

SPLIT ROCK



Map courtesy of NY DEC

About us

The Lake Champlain Land Trust is an independent non-profit organization founded in 1978 that preserves the islands, shorelands, and natural areas of Lake Champlain. Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest is a 3,700 acre forest located in the eastern foothills of the Adirondack Mountains in New York, boasting the tallest peak on Lake Champlain and the largest undeveloped shoreline of the lake on the New York side. The Open Space Institute, Lake Champlain Land Trust and other partners rallied together to save Split Rock Mountain just before the land auction began in 1993. In 1994, the state of New York bought the land and added it to the larger Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest, making it available for public access.

Do you have QUESTIONS about something you've seen on the trail today? Need directions to more of our natural areas? Want to donate online? Contact us via www.LCLT.org or 802-862-4150!



Explore ^{observe}
Listen to
Hike

A family hiking guide to

Split Rock Mountain



View from Split Rock

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Look around both sides of the trail. What kinds of nuts do you see on the ground? Acorns, hickory nuts, and beech nuts all provide food for various forest animals, such as squirrels and birds!

Do you know what trees produce these different nuts? Do you hear or see any trace of any animals nearby or in the trees?

For more animal track pictures and other information, explore www.lclt.org with your parents!

Listen

...for sounds of animals: birds chirping, squirrels rustling in the leaves, or just the wind whistling through the branches.

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You made it to the lakeshore! Look across toward Vermont—can you see the Green Mountains? What kind of fish do you think live near the shore here?

If you have time, see how many birds you can see around the water and cliffs!



Explore

1 Welcome to the Gary's Elbow Trail! When you look around you at this first stop, what do you see? Is this a young or old forest? How can you tell? Would you believe it if we told you that this land used to look very different than it looks today? Keep exploring the trail and many clues will reveal the history of this lovely property!



Red-spotted Newt



Fungi

2 Do you notice all the ferns and moss that grow along this trail? Do you know what growing conditions ferns and mosses prefer? Ferns and mosses prefer to grow in wet, shaded areas. This trail provides perfect habitat for these unique plants!

Which is a fern and which is moss?



Answer: Moss (left) and Fern (right)

3 Did you know the Adirondacks were formed around 5 million years ago? Some of the big rocks you see around you on the trail were deposited here by the movement of glaciers. Do you know what a glacier is? GLACIERS are big sheets of snow and ice that move very slowly. As they move, they scrape and smooth the land and carry natural debris, such as boulders, with them. When the ice sheet melts, the boulders remain.

Observe

Find a small item from the trail to sketch below!



4 Have you noticed all the pine needles and leaves on the forest floor? This layer of leaf litter is called DUFF. Duff is important because it provides moisture and nutrients for newly sprouted tree seedlings!

Can you find any new plants in the duff?

5



One type of fungi found at Split Rock

Have you noticed the FUNGI growing on dead trees and in the duff (leaves and pine needles) on the ground? Fungi require wet conditions, just like ferns and mosses. Fungi, such as mushrooms, are important decomposers, meaning that they help break down the dead trees, leaves, and other things on the forest floor and turn it into soil!

Do you see any fungi on the trees or ground around you?

Do not touch or eat any fungi you find in the forest! There are many types of fungi that are poisonous!

There are two types of trees in this forest: coniferous trees, which have needles, and deciduous trees, which have leaves. Most coniferous trees keep their needles all year long (with the exception of the Eastern larch), while most deciduous trees lose their leaves each fall.

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Coniferous tree



Deciduous tree

Can you find a tree with leaves and a tree with needles?

Hike