



Nature Guide

The Fly Rod Crosby Trail, named after Maine's first registered guide and local hero, is a project of the High Peaks Alliance, whose mission is to ensure and enhance public recreational access and opportunities in Maine's High Peaks Region. Please go to www.highpeaksalliance.org for more information.

This guide covers a half mile section of the Fly Rod Crosby Trail along the Sandy River, starting at the bridge in Phillips. Look for the numbered signs on trees to correspond with the numbers in this guide.

This trail is made possible through the generosity of private landowners. Please treat the land with respect. No fires, take all trash with you and please leave the plants and animals as you find them for others to enjoy.

Please return this guide back to this holder for others to use

1. Pot Holes on the rocks in the Sandy River (best seen from the bridge)

Granite bedrock is exposed along parts of the bed and banks of the Sandy River. These parts of the river commonly form rapids. Large, cylindrical pot holes are visible in the rapids up stream from the bridge in the village of Phillips. These pot holes are caused by rocks, carried in water, swirling rapidly in a circle. These small whirlpools (also known as eddies) produce a depression in the center which created these holes over thousands of years.

2. Large rock with tree growing out of a crack on it:

This boulder was deposited here about 12,000 years ago by a glacier. Exposure to the elements caused little cracks to form in the granite. Lichens found these cracks and were able to colonize due to their ability to obtain their own nutrients.

Eventually, moss was able to grow on top of the lichen. Other debris was trapped in crevices in the boulder which further added to the soil's formation. Over time, hemlock, white pine and white birch seeds were deposited in the soil. The roots have taken hold and will contribute to breaking down the boulder.

When the trees die, they will decompose and the minerals they have collected from the boulder will then become part of our soil. New plants will pass on the minerals from this rock as it feeds insects and animals.

3. Glacial Moraine

This ridge of huge boulders, gravel, and clay is a glacial deposit called an End Moraine. The flow and melting of the ice

temporarily became a stationary end of the glacier and the materials it carried were deposited as a ridge.

4. Eastern Hemlock

Eastern Hemlock is a slow-growing, long-lived tree which unlike many trees, grows well in shade. It may live for 250 years or more. The leaves are flat and 1/3-2/3 inch long. Hemlock bark was once the source of tannin for the leather industry which has been replaced with chemicals. The bark is now used for garden mulch. Its wood is used for timbers and general construction, boxes and crates, and pulp. Many species of wildlife benefit from the excellent habitat that a dense stand of hemlock provides.

The species is currently threatened by the hemlock woolly adelgid, a sap-sucking bug accidentally introduced from East Asia to the United States in 1924. It now threatens the entire hemlock population of the eastern United States. They are identified as immobile, white woolly masses at the base of needles on undersides of hemlock twigs. As of 2013, hemlock woolly adelgid has been found in southern and coastal Maine.

5. Sandy River and Rangeley Lakes Railroad

This 2 foot gauge railroad went from Farmington to Rangeley. It was a vital link to these small towns before the advent of cars and trucks. To the left there is an old railroad bridge abutment. On your right, is the "Hillside Station" which at one time was located between Strong and Salem. Beside that is the "Phillips Station" built to house Engine # 4. Beyond that is the original "Phillips Yard Office" and the round house which was started in 1901 and completed in

2000. You can still take a ride at Sanders Station on Bridge St. and learn more about it at www.srrl-rr.org

The trail continues to the left-watch for the signs.

6. Tree With Multiple Trunks

The tree to the right has multiple trunks growing out of its base. This is caused when a hardwood tree is cut down while still living. The roots send up sprouts around the perimeter of its stump and some become tree size. This doesn't happen with conifers (evergreen trees) because cutting them, kills their root systems.

There are several rows of small holes in the trunks which were made by Yellow Bellied Sapsuckers. They are a species of woodpecker that drill holes in trees to get the tree's sap. It licks the sap as it drains out of the holes. It must drill the holes repeatedly to keep the sap flowing. After 3 or 4 days, the sap stops flowing and new holes are drilled just above the old holes. Other animals and birds benefit from their efforts as well. Squirrels, bats and other birds (especially Ruby Throated Hummingbirds) also feed off the sap from these holes

7. Eastern Hop Hornbeam

As you walk along the trail, you will see several of these small trees with their distinctive shaggy bark. This is a small, short-lived tree that prefers the shade in the understory of hardwood forests. It is sometimes referred to as "Ironwood" because its wood is very heavy, hard and strong. The wood is so durable, that when metal was scarce, it was used to make wheel rims and sleigh runners. It is often used for tool handles. The name comes from its fruit which resembles hops- an

ingredient in beer making.

8. Poison Ivy

Watch out for this plant!! Touching any part of it can produce an itchy, irritating rash. There is a lot of variation in how it can look but some things that are constant are:

1. It has 3 shiny leaflets that come from one leaf stem.
2. The leaves are alternately arranged on the branch, (they are not opposite each other).
3. The leaves are reddish in the spring when they first come out. It will lose its leaves in the fall, but the stems can also cause a rash.

Areas of skin that are suspected of contamination should be carefully washed with soap and **cold** water.

Remember, “Leaves of three, let it be”

9. Northern Red Oak

Northern red oak has “bristle-tipped” leaf lobes and there is often a reddish coloration in the bark fissures. Its strong root system enables it to withstand the occasional river flooding here. It produces acorns that are an important food source for numerous birds and animals. The wood is hard, strong and heavy. It is used for furniture, flooring, cabinets, dowels and pallets,

Hardwood trees have water transport cells that are much larger in diameter than the surrounding cells. When these vessels are sliced open, they leave tiny hollows in the wood called pores. These pores give the hardwoods a distinctive look from softwoods, which have none.

Question: How many cider barrels

could you make from a red oak tree?
Answer: None - red oak cells are very porous, so all the root beer would leak out. However, white oak has tiny bubble-like structures in its pores (called tyloses) that keeps liquids out and is used for boat building and aging liquor.

Black Flies

Black flies are as amazing as they are pesky! They start their lives in fast moving streams, where the larvae hatch from eggs in the spring. The larvae attach to submerged rocks and branches with little “hooklets” They filter food from organic matter that sweeps by them in the water.

In a few days, the larvae spin a cocoon and change into adults. Then the cocoons fill with gas and bob to the surface with the flies inside the bubbles. It takes about 2 weeks to go from eggs to adults. They form swarms and live another 2-3 weeks and are an important part of the food chain. It's the females that look for warm blood and help keep the wilderness from becoming too populated!

10. White Pine

The state tree of Maine, this species has long been in Maine's history. It thrives in sandy soils, can grow rapidly and is the tallest tree in the eastern US. They were once prized for making ships' masts and the largest were marked with a broad arrow, reserving them for the King of England. The colonists were not happy with this which helped lead to the American Revolution.

Its soft, light wood is now used in interior finish work, furniture, and pulp. The needles are 3-5 inches long and grow in clusters of 5 (one for each letter in the word W-H-I-T-E). They are very high in

Vitamin C and the Indians used to make a tea with them. The cones are 3-6 inches long and take 2 years to mature, before opening and dispersing their seeds in the early fall.

Advice from a Tree® by Ilan Rashmir

- Stand tall and proud
- Go out on a limb
- Remember your roots
- Drink plenty of water
- Be content with your natural beauty
- Enjoy the view

11. Frost Ribs

This long scar on the trunk is a result of rapid temperature changes in the winter. As the dark bark absorbs the heat from the sun, the cells expand. At night, as the tree cools off, the cells in the bark contract faster than the cells deeper in the core of the tree. This causes a wound known as a frost crack. The crack will heal over as a new layer of inner bark grows. However, it can reopen again in following years. This cracking and healing forms a vertical scar like this, called Frost Ribs.

12. Yellow Birch

Yellow Birch can be identified by its yellow-gray bark that peels in thin, curly strips and is found in cool, moist areas. Older trees have irregular, rough plates that are brownish-gray. The twigs and buds have a wintergreen taste and in the past,

were distilled to make wintergreen oil.

The wood is hard, strong and close grained, At one time, there were factories in Phillips and Strong that made spools, clothespins and toothpicks from it. It is also valuable in making veneers, furniture, flooring, dowels, gun stocks, cabinets and pulp.

References:

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Wessels, Tom. *Reading the Forested Landscape* Woodstock, VT: Countryman Press, 1997

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