



Potato Hill Farm Outdoor Education Center

Jackson Hill – Telelmark Trail Points of Interest

1. White Pine
2. Lady and Hay Scented Fern
3. Ostrich Fern
4. Striped Maple
5. Large Leaved Aster
6. V-shaped valley
7. Black River Canal
8. Christmas Fern
9. Sugar Maple Tree
10. Cedar Club Moss
11. Hobble Bush
12. Saprophyte
13. Orange Jewel Weed
14. Wood Nettle
15. White Snake Root

Jackson Hill – Telemark Trail

1. White pine - The strong, straight white pines were one of the reasons for logging to become a major industry for this area. They became the mast on many sailing ships as the Adirondacks opened to the world. The leaves or needles are in bundles of five. They are flexible. An easy way to remember the white pine has 5 needles is to associate the 5 letters of the word white. The cones are slender and about 6 inches long. Cone production peaks every 3 to 5 years. Mature trees can easily be 200 to 250 years old. Some white pines live over 400 years. A tree growing near Syracuse, New York was dated to 458 years in the late 1980s.

2. Lady and Hay Scented Fern - Lady ferns can be found growing in meadows, moist woods, and along stream beds. Lady ferns prefer shaded areas. Grizzly bears like to eat Lady ferns as a major food source. Native Americans had many uses for Lady ferns, such as for drying berries on and covering food. The young shoots, or fiddleheads, were cooked, baked or eaten raw. Roots were dried and ground into a dust to help heal wounds.

3. Ostrich Fern - Ostrich ferns live throughout the Northern Hemisphere. They are named for their resemblance to the tail plumes of an ostrich. The fronds grow in a tight circle called a crown. The ostrich fern is popular in gardens. The tightly wound immature fronds, called fiddleheads, are also used as a cooked vegetable, and are considered a delicacy mainly in rural areas of northeastern North America. The young shoots can also be eaten raw in salads or as a snack in the field.

4. Striped Maple - Striped maple is sometimes called moosewood or moose maple. It is a small tree or large shrub. It is easily identified by its vertical white stripes on greenish-brown bark. It is often found growing in mixed hardwoods. This very slow growing maple may live to be 100. It isn't important as a wood source, but is a browse plant for wildlife.

5. Large Leaved Aster - This wildflower is named for the Latin word meaning star. It is identifiable because of the difference in the size of the leaves from top to bottom. The lower leaves can be almost 8" in length. The flowers are light purple and the center starts out yellow, but gets redder as it ages. The large leaves are thick and soft and have earned it the nickname of the Lumberjacks Toilet Paper. The Indians made a tea for headaches and used the dried leaves for tobacco.

6. V-shaped valley - A valley formed by flowing water is usually V-shaped. The exact shape will depend on the stream flowing through it. Rivers with steep slopes generally have steep walls and a narrow bottom. These valleys are normally younger in geologic age than others with broad flood plains. The gorge at the top of the Telemark trail resembles this type of structure. U-shaped valley - A valley carved by glaciers is normally U-shaped. The valley becomes visible after the glacier that formed it recedes or thaws. The valley remains, littered with small boulders. Most present U-shaped valleys started as V-shaped before glaciation. The glaciers carved the valleys out wider and deeper.

7. Black River Canal - The **Black River Canal** was a canal built in northern New York to connect the Erie Canal to the Black River. This canal was only 35 miles long, but it had 109 locks. While driving into Boonville on Route 12, you can see the locks that were once part of the Black River Canal. This canal was the longest-surviving of the Erie Canal's feeder canal system. It was in use in some segments until 1925.

8. Christmas Fern - Christmas ferns are popular because they are one of the few ferns that stay green all winter long. The fronds of the plant are often used at Christmas time for wreaths. The sori (spore-bearing structures) are on the upper leaflets of the fertile leaves; they are round and reddish brown. The fronds of this evergreen fern may be eaten by White-Tailed Deer when food is especially scarce.

9. Sugar Maple Tree - *Acer saccharum* is a deciduous tree often reaching heights of over 100 feet. The fall leaf colors are often spectacular, ranging from bright yellow through orange to fluorescent red-orange. The Sugar Maple is an extremely important species to the ecology of many forests in North America. Pure stands are common. Maple trees provide the major source of sap for making maple syrup. Tapping was done long before Europeans arrived on this continent. A tap is placed into the xylem of the tree to remove part of the natural sugars as the sap begins to flow in the spring. Gerrit Boon, the man for whom Boonville was named, had plans for creating a source of sugar for all of the colonies.

10. Cedar Club Moss - Club mosses are not mosses. They fall into a separate species called lycophytes. They are a perennial evergreen plant. If you look down the stem from one end, the leaves will appear in a line going along the stem. They look like small evergreen needles. The whole plant looks like a small pine tree growing on the ground. The common name is ground pine. Cedar club has a more flattened leaf structure.

11. Hobble Bush - Hobble bush is one of the many forms of viburnum. It is found in the understory of our Adirondack forests. The plant branches will take root wherever they touch the ground. This easily causes passers-by to trip or hobble the unwary. It is also known as Witch Hobble. Some say that this name comes from the belief that planting it around your home would keep witches away.

12. Saprophyte - A saprophyte is an organism such as a fungus that lives on and gets its nourishment from dead organisms or decaying organic material. Saprophytes recycle organic material in the soil, breaking it down into simpler compounds that can be taken up by other organisms. These decomposers are an example of nature repairing itself.

13. Orange Jewel Weed - Orange jewel weed is a summer wild flower that can grow to be several feet tall. It is a natural home remedy for the rash caused by poison ivy. Another name that they go by is touch-me-nots, because of their sudden release of seeds when lightly touched. Wherever jewelweed is found, poison ivy is usually close by.

14. Wood Nettle - Wood nettle has flower clusters on top as well as in the leaf. Nettles are covered with tiny stinging hairs that produce an intense, stinging pain, followed by redness and skin irritation. Newly grown shoots of the wood nettle are used in cooking; when they're boiled, the irritant that can cause stinging and itching on your skin is destroyed. It causes no digestive problems. The sting of the Wood Nettle hurts, but it isn't as severe as the sharp pain of a wasp sting or a bee sting. The itchy pain lasts for about 5 minutes. Jewel weed is said to counteract the sting.

15. White Snakeroot - White Snakeroot gets its name from the mistaken belief that the roots were a treatment for snakebites. It is found on the edges of or in open wooded areas and blooms from late summer into late fall. It is a late bloomer, one of the last flowers to be seen in the woods in the fall. It was also the cause of the much-feared milk sickness of man -- a disease that is contracted from drinking milk or eating milk products from poisoned cows. Milk sickness claimed thousands of lives in the early 1800s. The most well-known victim was Abraham Lincoln's mother. Nursing calves and lambs may die from their mothers' milk contaminated with snakeroot even though the mother animals show no signs of poisoning. Cattle, horses, and sheep are the animals most often poisoned. White snakeroot belongs to the aster family and grows only in shade.