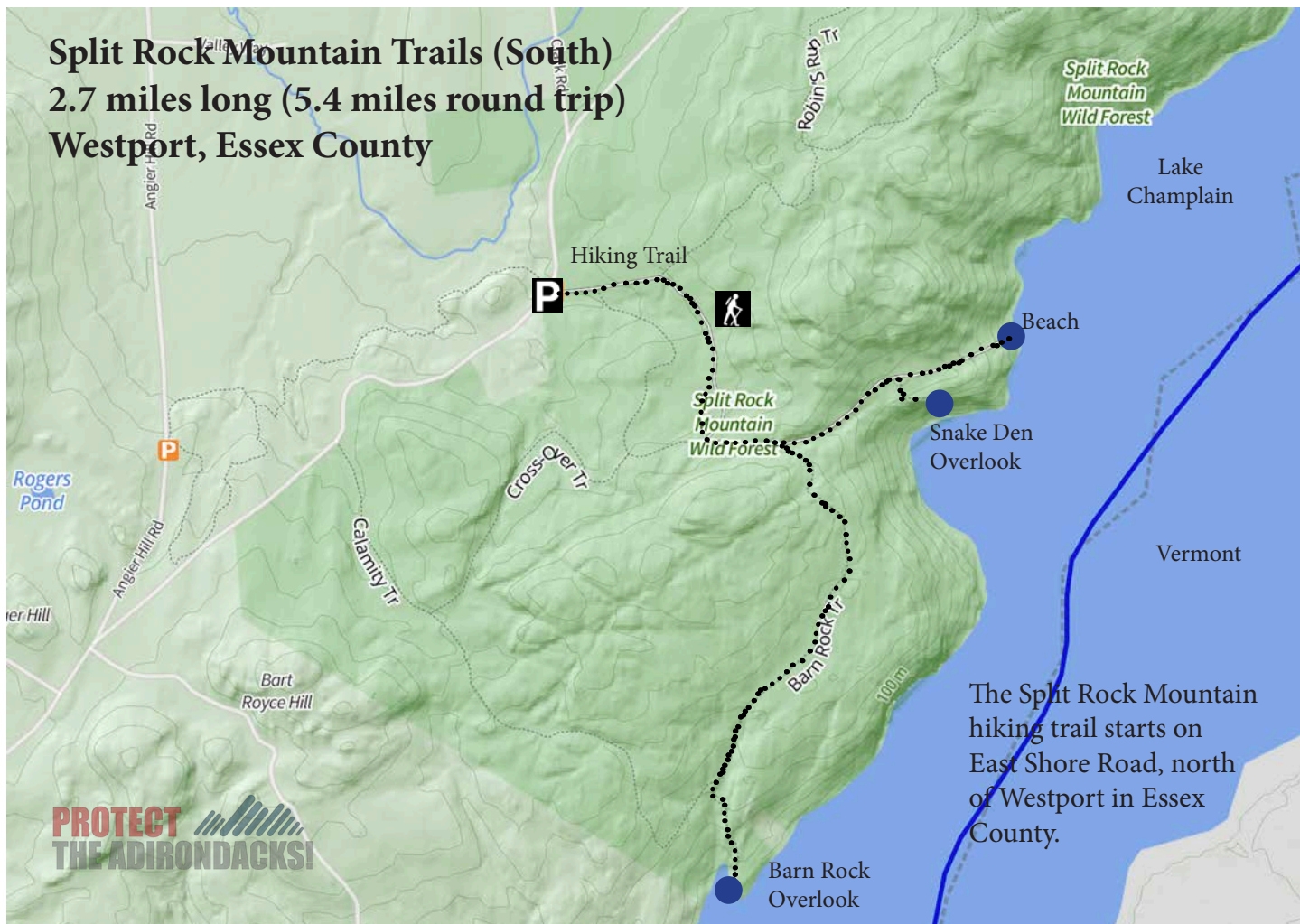


Split Rock Mountain Trails (South)



The trail network on the south side of Split Rock Mountain leads through beautiful northern hardwoods and oak-hickory forests to a beach and scenic overlooks above Lake Champlain. This collection of trails are all part of the public Forest Preserve in the Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest in the Town of Westport in Essex County. The two most popular destinations are the trail to a beach at Lewis Clearing Bay, which includes a short spur trail to Snake Den Harbor Overlook, and Barn Rock Trail.

The trailhead parking area is located on the east side of Lake Shore Road, about 6 miles north of Westport. The trails can be hiked as out-and-back trails using the same route or as loops. The parking area is large, though on busy days, vehicles park on the roadside. The trail register is on the trail at the rear of the parking area. The trails in this area are well marked and easy to follow.

Protect the Adirondacks

PO Box 48, North Creek, NY 12853 518.251.2700

www.protectadks.org info@protectadks.org

Follow us on Twitter @ProtectAdkPark Like Us on Facebook



The 1.7-mile Lewis Clearing Bay Trail begins with a short rise. There are two options to split off to the southern trails. At about 0.3 miles, Gary's Elbow Trail turns to the right, and at about 0.5 miles the Lewis Clearing Bay Trail splits off to the right. To the left is the North Rim Trail, which leads to a network of trails on the north end of the Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest area.

The Lewis Clearing Trail is surrounded by a mixed forest, though there stands of heavy spruce, white pine, and hemlocks that carpet the trail with pine needles. The trail travels south for about 0.7 miles, where it intersects with the Barn Rock Trail. Soon the Barn Rock Trail hooks off the south, and the Lewis Clearing Trail heads east towards Snake Den Overlook and the beach on Lake Champlain.

The Lewis Clear Bay Trail continues east, descending gently through the dense mixed forest. The last half mile drops fairly steeply, but the trail is in good condition as it descends to Lake Champlain's shore. Before the trail drops, watch for the spur trail on the right to Snake Den Harbor Overlook, which provides a great view of Lake Champlain to the south from above. The beach at the end of Lewis Clear Bay Trail provides a wonderful view of the lake and is a pleasant change of scenery from the dense forest. Hikers return using the same route.

The 2.7-mile Barn Rock Trail follows the same route from the parking lot and trailhead as the Lewis Clear Bay Trail. At a point roughly 1 mile in, where the two trails run together for a stretch, the Barn Rock Trail hooks off to the south. After this point, the trail drops down gradually from the intersection, curling slightly to the right through a shallow ravine.

After about a mile, the trail reaches an intersection with the Calamity Trail to the right where it continues straight toward Barn Rock Overlook. The mossy and rocky slopes around the trail here are unique as it passes around a number of downed trees and massive boulders. Soon the trail rises up onto a beautiful rocky overlook that juts out next to a small cove. The view of Lake Champlain from here is magnificent and there are lots of rocky perches to sit, rest and soak up the scene.

Hikers can return by using the same route, or take the Calamity Trail-Gary's Elbow that ascends gradually up through the rubble of the remnants of a 19th-century rock quarry and a serene wetland.

These are moderate hikes, accessible to anyone who can walk the distances involved. The forests, rocky scenic overlooks, and beach makes these trails unique in the Adirondacks for their variety. There are numerous places to camp along the trails.

Help Protect the Forest Preserve and Be Prepared When You Hike: Please follow “carry in, carry out” rules for all trash and follow other **Leave No Trace** principles when hiking in the public Forest Preserve and other wild areas. The seven Leave No Trace principles are: 1) Plan ahead and prepare; 2) Stay on hiking trails and camp at designated areas; 3) Dispose of human waste and trash properly; 4) Leave what you find; 5) Minimize campfires; 6) Respect wildlife; 7) Respect other hikers. **Educated and prepared hikers do not damage the environment or need search and rescue unless injured.**