

KENT - APPALACHIAN TRAIL DIRECTIONS – SUPPLEMENT TO OUR MAP

Y2180-2020 Connecticut Valley Volkssport Club

KENT – APPALACHIAN TRAIL – HOUSATONIC RIVER

City/State	Kent, CT
Event Name	Kent – Appalachian Trail – Housatonic River
Event Type	Seasonal (4/1/2020 – 12/31/2020), using OnLine Start Box
Event ID	Y2180
Award	IVV Credit Only
Rating	1B
Distance	8 km (one-way, spotting cars) - 10 km - 16 km
Strollers?	No
Wheelchairs?	No
Pets	Yes
Restrooms	Yes - latrine at Stewart Hollow Brook shelter
Sponsoring Club	Connecticut Valley Volkssport Club
POC	Lee West, LFWest@sbcglobal.net , 860-721-1185. P.O. Box 251, Glastonbury, CT 06033
Start Point/Driving Directions	St. Johns Ledges parking area (very small) and gate, at 90 River Rd., Kent, CT (GPS location). From I-84, take Rt. 8N to exit 38. Take Rt. 109W through Morris to Rt. 209N, and then Rt. 202W through Bantam to Rt. 341 in Woodville. Take Rt. 341W through Kent, crossing Rt. 7, and crossing bridge over Housatonic River. Take first right after bridge (Skiff Mountain Rd., with Kent School athletic fields on left). Proceed 1.1 mi. to junction with River Rd., marked by a small sign on the right, “Appalachian National Scenic Trail.” Bear right onto River Rd. (unpaved) and drive 1.7 mi. to St. Johns Ledges small parking area (along road on left) just before gate. Before May and after September, gate is open and it is possible to drive 1 mi. (versus walking it) further north on River Rd. to AT trail kiosk and spacious parking lot at what is known as the “South Gate,” where the AT changes from the gravel River Rd. to a packed dirt trail.
Event Information	<p>There are 3 suggested walk options from St. Johns Ledges parking area: a) 5 km to the 3-log bridge at the Stony Brook Campsites, and retrace steps - 10 km total, b) continue 3 km past Stony Brook Campsites to where AT bears right onto gravel River Rd. (AT guide box on tree on left). In 30 yards, pass by AT white trail blaze on left, where trail continues steeply to Silver Hill. Proceed 0.4 km on River Rd. to small parking area if you initially spotted a car there – 8 km total (River Rd. is reached by car from north side of Rt. 4/Rt. 7 across from Citgo station, curving right down under road and continuing 1.5 mi. to small AT trailhead parking area (at site of former Swift’s Bridge), or c) walk the 8 km distance and retrace your steps – 16 km total.</p> <p>This beautiful wooded trail, on packed dirt with few roots or stones to trip up even an amateur hiker, hugs the banks of the rushing 140-mi. long Housatonic River. It has the distinction of being the longest level section of the AT between Georgia and Maine, and certainly the easiest stretch of the AT’s 51 miles through Connecticut.</p>
Hours	Dawn to dusk
Special Programs	Appalachian Trail, Walking the USA
Comments	The AT formerly crossed the Housatonic River (Mohican word meaning land beyond the mountains) at the now ruined N. Kent (Flanders) bridge, but since the late 1930s has followed this old farm path, flanked by crumbling stone walls, overgrown foundations and second growth forest (mainly sycamore, maple, ash, black birch, sassafras, black locust, hemlock and pine). The original forest was harvested for charcoal to fuel the iron industry’s blast furnaces and foundries. Today, AT thru-hikers can be met in the first weeks of August, and rafters and paddlers floating down the river may call out, “how far to the parking lot?”. Stewart Hollow Brook Shelter, 2 km from the Start, offers walkers a rustic latrine.

Rev. 4-8-2020

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AVA Special Programs: *Appalachian Trail, Walk the USA: A-Z*

FOR IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE, CALL 911. LOCAL CLUB POINT OF CONTACT: Lee West, 860-721-1185.
 AVA REGIONAL DIRECTOR: Chris Mellen, 978-649-7633.

DIRECTIONS	COMMENTARY
<p>The annotated schematic map we have provided on the Online Start Box site, plus the description page of this AT volkswalk, replace our typical Trail Directions document. The map comments show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access route to the Start Point and Alternate Start Point • parking options • turn-around points for various walk distances (8km-10km-16km), <p>One of the best maps, showing details along our AVA-sanctioned section (and more) of the Appalachian Trail is: National Geographic Society's <u>AT: Schaghticoke Mountain to East Mountain Topographic Map Guide (#1509)</u>, 2015.</p> <p>For further details regarding the trail, including the plants, trees, and wildlife you may see, consult the various hiking books that have been written about the Appalachian trail. Following are a few:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rene Laubach and Charles W.G. Smith, <u>AMC's Best Day Hikes in Connecticut</u>, 2nd Ed., 2013 • Leonard M. Adkins and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, <u>Images of America: Along the Appalachian Trail (NJ, NY and CT)</u>, 2014. See chapter 3 on Connecticut. • David Emblidge, <u>Exploring the Appalachian Trail: Hikes in Southern New England</u>, 2nd Ed., 2012 • Connecticut Forest and Park Assoc., <u>Connecticut Walk Book</u>, 20th Ed., 2017 <p>There are also internet websites and blogs describing the trail and providing updates, including the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (www.appalachiantrail.org) and the Appalachian Mountain Club (www.outdoors.org).</p>	<p>PLANNING YOUR WALK: Most of our volkswalks are in towns where help and various services are fairly accessible. Before starting out on a woodland walk or hike, please make the following preparations to make your walk along the AT more comfortable, safe and enjoyable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk with a partner for safety. Plan to be back well before local sunset. • Wear comfortable, sturdy and supportive shoes – tripping and slipping is obviously more likely on a woodland trail than on city sidewalks! Tennis shoes do not provide sufficient support/grip! • Walking sticks or trekking poles are also helpful for balance. • Bring a water bottle, or better yet, pack a picnic lunch and snacks (like dried fruit, nuts, cookies, etc.). There are some scenic spots along the river, as well as some 3-sided shelters that would make good lunch settings. • Bring along bug spray – the gnats and mosquitoes can be bothersome, depending on the time of year and day, and dampness. DEET-based insecticide will also help to deter deer ticks. • The privy at the shelter may be out of toilet paper, so come armed with extra tissues. • A simple first aid kit is always a good idea – a band-aid for foot blisters and minor scratches and a little tube of antiseptic cream are recommended. • The woods can turn cool in the late afternoon, so be prepared with a sweater or jacket. Extra socks and raingear may also come in handy. • Bring a cell phone if possible, though cell service may not be reliable. Texting may be easier than emailing. If your phone has no flashlight feature, bring one along. • Given the above list, we'd recommend a small pack to carry your "stuff" in.

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FOLLOWING THE AT TRAIL BLAZES

In the 1940s, the **WHITE blaze** became the standard color for the Appalachian trail from Georgia to Maine. The blaze is 6" high by 2" wide.

TWO WHITE blazes on top of each other indicate a turn in the direction the top blaze is offset. (i.e., if the top blaze is to the right, turn right.) You will see this where the AT passes to the east of the Stewart Hollow Brook shelter. If you wish to take a brief detour to the shelter, follow the blue blazes here, returning down to the AT.

River on Your Right: This particular segment of the AT is quite straightforward, literally. The **Housatonic River** is almost always in sight, and it will be to your right as you walk north.

For those walking the **16k option** northbound, **your turn-around point** will be where the AT meets the gravel **River Rd.** (not marked). There is a trail guide box (probably empty) here. The AT white blaze indicates that the trail continues about 90 feet ahead to the left, going uphill. Do NOT continue. Turn around to retrace your steps south (with the river to your left this time) and return to your Start Point.

TO NOTE ON THIS STRETCH OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL

- At the kiosk where the AT picks up from the river road, note **remains of a bridge foundation** to your right. The North Kent (also known as Flanders) Bridge was swept away in a major flood in 1936. The AT formerly crossed to the east side of the Housatonic at this point and continued north. After 1936, the trail continued north along the west bank of the river.
- Other **stone foundations** to the left of the trail indicate former structures when this land was farmed. **Stone walls** would indicate property boundaries and contain livestock.
- In about a half-mile from the kiosk, note that an extensive **grove of trees** are of similar size and fairly young, mainly black birch. They grew up after an insect infestation (red pine scale blight) devastated a massive red pine plantation along the river in the 1950s. (The pine lumber was salvaged by the Connecticut chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club in the 1970s and used to build log shelters along the trail.)
- **Lots of birds!** Bald eagles, kingfishers, Canada geese, various ducks (mallards, wood ducks), and other birds can be seen in this area.
- You will be walking through **National Park Service land**, which was donated by Stanley Works. Note that federal law prohibits the removal of any artifacts in this area.

WALK COMPLETION AND CREDIT: Be sure to log back into the OSB system to “finish/complete” your online registration after doing the event. The OSB system does not deduct any event fee from a participant’s Event Bank until they have submitted event completion info including the date the event was completed, the distance completed, and the selection of applicable special programs that person is participating in. (Nevertheless, a fee of \$2 for a downloaded PDF is deducted from the user’s Event Bank when the PDF is downloaded. Later, any PDF fees are credited back to a user’s Event Bank when he/she submits the event completion info as a paying for credit participant. Note, however, the \$2 coupon for the downloaded PDF will expire in 60 days.).

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6. TURN-AROUND PT. (half-way) at AT junction with River Rd., for 16k northbound walkers. (This is the END Pt. for 8k one-way walkers who have spotted a second car at River Rd. parking lot, south of Rt. 4.)

5. TURN-AROUND PT. (half-way) 1.4k beyond Stony Brook campsites (stone silo of Liner Farm on left), for 10k northbound walkers starting at AT's South Gate kiosk parking.

4. TURN-AROUND PT. (half-way) at Stony Brook campsites, for 10k northbound walkers starting at St. Johns Ledges parking area.

3. STEWART HOLLOW BROOK SHELTER

2. ALT. START – AT's "South Gate" kiosk
PARKING lot. Available before May and after Sept.

1. START – River Rd. roadside **PARKING** area before iron gate (St. Johns Ledges up to left). *Must use after May and before Sept.*

**KENT APPALACHIAN TRAIL
 HOUSATONIC RIVER (#Y2180)
 8k – 10k – 16k Walks
 April 1 – Dec. 31, 2020**

Connecticut Valley Volkssport Club, AVA-784
 AVA: *America's Walking Club* (ava.org)

