accessed from the Balsam Lake Mountain Trail, a short side trail off the Dry Brook Ridge Trail. Trailed approaches from the north, south and west offer plenty of variation for visiting this peak. While no views are possible from the summit without ascending the tower, the dense balsam fir forest is beautiful and serene.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Lone

Elevation: 3721'

Rank: 15

Untrailed, NYNJTC map 143

Unlike its neighbors, Lone's untrailed summit is dominated by huge birches and other hardwoods, not balsam fir. Just south of the canister you may find an opening with views to the south.

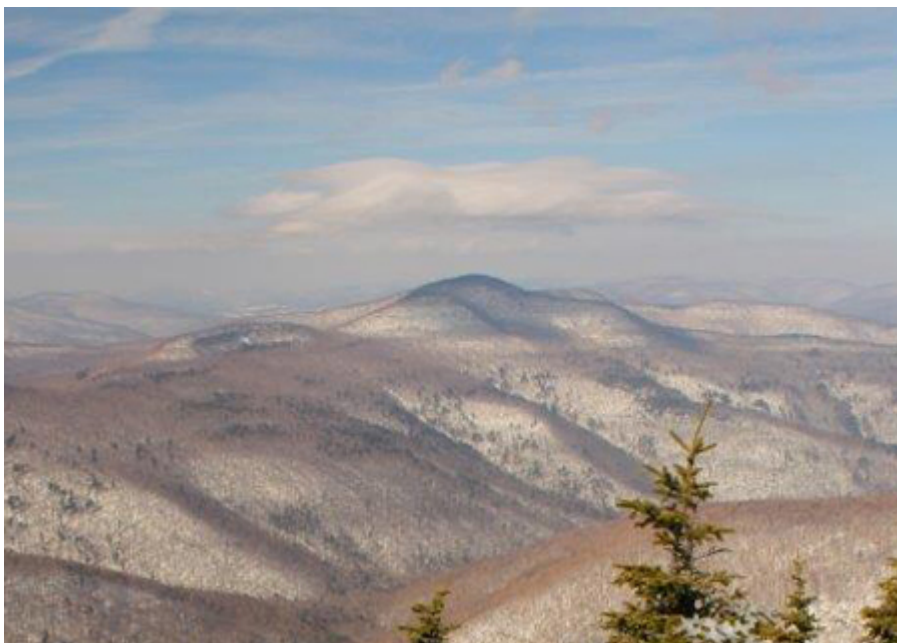


Photo: Anthony Versandi

Panther

Elevation: 3720'

Rank: 16

Trailed, NYNJTC map 142

Panther Mountain is one of the club's four required winter peaks, and is traversed by the Giant Ledge – Panther – Fox Hollow Trail. The summit offers excellent views from a small ledge. Additional views abound along the length of the trail from Giant Ledge across the summit and northern false summits of this peak.

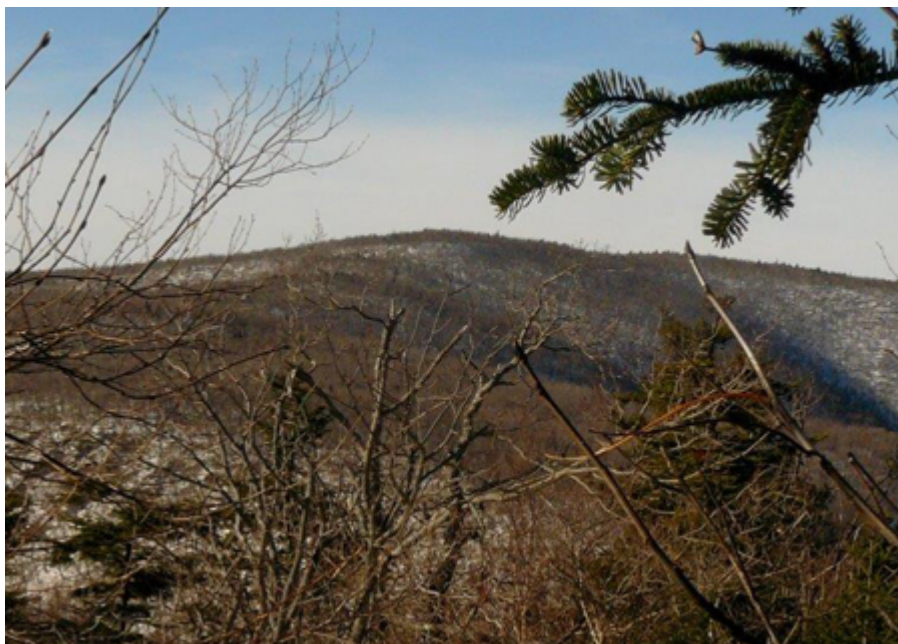


Photo: Anthony Versandi

Big Indian

Elevation: 3700'

Rank: 17

Trailed, NYNJTC maps 142 and 143

A short bushwack, the untrailed summit of Big Indian lies approximately .25 miles from the Pine Hill West Branch trail and is marked with a canister. No views are available at the summit. Proximity to Eagle, Fir, and Doubletop make this a peak that is often climbed in conjunction with at least one

additional peak. This mountain and the Ulster County village of Big Indian were named after Winnisook, the legendary Native American rumored to be 7 feet tall.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Friday

Elevation: 3694'

Rank: 18

Untrailed, NYNJTC map 143

A true bushwack, Friday is a steep climb from almost every direction, with challenging ledges and cliffs, and dense balsam fir forest on the summit. Be sure to respect nearby private property. Sign in at the summit canister and enjoy the view of the Ashokan reservoir.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Rusk

Elevation: 3680'

Rank: 19

Untrailed, NYNJTC map 141

A true bushwack peak, there is a canister at the summit. Rusk is easily hiked in conjunction with Hunter. Expect a steep ascent and winter views.

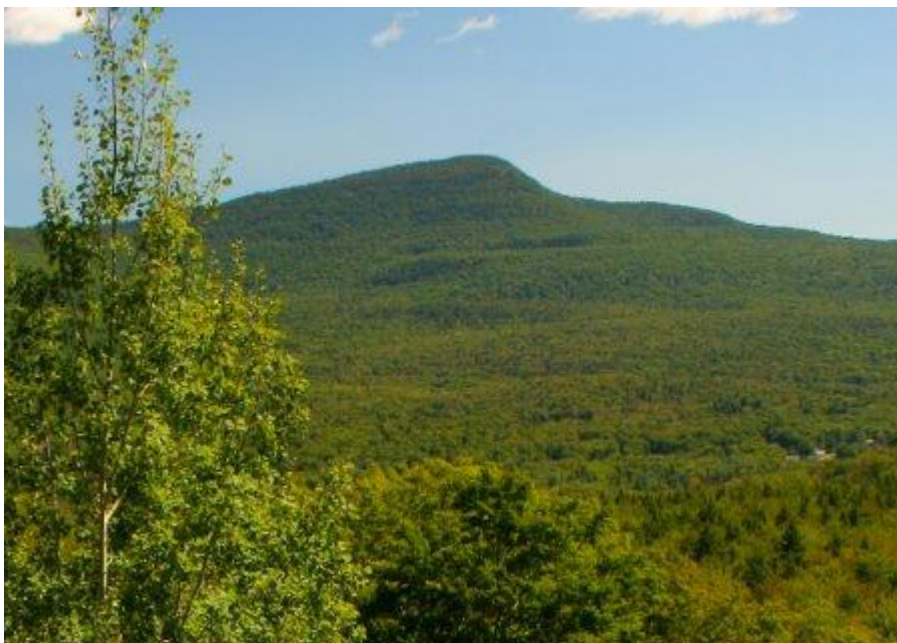


Photo: Anthony Versandi

Kaaterskill High Peak

Elevation: 3655'

Rank: 20

Untrailed, NYNJTC map 141

This was originally believed to be the tallest Catskill peak. Informal and unmaintained trails exist, and several bushwack routes are also popular. The summit, marked by a canister, is guarded by steep cliffs and dense balsams and features a grassy overlook with excellent views called Hurricane Ledge just to the south. Wreckage from several plane crashes may also be found on this peak.

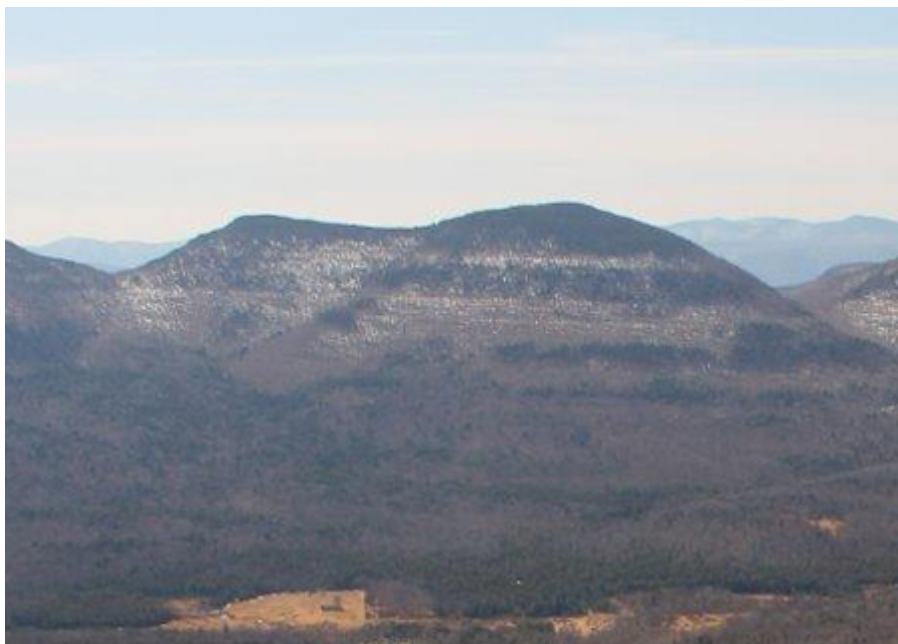


Photo: Anthony Versandi

Twin

Elevation: 3640'

Rank: 21

Trailed, NYNJTC map 141

This eastern Devil's Path peak does have two summits and it's the western one that claims the high point. Great views from the trail on both summits, dramatic and challenging rock scrambles, and dense balsam fir forest make this peak a favorite for many hikers.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Balsam Cap

Elevation: 3623'

Rank: 22

Untrailed, NYNJTC map 143

A true bushwack lying just south of Friday Mountain, Balsam Cap (not to be confused with Balsam Mountain or Balsam Lake Mountain) has a sign-in canister at the summit. Surrounded by dense balsam fir forest, no views are available from the summit.

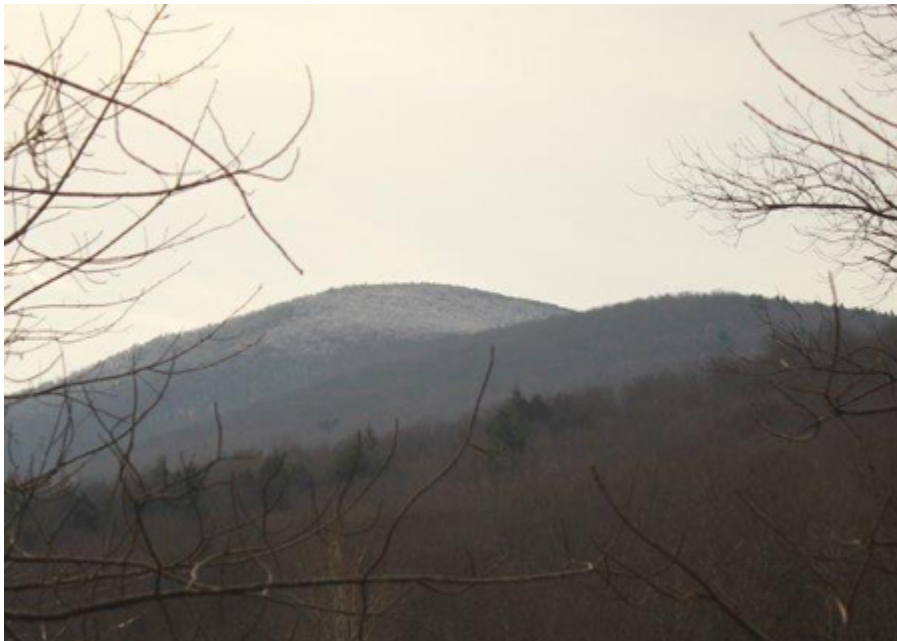


Photo: Anthony Versandi

Fir

Elevation: 3620'

Rank: 23

Untrailed, NYNJTC maps 142 and 143

Fir is a true bushwack that offers no views, but does have a canister at the summit. Despite the name, Fir does not have dense balsam fir forests; expect typical Catskills mixed hardwoods.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

North Dome

Elevation: 3610'

Rank: 24

Untrailed, NYNJTC map 142

A true bushwack, sign in at the canister at the summit. Challenging from all directions, with steep ledges and nettles and pricklers at lower elevation. Summit is viewless, in dense balsam fir forest. Be aware and respectful of private property boundaries, especially to the north.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Eagle

Elevation: 3600'

Rank: 25

Trailed, NYNJTC map 142

Eagle is a “semi-trailed” peak . The true summit, marked by a canister, is located just off the Pine Hill West Branch Trail on a small herd path. No views are available from the summit. Proximity to several high peaks (Big Indian, Doubletop, and Balsam) make Eagle a popular choice for multipeak hikes.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Balsam

Elevation: 3600'

Rank: 26

Trailed, NYNJTC map 142

The Pine Hill West Branch Trail traverses Balsam Mountain, one of the four required winter peaks, with the true summit just off the trail to the east. Access from a number of nearby parking areas makes for many route options and choices.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Bearpen

Elevation: 3600'

Rank: 27

Trailed, NYNJTC map 145

This peak lies just outside the Catskill Park, located in Bearpen State Forest. Trailed by a snowmobile trail, Bearpen is considered by many to be an untrailed peak due to the lack of a foot trail. There is no canister on this mountain. Formerly a ski area, look for old machinery in the woods and fabulous views from the top of the old ski runs.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Indian Head

Elevation: 3573'

Rank: 28

Trailed, NYNJTC map 141

The easternmost peak on the Devil's Path trail, Indian Head was named for its profile as you view from points south. A challenging hike with rock scrambles from both directions, Indian Head offers multiple view points and gorgeous balsam fir dominated summit.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Sherrill

Elevation: 3540'

Rank: 29

Untrailed, NYNJTC map 142

A true bushwack, with a canister located at the summit. Sherrill Mountain is named after Colonel Eliakim Sherrill – a New York State Senator and Shandaken resident in the 1840s. The summit offers no views, and nettles and prickles make the climb challenging in season.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Halcott

Elevation: 3537'

Rank: 30

Untrailed, NYNJTC map 142

Viewless and nettle covered, Halcott is a true bushwack with a canister at the summit. Access is from Route 42, or with landowner permission. Expect a steep climb and ferocious nettles and blackberry canes.

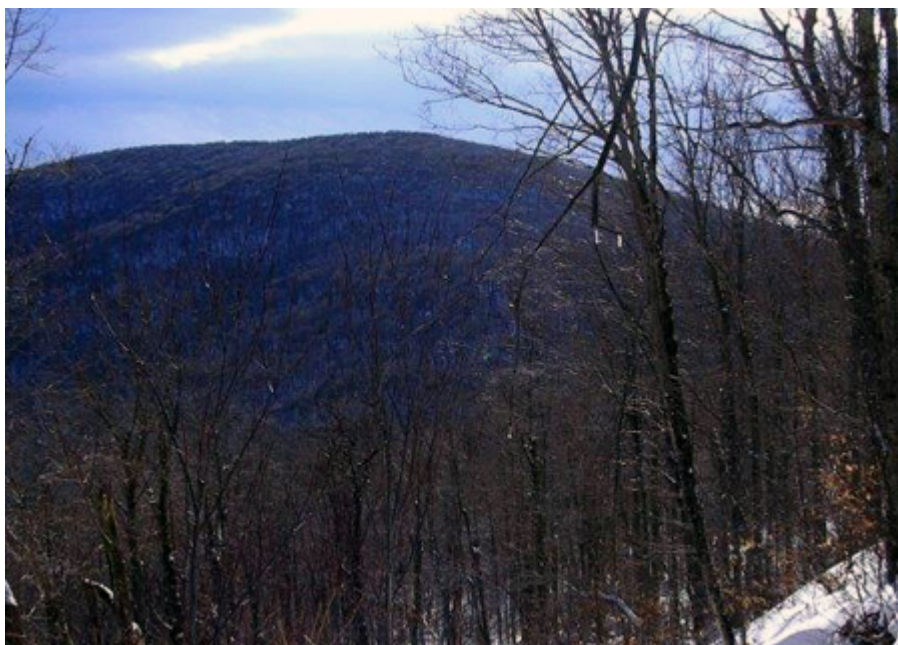


Photo: Anthony Versandi

Vly

Elevation: 3529'

Rank: 31

Untrailed, NYNJTC map 145

Vly Mountain lies west of the Catskill Park boundary, in the Bearpen Mountain State Forest. A canister marks the summit, and winter views are available just south of the summit, looking south and east. Most hikers approach this peak from the south; be sure to park legally and respect all private property.



Photo: Anthony Versandi

Windham High Peak

Elevation: 3524'

Rank: 32

Trailed, NYNJTC map 141

The northernmost peak on the Escarpment Trail, Windham High Peak (WHP) offers great views to the north and south at several viewpoints along the summit, and is traversed by the Long Path. Windham Mountain (the ski area) is several miles away, located on Cave and West Cave Mountains.



Photo: Stash Rusin

Rocky

Elevation: 3487'

Rank: 33

Untrailed, NYNJTC map 143

The shortest of the 35, Rocky is considered the most inaccessible. A true bushwack through dense balsam fir forest with a summit canister, expect a trip to Rocky to take most of a day. South of the summit, some views may be possible.

