

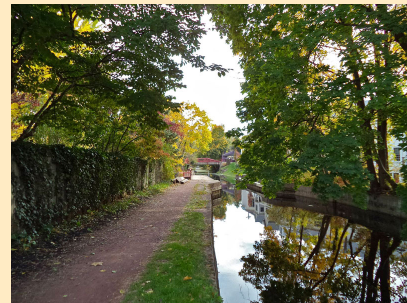


The Keystone Hiker - April 2022

Member's Corner

Trail of the Year Delaware Canal State Park Towpath

The Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee designates the Trail of the Year to help build enthusiasm and support for trails across the state, and to raise public awareness about the value of the Pennsylvania's land and water trail network. Pennsylvania continues its tradition of being a leader in trail development by providing its citizens and visitors with more than 12,000 miles of trails. In an effort to close the gaps in this network and bring trails to close everyone, DCNR has established a goal to have a trail within 10 minutes of all Pennsylvanians.



The 58.9-mile Delaware Canal Towpath passes through 18 municipalities in Bucks and Northampton counties. The towpath, where the mules once trod pulling the canal boats along the Delaware Canal, provides a level trail for walking, jogging, biking and horseback riding. Boat accesses allow for canoeing and kayaking. In winter, ice skating and cross-country skiing are also popular along the towpath and canal.

The [Friends of the Delaware Canal](#), the award recipient, works in partnership with Delaware Canal State Park, which manages the canal and towpath. The friends group assists with development and maintenance along the towpath, as well as helping to raise funds and awareness for the canal and towpath. They utilize the Canal Tenders volunteer program to watch over and care for sections of the towpath, and they also initiated a Canal Action Team to work on larger maintenance projects along the trail. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Friends of the Delaware Canal.

[Read the full story.](#)

Four Clubs to Receive KTA Mini-Grants

The Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club (BMECC), Standing Stone Trail Club (SSTC), Susquehannock Trail Club, and Warrior Trail Association applied for mini-grants during KTA's 2022 funding round. Each group will receive \$500 to support their respective projects.

BMECC is updating safety equipment and offering first aid certification to volunteers. The SSTC is purchasing liability insurance. The Susquehannock Trail Club is using their mini-grant to help cover the costs of feeding a month-long resident trail crew. The Warrior Trail Association is directing their funds to get their namesake trail onto the FarOut app. KTA is pleased to aid these meritorious and diverse activities.

Congratulations to the grant recipients. We wish them much success and hope their projects, and experience with the mini-grant program, inspire other groups to apply in 2023.

Last Chance to Sign Up Spring Hiking Weekend

KTA heads to Carlisle for the [2022 Spring Hiking Weekend](#), on April 29th - May 1st at Bongiorno Conference Center. Join us for a weekend of hiking and comradery.

Attendees will enjoy daily guided hikes, a Trail Celebration event led by Master Naturalist candidate Kristin Joivell, and educational reptile presentations by biologist Dr. Scott Boback. Hotel and dorm style accommodations are available. [Register by April 15th](#).

Thank you to our sponsors:



UPMC
HEALTH
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Rick and Karen
Rovegno

Friday Breakfast Rambles



Join the Executive Director, Brook Lenker, for short (< three mile) morning hikes and get to know KTA's new leader and the trail of the day. Meet special guests from our partnering organizations and agencies. Afterwards, if you wish, enjoy breakfast (on your own) and conversation at a nearby diner. Reservations are not required and

there is no cost to participate (although donations are welcomed). Consider bringing a friend or co-worker.

Meet: 7:45 a.m.
Hike ends: 9:45 a.m.(approx.)
Breakfast: 10:00 a.m.(approx.)

April 8 - Fort Hunter Conservancy, Harrisburg

- *In partnership with Dauphin County Parks and Recreation*
- *Meet: Fort Hunter Main Parking Lot - East Side of N. Front Street*
- *Breakfast at the Front Street Diner, 4003 N. Front Street*

May 13 - Appalachian Trail - Cumberland Valley

- *In partnership with the Cumberland Valley Appalachian Trail Club*
- *Meet: Craig Dunn Trailhead on Trindle Road, West of Mechanicsburg*
- *Breakfast at Dalicia, 105 S. Market Street, Mechanicsburg*

June 10 - Capital Area Greenbelt, Paxtang Parkway Section

- *In partnership with Capital Area Greenbelt Association*
- *Meet: Greenbelt lot off Derry Street @Parkway Boulevard in Paxtang*
- *Breakfast at the City Line Diner, 3302 Derry Street, Harrisburg*

Hiking Adventures in Spain and Andorra

September 26 - October 6, 2022



Led by Paul Shaw, International trekker and former KTA Executive Director, the trip to Barcelona and Andorra originally scheduled in 2020 is back on track for the upcoming fall. Prior registrants and those on the waiting list received first notification of the good news, but space remains for a few more participants. Find complete trip information on the KTA website.

Don't delay, register today!

Volunteer's Corner

Trail Care Confidential

Safety is the first and foremost priority at all Trail Care events. It is important that all volunteers recognize that there is always some inherent risk involved in any outdoor activity. Trips or falls that could result in sprains, twisted ankles or even broken bones can occur, heat or cold related illness or injuries, not to mention the possible adverse outcomes from tick encounters. Fortunately, individual awareness coupled with responsible actions and behaviors are always the primary line of defense against accidents and injury. When taking part in a group activity, such as being a Trail Care crew member, it is also vital that participants look out for the safety of other volunteers, as well as their own well being. For example, when using a Pulaski, a digging tool with a verticle axe like blade on one face of its metal head and a horizontal grubbing claw on the opposite side, the user must always be conscious of the proximity of other

people to the extent of the tool's reach. Making sure that other people remain outside that invisible perimeter, sometimes referred to as the "circle of death" by safety instructors, is as important as not hitting yourself in the foot. With safety always in mind, the satisfaction of joining others in helping to maintain a hiking trail is unparalleled.

-Ed Lawrence

The Briar Patch

Scourge of the Month: Green Briar (*Smilax Rotundifolia*)



The tough woody stem of this slender perennial evergreen vine is armored with long sharp spines. The ferocity and danger posed by of these rapacious projections is captured by some of the other names it is known by; Cat Briar, Saw Briar and, memorably, as identified by Tom Thwaites, Living Barbwire. It would be the perfect choice for an aspiring flagellant.

When it is able to grab hold of and twine to a tree it can climb to heights in excess of 30 feet. When earthbound, it can weave a dense tapestry of thorns and foliage 5-6 feet high that is virtually impenetrable without bloodletting, thus providing a safe haven for small animals and birds that feed on and spread the seeds from its bluish black berries. More problematically, it spreads vegetatively by way of rhizomes, linear stems that thread beneath the duff sending up shoots along the way. This makes it essentially impossible to remove by uprooting it from the soil. Controlling Green Briar, therefore, requires a regime of recurrent cutting. Return a year after cutting a stem off at ground level and you will find it has grown another 6-10 inches with a short shriveled black tip on the end. Green Briar is a native plant, not an invasive, but it is aggressive in its ability to gain ground so a trail maintainer must be equal to it in tenacity

What to Expect:

April 21-24 Bear Run / LHHT Trail Care

Important information: The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, which owns the [Ohler house](#), is requiring that everyone who stays on their property, whether actually in the house or tent camping on the lawn be **fully vaccinated** which, according to the current CDC guidelines, does not require the booster. Volunteers need to **bring their Vax Card** with them. I have reserved camp sites at the nearby Ohiopyle State Park (4 miles away), in their overflow camp ground for participants who have chosen not to get vaccinated. Please contact me if you have questions about this WPC policy.

This Trail Care will have a split focus, working in tandem on two of the areas exceptional hiking trail systems. The Bear Run Nature Preserve, owned and managed by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, has a coil of hiking trails situated just up the road from the famous architectural outcrop Falling Water. The KTA Trail Care program returns to the Preserve after a 10 year hiatus to assist in maintaining those trails. The Director of Land Stewardship For Bear Run will be making the final decision on what we will be doing based on his

spring assessment of needs, but it will be within the usual scope of the trail work canon using hand tools and power brush cutters. Our base camp, the Ohler house, has five bedrooms which will be available on a first come basis. Each room has one single bed mattress so if you are planning on sharing a room with someone the second person will need to sleep on a pad on the floor. Outdoor tenting will be available on the lawn with two bathrooms being available in the house. Be prepared to camp.

The Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail is a major hiking and backpacking destination that runs 70 miles from Ohiopyle to near Johnstown, and is a segment of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. The trail is managed by DCNR and runs through state parks, forests and game lands as well as other public and private properties. It is heavily used and is generally in excellent shape. KTA volunteers will be working on reblazing a section of the trail. DCNR will be providing the paint and, weather permitting, KTA volunteers will be applying a fresh coat to the blazes with a minimum amount to themselves. Aspiring painters should dress accordingly.

KTA volunteers will have the opportunity to tour Falling Water Sunday morning.

KTA Trail Care

April 7-10: Trail Care

Snyder-Middleswarth Natural Area
Bald Eagle State Forest
Leaders: Jenn Ulmer / Donna Thompson
Hawk2373@yahoo.com
570-854-8316
Camp: Reeds Gap State Park

April 21-24: Trail Care

Bear Run Nature Preserve
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy/
Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail
Laurel Ridge State Park
Leader: Ed Lawrence
cemclaw216@gmail.com
570-925-5285
Camp: WPC's Ohler house
Off Route 381 near
Falling Water

May 5-8: Trail Care

Black Forest Trail
Tiadaghton State Forest
Leaders: Jenn Ulmer / Donna Thompson
Hawk2373@yahoo.com
570-854-8316
Camp: Ruth Will cabin

July 14-17: Trail Care

Allegheny Front Trail
Moshannon State Forest
Leader: Ben Auer
auer.ben@gmail.com
608-772-1715
Camp: Black Moshannon State Park
Regular Camp Ground
Sites # 76, 77, 78 and 80

August 18-21: Trail Care

Thunder Swamp Trail System
Delaware State Forest
Leader: Ed Lawrence
cemclaw216@gmail.com
570-925-5285
Camp: Resica Falls BSA Camp
off Route 402
Bear Paw site

September 15-18: Trail Care

Bucktail Path
Elk State Forest
Leaders: Shira Blady / Brian MacNamara
bladysh@gmail.com
267-970-1280
Camp: Sizerville State Park
Regular Camp Ground

at Pump Station Fire Tower
off Route 44

May 19-22: Trail Care

Houselander Trail
Tiadaghton State Forest
Leader: Tony Robbins
tony.robbins.kta@excellservices.com
570-437-0065
Camp: Little Pine State Park
Organized Group Tenting Area
Site # 1

June 2-5: Trail Care

Mid State Trail, Everett Region
Buchanan State Forest
Leader: Chad North
chadnorth@gmail.com
570-238-3591
Camp: Tenley Park, Everett

June 23-26: Trail Care

Mid State Trail, Tioga Region
Tioga State Forest
Leader: Pete Fleszar
tioga@hike-mst.org
717-576-3112
Camp: Hills Creek State Park
Organized Group Tenting Area

Sites # 3, 19, 20, and 21

October 1: Code Orange 1 day

Saturday Only event
Gifford Pinchot State Park
W/ Friends of Pinchot S.P.
Leader: Steve Stroman
stevestroman@hotmail.com
717-350-0437
Meet at 8:30 am at the campground
office, off of East Camping Area
Road.
Friends of Pinchot will provide a trail
lunch for participants.
Free camping and showers available
Friday & Saturday for participants in
Group Camping Areas D, E, and F.

October 27-30: Trail Care

Pinchot Trail System
Pinchot State Forest
Leader: Jeff Mitchell
jmitchmitch@hotmail.com
570-441-2952
Camp: Pocono Mountain Bible
Conference Camp
191 Clifton Beach Rd.
Clifton, Pa. 18424
Meet: Manny Gordon Picnic Area off
Bear Lake Road at 8:00 a.m. each
morning

Visit <https://www.kta-hike.org/trail-care-and-trail-crew> for more info on
volunteering with KTA

Other Trail Care Opportunities

BMECC Trail Work Blitz Day

Saturday, April 2nd, 8am to ?

Meeting places to be determined

What to bring/wear: Dress for the forecasted- long pants recommended,
durable hiking boots/footwear, a head covering also recommended (protection
from sun and insects) water, snack, insect repellent, tools (if you have them) -
work gloves, clippers/loppers, compact hand saw

Contact: Sarah Shirk at sshirk@bmecc.org or via cell at 717-368-5385 to sign
up, if you have questions or for more information.

New Liability Waiver to Serve KTA Trail Care and Events

While a new form isn't the most exciting news, KTA is pleased to adopt a better waiver that will be used for outings, events, workshops, and workdays - essentially all of the organization's activities involving volunteers or participants.

The new waiver has been reviewed by an attorney and integrates various considerations, including the need for a photo/video release. While you may see the succinct form when registering for future programs, you can [preview it here](#).

Hiker's Corner

Get to Know Your Forest: Tioga State Forest



ATV Vista - Seeking Hike Leaders

A.T. Vista (previously known as the Biennial) is taking place at the State University of New York in New Paltz on August 2-8, 2022. Hike leaders are needed for this event! Lead a hike on the A.T. or on a nearby trail. If you have an interest in being a hike leader and would like to see a list of the available hikes that you could lead, or would simply like to learn more about this opportunity, [please click here](#).

We are also looking for excursion leaders! If you have an interest in being an excursion leader and would like to see a list of the available excursions that you could lead, or would simply like to learn more about this opportunity, [please click here](#).

Thank you for the consideration!

Alivia Acosta
A.T. Vista Volunteer Coordinator

Jeff's Jaunts

Hike the Smith's Knob and Painter Run Loop

This is a classic dayhike loop in the Loyalsock State Forest featuring several great vistas, Smith's Knob, and beautiful streamside hiking along Painter Run. This loop is about six miles long and is challenging.



From the parking area, hike up Little Bear Road for about three quarters of a mile. Turn left onto the yellow blazed Painter Run Trail and hike behind a cabin. Follow the trail into the woods and along scenic Painter Run. Hike up along the run with many cascades and mossy rocks. In summer there are wildflowers. Cross the creek a few times by hopping on rocks. The surrounding forest is a mixture of hemlock and hardwoods. It is a gradual climb along the run and very scenic. At the top, make a sharp left onto the Loyalsock Trail (LT).



The rest of the hike follows the LT. Hike across the plateau with laurel and pine, going on and then off a logging road. The forest is scenic and the hiking is rolling. Reach the edge of the plateau and begin to climb. Pass a great view of the Loyalsock Creek far below. The climb steepens with rock ledges as you climb the flank of Smith's Knob. Reach the top with a campsite and an awesome view looking east as PA 87 cuts a straight line through the forest. Spend some time here. Sunrises here are amazing.

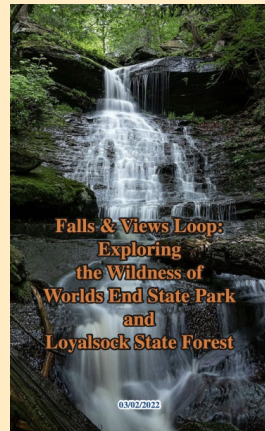
Continue along the ridge and pass a view to the south. A steep descent follows with loose rock, be careful. Level terrain follows as the trail follows an old woods road, pass a side trail to the right. There is laurel and hemlock along the trail. Reach another great view of the Loyalsock Creek. Begin a long descent that steepens. Enjoy the beautiful forests with an understory of striped maple. Return to the parking area and your car.

-Jeff Mitchell

Falls & Views Loop Update

The Friends of Worlds End State Park's the Falls & Views Loop: Exploring the Wildness of Worlds End State Park and Loyalsock State Forest is scheduled for completion before July 30th.

The unique and challenging 77.81 mile Falls & Views Loop passes more than 90 seasonal falls and 40 views, hence the name. Besides the falls and views, you'll encounter evidence of past coal mining operations, current timbering management, deer exclosures, old logging railroad grades, old woods roads, remote areas rarely visited, as well as unique natural and geological features.



To stay updated about the progress, visit : www.friendsofworldsendsp.org.

Dave Kowalewski

fallsandviews@gmail.com

Ruth Rode

National Trails Day

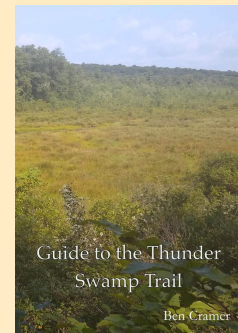
June 4, 2022

AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY'S
NATIONAL TRAILS DAY®

Connect with the people near you who share your love of being outside. Build your local community and join the nationwide movement to give back to the trails and make sure everyone can enjoy the outdoors. Find a local event or [create your own](#) and join the nationwide movement.

New in the KTA Store: Guide to the Thunder Swamp Trail

The [Thunder Swamp Trail](#) traverses a segment of Delaware State Forest in southern Pike County, in the Pocono Mountains region of northeastern Pennsylvania. There are two trails that make up the Thunder swamp Trail: the "Main Loop" and the "Northeast Spur". This trail guide by Ben Cramer provides detailed guidance on hiking all of the Thunder Swamp Trail. Turn-by-turn instructions, photos, and a map provide you with the most detailed information you need to venture out onto this trail.



Included with this trail guide is a full color, water-proof map, measuring 8.5" x 11", printed on both sides, showing the entire route of the Thunder Swamp Trail.

Trail News

[1,066 Acres to be Protected by Lancaster Conservancy](#)

[Newly Found Disease Killing American Beech Trees; Help Track The Disease](#)

[Deer Tick Virus Detected At Popular Iroquois Trail In Wyoming County](#)

[DCNR Warns Of High Wildfire Danger As Seasonal Risk Increases](#)

[PA ahead of the pack as 9-state Great Eastern Trail takes shape](#)

2022 Winter/Spring KTA Photo Contest

Submit your photos at <https://www.kta-hike.org/photo-contest.html>

The winner will be announced in July and will receive a free 1 year membership and KTA hat.



Community Calendar

KTA Events

Spring Hiking Weekend

April 29 - May 1st

Join us at Bongiorno Conference Center in Carlisle for three days of hiking and camaraderie. Meet other KTA members and enjoy local guided hikes, family-friendly programs, a Trail Celebration networking event and more.

Allegheny Front Trail Slackpack

May 27 - 30th

Take on this fantastic 41.7 mile loop around Black Moshannon State Park with just a day pack. Shuttle between the trail and a cozy cabin every night.

Allegheny National Forest Weekend

August 26 - 28th

Take a trip to Pennsylvania's only National Forest and stay in the beautiful Olmstead Manor in Ludlow for a weekend of amazing and wild hikes.

KTA Trail Challenge

September 10th

Take the challenge to conquer our 25k or 50k trail run, based out of Pequea Creek Campground and Susquehannock SP in Lancaster County.

Barcelona and Andorra

September 25 - October 5th

Barcelona, on the Mediterranean Sea, is one of Europe's most vibrant cities, a world center of art, culture and sport and a wonderful city for walking. Andorra, nestled in the nearby Pyrenees Mountains between Spain and France, is one of the world's smallest countries but packed with excellent hiking opportunities.

Black Forest Trail Slackpack

September 30 - October 3rd

Take advantage of this incredible opportunity, to complete in ONE WEEKEND the trail that everyone talks about: The Black Forest Trail. Shuttle between the trail and a cozy cabin with a home-cooked meal every night.

Community Events

[Planning for Trails in Wetlands Workshop](#)

April 29 - 30

Join [WeConservePA](#) and [PennTrails, LLC](#) for Planning for Trails in Wetlands and Wet Areas, a workshop focusing on the specialized demands placed on trail managers and management organizations when planning, designing, and maintaining trails in wet environments. This workshop will be hosted by [Allegheny Land Trust](#) at the Millvale Food+Energy Hub and the project site on the Girty's Woods Conservation Area

Hike Across Maryland 2022

May 7, 4:30AM - 8:45PM

The HAM starts in at the PA / MD border, follows the Appalachian Trail through Maryland, and ends in Harpers Ferry, WV. That's 41 miles over rough, rocky trail with several significant climbs- The Ham is intended for serious hikers! Have you done three or more training hikes of 15 miles and more in the last few months?

Can you maintain 2.5 to 3 mph for 13 to 16 hours over mountainous terrain? If so, you'll enjoy the challenges of the Mountain Club of Maryland's HAM!

Note : The HAM is only open to members of the Mountain Club of Maryland.

Allegheny 100 Challenge

June 10 - 12

The 2022 Allegheny 100 Challenge (A-100) is scheduled for June 10th – 12th along the 100 miles of the Allegheny National Forest section of the North Country Trail. This year it will be run from north to south. The event will be run in the traditional manner with the return of the optional shuttle bus to take you to the start. The registration fee is \$80 and does not include any membership to the North Country Trail Association.

The lottery to win a spot to register for the A-100 opens on March 7, 2022. Go to the A-100 event page at <https://northcountrytrail.org/events/a-100/> for an explanation of the lottery and additional information about the event.

The inaugural Allegheny 100 Hiking Challenge was held in June 2010 with 19 participants. The event was conceived by one of the founding members of the Allegheny National Forest Chapter, Bert Nemcik. Bert knew from thru-hiking the Appalachian Trail that the NCT needed greater exposure to the hiking community in order to help improve the trail. The ANF Chapter is saddened to report that Bert passed away in December 2021. The 2022 A-100 is being dedicated to Bert.

Best of luck in the lottery! Hope to see you in June.

Questions? Email us at anf@northcountrytrail.org

Mason-Dixon Appalachian Trail Outdoor Festival

June 11

Saturday, June 11 at Red Run Park, 12143 Buchanan Trail East, Waynesboro, the Greater Waynesboro PA Area Appalachian Trail Community is sponsoring its 6th "Mason-Dixon Appalachian Trail Outdoor Festival," from 10-4. Food, music, children's activities, vendors and exhibits as well as hiker hospitality fill the day, including the PA Department of Ag's WoodMobile! If you have an environmental group or display or handcrafted items and would like to participate, check out our website; please email atfestival17268@gmail.com if you have any questions.

WANT YOUR EVENT FEATURED ON THE COMMUNITY CALENDAR?

KTA will promote your club/organization's major events through The Keystone Hiker, Facebook, and our website. It's a perk of membership! Just submit a list with date, time, location, and link to web page for only those events that the public should see, to ktaadmin@kta-hike.org.

Club Spotlight

Susquehannock Trail Club



The purposes of the STC are to build and maintain trails, aid in the conservation of wetlands and wildlife and promote good fellowship through the medium of hiking and nature study.

Located in Pennsylvania's Potter and Clinton counties, the Susquehannock Trail System (STS) is an 84 mile loop hiking trail. It is marked with 2" x 6" orange paint blazes and occasionally an STS emblem. The STS offers the public a glimpse of Pennsylvania's crown jewel.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

This newsletter is published monthly by Keystone Trails Association. Submissions are accepted on a rolling basis. Opinions expressed are those of the listed authors. The Editor encourages submissions reflecting all viewpoints, but reserves the right to edit material. You are encouraged to submit material (even just a trail closing or care alert!) to the Program Administrator, Casey Schneck, at ktaadmin@kta-hike.org. The deadline for newsletter submissions is the 15th of the prior month. Submissions received after that time will be considered for the next month.

Please reference our [Editorial-Style Guide](#) while you compose your piece.

