Glacial Geology of the Black Rock Forest – Shawangunk Mountains – Catskill Mountains area, SE New York

Charles S. Denny, Leader, 1938 Northeast Friends of the Pleistocene trip

The following short “guidebook” outlines the topics and itinerary for the 1938 Friends of the Pleistocene excursion. Note that participants could stay at a Bed & Breakfast for $2.50, and dinner could be had for $1.00. Nevertheless, Charlie Denny added that “The accommodations are well worth the price if you wish to pay it”!

It is clear from his concluding statement that Denny was hoping his new bulletin on the glacial geology of Black Rock Forest (Cornwall-on-Hudson, New York) would be published in time for the trip. We don’t know if the target date was met, but after much searching I located a copy of this publication and scanned it for inclusion here on our Friends website. Note that the large accompanying map has been posted here separately.

Denny’s report is part of a bulletin series that was formerly published by the staff of Black Rock Forest. The uses of this property are summarized in the Black Rock Forest Consortium website:

“Black Rock Forest is a natural living laboratory for field-based research and education. Located in the Hudson Highlands, 50 miles north of New York City, the 3830-acre Forest encompasses native terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems now increasingly rare in the region. It features dramatic topography with more than 1000 feet of relief and numerous lakes and streams, and retains high habitat and species diversity. The Forest has a legacy of nearly 80 years of management, from its founding in 1928 by Ernest Stillman, through its 40 years as part of the Harvard University Forest system, and to its acquisition by William T. Golden and the creation of the Consortium in 1989.”

The complete reference for Denny’s bulletin is:


Woodrow Thompson
FOTP Secretary
2014
ANNUAL SPRING REUNION
of the
FRIENDS OF PLEISTOCENE GLACIAL GEOLOGY

Date: Saturday and Sunday, May 7-8 (1938)

Place: The Black Rock Forest, Cornwall-on-Hudson, N. Y., which
is located on west side of Hudson, north of Highlands
(6 miles north of West Point).

Meet at Junction of U. S. Hwy. 9-w and the "Mountain
Road" (to Storm King School) in Cornwall-on-Hudson,
at 9:15 A.M. on Saturday.

Outline of Excursion:

Saturday: Spend day in Black Rock Forest. Study the thick
till on the lower north slopes, and the thin glacial
deposits of the Highlands, which are thought to have
been considerably modified by periglacial processes.
If time permits there are kame terraces and similar
glacio-fluvial deposits in the valley of Hoodna Creek
to the north of the Highlands which can be visited.
A box lunch should be taken for noon meal.

Sunday: Drive to Ellenville, via Newburg and the Shawangunk
Mountains. Study deposits in the valley of Sandburg
Creek from Ellenville to Phillipsport which are mapped
by J. L. Rich as part of his "Late Wisconsin terminal(?)
moraine stage". Continue up valley of Rondout Creek,
to northwest, via Grahamsville to Curry where are
deposits which mark another position of Rich's "Late
Wisconsin" stage. Continue, northward, if time permits,
to and up the valley of Neversink river to Winnisook
Lodge; and thence down valley of Esopus Creek to Big
Indian, Shandaken, Phoenicia and the Ashokan Reservoir.
The upper valley of Esopus Creek is included by Rich
in the area of his "probable snowfields of local
wind-drift glaciers". The lower creek valley is in
his "Late Wisconsin" sub-stage. Party will disband
at the Reservoir. A box lunch should be taken for
noon meal.

Lodgings at Cornwall-on-Hudson:

Mrs. Lawrence Abbott, Cornwall-on-Hudson.
Terms: $2.50 per day, room and bath, including break-
fast. Dinner $1.00. This is a private house. The
accommodations are well worth the price if you wish
to pay it.

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This copy thanks to CSD.
The Half Moon Inn, on U.S. Hwy. 9-w, C-on-H, also run by Mrs. Abbott,
Terms: $1.50 per day, room and bath, breakfast extra.

Mrs. Theodore Hahn, C-on-H, boarding house,
Terms: $2.50 per day, including meals.

There are also several tourist homes in C-on-H where accommodations could be had at reasonable prices.

There are several hotels in Newburg, about 6 miles north of C-on-H.

I ps, etc.:

The Forest and vicinity are almost entirely within the Schunmunk Quadrangle (new edition), the eastern edge is in the West Point Quadrangle.

The topography of the Highlands is beautifully shown on The Topographic Map of the Palisades Interstate Park, U.S.G.S.

On Catskill trip we will pass through the following quadrangles:
Newburg, Ellenville, Monticello, Neversink, Slide Mountain, Rosendale, Margaretville, and Phoenicia.

Plates I and II of Pich's "Glacial Geology of the Catskills" (N.Y. State Mus. Bull. No. 299, 1935) will show the entire route through the Catskills, and should be brought if possible.

It is hoped that report of glacial geology of the Forest and included map will be available by date of excursion.

April 16, 1938.

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