

Hiking in Vestal

1. BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY NATURE PRESERVE

1.1. From 434 take Murray Hill Rd. After 0.9 mile turn right on Washington St. (1st right). After a short distance take a left on Lehigh Ave and take to the dead end. On your right there is a sign and a trail for SUNY Nature Preserve. After a 10-minute walk you come to a long boardwalk between two large beaver ponds. Go across the bridge to the start of other trails. This is an attractive area with a large hill for a backdrop. There are many level trails for beginning cross-country skiers.

1.2. Also, from the dead end on Lehigh take the footbridge on your left. Cross this bridge to enter Stair Park, a Town of Vestal park. Follow the creek for a series of small waterfalls. There is a pavilion for picnics.

2. TRACY CREEK STATE FOREST

Drive past Vestal Town Hall on 434 heading west to stop light at Castle Garden. From this stoplight it is 1.3 miles to Arlington Ave. on your left. Go straight through Arlington, which becomes Tracy Creek Rd. Stay on Tracy Creek Rd. After 5.1 miles from the original stoplight look on your right for Crumm Rd. Drive on Crumm Rd. which is a steep climb at first, soon it levels off through a forested area. After .6 miles look for a dirt logging road on the left. Soon after this is a parking area for one car on the left. This is just before a sharp curve. Walk back to the logging road, which branches left and right. The trail to the right is easier to follow. Both trails have steep sections and trails branching off them. This is a State Reforestation area. It would take you many hours to explore all trails in this deep forest.

3. FOLEY ROAD

This is a town owned road. Take Route 26 south off 434. From the flashing yellow light at Pierce Hill Rd. it is 3.1 miles to Powderhouse Rd. on your left in Vestal Center. Stay on Powderhouse Rd. 2.4 mile to Hogan Rd. on the right. Stay on Hogan Rd. to Foley Rd. at 3.3 miles. Park here to follow Foley Rd., a dirt road, through the woods for one mile to a locked gate ending the public access to the road.

4. GARDNER ROAD

This is a lightly traveled public road with a view. Take 26 south from route 434 to Powderhouse Rd. in Vestal Center (see #4 above). At 0.4 mile you pass the first Gardner Rd. on your right. Travel past this to the second Gardner Rd. on the right at 2.1 miles and park here.

This is a slightly steep rural road. In 0.7 miles there is a nice view north. It is 2.1 miles to the other end of Gardner Rd. Do not walk back on Powderhouse Rd. The shoulders are narrow and the traffic is too heavy.

5. DODD ROAD

At the corner of 434 and Bunn Hill Rd. is Denny's Restaurant. Take Bunn Hill 0.4 miles. On the right is Winding Rd. This is a short road. On the right you will see a sign "one Lane Bridge". Park here on Winding Rd. On the right is Dodd Rd. across the bridge. Dodd Rd. is a very steep rural road that in 1.1 miles joins Jensen Rd. for view of the Susquehanna River Valley.

6. VESTAL RAIL TRAIL (See Attached brochure)

The trail is 2.1 miles long. It runs between North Main Street and African Road and is located just north of and parallel to the Vestal Parkway East (Rt. 434). The trail has a twelve foot paved path and eight foot of grass on one side of the trail.

7. ARNOLD PARK NATURE/EXERCISE TRAIL

This is a town park. Take 26 south off 434. After one mile is Pierce Hill Rd., a flashing yellow light. Take a left. There is a sign directing you to Arnold Park. After a mile turn right on Andrews Rd. After a short distance on your left is the entrance to Arnold Park. Go through the open gate on the road about 100 yards to a pavilion on your left with a sand volleyball court, park here. Walk up the road a short distance to a sign pointing the way to the nature and VITA course. A short distance from here is a bar gate denoting the start of the trails. Before the bar on the right is the nature trail. It is steep at first, then levels off to make a 20-minute loop back to your area.

The VITA exercise loop begins past the gate. This trail has various stations for sit-ups, stretching, etc. This is a 30-minute loop through the woods and returns to the starting gate.

8. CHOCONUT CREEK FLOOD WALL

From the four corners area take Main St. 0.5 miles. On your right is Barlow Park, a Town of Vestal park with picnic pavilion and play ground equipment. Follow the wood fence by the parking lot to the corner of the rear fence. You will find a short decline connecting to a dirt trail. Go right on this trail a short distance to the start of the floodwall. The floodwall ends after a 20-minute walk at the bridge on Front St. by Town Hall. This is a level walk with a hill and woods across the creek for backdrop.

9. JONES PARK (See attached map)

This is an undeveloped Vestal Park. The 304-acre park has four miles of marked trails. The trails follow old roads and streambeds, winds through rows of trees in a pine forest or just meander through the lovely woods. It is excellent for cross-country skiers with experience.

Take 26 south from 434. From Vestal Center it is 1.8 miles to State Line Rd. on your left. Go 0.5 miles on State Line Rd. to dirt driveway with small green sign "Jones Park". There is a short incline to a storage structure with a small parking area.

Prepared by Collin Stuart with the help of Susan Hoyt and Fred Neebe.