

## **Suggested Walks (see below for Suggested Routes to the Northern Peaks)**

For those unfamiliar with Randolph and its environs, we have suggested a variety of walks. The brief descriptions of routes included here should be supplemented by consulting detailed descriptions of individual trails as well as the RMC's map, [Randolph Valley and the Northern Peaks of the Mt. Washington Range](#).

The walks are grouped into easy, moderate and strenuous. Within these categories, they are arranged in ascending order of difficulty. An easy walk for the older hiker, however, may not be appropriate for children, who will find a smooth path boring.

Many children thrive on challenges like scrambling up ledgy outcrops. Having an interesting objective, like a rock cave, or being able to putter in a mountain stream, rewards children for their efforts. Within descriptions of individual walks, features particularly suited for children are noted. For small children, a rough estimate of a mile an hour (no matter how smooth or steep the path) has proved a helpful guideline.

Trips with loops may be taken in either direction with no appreciable difference in time. Do not forget that the estimated time for any trip does NOT include time spent in enjoyment of views, eating lunch or incidental stops along the way.

### **EASY WALKS**

#### **Sylvan Crossing**

*0.5 mi round trip, 100-ft ascent, 30 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

A good three-generation walk that can include the quite elderly. To the pool at the crossing of Snyder Brook on the Sylvan Way. Slippery moss and shallow, dappled light. Take care to help old and young on the slippery brook crossing. Valley Way to Maple Walk, Fallsway, and Sylvan Way above Gordon Fall. Maple Way provides interesting sights of sugaring works.

#### **Mossy Glen**

*0.6 mi round trip, 200-ft ascent, 30 min*

*Trailhead: Randolph Library*

A natural gorge on Carlton Brook with nice waterfalls, pools, a Nepalese covered bridge and natural amphitheatre. Groveway over bridge to Glenside, upstream to Diagonal. Cross brook to Bluffway, down to Groveway and back to the town library. Brook is drinking water; no swimming. Mossy Glen can also be reached from Randolph Hill Rd, via High Acres Rd, Bee Line, Diagonal and Glenside. Cross on Nepalese Bridge to Bluffway, Glenside, Diagonal, EZ Way to Randolph Hill Rd. (2.0 mi loop, 400-ft ascent on return, 1 hr 10 min)

#### **Triple Falls**

*0.4 mi round trip, 250-ft ascent, 20 min*

*Trailhead: Pinkham B Rd*

A very short but steep hike up the Town Line Brook Trail leads to three picturesque waterfalls. The trail ends at Evans Fall, the highest cascade.

#### **Cold Brook Fall**

*1.4 mi round trip, 100-ft ascent, 45 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

Easy footing on the Link to one of Randolph's prettiest waterfalls, and to the beautiful Memorial Bridge. For an alternate return of the same length, use Sylvan Way and Air Line.

### **Snyder Brook Waterfalls**

*1.5 mi loop, 400-ft ascent, 55 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

Ascend via the Falls way and descend via the Brookbank, with views of Gordon, Salroc and Tama Falls. Many opportunities to dabble in the brook. For alternative return from Tama Fall via Cold Brook Fall, follow Valley Way, Beechwood Way, Sylvan Way and the Link (2.6 mi loop, 650 ft of ascent, 1 hr 40 min).

### **Castleview Rock and Ledge**

*1.8 mi loop, 450-ft ascent, 1 hr 5 min*

*Trailhead: Randolph Hill Rd*

An easy loop with views of the Northern Peaks from an enormous boulder and a small open ledge. Follow the Mt Crescent Trail, Castleview Loop and Carlton Notch Trail.

### **Lookout Ledge**

*2.6 mi round trip, 1000-ft ascent, 1 hr 50 min*

*Trailhead: Ravine House site*

The Ledge Trail climbs fairly steeply to this outcrop with its spectacular view of the Northern Peaks, King Ravine and Randolph Valley. A longer, but easier route from Randolph Hill Rd follows Grassy Lane, Pasture Path and Ledge Trail; return same way (3.2 mi round trip, 500-ft ascent, 1 hr 50 min).

### **Bumpus Brook**

*2.0 mi round trip, 650-ft ascent, 1 hr 20 min*

*Trailhead: Randolph East*

A pleasant climb along Bumpus Brook on the lower Howker Ridge Trail, visiting Stairs Fall, Devil's Kitchen, Coosauk Fall and Hitchcock Fall. Children will enjoy visiting The Bear Pit, an interesting rock formation which raises the question, was a bear once found trapped in the pit? Look for a side trail to the right just above the brook crossing below Hitchcock Fall. Return by the same route.

### **Pine Mt Loop**

*3.5 mi loop, 850-ft ascent, 2 hr 10 min*

*Trailhead: Pinkham B Rd*

Open ledges provide sweeping views. Children may be bored by 0.9 mi on the gravel Pine Mt Rd, but love scrambling up the Ledge Trail. Picnic on top of the ledges, continue to the summit to see the signs of an old fire tower. Return on the Pine Mt Trail, and explore the few short side trails with views and shelters. Descend via Pine Mt Rd.

## **MODERATE WALKS**

### **Dome Rock and Upper Inlook**

*3.4 mi round trip, 1400-ft ascent, 2 hr 25 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

Ledgy outcrop on Gordon Ridge with views to the north. Children will enjoy the steep scramble up the ledges, and should delight in disappearing into the cleft just below the top (known to some as "the pop-up toaster"). Valley Way to Brookside, cross Stevens Bridge, climb the steep Inlook Trail. For an alternate descent, follow the Kelton Trail north (passing another good view at the Overlook), Howker Ridge Trail, Sylvan Way and Maple Walk (4.0 mi loop, 1400-ft ascent, 2 hr 40 min).

## **Mt Crescent**

*3.4 mi round trip, 1350-ft ascent, 2 hr 25 min*

*Trailhead: Randolph Hill Rd*

Follow the Mt Crescent Trail, which climbs steeply at times, to good lookouts south to the Northern Peaks and north to the Pliny and Pilot Ranges. Return same way, or make a short loop on descent via east end of Crescent Ridge Trail; distance is same either way.

## **Peboamauk Fall**

*5.0 mi round trip, 200-ft ascent, 2 hr 35 min*

*Trailhead: Randolph Hill Rd*

An outstanding waterfall at the foot of the Ice Gulch. Ice Gulch Path to upper junction of Peboamauk Loop, Peboamauk Loop and return to Ice Gulch Path.

## **Owl's Head**

*5.0 mi round trip, 2000-ft ascent, 3 hr 30 min*

*Trailhead: NH 115 in Jefferson*

The moderately steep Owl's Head Trail leads to the open ledges of Owl's Head and a fine panorama of the Presidential Range. One can continue on Martha's Mile to Mt Martha, the highest summit of Cherry Mt, where there are views in several directions (6.6 mi round trip, 2550-ft ascent, 4 hr 35 min).

## **Cliffway Loop**

*5.5 mi loop, 1350-ft ascent, 3 hr 25 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

A series of less visited trails with outstanding views into King Ravine. Via the Link past Memorial Bridge, Cliffway past White Cliff, Bog Ledge and King Cliff. Descend Monaway and Amphibrach back to Link at Memorial Bridge. A longer variation continues on Cliffway past Spur Brook Fall to Amphibrach before descending to Link (6.1 mi loop, 1400-ft ascent, 3 hr 45 min).

## **Durand Scar**

*5.0 mi round trip, 2000-ft ascent, 3 hr 30 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

This outlook on the east side of Durand Ridge offers a good view of Mts Madison and Adams and the Snyder Brook valley. Via Valley Way, Scar Trail and Scar Loop; the latter two trails make a short loop over the outlook.

## **First and Second Cascades**

*5.4 mi round trip, 1450-ft elevation gain, 3 hr 25 min*

*Trailhead: Bowman*

Visit two scenic waterfalls on Cascade Brook in Cascade Ravine, with a view from the top of each. Follow the Castle Trail, then the Israel Ridge Path to the cascades. The First Cascade is a short distance south on the Link. Brook crossings may be difficult in high water.

## **Crescent Ridge Loop**

*6.5 mi loop, 1900-ft ascent, 4 hr 10 min*

*Trailhead: Randolph Hill Rd*

A very attractive circuit over the Crescent Range, with views from Lookout Ledge, Mt Randolph, Lafayette View Ledge, and the north and south viewpoints on Mt Crescent. Follow Grassy Lane, Pasture Path, and Ledge Trail to Lookout Ledge, then Crescent Ridge Trail to Mt Crescent. Descend via Mt Crescent Trail.

## **Mts Starr King & Waumbek**

*7.2 mi round trip, 2750-ft ascent, 5 hr*

*Trailhead: off US 2 in Jefferson*

Climb the moderately graded Starr King Trail for a good view of the Presidentials from Mt Starr King, then continue through fine fir forest to the wooded summit of Mt Waumbek, a 4000-footer.

### **Pond of Safety Loop**

*9.0 mi, 1800-ft ascent, 5 hr 25 min*

*Trailhead: Randolph Hill Rd*

A long loop over recently built trails through a remote area of the Randolph Community Forest and the Kilkenny unit of the White Mountain National Forest. Highlights include several partial vistas from the Four Soldiers Path, and the serene beauty of the Pond of Safety. Follow Grassy Lane, Pasture Path, Four Soldiers Path, Pond of Safety Rd and a spur road to the pond; return via Underhill Path and Carlton Notch Trail.

## **STRENUOUS WALKS**

### **The Howks**

*5.8 mi round trip, 2800-ft ascent, 4 hr 20 min*

*Trailhead: Pinkham B Rd*

A steep climb that includes several good viewpoints on the northern ridges of Mt Madison. Follow Pink Link, passing an excellent outlook, then Howker Ridge Trail to the open summit of the highest Howk.

### **Ice Gulch Loop**

*6.6 mi, 1250-ft ascent, 4 hr 25 min*

*Trailhead: Randolph Hill Rd*

A strenuous trip through the boulder-strewn cleft on the southeast side of the Crescent Range. Older children love the prospect of finding ice on a hot summer day. The walking to and from the Gulch is easy though long; the traverse through the boulders requires some difficult scrambling. Take the Boothman Spring Cutoff and Cook Path to the head of the Gulch, descend the Ice Gulch Path to Fairy Spring, follow Peboamauk Fall Loop, then Ice Gulch Path again to Randolph Hill Rd. Turn right on road to return to trailhead in 0.5 mi.

### **Floor of King Ravine**

*6.8 mi loop, 2500-ft ascent, 4 hr 40 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

This hike visits the floor of the spectacular glacial cirque on the north side of Mt Adams. Follow Air Line and Short Line to King Ravine Trail, just below Mossy Fall; King Ravine Trail to floor of ravine. Older children enjoy exploring the "Subway" route through boulder caves. Retrace King Ravine Trail to Mossy Fall and continue to Randolph Path, Short Line and Air Line. For a longer return, climb the steep and dramatic Chemin des Dames to Air Line on the Knife Edge and descend via Air Line (6.7 mi loop, 3150-ft ascent, 4 hr 55 min).

### **Emerald Bluff Loop**

*7.5 mi loop, 2600-ft ascent, 5 hr 5 min*

*Trailhead: Bowman*

A strenuous loop with fine brook scenery and a spectacular view of Castle Ravine from the Bluff. Follow Castle Trail, Israel Ridge Path, Castle Ravine Trail and the steep Emerald Trail to the Bluff; descend via Israel Ridge Path past Second and First Cascades to Castle Trail. Brook crossings may be difficult in high water.

### **Tour of RMC Camps**

*9.3 mi loop, 3200-ft ascent, 6 hr 15 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

This route visits all four RMC camps. A strenuous trip offering a wide variety of scenery and terrain; there is a short stretch above tree line and many good views. From Appalachia take Air Line, Link, Amphibrach, Randolph Path, and Spur Trail to [Crag Camp](#). Follow Gray Knob Trail to [Gray Knob](#) Cabin and on across Lowe's Path to Perch Path and [the Perch](#). Retrace Perch Path to Randolph Path and descend to Lowe's Path to [Log Cabin](#); take Log Cabin Cutoff back to Randolph Path; descend to Short Line and Air Line back to Appalachia.

### **Tour of less frequented RMC trails**

*9.9 mi loop, 3300-ft ascent, 6 hr 35 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

A varied trip over some of the less used RMC trails, using portions of thirteen trails in all! It features good views, a short stretch above treeline, and fine brook scenery, with all kinds of walking from level stretches to some scrambling up the sidewall of King Ravine. From Appalachia, follow Link to Cliffway. Left on Cliffway and turn right at Amphibrach, ascending to Pentadoi. Left on King Ravine Trail, up past Mossy Fall to the floor of King Ravine. Ascend Chemin des Dames to Air Line on Knife Edge. This is a good place for lunch. Now descend Air Line to Upper Bruin, go right to Valley Way, left to Lower Bruin, right to Watson Path, then left to Brookside and Salmacis Fall. Below Salmacis right on Kelton Trail to Upper Inlook, then left on Inlook Trail over Dome Rock and down to Brookside. Follow this to Valley Way and back to Appalachia.

---

## **Suggested Routes to the Northern Peaks**

Listed here are some of the many routes using trails described in our guidebook, [Randolph Paths](#), that may be used to ascend one of the three Northern Peaks - Mts Madison, Adams and Jefferson. Many additional route variations may be put together using the extensive trail network on the northern slopes. Distances given are one-way to the summit. In some cases, two of these routes can be combined to make an attractive loop, and ambitious and well conditioned hikers may find it enjoyable to visit two or even all three of the peaks in a single hike.

The difficulty of ascents to these summits should not be underestimated. With the exception of the Caps Ridge Trail up Mt Jefferson, every route requires an ascent of 4000 ft or more with rocky and awkward footing in the upper elevations. Each of these summits thrusts far above treeline and is thus exposed to the full force of wind and storm; if bad weather threatens, save the climb for another day.

### **MT MADISON**

#### **Valley Way, Osgood Trail**

*4.3 mi, 4100-ft ascent, 4 hr 10 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

Perhaps the easiest route to Madison, with moderate grades on Valley Way to Madison Hut and a half-mile climb up the rocks to the summit. An attractive and less-used alternative to the middle section of Valley Way is to follow the Brookside and Lower Bruin.

#### **Air Line, Air Line Cutoff, Osgood Trail**

*4.2 mi, 4100-ft ascent, 4 hr 10 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

This route allows one to enjoy the views from Mt Adams' Durand Ridge while en route to Mt Madison.

### **Valley Way, Watson Path**

*3.9 mi, 4050-ft ascent, 4 hr*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

One of the shortest routes to Madison, but the Watson Path is steep, rough and exposed to weather. An appealing option is to use the less-traveled Brookside instead of the middle section of Valley Way.

### **Howker Ridge Trail, Osgood Trail**

*4.5 mi, 4350-ft ascent (plus 200 ft on return), 4 hr 25 min*

*Trailhead: Randolph East*

This is a very scenic route with varied views from the Howks. Rough footing and some extra ups and downs make this one of the tougher routes to Mt Madison.

### **Pine Link, Watson Path**

*3.8 mi, 3950-ft ascent (plus 200 ft on return), 3 hr 55 min*

*Trailhead: Pinkham B Rd*

Pine Link and Watson Path offer a fairly steep and rough route with several good views in the middle section. Another option is to combine the Pine Link with the upper sections of the Howker Ridge and Osgood Trails.

### **Osgood Trail from Madison Hut**

*0.5 mi, 550-ft ascent*

## **MT ADAMS**

### **Air Line**

*4.3 mi, 4500-ft ascent, 4 hr 25 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

The Air Line is the shortest route to the summit of Adams, with superb views along the Knife Edge on Durand Ridge. An appealing option is to use Valley Way and the Scar Trail and Scar Loop to access the Air Line below the Knife Edge; this is 0.7 mi longer but is less steep and offers an additional view from Durand Scar.

### **Valley Way, Gulfside Trail, Air Line**

*4.7 mi, 4500-ft ascent, 4 hr 35 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

This is a fairly moderate route that passes by Madison Hut. For a more exciting finish, take the Star Lake Trail from the hut to the summit -- very steep and rugged with unusual views, and just 0.1 mi longer.

### **Air Line, Short Line, King Ravine Trail, Air Line**

*4.6 mi, 4500-ft ascent, 4 hr 35 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

This route features the spectacular scenery of King Ravine, with a dramatic and challenging scramble up the headwall. Allow extra time for traveling through the boulder field in the floor of King Ravine, and up the headwall.

### **Link, Amphibrach, Randolph Path, Spur Trail, Lowe's Path**

*5.1 mi, 4500-ft ascent, 4 hr 50 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

A less-used approach with good views along the west rim of King Ravine, this route also passes by the RMC's [Crag Camp](#).

### **Lowe's Path**

*4.7 mi, 4450-ft ascent, 4 hr 35 min*

*Trailhead: US 2 at Lowe's Store*

A steady ascent up Nowell Ridge, Lowe's is steep in its middle section. Passes very near the RMC's [Gray Knob](#) Cabin and offers open views in its upper 1.5 mi.

### **Castle Trail, Israel Ridge Path, Lowe's Path**

*5.4 mi, 4300-ft ascent, 4 hr 50 min*

*Trailhead: Bowman*

The Castle Trail and Israel Ridge Path offer a wild, less-used ascent route that passes by the First and Second Cascades and then climbs Israel Ridge. The stunning view from Emerald Bluff can be added with a short side trip on the Emerald Trail.

### **Spur Trail, Lowe's Path from Crag Camp**

*1.5 mi, 1550-ft ascent, 1 hr 30 min*

### **Gray Knob Trail, Lowe's Path from Gray Knob Cabin**

*1.6 mi, 1400-ft ascent, 1 hr 30 min*

### **Gulfside Trail, Air Line from Madison Hut**

*0.9 mi, 1000 ft, 55 min*

### **Star Lake Trail from Madison Hut**

*1.0 mi, 1000 ft, 1 hr*

## **MT JEFFERSON**

### **Air Line, Short Line, Randolph Path, Gulfside Trail, Mt Jefferson Loop**

*6.1 mi, 4400-ft ascent, 5 hr 15 min*

*Trailhead: Appalachia*

A long, relatively gentle approach with good views and much exposure to weather, no often used unless as part of a loop including Mt Adams.

### **Lowe's Path, Randolph Path, Gulfside Trail, Mt Jefferson Loop**

*5.5 mi, 4350-ft ascent, 4 hr 55 min*

*Trailhead: US 2 at Lowe's Store*

The upper half of this route is similar to that from Appalachia. This approach is popular in winter when the Caps Ridge route is impractical due to the unplowed Jefferson Notch Rd.

### **Castle Trail**

*5.0 mi, 4200-ft ascent, 4 hr 35 min*

*Trailhead: Bowman*

The Castle Trail is a rugged route up the Castellated Ridge, with spectacular views and scrambling along the Castles.

### **Castle Trail, Israel Ridge Path, Castle Ravine Trail, Randolph Path, Gulfside Trail, Mt Jefferson Loop**

*5.2 mi, 4250-ft ascent, 4 hr 45 min*

*Trailhead: Bowman*

One of the wildest and most scenic trips in the Randolph area, this route features an ascent through secluded Castle Ravine and a rough scramble up the headwall. Descend via Castle Trail.

### **Caps Ridge Trail**

*2.5 mi, 2700-ft ascent, 2 hr 35 min*

*Trailhead: Jefferson Notch Rd*

Caps Ridge Trail is the shortest ascent on the Northern Peaks, but still quite rugged as it struggles up the rocky Caps. A scenic 3.5 mi loop descent can be made around the south side of the mountain by following Mt Jefferson Loop for 0.1 mi., Six Husbands Trail for 0.3 mi., Gulfside Trail for 0.5 mi., and Cornice for 0.5 mi back to Caps Ridge Trail. Return loops on the northwest side via the Cornice or the Link are also possible but considerably rougher.

### **Gray Knob Trail, Randolph Path, Gulfside Trail, Mt Jefferson Loop from [Gray Knob Cabin](#)**

*2.6 mi, 1350-ft ascent, 2 hr (add 0.4 mi, 150 ft of ascent and 15 min for route from [Crag Camp](#))*