

Hiking Guide to the Moosehead Lake Region

Prepared by Destination Moosehead Lake

Monson Visitor Center notes:

Big Spencer Mountain: The road directions in this guide are outdated. Here are updated directions: Drive north to Kokadjo on Lily Bay Road. Take the left fork 0.2 miles north of Kokadjo and continue. At 4.3 miles bear left. At 5.9 miles stay straight. This route avoids Sias Hill, which is a very rough stretch of road. Just after crossing the bridge over Bear Brook (on the right is Bear Brook campsite), turn left and drive 6.1 miles. Trailhead parking is on the left.

Little Spencer Mountain: This guide mentions that there are ropes to assist hikers in climbing a narrow chimney. These ropes are not installed by trail professionals, nor are they regularly maintained. They may not be safe to use, and hikers should not rely on them. It is possible for strong, experienced hikers to climb the chimney without using the ropes.

CHAIRBACK MOUNTAIN (Please note that fee is charged at checkpoint)**Distance:** 8.2 miles round-trip**Time:** 6 hours round-trip**Elevation:** 2,219 feet**Difficulty:** Challenging

Although steep at first, the trail levels out and is a very pleasant hike to the summit. There are incredible views of the White Cap Range, Baker Mountain, Elephant Mountain and even part of Big Spencer Mountain. The last part of the trail winds through a steep rocky slope, so use caution. There is a blue-blazed side trail to East Chairback Pond.

Directions: Go through the blinking light in Greenville (traveling north); turn right and head up Pleasant Street. Two miles the pavement ends, and at 3.6 miles you cross Big Wilson Stream. At 12 miles you come to Hedgehog Checkpoint, and a fee is charged. At 13.8 miles turn right. Continue to follow signs to Gulf Hagas parking lot for several miles. The Appalachian Trail crosses the road before the Gulf Hagas parking, but there isn't any room to park. Continue 0.3 mile to the Gulf Hagas parking lot, then walk back to the trail.

BIG SPENCER MOUNTAIN**Distance:** 4 miles round-trip**Time:** 5 hours**Elevation:** 3,230 feet**Difficulty:** Challenging

Big Spencer is a prominent Moosehead Lake landmark. The views from the top include Lobster Lake, Chesuncook Lake, Katahdin, Moose Mountain, Mt Kineo, Allagash wilderness lakes, and many other lakes, ponds, and mountains. About .8 miles up the hiking trail is an old Forest Ranger cabin. From there, a steep trail leads to the top. There are short wooden ladders over some of the more slippery areas. An abandoned fire tower is at the summit.

Directions: Drive to Kokadjo. Take the left fork .2 miles north of Kokadjo. Continue on main road for 8 miles. At the bridge that crosses Bear Brook (on right is BB campsite) turn left and drive 6.1 miles. Trailhead is on the left. Vehicles with low clearance can make it to within 200 yards of trailhead.

MOXIE FALLS**Distance:** 2 miles round-trip**Difficulty:** Easy

This is a very easy 1 mile walk into one of Maine's highest and prettiest waterfalls.

Directions: Starting from the blinking light in Greenville head north on Route 15, at 1.4 miles turn left on Depot Street, at 2.2 miles curve right, at 5.3 miles curve left, at 6.1 miles straight through gate, at 12.2 miles pass "Wally World", at 17.1 miles straight through gate, at 18.0 miles stop and then left on Indian Pond Road, at 19.8 miles take a sharp right turn on to Lake Moxie Road, at 23 miles right into Moxie Falls parking lot, at 25 miles take a left or right at the stop sign at 201 for food and gas.

LILY BAY STATE PARK**Difficulty:** Easy

Beautiful location with a network of nature trails and a beach/picnic area that you can enjoy for a nominal day-use fee.

Directions: From the flashing light in downtown Greenville proceed about 8 miles north on the Lily Bay Road (up the east side of the lake). The park entrance will be on your left.

LITTLE WILSON FALLS**Distance:** 2 miles round-trip**Time:** 2 hours**Difficulty:** Moderate

Directions: Go south from Greenville to Monson on Rte 15. Take a left on the Elliottsville Road, just after the "Welcome to Monson" sign. Proceed 7.7 miles. Before the bridge that spans Big Wilson Stream, take a left and go on a gravel road for 0.7 miles to where the road ends at a campsite. Park here. Walk upstream on a trail that follows along the river. After about .8 miles you will come to the Appalachian Trail, designated by white blazes on the trees. Turn left onto the AT and follow it for about .1 mile upstream to the falls. There is a dramatic drop into the gorge, so keep dogs and children close to you at the falls. On your return trip you might want to spend some time at the swimming hole near the campsite. There is a rope swing and some deep pools to jump into. There is a gate at the start of the gravel road which may be locked, if so park at the gate and walk the .7 miles.

INDIAN MOUNTAIN – Laurie's Ledge Trail (Please note that fee is charged at checkpoint)**Distance:** 3.2 miles round-trip**Time:** 3 hours**Elevation:** 2,338 feet**Difficulty:** Moderate

Directions: Go straight through the blinking light in Greenville (traveling north); turn right and head up the steep hill called Pleasant Street. At 2 miles the pavement ends, and at 3.6 miles you'll cross Big Wilson Stream. At 12 miles you come to Hedgehog Checkpoint, and a fee is charged. At 13.8 miles turn left, following signs to LLPC (Little Lyford Pond Camps) and the Head of Gulf Trail. You will pass the Head of Gulf Trail at 14.7 miles. The entrance to Little Lyford Pond Camps will be on your right at 16 miles. The trailhead to Laurie's Ledge trail is .1 mile further on your left. There is a vista facing west near the top that offers spectacular views of Horseshoe Pond, the Wilson Ponds, Big Moose Mountain, Elephant Mountain, Baker Mountain, and glimpses of Moosehead Lake in the distance.

NUMBER FOUR MOUNTAIN**Distance:** 4 miles round-trip**Time:** 3- 4 hours round-trip**Elevation:** 2,890 feet**Difficulty:** Moderate to challenging

Directions: The Number Four Mountain Trail begins off the privately-owned but publicly accessible Meadow Brook Rd. The trailhead is located at -69.41865°, 45.63181° and is accessed by travelling a little over 4 miles eastward on the Meadow Brook Rd. (unpaved) from the Lily Bay Rd. (paved). At approximately 1.7 miles east of the Lily Bay Rd., bear left and continue straight to the trailhead. Temporary parking for a few cars is possible just across a bridge over Lagoon Brook. To start your hike, walk back along the road a short distance, cross the bridge, and continue about 100 yards to where the trail enters the woods on the east side of the road.

EAGLE ROCK**Distance:** 7.4 Miles round trip**Time:** 4-5 Hours round trip**Difficulty:** Challenging

This day hike has some of the best views in the area! The summit consists of bare rock with fantastic panoramic views of the entire Moosehead Lake Region.

Directions: From the blinking light, drive approximately five miles on ME Rte 6/15. Turn onto the North Road (a dirt road) and travel 3.6 miles, then turn onto the East Moore Bog Rd. Travel another 1.4 miles and you will see a gravel parking lot

B-52 MEMORIAL SITE ON ELEPHANT MOUNTAIN**Distance:** 1/2 mile round-trip**Time:** 45 minutes**Difficulty:** Easy

This is a somber memorial to the crash of a B-52 bomber doing training maneuvers in January of 1963. All but two crewmembers perished, and those two spent a cold night in a blizzard on this remote mountain before being discovered. The people of Greenville have preserved the site and the wreckage in honor of the men aboard this flight. Each year in January, a group snowmobile ride is held to this site, and a memorial service takes place.

Directions: Set your odometer at the blinking light and head north on Lily Bay Road, at 7 miles turn right on Prong Pond Road, at 10.7 miles bear left at fork, at 12.4 miles you will cross a wooden bridge then take the next left at 12.5 miles continue until you reach the trailhead at 14.3 miles. Return on the same road you used to reach the site. The road has some potholes so drive slowly.

BIG MOOSE MOUNTAIN (formerly Big Squaw Mountain)**Distance:** 6 miles round-trip**Time:** 3-4 hours**Elevation:** 3,196 feet**Difficulty:** Challenging

Big Moose offers tremendous views of the Moosehead Region and Mount Katahdin. The trail is well marked. Halfway up the trail you will pass an old Ranger cabin. From there, a steep, step-stone path goes up the southeast side of the mountain. The remnants of an old fire tower were removed from the summit in 2011 (built in 1905, the first in the U.S.) From the top of the mountain there is another trail that goes north to the top of the Squaw Mountain Ski Area and the top of the double chair lift.

Directions: From the traffic light in downtown Greenville travel north for 5.1 miles on Rte 15 going toward Rockwood. Take a left on the dirt road marked by a sign for Maine Public Reserve Lands--Little Moose Unit. Travel about 1.5 miles on this road. Look for the trailhead and parking on the right.



HIKING GUIDE

to the

MOOSEHEAD LAKE REGION

This region is blessed with some of the most spectacular hikes in the Northeast. A wide range of terrain will please both the casual stroller and the serious backpacker. The Appalachian Trail passes southeast of Greenville and touches some of the hikes below on its way to the grand finale atop Mount Katahdin. These hikes can all be done as day trips from the Moosehead area. Whatever your ability, the majestic views and variety of choice will thrill those who love hiking.

PLEASE REMEMBER

Take only pictures and leave only footprints.

DESTINATION

Moosehead Lake

LITTLE KINEO MOUNTAIN

Distance: 1.5 miles roundtrip

Time: 2 hours roundtrip

Elevation: 1,927 feet

Difficulty: Moderate

This is a very scenic hike across the open summit of Little Kineo. The trail is well marked (blue-blazed). There are several overlooks along the way and spectacular views of Moosehead Lake, Kineo, Katahdin, Big Moose and the two Spencer mountains. The 360-degree views are some of the best in the state. **Directions:** From the traffic light in Greenville go north about 20 miles on the Lily Bay Road to Kokadjo. After Kokadjo, turn left where the pavement ends and continue for another 1.2 miles. Reset your odometer and turn left again (there is a sign for Spencer Pond Camps) At 7.2 miles, where there is a sign for Spencer Pond Camps, stay straight on the main road. At 8.3 miles you will cross over a bridge at Spencer Pond. There will be a gorgeous view of Little Spencer Mountain on your right. At 13.9 you'll come to a fork, where you should go left. At 15.4 miles turn right at the sign for Maine Public Reserved Lands (Days Academy Grant Unit). At 16.6 miles bear left. At 17.7 miles look for the trailhead and a small parking area on the right. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** This road is used as a snowmobile trail in winter. There are several signs pointing to Raymond's, Kokadjo Trading Post, Rockwood, and Kineo. These signs are intended for snowmobilers and point to roads and trails that are not passable by car or truck.

LITTLE MOOSE MOUNTAIN

(formerly Little Squaw Mountain), LITTLE MOOSE POND, BIG MOOSE POND (formerly Big and Little Squaw Ponds), and NOTCH PONDS

Distance: 1-8 miles round-trip, depending on route

Time: 1-4 hours round-trip

Difficulty: Moderate

This is a beautiful hike with several picturesque mountain ponds. There are a total of five camping areas on these trails, two at Big Moose Pond, one each at Little Moose, Big Notch and Little Notch Ponds. The short trail (1 mile round-trip) into Big Moose Pond is very manageable for young children. From that point the trail continues to the east over a dam for about .25 miles to the intersection of the Loop Trail and the Greenwood Trail. The left fork goes to Little Moose Pond (.25 mile) and then to Papoose Pond (.5 mile) continuing up the ridge to the Moose Mountain Inn (4 miles from Big Moose Pond, so you may want to arrange with Northwoods Outfitters for a shuttle to get back). The right fork is the loop trail which climbs to the next trail intersection (.5 miles). The left fork is the loop trail back to the Greenwood Trail between Little Moose and Papoose Pond (.75 miles), commanding a nice view of Big Squaw Mountain. The right fork takes you to Big and Little Notch Ponds (1.5 miles). The trail then passes Baker Falls to the Big Indian Pond Trailhead (1.25 miles). The eastern end of the Greenwood Trail starts on the left side of the Moose Mountain Inn on Rte 15 (you may park in their lot by the Trailhead sign).

Directions: Follow the directions for the Big Moose Mountain hike. Follow the road beyond the Big Moose trailhead to the fork. Bear left. Stay on this road 1.1 miles. You will see the post heading of the trail on your left.

Directions to the Moose Mountain Inn: From downtown Greenville go north on Rte 15. The Moose Mountain Inn will be on your left about one mile after you pass under the railroad trestle at Greenville Jct.

BARREN MOUNTAIN

Distance: 8 miles round-trip; plus 1 ¼ further to Cloud Pond

Time: 6 hours round-trip

Elevation: 2,670 feet

Difficulty: Challenging

Finding this trail is a real challenge, but once you do you will be on a remote and strenuous part of the Appalachian Trail. Impressive sites along the way are the Barren Slide and Barren Cliffs. There is a fire tower at the summit. Cloud Pond is a remote mountain pond about 1 ¼ miles further that is well worth visiting. **Directions from Greenville:** At the blinking light in Greenville, turn right up Pleasant Street. Soon the pavement ends, and at 3.6 miles you'll cross Big Wilson Stream. Continue on the main dirt road and at 7.3 miles turn right. At 7.5 miles take a left and at 9.2 miles stay on the main road. In this area there is a great view of Barren and Borestone, with Lake Onawa in between. Take a right at 11.3 miles. Stay straight at 12.7 miles, and at 13.0 miles is the brown sign marking the AT. Head toward the sound of Long Pond Stream. You will have to ford Long Pond Stream. Be prepare to get at least your feet wet!

After hiking the trail, you should check out Vaughn Falls, 0.5 mile west (southbound on the AT). The trail leaves the road uphill from Barrens' trailhead, and is marked with a rock cairn. It takes you to the 20-foot high Vaughn Falls.

LITTLE SPENCER MOUNTAIN

Distance: 4 miles round-trip

Time: 4 ½ hours round-trip

Elevation: 3,040 feet

Difficulty: Challenging

Trail (not blazed) rises moderately through a hardwood forest, then becomes very steep as it enters softwoods, including some giant pines. There are gorgeous views along the way. After crossing through a few slides the trail comes to a narrow chimney. Use caution in this area; send only one hiker through at a time. There are ropes here to assist the hiker on the way up. There are a few more slides to cross, and the trail is very close to the cliff edge in some parts. Soon the trail mounts the ledges where there is some great blueberry picking when in season. From here there are no more difficult areas, and it is a moderate walk to the summit, where there are 360 degree views of Katahdin, Big Spencer, Big Moose, Mount Kineo, Moosehead Lake and Jackman area mountains. Some spots along the way have treacherous footing on loose rock. Dogs and young children will not be able to climb this.

Directions: Follow directions for Big Spencer Mountain to Kokadjo. After Kokadjo turn left where pavement ends. Continue for another 1.2 miles then turn left again. After another 7.2 miles turn right at a sign for Spencer Pond Camps. At this turn you will see Little Spencer. If you can see the ledges on it, keep in mind that the trail goes straight through that very same ledge. Drive 2.1 miles toward it (stay left). Look carefully for the trailhead on the right, as it isn't well marked. Park off the side of the road.

MT. KATAHDIN

Distance: 10 miles plus depending on trail.

Time: 10 hours or more

Elevation: 5,267 feet

Difficulty: Challenging

The summit of Katahdin can be reached using many different trails in a vastly wooded, remote wilderness setting. For more information, ask us for the complete Katahdin Hiking and Paddling Guide.

GULF HAGAS – (Please note that fee is charged at check-point) (map available at Visitor's Center)

Distance: 8.5 miles round-trip for entire trail,

Time: 8 hours round-trip for entire trail

Difficulty: Rim Trail is challenging. Pleasant River Road Trail is moderate.

Called the Grand Canyon of Maine, this magnificent gorge is nearly 4 miles long with vertical slate walls 300 to 400 feet deep. The West Branch of the Pleasant River drops some 400 feet creating numerous waterfalls, chutes and pools. The gorge and adjacent land have been purchased by the National Park Service. The Hermitage (a majestic stand of towering King's Pine) was declared a National Landmark in 1968. The Nature Conservancy now owns this land. We recommend using the north-western parking lot near the head of the Gulf since hikers can stay dry and do not have to ford the Pleasant River using this approach. From the north-west parking lot to the beginning of the rim trail and Stair Falls is just over 1.7 miles each way. So if you only have 4-5 hours you can stay dry and hike to Stair and Billings Falls. If starting from the south-eastern parking area the trail starts with a ford across the knee-deep Pleasant River. From the south-eastern parking lot to Screw Auger falls is just over 1.5 miles each way. To visit the Hermitage, look for signs on the right after crossing the river.

From either parking lot the hike includes a loop trail of approximately 8.5 miles. The Rim Trail is difficult but will take you by spectacular scenery along the gorge. Most hikers start their hike along the rim trail and return to their vehicle using the tote road.

WHITECAP MOUNTAIN

Distance: 2 miles of road and 2.5 miles of trail to the top, one-way.

Time: 5 hours round-trip

Elevation: 3,654

Difficulty: Challenging

This trailhead is difficult to find. It includes a lovely, remote section of the Appalachian Trail. About halfway up is a lean-to. The trail from here to the tree line is steep. The top is an open alpine area with fabulous views of Katahdin. There are two different ways to reach the spectacular views atop White Cap. If you plan to spend time in the Gulf Hagas area then you should check out the White Brook Trail. The more traditional route to White Cap is referred to locally as the Logan Brook Trail (although it's just the regular old southbound AT), since it follows Logan Brook for much of the way up the mountain, and the trail passes the Logan Brook Lean-to along the way.

Directions from Greenville to the White Brook Trail: Follow Gulf Hagas directions (there's a fee), but at 13.8 miles stay right. At 21.5 turn left. Begin new mileage here. At 2.4 miles turn left and cross a bridge. At 2.6 miles turn right, and at 3.8 miles turn left. From here it may be too rugged for most vehicles other than 4x4s. There is a gravel pit at 6.1 miles, and at 6.4 miles the road becomes impassable, but you should start seeing blue blazes. Follow for a half-mile, and soon you should come to the trailhead sign. At the AT intersection, turn right and follow the white blaze to the summit of White Cap.

Directions from Greenville to the Logan Brook Trail: Drive 18 miles north on the Lily Bay Road. Look for a wide dirt road on the right marked by a row of mailboxes. Take this turn onto the Frenchtown Road. At 9.3 miles turn left. At 10.8 turn right, passing near Second West Branch Pond. At 11.4 miles turn left (it's actually the turn straight ahead). At 12.4 turn right. At 13.4 miles the road ends at a snowmobile bridge. 0.5 miles beyond the bridge, the AT crosses the road. Begin the hike by turning uphill (right).

MOUNT KINEO (map available at Visitor's Center)

Distance: 2.2 miles round-trip for shortest trail; 8.2 miles round-trip for longest

Time: 2 hours round-trip for shortest trail

Elevation: 1,789 feet

Difficulty: Moderate to challenging

Directions: There are three separate trails that can be used to reach the summit of Kineo. All trails are blue-blazed, although the Indian Trail trailhead is not clearly marked.

a) Indian Trail - This is the shortest route to the fire tower and is also the one with the most views. Trail is strenuous. However, it is near to the cliff in many spots and is not a good place for those with a fear of heights. Length: 0.7 mile to Bridle Trail, then 0.4 mile to fire tower.

b) Bridle Trail - This is the original fire warden trail. Trail is easy. It begins 0.3 mile from the Indian Trail down the path called the Carriage Trail (which leaves the landing). There are no views along the trail. Length 1.1 miles.

c) North Trail - This is the longest trail. Including the entire length of the Carriage Trail, it is 4.1 miles to the summit. For the first part the trail follows the shore of Moosehead Lake all the way to Hardscrabble Point, where there are a few campsites. From here the North Trail continues along the shoreline over many roots and rocks, then begins a strenuous climb through some old hardwoods to the summit. There are limited views.

Directions: From the railroad trestle in Greenville Junction go 18.1 miles north on Rte 15. Turn right on a road marked with signs for the Rockwood town landing and docks. From the Rockwood docks it is about a 10 minute ferry ride to Kineo. In the summer there is generally a shuttle that leaves from the public boat landing in Rockwood every hour, although the times may be inconsistent. A small fee is charged. Kineo Shuttle telephone number: (207) 534-9012.

BORESTONE MOUNTAIN (map available at Visitor's Center)

Distance: 4 miles round-trip

Time: 3-4 hours

Elevation: 1,947 feet

Difficulty: Challenging

NO DOGS ALLOWED

The Borestone Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary is a check station about 1 mile along the trail. It is sometimes manned by the National Audubon Society, which owns the land around Borestone. The check station itself--when open---offers interesting exhibits for children. A small fee may be charged. There are also interesting nature stations along the trail. After leaving the check station, the trail goes by two ponds to the face of Borestone. The last 600 feet of elevation includes small sheer rock faces that are difficult to climb when wet. The view at the top is expansive, with a bare summit and two peaks.

Directions: Go south from Greenville on Rte 15. Take a left on the Elliottsville Road, just after the "Welcome to Monson" sign. Proceed 8 miles and cross over the bridge over Wilson Stream. Turn left after the bridge. Cross the railroad tracks. Trail is approximately .1 miles on the right, with a parking area on the left of the road.