



Connecticut Section of the Green Mountain Club

VOLUME XXXXVI ISSUE III CO-EDITORS: CAROL A. LANGLEY/CELIA CAMPBELL-MOHN July – Sept. 2015

President's Message

Let me start by thanking everyone who attended our Connecticut Section annual meeting in March for entrusting me with the section presidency for the upcoming year. It's a privilege and an honor to be back in this position. Second, I would like to extend my personal thanks to Carol Langley, who guided the section for an unprecedented twelve years as president. The standing ovation that Carol received at the meeting was well-deserved.

I've always thought that the two main tenets of the Green Mountain Club and its local sections are trail maintenance and recreational activities. In trail maintenance, vice president Dick Hart has already orchestrated two trips to the Long Trail in Vermont this spring. Dick and Sven Englund slogged through snow (!) near Story Spring Shelter during the first weekend in May, clearing the trail. We had a great turnout of seven members and a very productive weekend at the end of May based at Kid Gore Shelter. Again, clearing the trail of blowdowns was a major activity, along with water bar clearing and brush clipping. From the evidence, the heavy snowfall in New England last winter broke off or felled an above-average number of trees, which seem to preferentially fall ON or ACROSS the trail. But the swarming black flies on the trail from Kid Gore to Glastenbury Mountain reminded us that Spring is finally here.

Later this summer we plan to re-shingle the roof of Story Spring Shelter. The asphalt shingles are old and mostly covered with moss, and leaks have been reported in the shelter log book. This will be a large, labor-intensive task. Look for announcements of the specific date or dates when they are set. We also realized, during a midnight downpour at Kid Gore, that its leaking wood shingle roof will need near-term replacement as well.

On the activities front, vice president Mandy Brink has been organizing the summer event schedule which is included in this newsletter and accessible through the section website. Check out the schedule and take advantage of the great activities our volunteer trip leaders have planned!

See you on the trail,

Jim Robertson

Club Information

<http://www.conngmc.com>

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Please direct all inquiries regarding the Club to the President.

The Trail Talk is published four times a year, Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. Activity schedules are included in each issue. Reports of activities and articles must be sent to the editor no later than the tenth day of the month of the publication. Send articles to:

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Membership

When filling out the form to join or renew, circle the **Connecticut Section** on the application to receive, at no extra charge, the Connecticut Section's newsletter and activity schedule.

Dues:

Individual Adult	\$45.00
Family	\$60.00
Senior (70 or older) or Limited Income	\$25.00
Sponsor (Individual/Family)	\$75.00

Send annual dues to:
The Green Mountain Club
4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road
Waterbury Center, VT 05677-9904
(802) 244-7037, <http://www.greenmountainclub.org>

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Nicholas Cicale
Andrew Knott

SEE YOU ON THE TRAIL!!

GOOGLE CALENDAR

If you would like to be added to this site please subscribe to site listed below.

Ct-gmc-activity-reminders+subscribe@googlegroups.com

Allen Freeman will be posting our activities to this site. Please contact him with any questions: allen@allenf.com

HIKE LEADERS

All reports must be sent in a Word Document in Times Roman 11. Reports sent from I-phones or I Pads will be returned. Thank you!
Carol A. Langley & Celia Campbell-Mohn

Helpful Hiking Hints

A clear shoe bag over a door can be used for those extra hiking items that you can never find when you need them. Melaine Michaud

LEAVE NO TRACE

Shell pistachios at home cut down on weight and trash. Shells do not belong on the trail do your part not to litter!!!

**Full Moon/Hammonasett
Apr. 4, 2015**

On a cool windy afternoon Alina Badus and her husband John Parejko met me at the Nature Center parking as planned. Walking west was not a fun time we could barely converse with one another because of the strong howling winds. Reaching West Beach parking we decided to return along the beach since the wind would be at our backs.

We watched many patterns the waves made as the tide was going out. Reaching the picnic pavilion we sat in the sun to watch the sunset in the west. I had an extra blanket that I shared with Alina and she shared a wonderful piece of cheese cake with me. Think I got the better deal. After eating we walked over to the rocks and were standing to watch the moon rise over the ocean with other people when we heard EVERYONE NEEDS TO LEAVE THE GATE WILL BE LOCKED IN 10 MINUTES!!!!

What do we do let's drive east to Clinton and go to the town beach good plan but it did not work. After parking our cars we walked the beach then the road but there just seemed to be another obstacle in front of us to obscure the Moon. It was decided to abandon our search of the moon. As I turned off RT. 1 to head home the Moon was smiling in the eastern sky "saying here I am".

Full Moon Searchers: Alina Badus, John Parejko, Carol A. Langley

**April 12, 2015
Narragansett Trail: Section 1**

It was the perfect hiking day and judging from the turnout, everyone had cabin fever. The sunshine and warm weather was so welcoming. We headed up Lantern Hill and enjoyed the views from the top. There were some hawks circling as if to say Welcome to spring. Don made note of the springing skunk cabbage along a stream, a sure sign that spring really was here. We tromped through the North Stonington Landfill and onward towards Wyassup Lake. We stopped for a snack at a small pond shortly before crossing Route 2. There were a couple guys out practicing fly fishing. We came upon a small pond that had been busy with beaver activity. It was quite peaceful walking a bit along the pond shore. The group chatted as we hiked and everyone had an extra spring in their step. We ended up at the boat launch on Wyassup Lake with a total of 6.5

miles. I think it's safe to say everyone had a great hike. Thanks to George and Jim R for staging cars.

Leader: Mandy Brink. Fellow hikers: Don Hagstrom, Gary Griffin, George Jackson, Jim Fritz, Trekker Ratty, David Boone, Abby Boone, Cathryn Dolan, Jane Sherman, Han Sherman, Jim Robertson

**Metacomet Trail
May 3, 2015**

The hike traversed the northern end of the Metacomet Trail in CT on sections 20 & 21. In section 21 the trail has been reopened as a through trail entirely in the woods. Previously and for over twenty years, the trail either dead ended in the middle of the forest or was a road walk, the result of new housing developments and property owners refusing to allow hikers to cross their land. Now the trail is available again to hikers.

Many wildflowers were in bloom on this hike. We saw Early Saxifrage, Solomon's Seal as well as the False Solomon's Seal, Bloodroot, Red Columbine, Red Trillium, Round Lobed Hepatica, Pussy Toes, Marsh Marigold, Shad Bush and Spice Bush. We did not see but we heard the songs of the Wood Thrush and the Black Throated Green Warbler. At one point we found some owl pellets on the ground. Breaking them apart we found tiny bone fragments of the owl's prey. Toward the end of the hike Carol spotted a face looking at us – two eyes, a nose and mouth in the bark of a big, old White Oak tree. Carol said she likes to find images in the textures of tree bark.

Leader: Dave Wells Hikers: Sarah O'Hare and Carol Langley

**Flower Full Moon
May 4, 2015**

As planned we met at the Chestnut Hill parking, shortly after 5:30 we started hike in to the tower using the Yellow Trail. This trail has many ups and downs with some views towards Quinnipiac College. When we reached the Red Triangle we headed north over the rocks. Soon the tower trail was in view and took us to our destination.

After dinner we all went to the upper room for viewing of the sunset. As always Mother Nature put on a spectacular show painting the sky from pale pink to flaming crimson. The Full Moon would be late tonight. Since the actual Full Moon was on Sunday night.

We hiked out on the Blue Trail facing east and as we came out of the valley there was the Flower Full Moon glowing in a beautiful Pink. It was quite nice hiking with the moon in view on our way out. Thanks for joining me.

Full Moon Hikers: David A. Rothberg, Nan Birdwhistell & Carol A. Langley

May 9, 2015 Mystic River Paddle

It was just Dick and I for the Mystic River paddle event. I wanted to see the Mayflower II before it left to go back to Plymouth so we decided to paddle by the Mystic Seaport. It was a gray cloudy day but actually we had a great time. The Mayflower II was on the dock and quite impressive to see. We also paddle by the Charles Morgan and the Joseph Conrad. There was a bit of a breeze going and we watched the riggers putting the sails up on the Charles Morgan. It looked so majestic.

We paddle to the end of the river and enjoyed the bird life. There was lots of bird activity and we saw egrets, mallard ducks, swans and geese. The red winged blackbirds were singing away and it all gave a sound of happy wildlife enjoying the river.

Our paddle back was a bit more work as we paddled into the wind. We discovered a docking place for kayaks close to the bridge and decided next time we might plan a lunch stop or ice cream stop as part of our paddle. On the way back to the docking point, we had fun checking out the boats in the marina and seeing what different names were given to the boats. For our first paddle of the season I must say we were very pleased at how good it felt to be out on the water.

Paddlers: Mandy Brink and Dick Hart

The New England Trail Apr. 26 & May 9, 2015

As many of you probably know, the completion of the blue-blazed New England National Scenic Trail (NET for short) was celebrated last June in a ceremony at Chittenden Park in Guilford, where the trail begins/ends at Long Island Sound. It's now possible to hike from the salt water of Long Island Sound to the stone summit of Mount Monadnock in New Hampshire.

Unlike the Appalachian Trail, the NET is not designed for through hiking. There are currently only two campsites along the entire Connecticut section, both of them in the Durham/Madison area. This means that section hiking is the only option for those who wish to hike the entire Connecticut section of the NET.

As a relatively new resident of CT (five years) and a very new member of the CT section of the GMC (one year), I've developed an interest (and a plan) for section hiking the NET. Last summer I covered the newest section on my own, from the shoreline to where the NET crosses N Madison Rd in Guilford (not far from where my family and I live). I've also hiked the Timberlands section in Guilford multiple times, since I'm the volunteer trail manager for this portion of the NET, working under the auspices of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA).

This spring I've been joined on two hikes by several members of the CT section of the GMC: Sarah O'Hare, George Jackson, Carol Langley, Carol's daughter Paula Drivdahl, and Sandy Olsen. On April 26, Sarah, George, Sandy, and I spent the morning hiking the 5.8 mile section of the NET from the Cockaponset State Forest parking area on Route 80 in Guilford to the Bluff Head parking area on Route 77 (also in Guilford). The hike took us just about three hours. Much of the trail was relatively flat, but then we enjoyed scrambling up, down, and around the Broomstick Ledges, before descending to the Bluff Head parking area. The weather was gorgeous: blue skies, cool, breezy, low humidity.

Sarah, George, Carol, Paula, and I (and Paula's dog Cooper) went on the second section hike on May 9 in the morning, from Bluff Head in Guilford to Stage Coach Road in Durham. The air was cool and moist, the skies foggy and overcast; for most of the hike, the cool temperatures kept insect activity down. We saw many wildflowers in bloom, and fiddlehead ferns that had already leafed out. This was a shorter hike, only 3.6 miles, although the first 300 feet or so of the trail was really steep. We were the only hikers on the trail for most of the morning; toward the end of our hike, we greeted a runner heading in the opposite direction.

I've been told 21.5 miles of the 215-mile NET lie within the town boundaries of Guilford, so I can now say that I've hiked one-tenth of the NET. The next section is in Durham, from Stage Coach Road to Route 68, a 6.5 mile hike (over lots of traprock, according to Sarah). Since I

don't have any free Saturdays from now until the end of July, I may be scheduling this next hike for a Friday instead of a Saturday. If anyone reading this would be interested in participating in this next section hike on a Friday during May or June, please get in touch with me via email (revdlmc@gmail.com); if you don't have email, best way to reach me is on my cell phone (443-852-2439).

Doug Clark, Guilford, CT

Nipmuck Trail May 23, 2015

The enjoyment of hiking the East Branch of the Nipmuck Trail last fall prompted the scheduling of the West Branch this spring. A promise of visiting the UCONN Dairy Bar afterwards only sweetened the hike. Whereas there were many hikers on the fall trek, on this cool morning there were only three of us.

We began at the southern trailhead on Puddin' Lane. It wasn't long before we came to a side trail leading to a marsh. A viewing platform had been a recent Boy Scout Eagle project. Our next point of interest was Wolf Rock. As we approached, a lone Pink Lady Slipper was seen. We stopped here at the vista only briefly, taking in the views to the south.

This portion of the Nipmuck travels through and is part of Schoolhouse Brook Park. Many trails here intersect with the blue blazed Nipmuck. At Bicentennial Pond we missed our turn and ended up hiking a pleasant half mile around the pond. Ultimately, we easily located our turn and continued on. Then emerging from the woods onto Spring Hill Road, we came across a lemonade stand and enjoyed the sweet offerings of lemonade and baked goodies. Upon arriving at the East/West Junction we turned left, following the Nipmuck Trail north. It wasn't long before we reached the Fenton River. Here the trail followed the river upstream for more than a mile.

The trail left the river's edge, passed the Gurleyville Grist Mill and we eventually ended our eight mile hike at the Gurleyville Road trail parking. Our day's adventure wasn't over yet as we headed over to UCONN to treat ourselves to ice cream.

Hikers: Dave Wells, George Jackson
Leader: Sarah O'Hare

New Hampshire AT Backpack May 23 - 25, 2015

The Weather gods smiled on us, but the pesky demons of steep uphill could not be completely banished during this three day 35 mile backpack on the Appalachian Trail from Hanover to Route 25A in New Hampshire.

After joining Mandy on her April Pennsylvania AT trek, I "caught the bug" to get out on more backpacks this year. As Mandy has now finished the AT from Maryland through Vermont, we talked about scheduling trips in New Hampshire and Maine. This was the first section on the press northward.

Alina drove to Hanover on Friday and hiked into Velvet Rocks Shelter, where the temperatures dipped to freezing overnight. Mandy and Jim drove up Saturday morning, parked in the Dartmouth College A Lot, a designated parking area for section hikers, and started out on the Hanover streets towards the AT. To ensure we were purists and completely covered the trail, we hiked down to the Connecticut River, across the bridge to the Vermont side, then retraced our steps back up the hill to the town center. Dartmouth operates on a trimester system, so the town was still filled with students. Weather was cool, sunny and breezy, just about perfect for hiking. We made our way to Velvet Rocks Shelter, finding logbook entry from Alina, aka "Moose Hunter". We didn't catch up to her until reaching Moose Mountain Shelter and after meeting a couple of day-hiking Dartmouth grads with whom we had an enjoyable conversation on top of Moose Mountain. Surprisingly the three of us were the only ones who stayed in the shelter overnight. A long distance hiker, a Trinity (Hartford) College student who had started on the AT in Harpers Ferry WV in April chose to set up a tent in one of the nearby sites but walked over to the shelter for a chat after dinner. The privy was a source of amusement; being the open-air (no walls) type but set up on a throne-like platform. Sunday our second day was by far the longest and most challenging, primarily because it involved two significant climbs, the first up and over Holt's Ledges – great views! - and the top of the Dartmouth Skiway, and at the end of the day, a long steep slog up Smarts Mountain. We were rejuvenated at midday, however, by trail magic – the home of Bill Ackerly "the Ice Cream Man", whose house is less than 50 yards from the trail and who invites hikers to stop for a rest, free water and free ice cream. We partook in all, especially enjoying the ice cream bars that Bill left in a freezer on an outside

porch. He was not home so our only regret was that we couldn't thank him in person, but we left a note in his log book with our gratitude for his hospitality.

At the second crossing of the Lyme-Dorchester Road we spied the parked car of our own CT Section member Dennis Himes. While stopping for a break on Lambert Ridge we met a woman who said she lunched with Dennis. Unfortunately he took a side trail back down to the parking area so we never crossed paths with him. The final climb up Smarts Mountain was a gut-buster in my opinion. We were over ten miles into a 12-plus mile day, temps had reached 80 degrees, the sun was on our packs and backs and the trail was a mix of mud, ruts and wet rocks. Not my favorite type of hike. Nonetheless, we crested the mountain just after 5 o'clock. Alina went ahead to check out the Smarts Mountain Firewarden's Cabin, and after we surveyed the tent site, which had nice grass but no level tenting spots, we decided to stay in the cabin. It was closer to the new privy, too.

The cabin was quite spacious and again we had it all to ourselves. After dinner we went back to the tent site which had a nice open view to the south. But by 8:30 we were all tucked into our sleeping bags in the cabin.

On Memorial Day our final day on the trail we were up and out by 7 am. For at least two miles coming down the north side of Smarts Mountain, we passed countless evergreen trees that had tops broken off, presumably by ice, snow, wind or a combination during the past winter. In several places large spruce trees had snapped and fallen across the trail, causing difficult walk arounds. We popped up and over Eastman ledges, past the side trail to Hexacuba Shelter, and climbed Mt. Cube, which was a relatively easy climb. Alina spotted a backbone, probably of a moose, alongside the trail which somehow Jim and Mandy didn't see. (Guess that's why Alina is the Moose Hunter and we are not...) Despite a few sprinkles on top of the mountain, the first rain we had all weekend, we enjoyed a lunch break before starting down. During one descent Jim caught up with a porcupine waddling down the trail. As he approached the porcupine would increase its speed, staying just out of camera range, then stop and turn and look, then resume its downward traverse. It finally decided to cut into the woods and disappeared into a thicket.

We reached our destination at Route 25A just after 2 pm, with a light rain falling. Our pre-arranged shuttle driver Fancy Free, a 1996 AT thru-hiker who now lives in East Randolph Vermont, was there to meet us and drive us back to the parking lot in Hanover. We

stopped at a local food co-op for sandwiches, snacks and drinks before heading south.

Trekkers: Alina Badus, Mandy Brink & Jim Robertson

Shenandoah Backpacking/Slackpacking May 17-28, 2015

We started our trip by staying at Big Meadows Campground and did day hiking. The weather was very hot and humid just hiking a few steps and I was wilting. Many wildflowers were in bloom we even spotted a small patch of wild orchids. One bear crossed in front of us and a Timber Rattler laid along the trail. Base camping allowed us to get many miles done without a heavy pack.

The night we stayed at High Top Hut there were 30 thru/section hikers. There were 3 bear hangers it is a heavy use area. The next night we stayed at Pinefield Hut which is known to have a resident Black Snake hence no mice. The snake was not in residence when we were there. We spent the night with a retired Pastor which kept the conversation interesting. The Pastor shared with me a nightcap of my Peppermint Schnapps thanks to Mandy!!!

The night we stayed at Lewis Mt. C.G. we were invaded by bugs. Retreating to our tents early we were entertained by a pair of Bard Owls who were matting just above our heads. They called to each other and wings were flapping after about 15 mins. the pair calmed down and flew off.

Next adventure is planned for Oct. see activities.

Carol A. Langley & Joe Kekacs