



"Hiking the Sourlands" Spring/Summer 2017

Each hike is free and limited to 15 participants unless noted.

For more information and to register, visit our Facebook page, or sign-up to receive our eNewsletter at www.sourland.org

Friday, March 10, 6 pm, Woodcock Walk, Hopewell Borough Park Gazebo: In early March, after the sun sets, male woodcocks take to the air to perform a song and dance for their audience of female birds on the ground. Join the Sourland Conservancy and Mercer County Naturalists for front row seats to the annual woodcock performance. Donations benefit the Hopewell Borough Park Woodcock Habitat Restoration Project.

Wednesday, March 22, 7 pm, Learn About Lichens-A Talk, Hopewell Borough Train Station: Are they plants? Are they fungi? No, they're both! Lichens are everywhere you look, and they are as fascinating as they are ubiquitous. Join lichenologist Dennis Waters to learn about these remarkable botanical partnerships—how they work and how they have grown to be so dependent on each other. You will also learn the characteristics that let you tell one lichen from another in the Sourlands Region. You may also be interested in the Lichen Walk (April 8).

Sunday, March 26, 10-noon, Vernal Pool Hike, Sourland Ecosystem Preserve: Every spring vernal pools appear throughout the woods acting as a meeting and breeding spot for amphibians. Join the Sourland Conservancy and County Naturalist on this walk and learn about the importance of these pools and their inhabitants. Led by Jenn Rogers, Mercer County Naturalist.

Saturday, April 8, 10-noon, Learn About Lichens-A Walk, Sourland Ecosystem Preserve: Join lichenologist Dennis Waters for an excursion into the Sourland woods to find lichens growing on trees, on rocks, and on the ground. You will learn about their lifestyles, their habitats, and how they contribute to ecosystems. And you'll have plenty of chances to try your hand at figuring out which lichen you're looking at. If you have a hand lens, bring it. We will also have a few to share.

Saturday, April 22, 10-noon, Honey Hollow Hike, Baldpate Mountain: Local historian David Blackwell and ecologist Mike Van Clef will team up to lead a hike that offers insights into local history and ecology at the Ted Stiles Preserve on Baldpate Mountain. Mr. Blackwell will discuss the historical background of the mountain and point out many remains of settlement, including heaped stone walls, well-constructed double walls, and a farmstead site. Mr. Van Clef will discuss plant species and what they indicate, as well as new plants introduced by human activity. He will discuss the forestry activities of John Kuser on the mountain. Meet at the Pleasant Valley Road parking lot by 9:45 am.

Saturday, April 29, 10-noon, Spring Wildflowers, Sourland Ecosystem Preserve: This walk is timed for the height of the spring ephemeral bloom and the early part of the spring songbird migration. The forest will look, sound and smell its best! Led by Jim Amon, former Sourland Conservancy Trustee and D&R Greenway Stewardship Director.

Saturday, May 6, 8:30am-11am, Birding Hike, Baldpate Mountain: Spring is in the air... at least it will be, quite literally, on this morning walk in the Sourlands. The arrival of colorful breeding songbirds is one of the many sure signs that Spring has arrived. This bird walk will focus on the identification and natural histories of the songbirds that migrate through and breed in the forests of the Sourlands. Binoculars will be provided. Led by Jenn Rogers, Mercer County Naturalist.

Saturday, May 13, 10-noon, Geology Hike, Somerset County Sourland Mountain Preserve: Explore the rocks, boulders and soils of the Sourlands. Learn about the history and formation of the mountain on this moderately challenging hike to Devil's Half Acre and Roaring Rocks. Led by Dave Harper, former President of the Geological Association of New Jersey.

Saturday, July 8, 10-noon, Second Weekend Walk with D&R Greenway, Sourland Ecosystem Preserve: Join Sourland Conservancy Trustee, Beverly Mills, and D&R Greenway's Conservation Biologist, Diana Raichel, on a stroll through the various forest communities of the Sourlands Ecosystem Preserve to see what we can see. We'll be checking out the plant life; looking for butterflies and dragonflies along the forest edges; checking the progress of vernal pool species; listening for frogs and toads; and keeping an eye out for whatever strikes our fancy. Come along!

Saturday, August 12, 10-noon, Mushroom Walk, Hunterdon County Sourland Mountain Preserve: If you're having trouble telling the difference between Chicken of the Woods and Chanterelles, this is the foray for you! Experience the wonder of wild mushrooms with a local expert. Led by Jenifer Nina Burghardt of the New Jersey Mycological Association.

Saturday, October 14, 9:30 am -12:30 pm, Foraging Hike, Baldpate Mountain: Explore the forests and fields of Baldpate Mountain in search of primal sustenance -- the fruits, nuts, and other vegetable products in our local flora. Jared Rosenbaum will lead the hike and highlight edible and medicinal species. We'll also cover plant identification, conservation priorities, and preparation techniques.