

# Spanning the Gap

## The "AT" Experience



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**Spanning the Gap**  
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Recreation Area  
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There are more than 100 miles of trails in Delaware Water Gap National Recreation, but only one trail has achieved national significance. First marked out in the 1920s, the Appalachian Trail or

the "AT," as it is affectionately known, was the first designated National Scenic Trail in the United States. The trail extends along the spine of the Appalachian Mountains from Springer Mountain, Georgia, to Mt. Katahdin in Baxter State Park, Maine, traversing 2,174 miles through 14 states and various jurisdictions. In the spring of each year between 1700 and 2500 hikers start north from Springer Mountain, following the white rectangular blaze that marks the trail, in the hope of hiking the entire length of the trail. Of these *thru-hikers*, approximately 20% successfully walk the entire trail before the snows envelop Maine's mountains. These hardy trekkers normally cross the Water Gap in the month of June.

The trail is a unit of the National Park system, and the National Park Service has delegated the overseeing of the trail to the *Appalachian Trail Conference* (ATC). (Editor's note: On July 4, 2005, the Conference changed its name to the *Appalachian Trail Conservancy*). This non-profit organization in turn oversees 31 independent hiking clubs that maintain and improve the trail. (The two hiking clubs that maintain the AT in Delaware Water Gap National

### The view: mile by mile

*(Left) PA mile minus 7.2* More than 7 miles before reaching the boundary of the recreation area, Mt. Minsi can be seen from the Appalachian Trail near Kirkridge shelter and Route 191 in Bangor PA.



*PA mile minus 4.4* Soon after the AT northbound enters the recreation area atop Mt. Minsi, a pipeline cut offers impressive views southward back towards Poplar Valley and north (*above*) over Tott's Gap.



*NJ mile 1.6* Dunfield Creek

Recreation Area are the *New York/New Jersey Trail Conference* and the *Wilmington Trail Club of Delaware*.) These groups are made up of volunteers who maintain and hike the trail. While on the trail, one might encounter a special type of caretaker known as an *AT ridgerunner*. These individuals spend their summer on the trail providing information, suggesting techniques for minimum impact camping, reporting hazards, and maintaining the trail. Volunteers and ridgerunners are an integral aspect in the maintenance and health of the trail.

The meandering AT sometimes has different and special camping and fire regulations in its various jurisdictions. In Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area the following regulations apply:

- Camping is restricted to hikers who are hiking the AT for two or more consecutive days.
- Camping is limited to one night per campsite.
- Camping is limited to 10 persons per campsite.
- Hikers must camp a minimum of 50 feet and no more than 100 feet from the AT.
- No fires are permitted.
- Persons may not camp within:
  - 100 ft. of any stream/water source, or
  - 1/2 mile of an established roadway, or
  - 200 ft. of another camping party, or
  - the stretch that begins 1/2 mile south of Blue Mountain Lake Road, and continues north to the intersection of the AT and Buttermilk Falls Trail.

Whether one is just hiking for a couple of hours, for the day, or for the entire length of the trail, the AT provides majestic views, sightings of wildlife, and hiking challenges. So be kind, be gentle, and leave only footprints, because the AT is a very special trail for future generations to experience and enjoy.

along the AT in Worthington State Forest NJ. From this point the AT climbs Kittatinny Ridge.



*PA miles 2.1 to 2.4* Hikers get their first glimpse of the Delaware from atop Mt. Minsi. (1,463 ft.) This view shows the very southern reaches of the recreation area near Slateford PA, downstream to Portland PA.



*PA mile 2.7* A short spur provides an overlook of the Water Gap and of Mt. Tammany NJ (1,527 ft.) on the left. The slopes of Mt. Minsi are to the right.



*Mile 7.7 (Left)* This view west over the Delaware River is from Mt. Mohican atop Kittatinny Ridge. The stretch of river is at Depew and Poxono Islands. Just touching 1,500 ft., this is one of the highest points of the AT in the recreation area, and one of its best views.

**Mileage along the AT  
(within Worthington State Forest and  
Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area)**

*Mileage has been edited to correspond to the official AT guides of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. Mileage in New Jersey is counted northbound from the village of Delaware Water Gap Pa. Mileage in Pennsylvania is counted as minus mileage southbound from the village of Delaware Water Gap PA.*

- PA -4.8** Enter national recreation area at Totts Gap PA
- PA -2.7** Top of **Mt. Minsi** (1,463 ft.)
- PA -1.7** View north and east to Mt. Tammany NJ (1,527 ft.)
- PA -0.6** **Lake Lenape**
- PA 0.0** **Village of Delaware Water Gap PA**
- NJ 0.0** PA end of Interstate 80 bridge

***End of Pennsylvania mileage.  
Start of NJ mileage.***

- NJ 1.1** Kittatinny Point NJ
- NJ 1.4** Enter **Worthington State Forest** at Dunnfield Natural Area; west (lower) trailhead of **Red-dot (Mt. Tammany) Trail** (1.5 miles) to top of Mt. Tammany
- NJ 1.5** Southwest (lower) trailhead of Dunnfield Hollow Trail (3.7 miles) to Sunfish Pond
- NJ 1.9** West (lower) trailhead of **Blue-blazed trail** (2.5 miles) which crosses footbridge to top of Mt. Tammany
- NJ 3.0** East (ridgetop) trailhead of yellow-blazed **Beulahland Trail** (1.3 miles) to Old Mine Road; west (ridgetop) trailhead of red-blazed **Holly Spring Trail** (0.5 miles) to Dunnfield Trail
- NJ 4.6** South (ridgetop) trailhead of **Douglas Trail** (1.5 miles) to Old Mine Road; **Backpacker Site #2** along Douglas Trail at AT
- NJ 5.3** Southwest corner of **Sunfish Pond**; west end of unblazed Sunfish Pond Fire Road (trail)
- NJ 5.9** North trailhead of **Turquoise Trail** 0.5 miles to Sunfish Pond Fire Road and loop around Sunfish Pond.
- NJ 6.0** Southeast (ridgetop) trailhead of **Garvey Spring Trail** (1.2 miles) to Old Mine Road; Garvey Spring (seasonal) 600 ft. down trail to left

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*PA mile minus 0.2* The AT crosses Main Street at Waring Street in the town of Delaware Water Gap PA. Waring was a famed band-leader who built a music publishing house still standing in town.



*NJ mile 5.3* At an altitude of 1,382 ft., the AT reaches Sunfish Pond NJ, a glacial lake registered as a National Natural Landmark in 1970.

**NJ 7.6** Power line  
**NJ 7.7** **Raccoon Ridge/Mt. Mohican**  
**NJ 7.9** Exit Worthington State Forest; continue in national recreation area  
**NJ 8.4** Southeast (ridgetop) trailhead of **Kaiser Trail** (2 miles) to Old Mine Road  
**NJ 10.3** **Camp Road**; east (ridgetop) trailhead of red-blazed Coppermines Trail (1.8 miles) to Old Mine Road; **Mohican Outdoor Center** 0.25 mile north along Camp Road

**NJ 11.7** Southwest (ridgetop) trailhead of orange-blazed **Rattlesnake Swamp Trail** to Mohican Outdoor Center (0.5 miles)

**NJ 12.7** **Catfish Fire Tower** (1,565 ft.)

**NJ 13.3** Rattlesnake Spring 50 ft. to left (dependable)

**NJ 13.7** **Millbrook-Blairstown Road (Rt. 602)**

**NJ 14.1** Black's Pond

**NJ 14.4** Power line

**NJ 16.9** View east over Fairview Lake

**NJ 17.6** **Blue Mt. Lakes Road**; water pump on left 100 ft. before road

**NJ 19.2** Steep escarpment to bluff over Crater Lake

**NJ 19.3** Side trail on right leads 150 ft. to view of **Crater Lake**

**NJ 19.6** South (ridgetop) trailhead for **Hemlock Pond Trail** to Hemlock Pond (0.5 miles)

**NJ 20.5** **Buttermilk Falls Trail** to Buttermilk Falls on Mountain Road in Walpack Center (1.9 miles)

**NJ 21.1** Unmarked connector trail (0.8 miles) to Woods Road

**NJ 22.4** Rattlesnake Mt. 1,492 ft.

**NJ 23.0** Intersection with Woods Road (unmarked)

**NJ 23.6** Exit national recreation area; enter **Stokes State Forest**

**NJ 24.3** **Brinks Road**; shelter is 900 feet west along Brinks Road



*NJ mile 12.7* The AT looks out over Blairstown and Hardwick townships NJ from Kittatinny Ridge near Catfish Fire Tower.



*NJ mile 19.3* Crater Lake NJ seen from the AT, which passes across a bluff on its west shore at an altitude of about 1360 ft.

**Brad Clawson is the supervisory park ranger for Law Enforcement Operations.**