

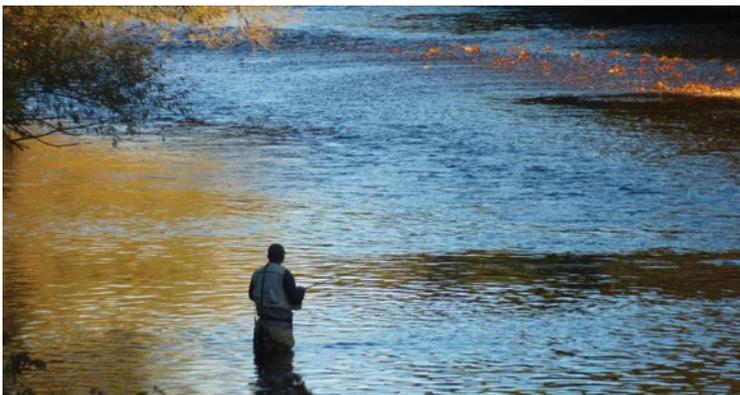


5 Watchable Wildlife Trip Ideas

1 Covered Bridges, Bald Eagle's and fast water. Often referred to as the Tuscany of Upstate New York the Battenkill Valley is located in Southern Washington County. It's hard to imagine the early settlers traveling by horse and buggy to families and friends, for business and pleasure and running up against a swollen Battenkill or an ice-jammed Hoosic river. Their solution—the covered bridge—Built in the Civil War era, four of the county's covered bridges still remain, three of which are still in use—Rexleigh, Eagleville and Buskirk. The fourth, in Shushan, has been preserved as a museum. Along the legendary Battenkill you will see a variety of animals—including bald eagles, a thriving osprey population, increased numbers of the common loon and peregrine falcon, rare plants and many fish, muskrat, beaver, and others.

2 Livingston Brook Heron Rookery is located on wetland owned and protected by the Battenkill Conservancy. Livingston Brook is located less than half a mile from the Battenkill River. Beaver dams have flooded 25 acres near the edge of forests and farm fields. Nearly two dozen pair of Great Blue Herons build their nests in the dead pine trees that stand in the wetland. The wetland is a half a mile long and parallels McDougall Lake Rd. The nests are easily seen from the roadway edge where there is ample room for on foot viewing. Other Wildlife to Watch: Canadian Geese and Wood ducks also nest here and wetland land birds and swallows are common. Large numbers of Red Eared Sliders sun themselves on the numerous fallen trees. Cacophony of frog calls greets visitors spring and summer. Parking is along the side of the roadway.

3 Carters Pond Wildlife Management Area is a 446.5 acre management area located along County Route 338 in the Town of Greenwich is ideal for nature observation and photography. The variety of fungi growing throughout the moist woods are of special interest, water birds nesting or migrating through the area, including flocks of Canada geese, mallards, black ducks and wood ducks, search for a hummingbird nest, woodcock, grouse, pheasants. Look for tracks of mink, deer, muskrats, and foxes. Fishing is a major summer family activity among the chief game fish species are largemouth bass, chain pickerel, northern pike, bluegill, sunfish and bullhead. A mile long trail offers you an opportunity to learn more about nature and examine the relationship between wildlife, habitat, soils, and climate.



Washington County New York

4 Gull Bay Preserve, with 472 acres in the Town of Putnam, provides scenic vistas of Gull Bay and southern Lake George. The preserve includes part of Sucker Brook, which is considered one of the most important wetlands in the Lake George watershed and is home to a great blue heron rookery containing over 30 nests. Directions: From NYS Route 22 take Gull Bay Road approximately 1.75 miles to Sagamore Road. The dirt road entrance to the preserve is 0.6 miles down Sagamore Road. The Lake George Land Conservancy has established more than two miles of hiking trails with moderate to steep slopes. The blue trail is a 0.3 mile trail that follows an old logging road uphill to an overlook. Just below the blue trail the orange and yellow trails cut off and loop around either side of the wetland to the heron rookery and beaver dam. Sections of trails may be seasonally flooded and not passable. A rookery is a nesting colony. A single rookery can contain up to 100 nests. The Great Blue Heron is North America's largest.

A trip into Washington County should include your kayak, canoe or raft because there are miles upon miles of brooks, streams, ponds and lakes throughout the county. Prominent waterways and lakes include the Hudson River, Lake George, Lake Champlain, and the Champlain Canal, Cossayuna Lake, Mettawee and Batten kill.



Two outfitters Battenkill River Sports and Battenkill Valley Outdoors - both located off Route 313 in the Town of Jackson are here to assist.

5 East Bay Wildlife Management Area encompasses 38 acres off County Route 10 in the Town of Whitehall and is primarily a wetland preserve known especially for waterfowl. Birds to see include Northern Harrier, Least Bittern, Black-Crowned Night Heron, Pied Bill Grebe, Osprey and Peregrine Falcon. A mile long trail offers you an opportunity to learn more about nature and examine the relationship between wildlife and habitat.

About Washington County, New York

Uniquely located where the Hudson River Valley meets both the Southern Adirondacks and the Green Mountains of Vermont, scenic Washington County offers visitors charming country roads, covered bridges, agri-tourism and farm experiences, local artisans and cultural activities, charming boutiques for shopping and so much more. Lodging includes charming bed and breakfasts, Inns and motels.