

VHT Pathfinder

The Official Newsletter of Victor Hiking Trails, Inc.

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PTNY grant awarded to VHT

Parks & Trails New York (PTNY) is New York’s leading statewide advocate for parks and trails, dedicated since 1985 to improving our health, economy, and quality of life through the use and enjoyment of green space.

Parks & Trails New York has worked with hundreds of community organizations and municipalities to envision, create, promote, and protect a growing network of parks and more than 1,500 miles of greenways, bike paths, and trails throughout New York State.

PTNY’s *Growing the Grassroots* Capacity Building Grants enhance the long-term sustainability of park and trail not-for-profit organizations by helping them better fulfill their missions; improve their reach, effectiveness, and impact; leverage resources, and increase community support for park and trail planning, development and/or stewardship.

This program is generously supported, in part, by the visionary philanthropist, Merryl H. Tisch, whose contribution makes it possible for PTNY to help park and trail grassroots groups become stronger and more effective stewards of New York’s parks and trails.

Since it initiated the awards program in 2009, PTNY has assisted 59 organizations in 36 New York counties.

Victor Hiking Trails (along with Victor Parks and Recreation) is one of seven organizations to be awarded a grant in 2015. We have been awarded \$2,500 for consultant services to aid in growing volunteer stewardship efforts and assist with development of short- and long-term strategies for trail maintenance.

Recently we signed a contract with LaBella Associates for \$4,000 to lead us through the process of reviewing our goals, assets and resources, determining our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and creating a plan to accomplish our goals. Ed Flynn, an engineer with LaBella Associates, will be our mentor. Ed’s background and experience will be a good fit for this program.

There will be a series of meetings with the VHT board, VHT members and the general public throughout the year.

The VHT board invites all members who would like to participate in this process to send an email to Chairman@VictorHikingTrails.org.

Inside this issue:

Both hikes were tough going (page 3)

We will be looking for early wildflowers (page 4)

if you are out on a trail and see a problem (page 6)

There a number of wild grape species (page 7)

HIKES FOR 2015

VHT 2015 Officers:

Dave Wright— Chairman
 Jeff Hennick— Vice Chairman
 Suzy Paquin— Secretary
 Ralph Weber— Treasurer
 Carol MacInnes— Trailmaster
 Chauncy Young— Trail Boss
 Peter Ingalsbe— Membership
 Ralph Weber — Education
 Wizzy Geno— Volunteer
 Coordinator
 David Coleman— Camping
 Larry Fisher—Parks Liaison

VHT Pathfinder

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*The Victor Hiking Trails
 Pathfinder* is published
 quarterly for the
 members of Victor Hiking
 Trails, Inc.

We encourage
 submissions of letters,
 editorial items and
 advertising pertaining to
 trails, Victor and the
 environment.

Ask about our rates.
 To submit articles for the
VHT Pathfinder, please
 contact:

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www.victorhikingtrails.org

Also on Facebook
 and Meetup

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Trails, Inc.

April 11th— Fishers Park— Meet at the tennis courts on Wangum Rd.
 May 9th— Webster Trails (Lake and Phillips Roads)
 June 6th— National Trails Day (hike in Victor)
 June 13th— ADK Expo, Mendon Ponds Park, hike in the park
 July 10-12th— Camp and hike at Robert H. Treman Park and Ithaca
 August 8th— Stoney Brook State Park
 September 5th— Ring Of Fire, evening hike at Bare Hill
 September 12th— Hang Around Victor Day, Village hike at 11:00 a.m.
 September 27th— 5th Annual Challenge Hike
 October 10th— Outlet Trail hike, if open
 November 14th— Boughton Park
 December 12th— Ontario County Park, new north trails

Note: Please check the message line at 585-234-8226 for details. All hikes meet at Victor Town Hall rear parking lot, 85 East Main Street, at 9:00 a.m. unless otherwise noted. Most hikes are relatively easy and take 2-4 hours. Always bring a bag lunch or snack and something to drink. Dress for the weather. We rarely cancel due to inclement weather.

We usually carpool to the trailhead. Expect to share the cost of gas with the driver. If you have any questions regarding any of the hikes, or if you have suggestions for places to hike, please leave a message at 585-234-8226.

Again this year we have scheduled several hikes in Victor or the surrounding communities. We are also leading shorter and easier hikes to encourage families and younger hikers to join us. Based on the success of last year we will again be adding an educational element to some of the hikes.

We only hike as fast as the slowest hikers, so don't worry about not keeping up. If we need to split into more than one group, that is not a problem.

Come enjoy the fun.

Past Hikes

January 10th— Lehigh Crossing Park.

On one of the coldest Saturday mornings in January, 2015, we hiked the trails at Lehigh Crossing Park as well as a section of the Auburn Trail, the Trolley Trail, The Seneca Trail, the trails at Fishers Landing and Omnitech Trail. We covered about 4 miles in two hours.



February 14th— Blue Cut Nature Center.

This was a new trail for us to check out. It is located on Route 31 between Newark and Lyons. We had Gil Burgess from Trail Works, Inc. to lead us through the trails, which were covered with about two feet of snow. We hiked about two miles there, then went to Zurich Bog for another one-hour hike. Both hikes were tough going because of the depth of the white fluffy stuff. We had to stop at Tim Horton's on the way back to Victor to get re-fueled.

March 14th— Harriet Hollister Spencer State Recreation Area.

With balmy (compared to February) temperatures in the mid-thirties, the snow was a little too soft for our snowshoes. We had to stay on the groomed trails or we would sink deep into the snow. But we practically had the entire park to ourselves. Only saw a few skiers and no snowmobilers.



Upcoming Hikes

April 11th— Fishers Park. Meet at the tennis courts on Wangum Road in Fishers at 9:00 a.m. This town park is nearly 100 acres of passive recreation with many miles of trails. Plan on a two-hour hike up and down the hills, through the hardwoods and around the open fields. We will be looking for early wildflowers and amphibians to be popping out of their winter hibernation.

May 9th— Webster Trails. We will be checking out a new trail with bridges and boardwalks. Four Mile Creek Preserve is located at the corner of Phillips and Lake Roads. The trails are mostly level with some slopes to the creek. We will also hike another trail in Webster, TBD.

June 6th— National Trails Day. We have been invited to use the Victor campus of the Finger

Lakes Community College as our home base. We will have a continental breakfast, several loop hikes, snacks, lunch, prizes and fun. All we need is nice weather.

June 13th— ADK Outdoor Expo. This annual event, held at Mendon Ponds Park at the Hundred Acre Pond area, is a great opportunity to see many of the sporting organizations that are located in our region. From canoeing and kayaking to hiking, biking and star gazing, you will find something that is new and interesting. VHT will have our tent and tables set up showing the visitors all 55+ miles of trails in Victor and telling them about our projects and monthly hikes. Stop by and say hello to the members handing out brochures.

Pancake Breakfast at Stoney Ridge Farm

If you like fresh, real maple syrup on your pancakes, you will want to visit the Stoney Ridge Farm on March 29 or 30. Located at the corner of County Road 28 and Rushmore Road (625 Co.Rd. 28 for your GPS), this 72-acre farm will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days. You will see the new syrup house, learn how they change the sap into syrup, the different types of syrup and different products that they make from the syrup. Parking will be in the lot on Rushmore Road.

VHT is now a Meetup Group

Now you can find VHT on Meetup. No cost to join.

This is another means of communicating our monthly hikes, weekly trail maintenance schedule, scout projects and special events.

To join, search for Victor Hiking Trails Meetup or go to this:

<http://www.meetup.com/Victor-Hiking-Trails-Meetup/>

Woolly Adelgid Infestation

Bob Lasher, a Master Naturalist, led a group of volunteers on a hike on March 7th to look for woolly adelgids on hemlock trees in Victor. They were actually hoping they wouldn't find any, but alas they did find an infestation in Bentley Woods, a Nature Conservancy property in Fishers. The Conservancy has been notified and

Bob reported the findings to NYSDEC for their records. Bob will next be leading a group to Letchworth Park to investigate additional areas on Saturday, March 28th. Anyone interested in helping should send an email to Bob at bclasher@live.com.

Trail Maintenance — 2015

Date - Time	Trail	Section	Start Location Description
2015/4/29 1800	Seneca	Judson - Cherry St to Apple Farm	Trailhead past the barns on Cherry Street
2015/5/2 0800	Seneca	Fishers Ridge - Willowbrook to Rt 96	Fishers Ridge sign on Willowbrook just east of Rowley Rd
2015/5/4 0800	Seneca	High Point - Turk Hill Rd to High St	Follow High Point Drive to top of the hill and west side of parking area
2015/5/6 1800	Mixed	100 Acre, Blue Bird Sanctuary & Seneca North	Trailhead South end of Yale Court then move to other locations
2015/5/11 0800	Seneca	Behind Plazas - High Street to Willowbrook	Trailhead south end of Victor Crossing Plaza (Goodwill)
2015/5/13 1800	Seneca	Ganondagan - Dryer Rd to School St	Trailhead RG&E substation on Dryer Rd
2015/5/16 0800	Monkey Run	Monkey Run all trails - come in gas line road	Trailhead on Valentine Rd
2015/5/18 0800	Fishers Park	Fishers Park all trails including connecting trail to Lehigh	Trailhead Main Street Fishers parking area
2015/5/20 1800	Auburn	Auburn Bypass East Victor plus School St to Spitzer Bridge	Auburn Trailhead on East Victor Rd
2015/5/23 0800	Seneca	Ganondagan - Boughton Rd (CR 41) thru the Apple Farm	Metal Barns south of CR 41 just west of School St
2015/5/27 1800	Trolley	Lehigh Crossing Park, Omnitech & Seneca to woods	Lehigh Crossing Park parking area off Rte 251 about 1/4 south of Rte 96
2015/5/30 0800	Trolley	Trolley Trail going both East and West from Rte 251	Trailhead on Rte 251 just north of the Auburn Trail
2015/6/1 0800	Mixed	Domine , Fishers Landing and FLCC Trails	Lehigh Trailhead where it crosses Wangum Rd
2015/6/3 1800	Seneca	Duval - Cherry St to Boughton Park	Trailhead past the barns on Cherry Street
2015/6/8 0800	Seneca	Judson - Cherry St to Apple Farm	Trailhead past the barns on Cherry Street
2015/6/10 1800	Seneca	Fishers Ridge - Willowbrook to Rt 96	Fishers Ridge sign on Willowbrook just east of Rowley Rd
2015/6/15 0800	Seneca	High Point - Turk Hill Rd to High St	Follow High Point Drive to top of the hill and west side of parking area
2015/6/17 1800	Mixed	100 Acre, Blue Bird Sanctuary & Seneca North	Trailhead South end of Yale Court then move to other locations
2015/6/20 0800	Seneca	Behind Plazas - High Street to Willowbrook	Trailhead south end of Victor Crossing Plaza (Goodwill)
2015/6/22 0800	Seneca	Ganondagan - Dryer Rd to School St	Trailhead RG&E substation on Dryer Rd
2015/6/24 1800	Monkey Run	Monkey Run all trails - come in gas line road	Trailhead on Valentine Rd
2015/6/27 0800	Fishers Park	Fishers Park all trails including connecting trail to Lehigh	Trailhead Main Street Fishers parking area
2015/6/29 0800	Auburn	Auburn Bypass East Victor plus School St to Spitzer Bridge	Auburn Trailhead on East Victor Rd
2015/7/1 1800	Seneca	Ganondagan - Boughton Rd (CR 41) thru the Apple Farm	Metal Barns south of CR 41 just west of School St
2015/7/6 0800	Trolley	Lehigh Crossing Park, Omnitech & Seneca to woods	Lehigh Crossing Park parking area off Rte 251 about 1/4 south of Rte 96
2015/7/8 1800	Trolley	Trolley Trail going both East and West from Rte 251	Trailhead on Rte 251 just north of the Auburn Trail
2015/7/13 0800	Mixed	Domine , Fishers Landing and FLCC Trails	Lehigh Trailhead where it crosses Wangum Rd
2015/7/15 1800	Seneca	Duval - Cherry St to Boughton Park	Trailhead past the barns on Cherry Street
2015/7/18 0800	Seneca	Judson - Cherry St to Apple Farm	Trailhead past the barns on Cherry Street
2015/7/20 0800	Seneca	Fishers Ridge - Willowbrook to Rt 96	Fishers Ridge sign on Willowbrook just east of Rowley Rd
2015/7/22 1800	Seneca	High Point - Turk Hill Rd to High St	Follow High Point Drive to top of the hill and west side of parking area
2015/7/25 0800	Mixed	100 Acre, Blue Bird Sanctuary & Seneca North	Trailhead South end of Yale Court then move to other locations
2015/7/27 0800	Seneca	Behind Plazas - High Street to Willowbrook	Trailhead south end of Victor Crossing Plaza (Goodwill)
2015/7/29 1800	Seneca	Ganondagan - Dryer Rd to School St	Trailhead RG&E substation on Dryer Rd
2015/8/1 0800	Monkey Run	Monkey Run all trails - come in gas line road	Trailhead on Valentine Rd
2015/8/3 0800	Fishers Park	Fishers Park all trails including connecting trail to Lehigh	Trailhead Main Street Fishers parking area
2015/8/5 1800	Auburn	Auburn Bypass East Victor plus School St to Spitzer Bridge	Auburn Trailhead on East Victor Rd
2015/8/10 0800	Seneca	Ganondagan - Boughton Rd (CR 41) thru the Apple Farm	Metal Barns south of CR 41 just west of School St
2015/8/12 1800	Trolley	Lehigh Crossing Park, Omnitech & Seneca to woods	Lehigh Crossing Park parking area off Rte 251 about 1/4 south of Rte 96

AmazonSmile helps non-profit organizations

AmazonSmile is a program operated by Amazon that generates donations for 501(c)(3) public charitable organizations. Now when you make purchases at Amazon.com you can designate that they donate 0.5% of the value of your purchase to Victor Hiking Trails.

To get started, log on to [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com).

Then select Victor Hiking Trails Inc. as your charity. The funds will automatically be transferred to our VHT bank account. So the more we spend, the more Amazon will donate to VHT.

Let us know if you have any questions or problems.

New Membership Level

We now have a level for Corporate membership. For a mere \$100 per year a business can join and all the employees automatically become

members. When applying, a list of employees, with their home address and email address, should be attached to the membership form.

Trail Maintenance begins soon

Looking out the window you would not believe that we would be thinking about trail maintenance anytime soon. But as the days get longer and the ground begins to warm up, we will be out on the trails keeping the new growth in check. If we didn't, it would be difficult to find the trails.

As shown on the chart on page 5, we officially begin trail maintenance on Wednesday, April 29th on the Seneca Trail. Chauncy Young, our new Trailboss, will have all the power equipment and hand tools ready to go. All he needs is volunteers to come out for an hour or two to help get the job done. We have our regulars on Mon-

day morning, Wednesday evening and Saturday morning, but they can all use some extra help.

If you sign up for Meetup for Victor Hiking Trails (see page 4), you will get up-to-date information every week showing where to meet on what day and time. Last minute changes due to weather will be placed on Meetup.

In the meantime, if you are out on a trail and see a problem that needs our attention, you can call Chauncy at 585-455-1932 and he will make sure the problem gets resolved.

National Trails Day

Victor Hiking Trails will be celebrating National Trails Day on Saturday, June 6th. This year we will be located at the Victor campus of the Finger Lakes Community College, 200 Victor Heights Parkway, off Route 251, near Route 96.

We will provide a free continental breakfast from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. Two loop-hikes on two separate trails will be conducted from 9 to 10:30 a.m. Hikers will then switch and traverse the other loop-

hike between 10:45 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.

Free pizza lunch will be offered from 12:30 to 1:00 p.m. A drawing will be conducted for prizes at 1:00 p.m.

A third loop-hike will follow the drawing and conclude by 3:30 p.m. All hikers who complete all three hikes will receive one year of free membership to VHT. Pre-register on Meetup.

Wild grapes in the forest... friend and foe?

If you've been out hiking in a forest any time after the deciduous trees lose their leaves and before they re-emerge in the spring it is hard not to notice the evidence of wild grape plants. Grape vines, both large and small, reach along the ground, climb up the trunks of trees, and eventually into the branches. Wild grapes are beneficial to the forest ecology but at the same time can also be detrimental. There a number of wild grape species that can grow depending on the type of habitat. For instance, some prefer moist soil and others a soil that's sandy and dry. The grape fruit is a food source for many birds and mammals. The grape vines themselves are beneficial as the bark on the vine is used as nesting material. Also, if the vine growth is dense enough it can create nesting opportunities for wildlife.

Unfortunately a thriving grape plant can produce very large, heavy vines that can attach to trees and grow into the upper limbs and branches. At this stage the vine can continue to grow and reach into nearby trees growing into that trees upper branches and limbs. This can limit the amount of sunlight received by the tree and consequently slow its growth. In time the weight of these vines can cause branches and limbs to break. The upper portion of the trunk can be broken off and in some cases the entire tree brought down. (Evidence of this is seen in our nearby forests, such as Dryer Road Park, as seen in photographs I've taken and are included below and on page 8.).



Ways to manage its negative impact while allowing it to be an important resource should be carefully considered. Accepted management methods include cutting the vine low to ground in areas where there is dense tree canopy coverage as the plants access to sunlight is limited and can prevent it from growing back. Other methods are the careful use of selected herbicides.

It should be noted that there a number of plants that have woody vines that can grow in a forest other than wild grape. There are some non-native plants with woody vines, such as Porcelain Berry and Oriental Bittersweet, and native ones such American Bittersweet. Proper identification is important and often not as complicated as it seems. There are many excellent resources online on how to identify these, and on the topic of wild grapes. Among these are the Penn State Extension, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Nature Conservancy. Also a guide put out by the Delaware Department of Agriculture found at nybg.org is a good resource.

Robert Lasher
Master Naturalist
Shagbark Brook
Get back to the roots!
shagbarkbrook@outlook.com





Bob Lasher and Chauncy Young checking out hemlocks for woolly adelgids near the Auburn Trail.



Those little white dots on the hemlock needles are the bugs that kill the trees. Native to East Asia, they feed by sucking the sap from hemlock and spruce trees. Accidentally introduced to North America from Japan, hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) was first found in the eastern United States near Richmond, VA in the early 1950s. They have now spread to western New York.

Several methods, both natural and chemical, are being tested to kill the HWA and save the hemlock trees.

Photo by Peter Ingalsbe



Photos by Bob Lasher of Dryer Road Park showing the destruction caused by wild grape vines.

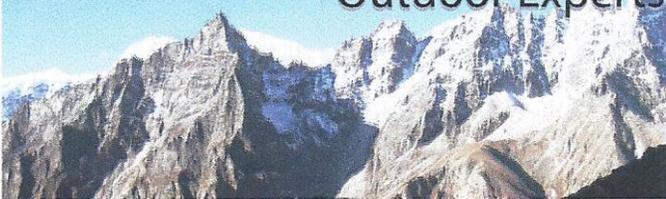
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All VHT newsletters are now available on our website.
View it and download it in full color.

Annual membership is for 12 months, beginning when you first join. Please send your renewal check promptly so we don't have to come after you. We will use your dues and donations for new and improved trails.

Filling the gaps in Victor

Check out our website at
www.victorhikingtrails.org

Join us on Facebook!

And Meetup!



VHT Map Link

Yes, I want to join / renew membership in VHT!

Name _____ **Date** _____

Address _____

City _____ **Zip** _____

Phone () - - - - -

E-Mail _____

Please note that we need your e-mail address to notify you when the latest edition of our newsletter is available on our website.

I can help with: Trail Acquisition _____ Trail Maintenance _____ Trail hikes _____
 Newsletter _____ Fund Raising _____ Special Events _____ History / Education _____

Amount submitted \$10 _____ \$20 _____ \$100 _____ \$250 _____ other \$ _____

Corporate membership at \$100 per year allows all employees to be members.

Victor Hiking Trails, Inc. is a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization.

Make check payable to: VICTOR HIKING TRAILS, INC.
 And mail to: 85 EAST MAIN STREET
 VICTOR, NY 14564