

🦋 Distances: Adirondak Loj to Marcy Dam, 2.3 mi; to Indian Falls, 4.4 mi; to Hopkins Trail, 6.2 mi; to Phelps Trail, 6.8 mi; to summit of Mt. Marcy, 7.4 mi (11.9 km). Ascent, 3166 ft (965 m). Elevation, 5344 ft (1629 m). Order of height, 1.

## 62 Phelps Mt.

**ADK High Peaks Map: D9 | Trails Illustrated Map 742: Y24**

Phelps Mt. is named for Orson Schofield Phelps, better known as “Old Mountain” Phelps, who cut the first trail up Mt. Marcy and over the years guided many parties to its summit. It is thus fitting that this peak whose view is so dominated by Mt. Marcy is named after Phelps, even though he probably never climbed the peak himself. Phelps Mt. is the easiest high peak to climb from the Marcy Dam area, and is thus a good alternative for Marcy-bound parties who find themselves short of time.

▶ Locator: This red-marked trail turns L from the Van Hoevenberg Trail to Mt. Marcy (trail 61) at a point 1 mi from Marcy Dam or 3.2 mi from Adirondak Loj. ◀

*From the jct.* (0.0 mi), the trail immediately climbs away from the Van Hoevenberg Trail on a moderate grade and continues with occasional steeper pitches to the first open rock at 1.1 mi. The red markers are now supplemented by yellow paint blazes as the trail soon comes to a second rocky outcrop with views of Marcy Dam. From here, the trail is mostly flat to large open ledges at the summit at 1.2 mi.



*Phelps Mountain. James Appleyard*

🦋 Distances: Adirondak Loj to start of Phelps Trail, 3.2 mi; to summit of Phelps Mt., 4.4 mi (7.1 km). Ascent from Adirondak Loj, 1982 ft (604 m). Elevation, 4161 ft (1269 m). Order of height, 32.

## Table Top Mt. *(Unmarked path; see introduction, p. 19.)*

**ADK High Peaks Map: D9 | Trails Illustrated Map 742: Y24**

In 1997, this route became the first “herd path” to be officially designated, or defined, to keep hikers on the most durable terrain. The path branches L from the Van Hoevenberg Trail (trail 61) just below Indian Falls at the jct. with the ski route, 4.4 mi from Adirondak Loj. Heading generally SE and marked with a few red markers at the start, the path gains the summit plateau in just over 0.5 mi, after which a few hundred yards of up and down lead to the summit at the S end of the plateau. The summit canister has been removed and replaced with a wooden sign to mark the summit. A few yards past the summit, a small open area provides a limited view of Mt. Marcy and neighboring peaks.

## 63 Indian Falls–Lake Arnold Crossover

**ADK High Peaks Map: D9 | Trails Illustrated Map 742: Y24**

► **Locator:** From the Van Hoevenberg Trail to Mt. Marcy (trail 61) at Indian Falls, 4.5 mi from Adirondak Loj, a trail with yellow markers branches R and connects with the blue trail to Lake Arnold and Feldspar Brook from Avalanche Camp (trail 73). It provides a connection between Indian Falls and Lake Colden without a traverse of Mt. Marcy or a descent to Marcy Dam. ◀

**Leaving the jct.** (0.0 mi) just above the brook crossing at Indian Falls, the trail descends for 75 yd to a good view of Indian Falls from below. In another few yards, the trail swings L and away from the original route of the Van Hoevenberg Trail, climbs briefly, and then begins a descent to a sharp L turn at 0.6 mi. From here, the trail climbs gradually, crosses an extensive wet area, and reaches the R bank of a stream. Following the R bank for a few yards, the trail crosses on the rocks to the jct. with the Lake Arnold trail at 0.8 mi. (Turn R for Avalanche Camp, 1 mi; L for Lake Arnold, 0.5 mi.)

⚠ Distance: Indian Falls to Lake Arnold trail, 0.8 mi (1.3 km).

## THE MACINTYRE RANGE\*

**ADK High Peaks Map: C10–D9 | Trails Illustrated Map 742: Y22-23**

The series of peaks known as the MacIntyre Mts., or the MacIntyre Range, rises loftily against the sky S of Heart Lake. Named in honor of Archibald McIntyre, the dominating figure in the Tahawus iron works enterprise that bore his name, this is one of the noblest groups of peaks in the Adirondacks. Standing apart from all surrounding peaks, the range extends for about 8 mi, running NE and SW. Its steep SW slopes form one side of Indian Pass and the NE spur forms the spectacular cliffs of Avalanche Pass.

The most northerly major peak is Wright Peak, 4580 ft, named after Governor Silas Wright. A lesser peak NE of Wright is called Whales Tail because of its shape when viewed from Marcy Dam. The NE shoulder of Wright, adjacent to Whales Tail, is sometimes referred to as “the Whale” and offers some interesting views for those willing to make the short bushwhack up to this point from the ski trail in Whales Tail Notch (trail 67).

To the SW of Wright is Algonquin Peak, 5114 ft, the highest peak in the range and second highest in the Adirondacks. Algonquin has also been called Mt. MacIntyre and is still referred to as such on a few DEC trail signs. SW of Algonquin Peak stands Boundary Peak, so named because it is supposed to have marked the boundary between the Algonquin and Iroquois Indian tribes. In reality, it stands

\*The spelling of *MacIntyre* conforms to the USGS topographic map, which has been approved by the U. S. Board of Geographic Names. It is used throughout this guidebook for consistency, but the man for whom the range is named spelled his name *McIntyre*.

on the southern boundary of the Old Military Tract that was originally surveyed in 1797 by Charles Brodhead, who thus lays claim to the first ascent in the MacIntyre Range—40 years before Ebenezer Emmons first climbed Algonquin Peak in 1837. Although high enough to count as one of the 46 high peaks, Boundary Peak is considered merely a prominence on the ridge to Iroquois Peak.

At 4840 ft, Iroquois is the second highest peak in the range and the eighth highest in the Adirondacks. Its rocky summit offers many fine views, particularly of the cliffs of Wallface Mt. in Indian Pass.

Farther to the SW and separated from Iroquois Peak by a deep valley is Mt. Marshall. Verplanck Colvin first named this peak in honor of Governor DeWitt Clinton of Erie Canal fame. Colvin at first attached the name to the peak we now call Iroquois, but later transferred it to this southernmost peak of the MacIntyre Range. For some time this peak was also called Herbert in honor of Herbert Clark, the Marshall family's guide and one of the three original 46ers. After Robert Marshall's death in 1939, the Adirondack Forty-Sixers successfully petitioned the New York State Board of Geographic Names to officially name this peak Mt. Marshall. Even though the Board accepted this name, it was labeled Clinton on the 1954 USGS maps. The 1978 USGS Ampersand Lake 15' x 7½' metric series sheet, however, does show this peak as Mt. Marshall.

Robert (Bob) Marshall, with his brother George, drew up the original list of the 46 peaks and with Herb Clark became the first to climb them all. Bob Marshall was a noted forester, explorer, author, and conservationist. The naming of the 1,000,000-acre Bob Marshall Wilderness Area in western Montana is another tribute to his accomplishments.

## 64 Algonquin Peak from Heart Lake

**ADK High Peaks Map: D9 | Trails Illustrated Map 742: Z23**

Algonquin Peak is a spectacular and popular peak. Becoming progressively steeper as it approaches the summit, this trail will seem far longer than its actual length, and some recent reroutes have actually added a few tenths of a mile to it.

► **Locator:** This trail leads generally SW from its jct. with the Van Hoevenberg Trail (trail 61), 1 mi S of Adirondak Loj. (See p. 95 for further directions.) ◀

**From the Adirondack Mountain Club's HPIC** (0.0 mi), take the Van Hoevenberg Trail (trail 61) to a jct. at 1 mi. Here the trail to Algonquin Peak continues straight ahead. (Trail L leads to Marcy Dam.) Continuing at a generally easy grade with a few steeper pitches, the trail reaches the jct. with the Whales Tail Notch Ski Trail (trail 67) at 1.5 mi. Bearing R and up at this jct., the generally rough and rocky trail climbs moderately to steeply along the lower portion of what was originally cut as the Wright Peak Ski Trail. Crossing a brook at 2 mi, the trail veers R on a switchback and then continues its rocky ascent to the base of a small cliff at 2.5 mi. (Trail going L above this cliff is a ski trail that does not reach a summit and should not be used in

the summer.) Here the trail to Algonquin and Wright turns R and is briefly narrow and flat as it crosses over to the old hiking trail. A rock scramble now leads to a side trail L to a designated campsite with the base of a waterfall 100 yd beyond at 2.6 mi.

After this waterfall, the trail climbs a short, steep pitch, levels out for a bit, and then climbs again steeply to a flat area at 3.1 mi with a small rock cobble on the R. Turning L and up, the trail climbs over one steep rock step, after which the grade eases a bit across a sidehill before reaching the jct. with the spur trail to Wright Peak (trail 65) at 3.4 mi.

Bearing R at this jct., the Algonquin trail begins to climb steeply, going up over several sections of smooth rock and leveling out just before reaching timberline at 3.9 mi. (This point marks the start of the arctic-alpine zone where hikers must remain on the marked trail or bare rock to protect the fragile vegetation.) From timberline the trail is marked with cairns and yellow paint blazes. A large expanse of grass L just before the summit is the best example to date of the successful restoration efforts developed by the late Prof. E. H. Ketchledge, PhD, of the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, and now proving successful on other summits as well.

Reaching the actual summit at 4.3 mi, the trail meets the Lake Colden trail (trail 71) coming up the SW slope and similarly marked with cairns and yellow paint blazes. The view from the summit is spectacular and expansive, highlighted by the view of Mt. Colden with its many slides and famous dike, or cleft, as well as by the view of Lake Colden and Flowed Lands at the foot of the mountain. The distant view encompasses most of the high peaks to the E and S, with many lakes visible to the W and N.

On the descent, hikers should pay close attention to the markers, especially in poor weather. The route down generally traverses slightly to the R across the fall line to reach the trail at timberline.

❧ Distances: Adirondak Loj via blue trail to jct. with yellow trail for Algonquin Peak, 1 mi; to blue trail to Wright Peak, 3.4 mi; to summit of Algonquin Peak, 4.3 mi (6.9 km). Ascent, 2936 ft (895 m). Elevation, 5114 ft (1559 m). Order of height, 2.

## 65 Wright Peak

### ADK High Peaks Map: D9 | Trails Illustrated Map 742: Y23

► Locator: The blue-marked trail to Wright Peak diverges L from the yellow trail to Algonquin Peak (trail 64) 3.4 mi from Adirondak Loj. ◀

**Leaving the trail jct.** (0.0 mi), the trail climbs steadily to timberline at 0.2 mi, after which the route is marked with cairns up the bare rock ridge. Soon after timberline the grade eases, with the summit reached at 0.4 mi.

A bronze plaque on a large vertical rock face just N (350° magnetic) of the summit memorializes four airmen who lost their lives in the crash of a U.S. Air Force B-47 bomber at that spot in 1962. Some parts of the ill-fated aircraft are still scattered around the area close to the top of the mountain.

✚ Distances: Adirondak Loj to blue trail for Wright Peak, 3.4 mi; to summit of Wright Peak, 3.8 mi (6.1 km). Ascent from Adirondak Loj, 2400 ft (732 m). Elevation, 4580 ft (1396 m). Order of height, 16.

## 66 Boundary and Iroquois Peaks

(Minimum maintenance and marking; see introduction, p. 19.)

**ADK High Peaks Map: D9 | Trails Illustrated Map 742: Y23**

Although not an official trail, there is a reasonably well-defined route from the col between Algonquin and Boundary peaks along the mostly open ridge to Iroquois Peak. The trail is marked with cairns in the open areas, but there are no other signs or markers. In 1975, the Adirondack Forty-Sixers improved this trail somewhat, mainly to establish a route around a unique alpine bog on Boundary Peak, to prevent the bog from being trampled. No significant maintenance has been done since, but the route has remained reasonably well defined.

► Locator: The trail leaves the Lake Colden trail to Algonquin Peak (trail 71) 0.4 mi below the Algonquin summit, at a large cairn at timberline. The “herd path” for Iroquois goes straight ahead; the marked trail for Lake Colden swings L and down. ◀

*Leaving the col* (0.0 mi), the route climbs quickly to the first summit of Boundary Peak, dips down and bypasses the above-mentioned bog on the R, and comes to the summit of Boundary Peak at 0.2 mi. The route now descends over open rock, enters the woods for a few hundred yards, and finally climbs steeply up and slightly L to the summit of Iroquois Peak at 0.7 mi from the Algonquin trail.

✚ Distances: Algonquin Peak summit to start of “herd path,” 0.4 mi; to summit of Iroquois Peak, 1.1 mi (1.8 km). Elevation, 4840 ft (1476 m). Order of height, 8.

## 67 Whales Tail Notch Ski Trail

**ADK High Peaks Map: D9 | Trails Illustrated Map 742: Y23**

► Locator: This trail leads from Marcy Dam over a notch NE of Wright Peak to a point on the Algonquin trail. The trail is quite rough and is not maintained for summer travel. It does offer a 0.5 mi shorter approach to the Algonquin trail for those camped at Marcy Dam, but this saving in distance is not great when compared to the rough footing and 380 ft vertical climb through Whales Tail Notch.

The start of the Whales Tail Notch Ski Trail, which has no sign, is at the top of a slight rise a few yards from the W end of Marcy Dam on the Van Hoevenberg Trail (trail 61). ◀

*Leaving the jct.* (0.0 mi), proceed past the first lean-to to a trail R approximately 100 yd from the Van Hoevenberg Trail. (Trail straight ahead leads around Marcy Dam to other lean-tos and campsites.) Turning R, the trail proceeds mostly on the level through open forest before starting to climb at 0.3 mi. The climb is steady and

becomes steeper near the height of land. Easing off at 0.6 mi, the trail reaches the actual top of the pass at 0.8 mi, having gained approximately 380 ft from Marcy Dam. Now starting down a slightly easier grade than that just ascended, and going in and out of a small brook, the trail reaches the Algonquin trail (trail 64) at 1.3 mi.

✳️ Trail in winter: As the name implies, this was cut as a ski trail and is therefore a bit wider than most hiking trails. The Marcy Dam side is steeper and more of a challenge to ski down, while the other side has been badly eroded over the years and requires at least a foot of snow to be skiable. Skied in either direction, it is recommended only for advanced skiers.

🏃 Distance: Marcy Dam to Algonquin trail, 1.3 mi (2.1 km).

## 68 Avalanche Pass to Lake Colden

**ADK High Peaks Map: D9 | Trails Illustrated Map 742: Y23**

The trail through Avalanche Pass is probably the most spectacular route in the Adirondacks. Sheer rock walls rise directly out of the water on both sides of Avalanche Lake, and the trail is forced to wind among large boulders and even cross two catwalks set into the rock face in order to negotiate this impressive piece of terrain. At the actual top of the pass, a spectacular 1999 slide reaches the trail, adding to the expanses of steep rock viewed along this route. This is the most popular approach to Lake Colden and is much used. Backpackers should be aware, however, that this is a very rough trail in spots. Allow plenty of time so as not to have to rush. Many parties, for instance, find that it takes an hour to cover the 1 mi section from the top of the pass to the lower end of Avalanche Lake.

▶ Locator: The Avalanche Pass trail diverges R from the Van Hoevenberg Trail to Mt. Marcy (trail 61) at Marcy Dam just over 100 yd past the trail register. ◀

**Leaving Marcy Dam** (0.0 mi) and marked with yellow DEC disks, the trail proceeds along the flat for 200 yd where a trail leads R and over a bridge to additional lean-tos and campsites. Bearing L and still on the flat, the trail soon comes to the R bank of Marcy Brook, which it now follows. At 0.4 mi the trail swings away from the brook and soon crosses two small bridges. At the second bridge, an obscure trail leads R to Kagel Lean-to. Continuing up a gradual climb, the trail passes Marcy Brook Lean-to on the R at 0.8 mi and then crosses Marcy Brook on a bridge before reaching a jct. with the blue trail L to Lake Arnold (trail 73) at 1.1 mi. This jct. is also the former site of the Avalanche Camp lean-to. The lean-to is now approx. 200 yd uphill to the R of the former lean-to site.

Continuing R, the Avalanche Pass trail crosses a wet area and begins to climb steeply with several log stairs. At 1.2 mi the trail swings sharp L, and continues climbing as it comes to a jct. where the ski trail crosses at 1.3 mi. (This ski trail follows a slightly longer route down from the top of the pass and eventually joins the Lake Arnold trail just above Avalanche Camp. It is extremely rough and not suited for summer travel.) Continuing straight ahead, the trail swings R at 1.4 mi,