

Waterfall Trails

North Valhalla Brook Falls is in the Turkey Mountain section of Morris County's Pyramid Mountain Natural Historical Area. It's on Route 511 (Boonton Ave) in **Montville Township**, about four miles north of downtown Boonton. Pick up a trail map at the Visitor Center or the parking lot; it includes trails for both Pyramid and Turkey Mountains.

The trail to the falls is across Route 511 from the Visitor's Center; look for the Yellow Trail and follow it for about two miles to the falls.

The Yellow Trail intersects with *two* red trails; watch for the *second* red trail at the top of a steep climb. An unmarked trail across from the intersection with this Red Trail goes to the right, where you can visit an old limestone quarry. After seeing the quarry, return to the trail intersection, and continue on the Yellow Trail.

North Valhalla Brook Falls is just off the Yellow Trail, upstream from the trail bridge over North Valhalla Brook. There are two falls here; the smaller one is a short distance up the brook. This is about halfway through the hike, and if you brought lunch, this is a good place. (Please remember to bring all your garbage back.)

To return, walk up along the brook across from the falls until you find the Green Trail. Do not follow this trail along the brook; instead, follow the Green Trail up a short hill and *away* from the brook. After about half a mile, the Green Trail merges with the Red Trail; turn right to stay on the Green Trail when the two trails separate. If you miss the turn for the Green Trail, you come back to the Yellow Trail and the limestone quarry area - reverse direction for about 200 feet and pick up the Green Trail again.

The reason for taking the Green Trail back is a very nice overlook from Turkey Mountain for only a moderate climb. It will be on the left after you pass an old stone house. If you brought lunch, but didn't picnic at the falls, this is at least as good a spot, with a very nice view to the southeast and some of the NYC skyline.

To return to the Visitors Center, continue on the Green Trail to the Blue Trail; follow the Blue Trail downhill to the Yellow Trail, then turn right on to the Yellow Trail to return to the Visitors Center.

Difficulty: A *Moderate* four-mile hike, with hills.

Trout Brook Falls is in Hacklebarney State Park in **Chester Township**. Take State Park Road (also known as Hacklebarney State Park Road), from the intersection of Route 513 and Park Road in Chester Township, about one and a quarter miles west of Route 206 in Chester. State Park Road leads to Hacklebarney Road and the park entrance. A trail map is at the parking lot.

If you follow trails down along Trout Brook from the parking lot, there's a very nice waterfall just past the second bridge, and several places to picnic in this area.

The other principal attraction at Hacklebarney is the Black River. This was an industrial area with iron mines in the 19th century, but now the eastern hemlocks and the rushing river is rocky, but the rest of the trails are mostly gravel. A walk down to the river and back is between two and three miles, but the return route is all uphill.

Three rare and endangered plants are in this park: American ginseng, leatherwood and Virginia pennywort, along with over a hundred bird species. A hunting area is across the Black River, and hikers are advised not to cross the river.

Hacklebarney State Park was dedicated to two women in 1924, and the entrance plaque is worth a brief stop.

Difficulty: *Easy* if you just walk down to the falls; or *Moderate* if you hike down to the Black River and back.

Indian Falls is in Hedden County Park. The Hedden family donated 40 acres in 1963, and the park was opened in 1970. With Park Commission acquisitions, the park now covers 380 acres.

The main entrance to Hedden Park is on Route 513 (Reservoir Road) in **Randolph Township**, just south of Dover. From the intersection of routes 10 and 513 in Randolph, take Dover Chester Road / 513 North, turn right onto Quaker Church Road, and then left onto Reservoir Road.

The park entrance leads to a parking area near a picnic shelter and a directory. Trail maps are usually in the map box at the directory. Walk past the shelter, cross the bridge, and bear right. The green-blazed Indian Falls Trail starts on the left, just before the second bridge.

Indian Falls is not large, but it's very easy to reach, and ideal for an outing with small children. Local children were once told that this is where the Indians came to grind their corn. There is a hole in one rock created by the water, which looks like it might be used for grinding something; this probably accounts for the name.

The green trail follows Jackson Brook to the falls, which can be hard to see from the trail. Where the trail ascends steeply Indian Falls is on the right; you can walk out on the rocks of the brook to see the falls. You can also walk up the trail past the falls, cross the brook above on the rocks, and walk down on the other side of the brook; this route requires less balancing on rocks and the best view of the falls is from the other side.

You can continue on the green trail to the white-blazed Hedden Circular Trail; this is a two-mile loop. For $\frac{3}{4}$ mile return, turn left onto the white-blazed trail continue across the

gravel road, then turn left again onto a blue-blazed trail, and left again when the blue trail ends at the paved path, which leads back to the picnic shelter area.

Difficulty: *Easy*

Electric Brook Falls is in Schooley's Mountain County Park in **Washington Township**. Follow Rout 24 west from the intersection of routes 24 and 517 in Long Valley. After about a mile, turn right on to Washington Road, and then right again on to East Springtown Road; the main park entrance is on the right.

Schooley's Mountain is named after early Quaker land owners, but the Lenape Indians had been gathering in this area long before European settlers arrived. Later the mountain became a resort area, and from the 1920's through the 1950's much of the park was a YMCA camp called Camp Washington.

To visit the falls, park in the first parking lot on the right from the Springtown Road entrance. Follow the road that goes down to and along Lake George. Just before the start of the earthen dam, turn left onto the blue-blazed Falling Waters Trail. This is a sometimes rocky trail that has become one of the finer examples of trail engineering in Morris County. The falls is about one third of a mile down this trail.

You can turn back at the falls, and return on the same trail, or continue past the falls, then up a short steep hill to the white-blazed Patriots' Path. Turn right on Patriots' Path for a short walk to the Long Valley overlook. From the overlook, reverse direction on the white trail to follow Patriots' Path back to the parking lot and your car.

For a more challenging route back, continue on Patriots' Path past the overlook, to the Boulder Gorge Trail - a more rocky trail that goes back down the hill to Electric Brook, and then returns up for another look at the falls from the other side of the brook. The Boulder Gorge trail ends at the lodge across the lake from your parking lot, where you can return across the Lake George dam and back up the road to the parking lot and your car.

Difficulty: *Moderate* to the falls or the overlook, *Difficult* if you return on the Boulder Gorge Trail.