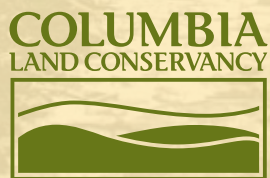


Nature Quest is a treasure hunt!



At the end of each quest there is a hidden box that contains a special stamp, an ink pad, and a logbook. Use the stamp to mark your passport, then sign or stamp the logbook.

\$5

COLUMBIA LAND CONSERVANCY'S

NATURE QUEST

Follow the clues, find the hidden treasures, and win a prize!



NATURE QUEST

Columbia Land Conservancy

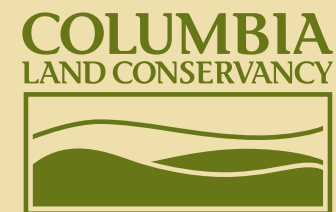
PO Box 299

49 Main St

Chatham, NY 12037

518.392.5252

clctrust.org/naturequest



2nd Edition

copyright: Columbia Land Conservancy, 2011, 2012

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| What is Nature Quest? ----- | 2 |
| Prize Rules----- | 2 |
| Tips for your Nature Quests----- | 3 |
| Regulations for CLC Public Conservation Areas ----- | 4 |
| About the Columbia Land Conservancy ----- | 5 |
| Borden's Pond Conservation Area ----- | 6 |
| Drowned Lands Swamp Conservation Area ----- | 9 |
| Greenport Conservation Area ----- | 12 |
| Hand Hollow Conservation Area ----- | 15 |
| High Falls Conservation Area----- | 18 |
| Ooms Conservation Area at Sutherland Pond----- | 21 |
| Round Ball Mountain Conservation Area ----- | 24 |
| Schor Conservation Area ----- | 27 |
| Siegel-Kline Kill Conservation Area----- | 30 |
| Acknowledgements ----- | 33 |

What is Nature Quest?

Nature Quest is a treasure hunt! You use clues in this passport to find treasure boxes hidden at nine of the Columbia Land Conservancy's Public Conservation Areas. The clues will lead you through amazing wildlife habitats and across interesting historical and natural features. At the end of each quest, there is a waterproof box that contains a special stamp, an ink pad, and a logbook. Use the stamp to mark your passport, then sign or stamp the logbook. Close the box and return it to the exact same place where you found it. This passport contains clues for all nine Nature Quests. Quests can also be downloaded at clctrust.org/naturequest.

Prize Rules

Complete all nine quests for a prize. Bring your stamped passport to the Columbia Land Conservancy office at 49 Main St. in Chatham to get your final stamp and to claim your prize! Call 518.392.5252 for hours.



Tips for your Nature Quests!

- ☆ Allow one and a half hours for the Round Ball Mountain quest and one hour for the other quests.
- ☆ Always tightly reclose the box and hide it in the exact place where you found it.
- ☆ Several of the quests have steep inclines and some trails will be muddy after hard rains. Please be careful.
- ☆ Sign in at the entrance to the Public Conservatoin Area & pick up a trail map.
- ☆ Carry an extra ink pad & pen with you.
- ☆ Bring your own special stamp from home so you can stamp our logbook.
- ☆ Never litter and always respect the site and the environment.
- ☆ The treasure box will be hidden close to the trail, but out of view from the casual observer...so look closely!
- ☆ When you find the treasure box, stamp your passport. Then sign the logbook or stamp it with your own stamp from home.
- ☆ Do not dig, remove native vegetation, disturb natural rock formations, or interfere with animals or their habitats.
- ☆ Remember...safety first! Watch out for poison ivy, ticks, stinging insects, and bad weather. Snakes and spiders sometimes like the places were the boxes are hidden.
- ☆ Always check for ticks when finished hiking for the day.
- ☆ Bring a snack & some water. You may get hungry or thirsty!
- ☆ And, lastly, have fun!

Regulations for CLC Public Conservation Areas

- ☆ Columbia Land Conservancy (CLC) properties are open year-round, dawn to dusk.
- ☆ Admission is free.
- ☆ All properties have parking areas.
- ☆ Pets must be on leash at all times, except when swimming.
- ☆ "Carry in, carry out." In an effort to minimize human impact on the conservation areas, no trash receptacles are located at the sites. Take your trash with you when you leave.
- ☆ Dog owners must remove dog waste from the site. Leaving dog waste on the site is harmful to wildlife and creates a major annoyance to site visitors and CLC maintenance staff. There are no trash receptacles located on the site.
- ☆ People are not allowed to swim.
- ☆ Camping and fires are prohibited.
- ☆ Motorized vehicles are not allowed unless they are part of an official CLC program.
- ☆ Fishing is permitted with NYS License.
- ☆ Limited hunting is allowed on some of the CLC properties as part of the overall management plans.
- ☆ Audio equipment or radio use is allowed with earphones only.
- ☆ Please respect the plants, animals, and artifacts at the sites as they make the properties special.



Columbia Land Conservancy

The Columbia Land Conservancy works with the community to conserve the farmland, forests, wildlife habitat, and rural character of Columbia County, strengthening connections between people and the land.

Organizational Highlights:

- ☆ Protected over 22,000 acres of farms, forests, and rural landscapes with permanent conservation easements, 25% of all privately conserved land in the Hudson Valley, 60% in the Capital Region.
- ☆ Established over 5,000 acres of public lands and manages 10 Public Conservation Areas.
- ☆ Helped secure over \$5 million dollars to ensure the protection of 4,830 acres of working farmland.
- ☆ Created an agricultural program that promotes working farms and provides logistical support, including matching farmers with landowners.
- ☆ Assist with open space and trail development, conservation planning and agricultural issues throughout the County, including workshops and conferences, coordinating funding initiatives, and fostering partnerships among towns, county government, and allied conservation organizations.
- ☆ Developed an environmental educational program that serves thousands every year.



Borden's Pond Conservation Area

1628 Route 203, Ghent

1 mile East of Rt 66

From the center of Chatham: follow Route 203 East. Follow signs for the Taconic State Parkway. Just past the Payn Home on your right, look for the Borden's Conservation Area sign on your left. Follow gravel driveway into parking area.

Near the parking lot notice a stonewall inscribed with many a name
A kind of "People who Protected this Land" hall of fame
The preserve was founded by locals Tom Hope and Lael Locke
They rallied citizens to raise the funds for the site around the clock

Stop at the kiosk and take a little time to peruse
CLC news, events, and programs from which to choose
Off to your left is where you get underway
The green trail is the track on which to stay

On the left is the larch, a tree that bears a cone
An evergreen whose needles land in the drop zone
The fact that the evergreen larch loses its leaves is not a tall tale
Like a deciduous tree every autumn its leaves fall without fail

The field through the trees used to host town baseball games
And remnants of the Browning Farm stonewalls still remain
"How do I love thee? Let me count the ways."
The land is linked to the poet who turned this famous phrase

Along the trail are spruce, hemlock, and red pine
Look for their cones as you head up the incline
Go to the bench overlooking what was once Borden's Pond
A body of water of which Chatham residents were most fond

Before modern refrigeration, ice was harvested from the Hudson to keep food cool in ice boxes. Ice was cut, hauled out by horse or hand, and stored in sawdust.



Larch

Swimming, fishing, and ice harvesting are part of the story
The ice taken to Borden's milk plant in Ghent on a lorry
A habitat for herons, fish, turtles, and Canada goose
One winter day in 2006, the old concrete dam did break loose

Now a marsh with wildflowers and native vegetation
Still habitat for a variety of birds is a great consolation
Move down the hill and back onto the route
Where deer, squirrel, and turkey have their daily commute

The Borden's site symbol is a rather coy looking red fox
Luxurious fur, white tipped tail and black socks
An upland forest is a good place for them to call home
A solitary, direct register trotting track as they roam

Follow the trail along the perennial stream on its course
In the spring it runs high and flows with some force
Cross several bog bridges to keep your feet dry
The water here drains from seeps on hill and ridge high

Think back to a time when forests were cleared and pastures abounded
Look for a "wolf" tree - older and much larger than those around it
Often left in a field to provide shade and shelter for grazing cows
Today they produce mast for wildlife from their numerous boughs

The oaks produce wild turkeys favorite food - the acorn
You may see them scratching at the earth in the early morn

Absent from Columbia County for over a hundred years
Victims of habitat loss and unregulated hunting by pioneers



Fox

Mast is the dry fruit from woody plants that animals eat for food. Examples include nuts from oak, beech, hickory, and hazel trees as well as seeds from all evergreen trees.

Reintroduced in the 1950's, turkey population has seen a rebound
Clucks and purrs, but the 'gobble' is their most familiar sound
Look to the right for a trail marked with blue
The treasure will be found at the end of this cut-through

It's hard to believe you are so near the village and surrounded by houses
Sharing space with woodpeckers, deer, and ruff-necked grouses
An excellent place to soak up nature and clear your head
A breath of fresh air, open space, and good earth on which you tread

End your quest at the blue and red trail connection
Search for the prize under a log in the due north direction
Hope you don't need to hunt too much after all your work
Be sure to hide it well when done, please don't shirk

Thanks for exploring the place of Borden's Pond
CLC has more sites to discover to which you can form a bond

Drowned Lands Swamp Conservation Area

653 Route 3, Ancram

From Route 22 North: Follow Route 22 south through Hillsdale and Copake. Turn right onto Route 3, and follow it as it bends to the left. Proceed past Wiltsie Bridge Road, Blodgett Road, and pass over the Punch Brook. The entrance to the conservation area is just past the Punch Brook on the left. Look for the Drowned Lands Swamp Conservation Area sign.

From Route 82: Take Route 82 heading east into Ancram. Proceed past the intersection of Routes 7 and 82, and take the next left onto Wiltsie Bridge Road. Follow Wiltsie Bridge Road until it meets with Route 3, and take a right onto Route 3. Follow Route 3 past Blodgett Road and over the Punch Brook. The entrance to the conservation area is just past the Punch Brook, on the left. Look for the Drowned Lands Swamp Conservation Area sign.

This quest begins at a place named Drowned Lands

A very cool name and a view that commands
How can a swamp have a view? You might ask
It will become clear when on Old Croken you bask

This site might seem inconsequential and small
But with rare plants, unique insects – it has it all

Stop for a minute at the kiosk made of wood
Sign your name on the sheet as you know you should

Look to the left or east to take the Swamp Trail
Into a freshwater wetland complex hearty and hale
This trail runs right along the wetlands edge
Soon you'll spy cattail, reed, and sedge



Ginger

Punch Brook meanders through this great fen
Home to kingbird, heron, and wren
Running north into the Roeliff-Jansen Kill
Songbirds, sparrows, and warblers that trill

Follow this trail 'til it comes to the end
Here, we hope, a few minutes you'll spend
Don't be upset because of this small mislead
The whole site we want you to see, we concede

When you are ready, turn back around
To the hidden treasure you are now bound
See maidenhair, royal, and marsh fern
Wild geranium and ginger until the second left turn

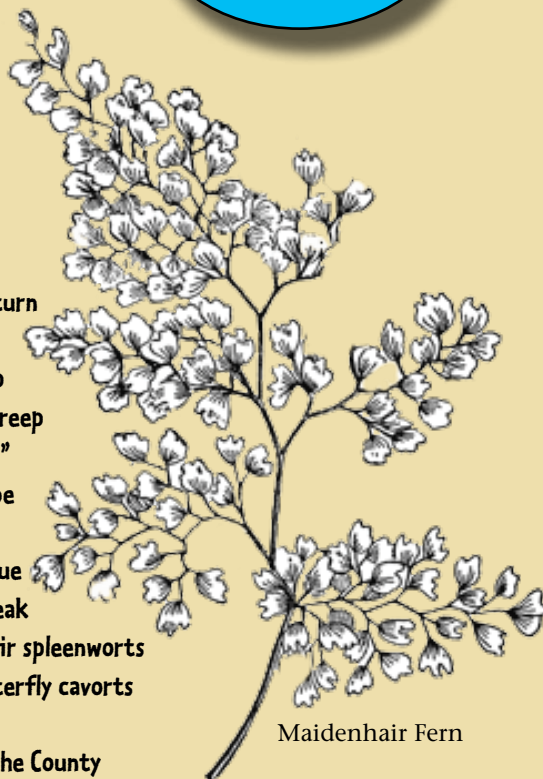
Up the cut-through trail, quite grassy and steep
Onto the track some brush with thorns might creep
This short and quick cut-through ends at a "tee"
Turn to the left and at the crown you soon will be

Old Croken is where you'll find plants most unique
As you continue your ascent to the limestone peak
Rare upland boneset, bush-clover, and maidenhair spleenworts
It's also where the extraordinary harvester butterfly cavorts

The only place the harvester has been found in the County
Its carnivorous caterpillar eats a woolly alder aphid bounty
Harvesters, aphids, ants, alders, and maples all connected
Ecological interplay and interdependence perfected

At the top is a bench where you may want to take a rest
And marvel at the view before you end your quest
A great swamp, protected farms, and hills set before you
Take a deep breath, relax, and feel a sense of renew

A fen is a natural low land that is covered completely or partly with water.



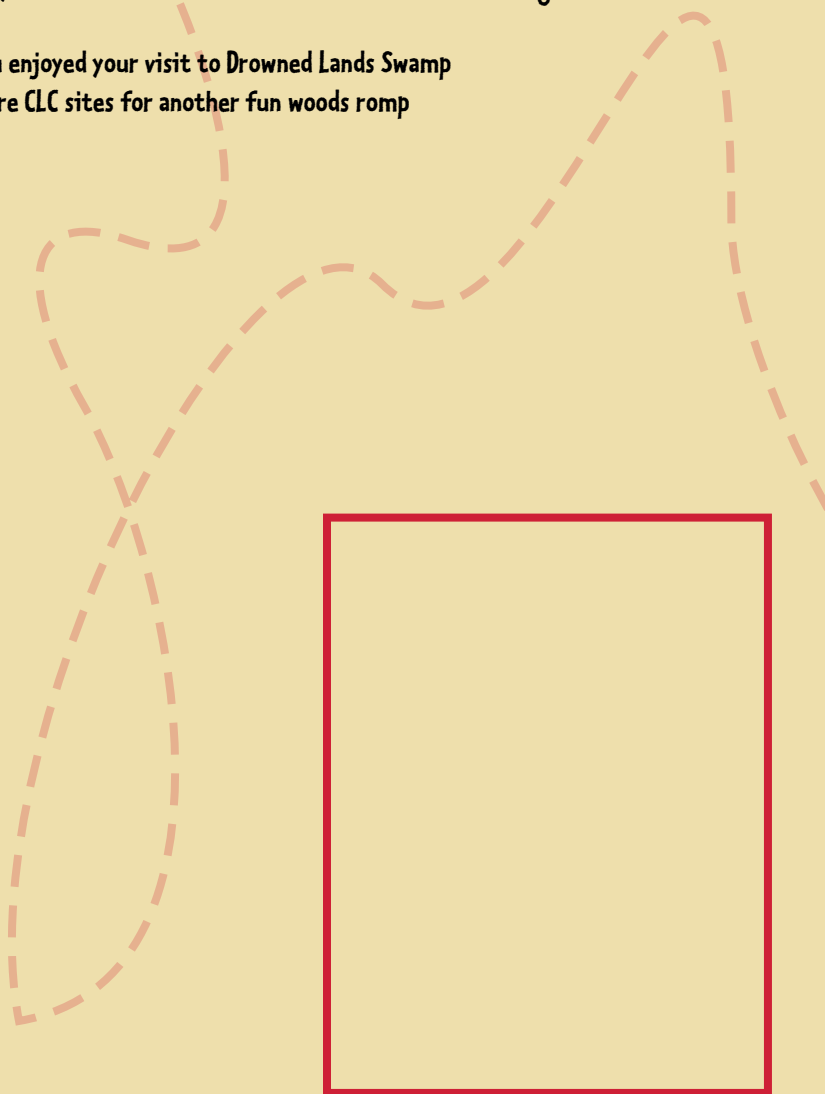
Maidenhair Fern

Only 1% of all caterpillars are carnivorous.

To not tell of this site's history would be a serious omission
Of "speakeasies" and "stills" operating during prohibition
That's the reason there's still a flagpole standing at the top
Up goes the flag if the brew is ready or to look out for a cop

The Rothvoss family used this as hunting and fishing preserve
Now a recreation area forever the public it will serve
In the 1920's it was owned by a family named White
But today look for the treasure hidden in the woods to the right

Hope you enjoyed your visit to Drowned Lands Swamp
Visit more CLC sites for another fun woods romp



Greenport Conservation Area

54 Daisy Hill Rd, Greenport

From the North: Take Route 9 to Greenport, NY. Veer right onto Joslen Blvd., and follow straight for 1.2 miles. Turn right onto Daisy Hill Road at the sign for the Conservation Area. Continue on Daisy Hill Road until it ends. You will see a parking area and information kiosk.

From the South: Take Route 9 to Greenport, NY. Pass Healy Blvd. Turn left at the second light onto Joslen Blvd., and proceed for 0.9 miles. Turn left onto Daisy Hill Road at the sign for the Conservation Area. Continue on Daisy Hill Road until it ends. You will see a parking area and information kiosk.

Start on the main trail on a westward heading
On a firm and gravel path you are soon treading
"Access for All" allows for a person in a wheelchair
To see views of the Catskills and smell the clean fresh air

To the right is a chestnut oak of rather large dimension
Being on the Big Tree Register does deserve a mention
Its considerable trunk is 168 inches in circumference
A tree 75 feet high with a crown quite thick and dense

It's a favorite perch of the friendly red-tail hawk
Who follows the trail crew as they work or you on your walk
Continue to travel along the trail where cattle once did graze
Through a flowering grassland habitat in the summer dog days

Bobolinks, meadowlarks and Eastern bluebirds may be viewed
Hudson school children built the houses for bluebirds to raise a brood
They learned about New York State animals, including the bluebird
About protecting the land, caring for the animals and being a steward



Henry Hudson

Maintain your course to the left as the trail comes to a large fork
Heading towards the river symbolized on the flag of New York
A huge amount of history on this site, there's so much to relay
Below you'll find a synopsis or if you will – a quick replay

Glacial Lake Albany deposited silt and clay as
soil for its part

Henry Hudson and crew sailed the river – no
maps or a chart

For many, many years the Mahican people walked on
this land

Hunted the woodlands and from the bluffs the river they scanned

About 1661 the Dutch bought the land for a colonial settlement
A Lutheran minister lived here and crossed the river to give testament
Wheat, hay, and cattle in the fields guarded by a "wolf" (a large old tree)
Silos, foundations, and the sign at the entrance speak of a farm for poultry

In the 1980's a series of high-density residential subdivisions were slated
Now a natural area for you to enjoy and land protected forever it is fated
Purchased by the Open Space Institute, CLC manages it at their behest
Whew! Now we're done with all that history, let's get back to the quest

At the next trail junction, follow the sign to the picnic area to the right
The left takes you to the gazebo and the view is an amazing sight
You may want to take the time to visit there if you have the chance
To see the Hudson River below and the Catskill Mountain expanse

Eastern red cedars dot the fields, neatly trimmed by the deer
Favorite food choice for deer, mice, and songbirds it is clear
Ahead you will see an ash tree standing there all alone
Its wood used for baseball bats and oars when full grown

Bear to the right as the trail turns to the northeast
Eye on the sky as bald eagles search for a fishy feast
Enjoy the woods as you stay on the trail of pressed rock
The trail is enjoyed by people and dogs on their daily walk

On one of
Henry Hudson's
quests to find the North-
west Passage, his crew muti-
nied. The crew cast Hudson
and his teenage son adrift,
and they were never
seen again!

Ignore all the other trails that head off to the right
Keep heading for the picnic area, keep the blue in sight
Stop at the "vee" in the trail, notice a tree on your left
Standing all alone and looking slightly bereft

An Eastern bluebird nesting box is behind the tree
Off trail you should always look for poison ivy
Take a peek inside is what we do advise
For that is where we have hidden the prize

Hope you enjoyed your visit to the area of Greenport
There are more quests to try, both long and short

Immature bald eagles have dark feathers until they are 5 years old, then they grow the white head feathers that make them so easy to identify.

Hand Hollow Conservation Area

4079 Route 9 Entrance, New Lebanon
Just north of the intersection of County Route 34, parking is next to a beige farmhouse with a large pond.

At the gate is where you begin your quest
Reading the landscape and looking for signs is the test
Please stay on the trail and take a little care
Poison ivy is itchy and pink lady's slipper quite rare

You may have noticed as your car came to rest
An old farm house not looking its best
For over a hundred years this land was a farm
Stone walls, lilacs, and apple trees still tell of the charm

The farm began with a family named Sherman
Building barns and the house with much determine
Neighbors purchased veggies and milk on their word
From the Oldenburg's fields and small dairy herd

Not far into the meadow, make the first discovery
To the north is a great blue heron rookery
In the spring quiet is always a request
Eggs or babies could be in the large twig nest

Continue and bear to the right on the grassy trail
You are about to explore the beavers tale
Our friend Joyce was a great proponent
Of these creatures – North America's largest rodent

A rookery is a breeding or nesting place of any social bird or animal

They alter the environment more than any non-human creature
 At dawn and dusk they are seen – the main feature
 They construct their lodges of sticks and mud
 The dams they build help with erosion and flood

Stop at the bench and look at the watery view
 Beavers created this series of ponds before you
 Otters, turtles, and many birds all use this habitat
 What other critters can you name off the top of your hat?

With beavers in mind please don't be bemused
 If the trail suddenly changes and clues are confused
 Follow the green trail no matter where it goes
 The trail crew may have moved it to give you dry toes

You might skirt the ponds or head straight through
 But eventually the green trail leads back to this clue:

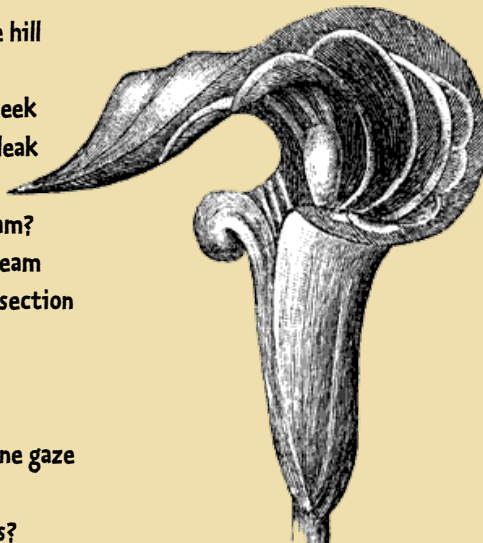
Now it's time to head off into the woods
 Where jack-in-the-pulpit wait in their "hoods"
 It must be May if wildflowers bloom by the trail
 Bloodroot, wood anemone, and trout lily without fail

A few hundred yards, look to the left up the hill
 For the river otter in winter it fits the bill
 Sliding down across the trail and into the creek
 Playfully gliding on his belly during winter bleak

Do you see the bridge that crosses the stream?
 Built by the trail crew of cedar planks and beam
 Across the bridge, there's a large trail intersection
 The treasure is close, but which direction?

Turn to the west and follow the green blaze
 Look for Chris's bench and on a peaceful scene gaze
 Listen to the stream as the water flows by
 What else can you hear if you close your eyes?

Great Blue
 Herons can have
 a wingspan over 6
 feet wide.



Jack-In-The-Pulpit

Back on the trail look for a break to the left in the brush
 Across this stream stagecoaches used to rush
 Look closely and see what's left of the road
 Ruts, rocks, slope, and dirt show the erode

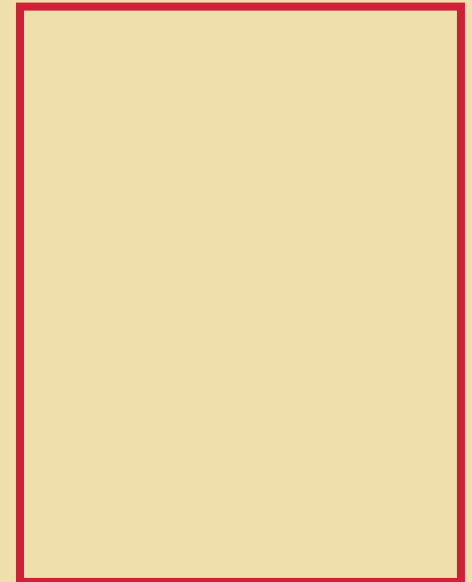
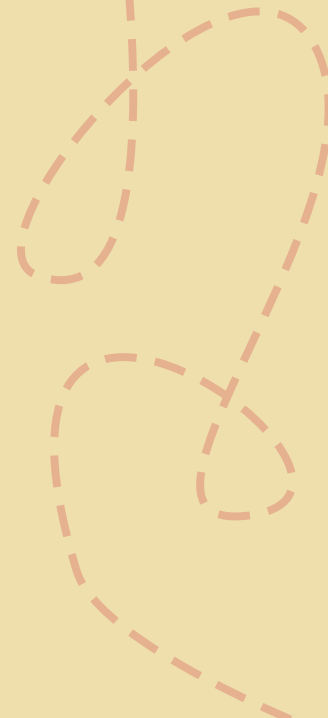
Up the trail it's time for you to begin the ascent
 Where school children usually start their tired lament
 Autumn is the best time to walk along the stonewall
 With the crisp air and watching the leaves as they fall

The treasure is hidden where the trail cuts the wall
 Look high and low as it might be quite small
 Be careful of creatures that might be living in the rock
 We don't want you or them to get a shock

Hope you learned a lot about Hand Hollow
 Check our other sites, there are more quests to follow



Otter



High Falls Conservation Area

540 Roxbury Rd, Philmont/Claverack

Located primarily in the Village of Philmont, with access on Roxbury Road in the Town of Claverack

From Route 217 (Main Street) in Philmont, turn south on Roxbury Road, and cross over the Agawamuck Creek. The entrance to the parking lot and trail head is 100 yards up on the left.

At the arbor made of cedar wood is where you start
On your quest to see what lies at Philmont's heart
Lifelong residents tell of stories, childhood memories, and lore
Both cultural and natural history on this hike you will explore

Down the path and on the green trail is the plan
Stonework steps lead you to cross the wide span
This perennial stream flows down from Moore Pond
To the Agawamuck Creek, the Hudson River, and beyond

Welcome to an Eastern hemlock covered "cool ravine"
Uncommon plants make up this unique habitat scene
You might find walking fern or purple cliffbrake
Bloodroot, red trillium, and trout lily in spring's wake

Red trillium's flower is beautiful and catches the eye
But it smells like dead meat to attract the carrion fly
Dark blood red color and putrid odor its adaptation
"Stinking benjamin" lures the flies in for pollination

If you see these plants look close, take a sniff, and inspect
However, on this site and our others please don't ever collect
On your left will be the blue trail to the Agawamuck Creek
Remain on the green trail to find that which you ardently seek

"Cool Ravines" have conifers and steep rocky walls that flank a rocky intermittent stream. This unusually shady, cool and moist microclimate often supports plants found in more northern regions.

This land was once hardscrabble farmed and used as woodlots
Rocks break through the shallow and acidic soil in spots
Signs remain of stone walls and fences of barbed wire
Farther up the trail is a wooden bench to rest if you tire

Walk through woodlands of sugar maples and oaks of red
Thick tree branches form a leafy canopy above your head
A fine hunting ground for hawks or a barred owl
Perhaps a coyote or red fox on a quiet night's prowls



Barred Owl

An understory of witch-hazel, striped maple, and black birch
You can see them all close to the bench on which you perch
Black birch is used in birch beer and smells of wintergreen
And striped maple is by far the moose's favorite cuisine

Witch-hazel is discussed in the Round Ball Mountain quest
Yellow leaves in the fall - do that quest to find out the rest
Time to keep moving, gather your things, and head up the hill
That's where you'll see the power that supplied seventeen mills

Come to the place where the red and green trails meet
Green trail takes you to the waterfall where you'll see a real treat
Now is the time to go see the falls - go ahead and take in the view
But return to this exact spot to find the treasure when you are through

From Philmont Reservoir and Summit Lake the water drops down loudly
The tallest waterfall in Columbia County we can report quite proudly
One hundred fifty feet from the dam at the top to the plunge pool at the bottom
The water rushes and gushes over the rocks in a magnificent column

In 1847, High Rock Mill was constructed for making fine woolen goods
Followed by a feed mill and paper mills using lumber from nearby woods
After a century of industry by waterpower the mills all began to close
But over High Falls and into the Agawamuck Creek the water still flows

**"Creek of many fish" is what the word Agawamuck means
With trout, perch, and bass the water in the creek teems
A conservation area of little acreage – just a small forty-seven
Within the busy village nestles this amazing piece of heaven**

**Head back to where the green trail meets the red
Down the red trail is the correct way to head
From the footbridge measure 68 (or so) steps or paces
To find the treasure in the most unusual of places**

**On the left notice a stump all hollowed out inside
Nestled there is where the treasure box likes to hide
Before putting your hand in, it should best be not forgotten:
Other creatures can be in hidden in stumps that are rotten!**

**Hope you enjoyed your visit to High Falls, such a special place
We have nine other sites with more protected open space**

Rock Mill reached its peak in 1913, when it employed 870 people, a larger number than any other employer in Columbia County.

Ooms Conservation Area at Sutherland Pond

480 Rock City Rd, Chatham

From the Taconic State Parkway: Take the exit marked for Route 295, East Chatham/Chatham. From the north, turn right off the exit ramp onto Hartigan Road. From the south, turn left onto Route 295 heading toward Chatham, proceed under the Taconic State Parkway, and then turn right onto Hartigan Road (keep left to avoid the parkway). Follow Hartigan Road for one mile until you come to a "Y" intersection. Proceed left for 0.2 miles; the parking area will be on the left.

From downtown Chatham: follow Route 295 east for approximately 2.5 miles. You will pass Kling Magnetics on the left and the transfer station on the right. Turn left at Hartigan Road, as if you were entering the Taconic State Parkway southbound, then stay straight, past the Taconic entry ramp. Follow Hartigan Road for one mile until you come to a "Y" intersection. Go left for 0.2 mile and the parking area will be on the left.

**Start at the kiosk, open the wood box and sign right in
Under a majestic Eastern white pine is where you begin
In colonial times they were masts on ships, straight and tall
King George declared all these trees his to the colonists gall**

**Loss of money from pine products colonists could not ignore
Like taxed tea it was a trigger of the Revolutionary War
A white pine was on the first flag that went up Bunker Hill
A chosen symbol of independence, prosperity, and free will**

**Head down the hill and stop on the edge of Sutherland Pond
Of this 35 acre body of water local fishermen are quite fond
The pond is known for bullhead, bluegills, and bass
While Eastern meadowlarks and bobolinks sing in the grass**



White pine

Sutherland Pond is a nice spot to relax and float in your canoe
 Or head to the gazebo for pond and Catskill mountain views
 Head to the west along the pond's curvy shore
 Overhead hawks, herons, and osprey soar

Soon you will see the edge of the wooden boardwalk
 "Come hide in the herd and float with the flock"
 The boardwalk keeps your feet dry as you cross the swamp
 It's a place where rabbits and muskrats often romp

On the right is a lone hickory tree called a Shagbark
 Into the upland meadows and old fields you are about to embark
 Travel through the fields as we tell you the story of this place
 Keep the beautiful pond on your left as you keep the pace

Meadows of goldenrod, Queen Anne's lace, and milkweed bloom
 Cut into hay and baled for our local bovines to consume
 Hayed on a schedule that gives the grassland birds a better chance
 To raise their fledglings and launch them into this wild expanse

Notice Eastern bluebird nesting boxes hanging on posts
 Built by volunteers, crew, and schoolchildren so we can play host
 To this symbol of love, happiness, and the first blush of spring
 Pause at the bench, listen closely for the sweet song they sing

After you've had your fill of this scene most bucolic
 Head up the trail towards the woods where deer tend to frolic
 At the top of the hill spot the silos that mark the Ooms family farm
 Beyond the farm towards the east are the Taconics in all their charm

You can stop at the gazebo if you feel you need another rest
 Or stay on the trail into the woods to continue your quest
 Follow the trail down the hill to the left you should bear
 The trees provide a nice shelter from wind and sun glare

On the left is a tree that a porcupine has used as a meal
 The inner bark during the winter has much appeal



Meadowlark

Queen Anne's lace, or "wild carrot," was introduced from Europe, and the carrots that we eat today were cultivated from this plant.

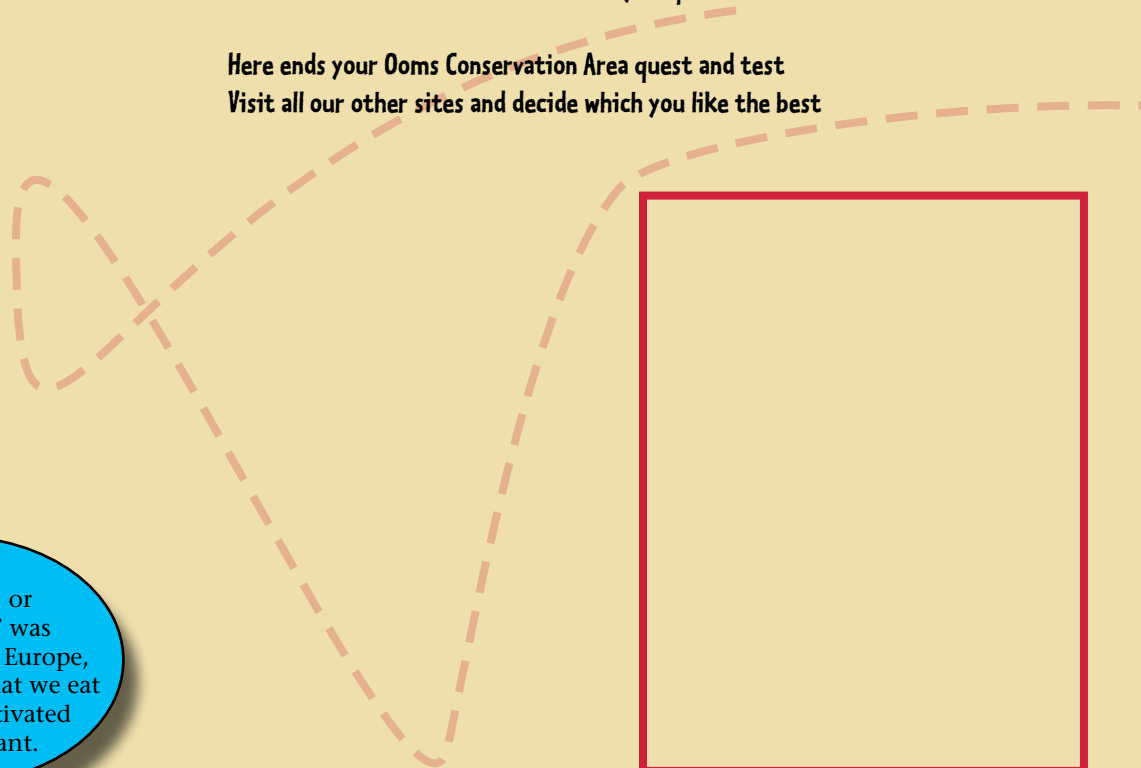
Their chisel-like teeth make quick work of the outer bark
 In spring and summer buds, flowers, twigs, and leaves hit the mark

Can you see that some of the trees are missing their tops?
 The ice storm in 2008 brought them down with loud snaps and pops
 Branches and trees blocked the trail all helter skelter
 They were cleared and stacked off trail to provide animals shelter

Toads, salamanders, insects, and spiders like to live in the brush
 Plus birds such as grouse, mockingbird, sparrow, and thrush
 Back to the meadows is where this trail eventually goes
 But in these woods is where your search will come to a close

As you round the corner see arching and bent over paper birch
 The white pines on your right is where you should search
 The quest started and is ending with Eastern white pine tree
 Hidden at the base of one of the trees your prize will be

Here ends your Ooms Conservation Area quest and test
 Visit all our other sites and decide which you like the best



Round Ball Mountain Conservation Area

503 Carson Rd, Ancram

From Route 22 in Ancram at the Columbia/Dutchess County border, turn onto Carson Road. The entrance sign will be on the right approximately 1/2 mile up from Route 22. Park in the designated lot before reaching the residence.

Start at the kiosk to hear this mountain's voice
The new yellow trail should be your first choice
This quest is long – there's so much to say
Please be prepared before you get underway

The slope to your left has lots of boulders, rocky and steep
A good place for raven, bobcat, and small-footed bat to sleep
Animals of "Special Concern" might nest, den, or find an abode
Including warblers, marbled salamander, and fowler's toad

The trees do beckon as the old driveway ends
Volunteers built this trail with its curves and bends
Mike, Matt, Sheila, and more did a fine job you can tell
As this path wraps you in a magical woodland spell

We paid them with oatmeal cookies and much thanks
As they removed roots and dug cuts in the banks
You'll soon see a fence surrounding a hole in the ground
In the spring this is where the native columbine can be found

Around the hole and trail are rocky outcroppings of schist
Rich in iron and processed for ore – mining was the gist
Schist, quartz, and shale are part of the Walloomsac Formation
Similar rocks were used in iron foundries to help build our nation

The Bobcat's short or "bobbed" tail is what gives it its name. They are twice the size of their cousin, the house-cat.

Down the trail, turn left onto green and an old road
Where in 1912 lumberjacks and timbermen strode
The mountain was cleared with a crashing of trees
Timber sent down the hill in a long chute with ease

Before that time there were chestnut trees six feet around
And bushel baskets of harvested nuts did abound
Notice the other trees still here and stop for an appraisal
Of white oak, pignut hickory, black birch, and witch-hazel

Witch-hazel has a delicate yellow late-autumn bloom
It can shoot its seeds out of the pod clear across a room
A medicinal astringent is made from its leaves and bark
To treat blemishes, insect bites, and bruises that mark

Take the blue trail to the stream with no name
Tales of nine and ten inch trout are its claim to fame
Home to two salamanders: dusky and two-lined
The dusky salamander is regionally somewhat a rare find

This upland forest and its streams are a special domain
Into a wetland that forms the Webatuck Creek they drain
This wetland is where the endangered bog turtles reside
A wildlife corridor for bobcat and black bear the woods provide

To the green trail the blue eventually does circle on back
Turn to the right on the green and you'll be on track
Large holes in the trees where Pileated Woodpeckers dine
A beautiful image Roberta Wilson created for the sites sign

At the top of the slope notice white birch rather large
As farm fields were abandoned they took charge
This perimeter trail was once the edge of a field
Cultivation of corn, buckwheat, and rye the yield

At the red trail junction, it's a left you should make
To the top of the mountain and a rest soon to take



Witch Hazel



Pileated Woodpecker

The plateau is where Tator Farm did once stand
When pastures and woolly sheep dotted the land

1312 feet high and cleared it would have a distinctive shape
Standing out most strong from the nearby landscape
Perhaps that's how it got the name "Round Ball"
The origin of the name locals simply could not recall

Stop at the bench for Evelyn Kitchen and you'll be at the peak
Through the trees, a view of the Taconic ridge you can sneak
Please take a few moments to sit down, relax, and unwind
Close your eyes, breathe deep, and clear your mind

Dogwoods were planted to honor Evelyn and the land the family gave
Consideration and thanks for these 100 acres they thought to save
Not too far from the bench do you have to rove
Behind a tree with two stumps is the treasure trove

Hope you were able to hear the voice of Round Ball
Visit more CLC sites - there are ten in all

Schor Conservation Area

58 Shoreview Dr, Red Rock - accessed from Cemetery Road in Red Rock
Traveling east from Chatham on Rte. 203: take a left onto County Rte. 9, following signs for Red Rock. After 2.5 miles, bear right onto Rte. 24, following for 1.8 miles. Take a left onto Cemetery Road and follow for one mile to Shoreview Drive on the right. Follow the entrance road for .5 miles to the parking area and trail entrance.

Traveling West from Spencertown/Austerlitz: take a right onto County Rte. 9. Bear right onto Rte. 24, following for 1.8 miles. Take a left onto Cemetery Road and follow for one mile to Shoreview Drive on the right. Follow the entrance road for .5 miles to the parking area and trail entrance.

Schor is another quest where you start at the gate
Down the trail you head, nice and straight
Turn left at the blaze showing green
On to a scene that is usually quite serene

Often the fog is lifting off of the pond
And the forest stretches up the hill and beyond
Stop and contemplate just for a second
Before you enter the trees as they beckon

This is Jon's Pond, with a special story of how it came to be
A man named Jon Schor had a vision, you see,
Of conserving the land that he loved with all his heart
He made it a place everyone could enjoy and take part

People, plants, and creatures all together
Whether hair, scales, fur, or feather
A quiet, beautiful forest that brings great joy
It is protected forever, never shall we destroy

Stay on the green trail and pick east as your direction
 Time to head into the woods and make a connection
 Across the bridge and you're onto the shale
 It's important at this junction that you bear right on the trail

The path heads through the oaks so you can climb up
 Beneath your feet are leaves and many an acorn cup
 A tasty snack for squirrel, wild turkey, and deer
 Chatter, gobble, or snort in the distance you may hear

Land crisscrossed with old logging roads, tracks, and
 trace
 Stay true to the green as you mark a steady pace
 See beds of white-tail deer as you carry on up the hill
 Listen for the sound of the pileated woodpeckers bill

Soon you will be standing where green and red meet
 Take the red, go right, and always follow your feet
 Your boots will stay dry as you cross another bridge
 Take a deep breath – you're climbing up to the ridge

Through a cool hemlock forest you will meander
 On the right, two large uprooted trees – take a gander
 They came down in the ice storm of 2008
 The victims of wet ground, shallow roots, and ice weight

Although a rotting log might not look like much on the surface
 They have a role in nature and serve a great purpose
 A decomposing log is good habitat for animal and plant
 Home to mouse, fungus, moss, bacteria, beetle, and ant

Soon the trail becomes quite steep and tough
 Don't be embarrassed – we all huff and puff!
 Watch for the red blaze as you come up the incline
 Bear to the right – don't take the straight line



Oak Leaf and Acorn

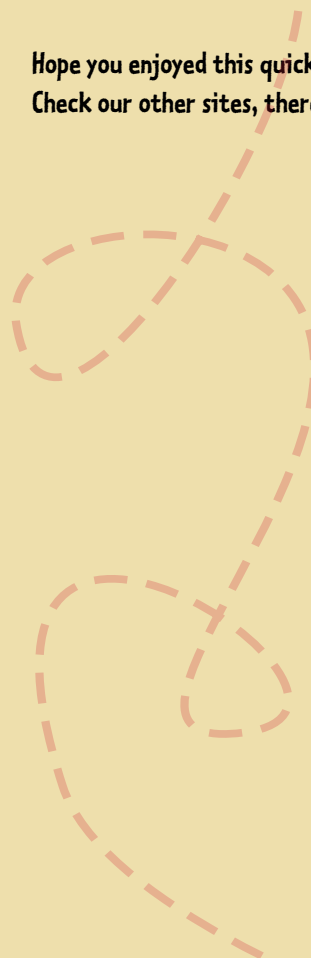
Please be careful as you come up to the rise
 If you fall down the cliff you can't claim the prize
 The rocks are inviting and call you to sit
 Relax with the mountains, just for a bit

The mountains to the left are the gentle Catskills
 In the foreground are barns, cattle, and hills
 Then in the distance the Heldeberg Escarpment and Albany city
 Even on a crystal clear day the Plaza looks pretty bitty

Some people say the real treasure is the view
 But don't worry – we wouldn't do that to you
 Look for the large tree of white pine
 There at the base the treasure box you shall find

Hope you enjoyed this quick quest at Schor
 Check our other sites, there is more to explore

The bark of Eastern hemlock is rich in tannin and is used to soften animal skin to make leather.



Siegel-Kline Kill Conservation Area

1452 County Route 21 (Garage Place), Ghent
Approximately 1/2 mile west of Ghent Town Hall.

Begin your quest at the green trail heading to the north
Walk through a working farm field as you set forth
Today the site is used to harvest cuttings of hay
It produced corn and was a dairy back in the day

John Aiken owned this field known as the "40 acre lot"
A farmhouse to the west and a barn close to this spot
What once was prime pasture for many a cowherd
Now is wonderful habitat for species of grassland bird

You'll soon notice the trail splits in a short ways
Stay to the right and keep on the green blaze
The trail starts to get a little brushy and shrubby on the side
The upland meadow from the floodplain forest it does divide

Bypass two trail spurs on the right marked with blue
Joe-pye weed and goldenrod the path goes right through
This is a good place to look for signs of cottontail rabbit
Clean bit stems and tracks point to where they inhabit

Take the third blue trail towards the stream called the Kline Kill
Where over the years many fishermen have tried their skill
The symbol for the Siegel-Kline Kill area is the brown trout
The trees by the water please take a moment to check out

Many Eastern cottonwoods line the Kline Kill's shore
Red maple, white oak, and some mighty sycamore
They like their feet kind of wet and don't mind a little flood
River otters like this place too and slide on the banks of mud

The "kill"
in Kline Kill
comes from the Dutch
language and means
riverbed or water
channel.



Joe-Pye Weed

Our friend Lauren likes to watch the water when she visits
She won't sit, just stand, and let the stream raise her spirits
Something about the way the water rushes and moves
Worries wash away and your mood suddenly improves

Time to turn back around to search for that which you seek
In the spring, look by the trail for skunk cabbage and wild leek
At the junction, take a right hand turn on the green trail
Here large colonies of goldenrod plants do prevail

Don't blame beautiful goldenrod when you sneeze
It's ragweed that causes allergies and makes
you wheeze

Look on the goldenrod plant stem for a round gall
A tiny fly spends the winter "sleeping" within that ball

Towhees, sparrows, and warblers can be seen in this zone
Where dogwood and other scrubby bushes have grown
Continue around the trail through the grassy countryside
Where American kestrels and red-tail hawks preside

Soon you'll come to the red trail and a hill to behold
Head up the hill with its sides quite steep and bold
At the top you may want to stop and take a breather
As you look back upon one of the sites finest features

Brush and shrubs cleared for sledding on the snow all white
A "Thanks" to the community and the Siegel's for this site
Young Samantha likes to run down this hill in a great rush
Even when it's a cold day in March with lots of slush

Also a nice place when it's warm with sun shining
Smell the fresh cut hay as you stretch out reclining
Listen to the buzzing of the cicadas and crickets
And birds singing and chirping from the thickets

When crushed,
skunk cabbage leaves
release an odor of rotten
meat. This attracts pol-
linating insects.

Back down the hill to where red and green meet
Look here to the south and your quest is complete
When digging and searching in the grass please be aware
Creatures hide in that grass and there could be a lair

Hope you learned a lot about Siegel-Kline Kill
There are many more sites to visit, we hope you will

Acknowledgements

Writing the CLC quests was quite a bit of work
Without volunteers, the staff would have gone berserk
When it first started, we didn't much enjoy the rhyme
They seemed kind of silly and took a fair amount of time

Jenny wrote the first quest about Hand Hollow
With lots of help, soon more were to follow
They really are fun to write and make you think
Everything has to come together and be in sync

Thanks to Meg Everett for starting the proceeding
And Tom, Nate, and Heidi for reading and rereading
Knowledge of quests was provided by Rosemary
Suggestions and trail content by Marcia Cary

Michael Chameides created the passport
And thanks to the CLC members who give their support
Also to all the people we maybe forgot to mention
We give appreciation with only the best intention

These are amazing and special places
Protected in perpetuity as wild open spaces
Through the quests we hope you have made a connection
And hold these areas in your heart with great affection

Join CLC as a Member!

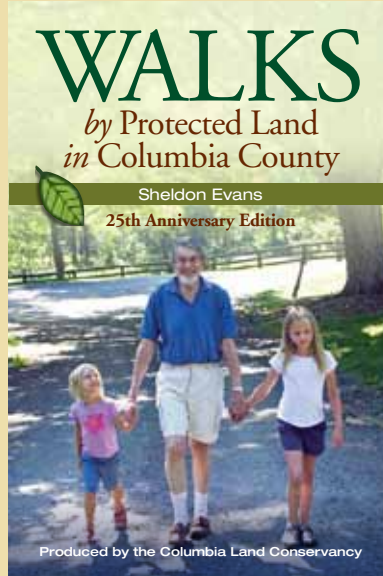
Support CLC and conserve Columbia County's farmland, forests, wildlife habitat, and rural character. Strengthen the connections between people and the land by becoming a member. More information at clctrust.org/membership

Walks by Protected Land

Written by Sheldon Evans

The walk guide includes 20 walks on public roads passing by land permanently protected by conservation easements in Columbia County. The walks range from 3.8 to 7 miles. The guide includes a description of each walk, detailed directions with mile markers, and a topographic map.

Large tracts of conserved land are important for wildlife habitat and biodiversity. These walks feature some of the areas most treasured protected lands, several of which are over 1,000 acres. The walks offer great views of diverse landscapes and a chance to peacefully connect with the natural world.



Columbia County Outdoors

Written by Sheldon Evans

Columbia County Outdoors is the guide to outdoor activities in Columbia County. The 120 page book includes sections on boating, cycling, fishing, winter sports, and hiking. It details 42 locations, including address, parking, rules, as well as highlights of the property. Most of the locations include detailed trail maps. For each activity, guest authors give an overview of opportunities and resources throughout the County.

Both books are available at the CLC store at 49 Main Street in Chatham, NY as well as local bookstores. All proceeds support CLC's conservation work.