

Winter Use Guidelines



Please note that snowshoeing is the only accepted activity on the Rose Ledge trail while there is snow on the ground. There is no charge to use the snowshoe trails, however all trail users must stop in the ski shop for a trail ticket. When crossing ski trails please avoid stepping on the groomed ski tracks. All trails are open Wednesday through Sunday and closed to all uses in the winter on Mondays and Tuesdays, except holidays.

Please note that our trails may be closed during the spring mud season. We welcome hikers at other times of the year and our trails are open seven days a week, free of charge.

Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center

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Rose Ledge Trail

Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center



This scenic 3.1 mile loop trail gradually climbs to Rose Ledges with a total elevation gain of 690 feet. A wonderful hike in any season, this trail offers shade in summer, beautiful color in fall and solitude in winter. Highlights along the way include abandoned 19th century stone quarries, scenic views of the Connecticut River Valley and the striking 80 foot high Rose Ledges. The trail crosses cascading brooks and meanders through a mixed forest of hemlock, oak, black birch and maple.

Please take a Northfield Mountain trail map with you and enjoy the hike.

Rose Ledge Trail



Cascading brook along trail

The Rose Ledge Trail begins at the pond behind the Visitor Center. Follow the **blue trail markers** through the field turning left onto the foot trail into the woods. Follow signs for Rose Ledge and Hidden Quarry trails. After crossing under the power lines and reentering the woods, turn right at the Rose Ledge trail intersection (.4 mile), and follow the **orange trail markers**.

The hiking trail crosses two trails (Hemlock Hill and Jug End) and two seasonal streams as it climbs through rich hemlock woods with an understory of mountain laurel. Just uphill of the second stream crossing (.6 mile), turn right onto the Lower Ledge trail. The trail bears left as it enters the power line opening with views of the valley to the west and north. After a short distance the trail returns to the woods on the left. Here the forest is drier with white pine and oak as the dominant species.

An abundance of evenly split, rectangular stone slabs provide clues to a once active stone quarry. Look closely and you may see the distinctive, finger-size grooves from the pin and feather quarrying technique from the mid-1800s.

At the next trail intersection (1.2 miles) bear right and continue straight across Rock Oak Ramble continuing to follow the orange trail markers. (For the quickest return route to the Center please see below for a total hike of 2.2 miles.*)

This next section of the hike takes you below Rose Ledges, a popular destination for rock climbers. Older than the Appalachians, the ledges are composed of rock that changed into gneiss, a metamorphic rock, about 550 million years ago. At 1.6 miles the trail passes through the ledges. Turn left along the Upper Rose Ledge trail and enjoy views of the valley to the west as you begin the descent. (Turning right at this intersection will take you to the Northfield Mountain summit for a one-way hike of 2.5 miles.)

The Upper Rose Ledge trail continues straight across Rock Oak Ramble (2.1 miles), bearing right at the intersection

with Lower Rose Ledge trail for a gradual downhill hike back to the Center. Turn left at the intersection with the West Slope foot trail and bear right where the Lower Ledge trail heads off to the left (2.5 miles.) Retrace your steps back to the Center as you continue straight through two trail intersections (Jug End and Hemlock Hill.) Turn left at the intersection with the Hidden Quarry trail and follow the blue trail markers back to the Center (3.1 miles.)

***Quickest Return Route to Center:** Bear left at the trail intersection (1.2 miles.) After a short uphill climb, turn left at the next trail intersection (1.4 miles) for a gradual downhill return hike. As you begin the descent, enjoy the views to the west across the Connecticut River Valley. Turn left at the intersection with the West Slope foot trail and bear right where the Lower Ledge trail heads off to the left (1.6 miles). Continue straight through two trail intersections (Jug End and Hemlock Hill) and turn left at the intersection with the Hidden Quarry trail. Follow the blue trail markers back to the Center (2.2 miles.)