

Catskill Mountain Region

November 2013

# GUIDE

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS



*On the cover: The Windham Festival Chamber Orchestra will perform their annual Thanksgiving weekend concert this November 30 at the Doctorow Center for the Arts in Hunter. They will be joined by special guest, trumpet player Mark Gould. For more information on this concert, please see the article on page 16. Photo by Rob Shannon*

- 4 THE ARTS
- 10 PHOTO ESSAY: DELAWARE COUNTY'S WATERSHED AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF PROTECTING CLEAN DRINKING WATER
- 14 RAKONTO OF THE CATSKILLS  
*By Garan Santicola*
- 16 WINDHAM FESTIVAL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA:  
Bringing Great Music to the Mountains for 17 Years  
*By Billy Schafer*
- 18 THE GREAT OUTDOORS IN THE CATSKILLS  
*By Jeff Senterman*
- 20 MEMORIES AND REFLECTIONS ON HIKES PAST  
*By Carol and David White*
- 24 NOVEMBER AT THE CATSKILL MOUNTAIN FOUNDATION

# THE GREAT OUTDOORS IN THE CATSKILLS

By Jeff Senterman

As the leaves fall, colder temperatures settle and the mountains prepare themselves for the upcoming winter, November can be a great time to get outside in the Catskill Mountains, especially if you are a sportsman and can enjoy the hunting seasons that are available throughout the month. That means a few extra precautions for non-hunters too, so make sure you are prepared. Not only that, but November weather can be unpredictable, so it is best to plan ahead and be prepared so you can enjoy your outdoor adventures in the Catskill Mountains.

## Be Aware of Hunting Seasons

Bow season for deer hunting in the Catskill Park opens in October and runs until November 15, when rifle season starts for deer hunting (which runs through December 9). For all the details about hunting seasons, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation maintains a website at [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/65231.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/65231.html). The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference also maintains a website with hunting season and hiking information at [www.nynjtc.org/news/hunting-seasons-2013](http://www.nynjtc.org/news/hunting-seasons-2013).

Hikers should always be aware of the hunting regulations in the area they are hiking and should wear blaze orange.

## Get Ready for the 2013-2014 Winter Hiking Season!

On Saturday evening, December 7th the Catskill 3500 Club will hold a Winter Hiking Primer Class in Arkville at the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development. While the Catskills are sometimes seen as “easy” peaks, they can present formidable challenges to the winter hiker. Tom and Laurie Rankin have climbed all of the Catskill 3500 peaks at least twice in winter, as well as all the 4000’+ peaks in the Northeast. They will share their winter mountaineering skills, learned over many years, during an early evening indoor presentation. Bring your gear! Contact the Rankin’s to register and for additional information: [laurierankin@hvc.rr.com](mailto:laurierankin@hvc.rr.com) (preferred) or 845 926 2182.

## Come join the Catskill 3500 Club’s Winter Weekend January 24-26, 2014!

Enjoy winter hiking with the Catskill 3500 Club! Do you want to climb a peak in the winter? Do you want to get more comfortable with snowshoeing? All four required winter peaks for 3500 Club membership, as well as some bushwhacks, will be led by experienced hike leaders so you can pack in two fun-filled days in the outdoors and spend a great weekend in the beautiful Catskill Mountains.

As last year’s weekend was so popular, the group will once again be at the Frost Valley YMCA—a great setting not only for



Summit of Slide Mountain in winter. Photo by Andrew Moroz

hiking, but also for cross-country skiing. There are three housing options available: the Friendship House, which is inn-like housing, rooms with double beds and private baths; the Castle, which has private rooms but shared baths; and Biscuit Brook Lodge, a large cabin with bunks and configurations of four or six beds to a room. It has a central meeting space with a fireplace (perfect after a day of playing in the snow!). Please contact Maria Bedo at 917 881 9272 or at [winterweekend@catskill-3500-club.org](mailto:winterweekend@catskill-3500-club.org) for more information or if you’d like to attend. This event is sponsored by the Catskill 3500 Club and is open to the public.

## Take a Hike!

If you are looking to get out on the trails, but are looking for some guided hikes to help you get your bearings on Catskill Mountain trails, the region has several different groups that lead guided hikes. The Catskill Mountain Club (CMC) offers members and non-members the opportunity to go hiking, paddling, biking and skiing throughout the Catskills. More information on the CMC and schedules of their activities can be found at [www.catskillmountainclub.org](http://www.catskillmountainclub.org). The Catskill 3500 Club leads hikes up the 35 peaks in the Catskills that reach above 3500 feet in elevation. Visit the 3500 Club’s website at [www.catskill-3500-club.org](http://www.catskill-3500-club.org) for information on their activities. The Rip Van Winkle Hikers also lead hikes throughout the region and you can find out more information about the club check out their website at [www.newyorkheritage.com/rvw](http://www.newyorkheritage.com/rvw).

## Five Restored Fire Towers in Catskill Park Are Focus of Hiking Brochures and Maps

To help visitors find their way to the fire towers and understand their history, new trail maps and brochures for each of the restored Fire Towers of the Catskill Park are available: the Balsam Lake

Mountain Fire Tower; the Hunter Mountain Fire Tower; the Overlook Mountain Fire Tower; the Red Hill Fire Tower; and the Tremper Mountain Fire Tower. Each brochure includes a map of the area surrounding the fire tower and a description of the most direct hike to the fire tower. They are available on the Trail Conference's website as free downloads, in both black-and-white and color: [www.nynjtc.org/news/catskill-fire-tower-brochures](http://www.nynjtc.org/news/catskill-fire-tower-brochures).

## Getting Involved

If you are interested in learning more about hiking the Catskill Mountains, getting outdoors, joining a trail crew, adopting a trail for maintenance, or just finding out more information about stewardship of our recreational facilities in the Catskill Mountains, please contact the Trail Conference at 518 628 4243 or via e-mail at [catskills@nynjtc.org](mailto:catskills@nynjtc.org).

*Jeff Senterman was formerly an Assistant Forest Ranger for the DEC in Greene County, graduated with a degree in Environmental Science from Lyndon State College, has worked in the Environmental Planning field, is currently the Catskill Region Program Coordinator for the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference and is a member of the Board of Directors for the Catskill Mountain Club and the Friends of the Catskill Interpretive Center.*

*The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference partners with parks to create, protect, and promote a network of 2,000 miles of public trails, including 29 lean-tos and over 200 miles of trails in the Catskill Mountain region. We offer volunteer opportunities for people who love the outdoors, as well as publishing detailed hiking maps for the Catskill Mountain Region, along with a number of other regions. For more information on our maps and our Catskill Community Trails program please visit us on the web at [www.nynjtc.org/catskills](http://www.nynjtc.org/catskills) and follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NYNJTC.CatskillRegion](http://www.facebook.com/NYNJTC.CatskillRegion).*

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