



Discover America

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ADT Featured Trail: The Knobstone Trail

The Knobstone Trail is Indiana's longest footpath, offering a 58-mile backcountry hiking experience that is often compared to the Appalachian Trail. The southern terminus is at the Deam Lake trailhead, about 20 miles northwest of Louisville, Ky. The trail extends generally northward as it passes through Clark and Jackson-Washington State Forests and the Elk Creek Public Fishing Area to Delaney Park. The American Discovery Trail utilizes the southernmost 17 miles of the Knobstone Trail, providing a glimpse of the area's mixed hardwood forest as the trail traverses a land distinguished by narrow, relatively flat-topped ridges, known as the Knobstone Escarpment.

The Knobstone Escarpment is a knobby slope separating two of Indiana's natural land regions, the Norman Upland and Scottsburg Lowland. This escarpment rises more than 300 feet above the low-lying farmland to create one of Indiana's most scenic areas. It derives its name from the "Knobstone" shale, which is actually a mix-

ture of weathered brown shale, sandstone, and siltstone that is common in the region.

Because the Knobstone Trail follows the escarpment, steep climbs and descents occur, making it at times a rugged, difficult trail to hike. It is developed as a backcountry trail, so structures are limited to primitive steps and waterbars to minimize erosion, and it is managed for foot traffic only.

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources developed the Knobstone Trail as a cooperative effort between the Divisions of Fish and Wildlife, Forestry, and Outdoor Recreation, with help in land acquisition from the Nature Conservancy. The trail and surrounding 42,000 acres of forest land serve many purposes, including recreation, timber and wildlife production, and watershed protection. Therefore, the area is open to public hunting in season.

In its original 1970s conception, the Knobstone Trail was to extend 140 miles along the full length of the Knobstone Escarpment to Martinsville. The initial 32 miles of the trail opened in 1980 and it has been lengthened over time to its current 58 miles. The DNR continues to purchase property to improve the trail and the Hoosier Hiking Council assists by providing volunteer labor and citizen support.

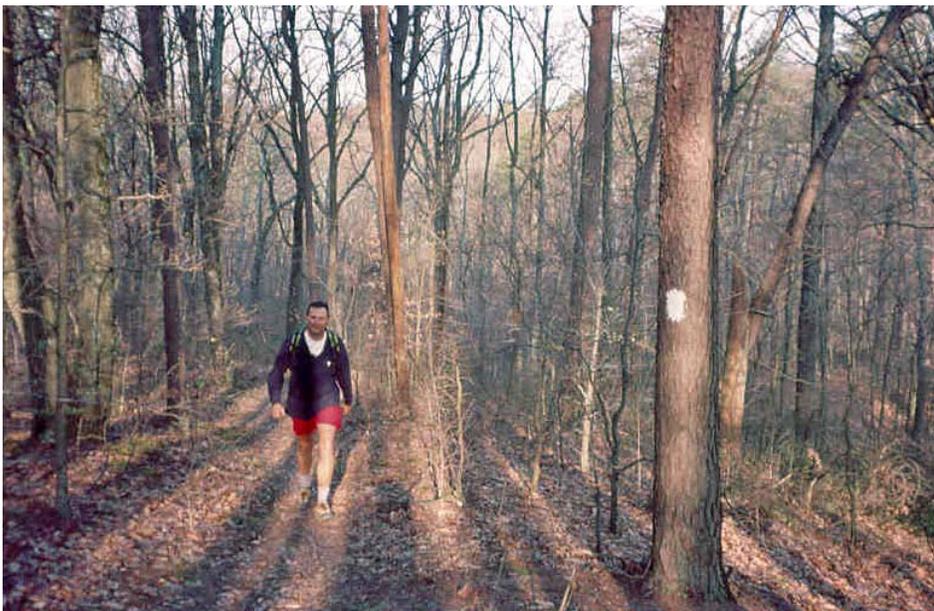
Access to the trail is provided through eight trailheads with parking. Posts with "Knobstone Trail" written in yellow mark the trail at entrance roads. The distance between trailheads varies between five and 12 hiking miles. The trail is marked with 2-inch by 6-inch white blazes painted near eye level on trees as well as mileposts.

Campgrounds are available at Delaney Park, Clark State Forest, and Deam Lake State Recreation Area. Primitive backpack camping is allowed along the trail on public lands at least one mile, by trail, away from roads, recreation areas, and trailheads as long as it is out of sight of the trail and all lakes.

Detailed information about the Knobstone Trail is available from the Division of Outdoor Recreation, 402 W. Washington St., Room W271, Indianapolis, IN 46204 or www.in.gov/dnr/knobstone/general.html.

ADTS Annual Meeting and Board of Directors Meeting

The annual ADT Society membership meeting and board of directors meeting will be held on Oct. 20, 2007, at the Best Western Hotel and Conference Center, 726 E. Market St., in Leesburg, Va. The membership meeting will begin at 8:00 a.m. and all Society members are invited to attend. The hotel is only a few miles from the ADT's route through the C&O Canal National Historic Park. To get to the canal, you have the fun of crossing the Potomac River at historic White's Ferry, on one of the country's few remaining cable ferries still in full-time operation.



ADT pioneer Bill Foot hikes the Knobstone Trail in 1997.

Indiana

In April, Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels joined community leaders and officials from the Cardinal Greenway to officially open 14 miles of new greenway as a part of the state's plan to develop a comprehensive system of trails.

"There's never been a time when the quality of life that Indiana can offer to our citizens and the people who can bring businesses here has been so important," said Daniels. "By encouraging Hoosiers to be more mindful of their personal fitness, we can continue to move toward lowering health-care costs and make Indiana a better place to live."

The new section of Cardinal Greenway includes seven miles of paved trail and seven miles of equestrian trail, extending through the towns of Blountsville and Losantville. The Cardinal Greenway is a 60-mile privately owned and operated not-for-profit greenway that runs from Richmond to Marion. It has been built as a public-private partnership utilizing nearly \$9 million of state and federal funding as well as \$3 million in private donations. As part of the northern section of the American Discovery Trail, the Cardinal Greenway's link to a national trail system helped build support for this effort.

"With Governor Daniels' support, Cardinal Greenway continues to be a unique model of how public and private entities can work together to create a trails infrastructure that can be enjoyed by Hoosiers of all ages," said Lenette Freeman, Cardinal Greenway executive director. "Because of the governor's support, those of us who work on trails and greenways across the state have renewed energy for trails development. In addition, our volunteers have been instrumental from the very beginning in helping with construction, maintenance, security, programming, and stewardship to ensure that the nearly 250,000 people who visit the trail each year can continue to utilize it for decades to come."

Last May, Daniels announced that Indiana would double its financial support of

trails development from \$10 million to \$20 million annually through a combination of state and federal funding sources.

In December, the state finalized a comprehensive statewide trails development plan that will be implemented over the next 10 years with the goal of placing every Hoosier within 15 minutes of a trail. The American Discovery Trail is a centerpiece of the plan.



The Buckeye Trail Association's work crew takes a lunch break on the new trail in the forest.
Photo courtesy of Mary Hayes

Ohio

By Mary Hayes

The American Discovery Trail, which follows the Buckeye Trail in south central Ohio near Sinking Spring, will soon have a few more miles off road in the Strait Creek Prairie Bluff Nature Conservancy. The Buckeye Trail Association trail crew was invited to start clearing trail through the conservancy last year. The work continues this year and should be completed next spring.

The work crew was treated to a wonderful week early this May. The forest was in full bloom with wildflowers everywhere – lady's slipper, Solomon's seal, loosestrife, white orchis, trillium, white and yellow vio-

lets, and Dame's rocket. The trail passes through a forest area, across Strait Creek, and up to the prairie bluff. Ohio University students study the plants on the prairie. The Strait Creek Prairie Bluff Nature Conservancy is an Ohio Department of Natural Resources State Nature Conservancy. It is also known for its scenic geology, and permits are required for hiking.

Iowa

Trails are well-known for their health and recreation benefits but now another benefit can be added to their list—land cleanup. The T-Bone Trail in Iowa created concern because of its proximity to a junkyard in Hamlin. As a result, the Audubon Veterans Foundation purchased the site with the understanding that all of the junk on the grounds would be removed by June 2008. At that time the land will be donated by the foundation to the county conservation board. Three cheers to the veterans group for all their efforts on this project.

A three-mile stretch of the T-Bone Trail south of Hamlin is expected to be completed this summer through funds received from the Iowa Department of Transportation. The trail construction has received funding and should be completed in 2008. Once the latter project is complete, the trail will be paved for 18 miles, from Audubon to three miles south of I-80 in Cass County.

Maryland

A new trail connection provides greater hiking and biking opportunities in Maryland. The ADT has always promoted the linking of trails across our nation and seeks to become the backbone of a trail system as it crosses the nation. Now one of the longest trails the ADT uses, the C&O Canal towpath which spans 184 miles between Washington, D.C., and Cumberland, Md., has recently been linked to the 132 completed miles of the Great Allegheny Passage. The Great Allegheny Passage is currently continuous all the way to McKeesport, Pa., and will eventually extend to Pittsburgh.

A Run Across Iowa on the American Discovery Trail

By Brian Stark

“Why Iowa?” my friends asked as I prepared to leave home and run 520 miles across the Hawkeye State in June 2006. “Because I haven’t done that one yet,” was all I could say.

There were a few reasons I chose Iowa to spend my summer break from teaching middle school English in Arizona. First, my school has a short summer recess so I couldn’t pick a huge state. Second, juggling family, school, and home improvement left little time for training, so I needed a state that was non-technical. Iowa, with its small towns pin-cushioned every 8–10 miles in any direction, each with its own Casey’s—a gas station chain that offers fresh pizza—all pointed to a tour of corn and soybean for an 18-day June run.

Iowa was my 27th state en route to running across all the states on trails. Walking through the terminal in Moline, Ill., wearing a running outfit and toting one carry-on pack, I stood out from the rest of the passengers hugging their family members or heading for hotel shuttles. I simply strode past them all, cinched down my hip pack, and broke into a trot as the glass doors slid open to reveal 500 miles of rolling farmland awaiting me.

Noticing a huge increase in humidity, I tried to fathom that five hours earlier I had left my arid home in the desert and was now running on the shoulder of a busy Midwestern airport exit ramp.

On the second day I stopped in Wildcat Den State Park. I toured the only working grist mill west of the Mississippi. Gary, my volunteer docent, made the history of the mill come alive, telling how farmers came from miles around to have their grain ground into flour. During a famous flood of 1883, the creek that powered the mill’s wheel rose up through the second floor of the mill. The owner, unable to swim, climbed to the third floor and in a panic, tied himself to a beam. The water never reached him but his entire inventory of flour was washed away. Community members fished the sacks out and returned them to

the owner, thus saving his business. Remarkably, only the lining of each flour sack had gotten wet, forming a paste that protected the rest of the contents.

Gary and I got along so well that he and his wife later took me in for the night in nearby Muscatine. Much to my surprise, I consumed an entire pizza in front of them during dinner and hadn’t noticed until I started digging into the second pizza the couple had been sharing between themselves.

The first long trail section of the trip was the Hoover Nature Trail, a north-south crushed limestone rail-trail east of Iowa City. When I arrived at the completed section of trail, I could barely make out the path. It had been finished but had not been maintained and was now knee-high weeds. I tried five strides in the razor grass and my socks were shrouded in seed heads. Not having gaiters and still with a long way to go for the day, I ran on a gravel road parallel to the trail for 20 miles. My feet quickly blistered from 35-mile days with an eight-pound pack wearing inadequate shoes.

Near Cedar Rapids, the route joins the Cedar Valley Nature Trail, a 56-mile rail-trail that runs all the way north to Waterloo. One highlight along that trail was in a bar in Brandon. Never one to pass up a cold soda along the trail, I stepped in, excited by the five touring bicycles laden with gear parked in front of the bar. “Cool,” I thought as I eagerly went in to meet my fellow travelers.

Iowa is host to the RAGBRAI, one of the largest bike rides in the nation. The annual event draws 15,000 people from around the world each year as they bike in a long snake from one town to the next, a moving city of alloy and spandex that camps out in tent cities on high school football fields. In addition to the hard-core Tour de France wannabes, the ride is home to a number of riders who seem to make a sport of performing their own personal sobriety test as they bike from one bar to the next, and if you’re not falling off your bike, you’re not doing it right.

This group claimed they were training for the ride and with beers in hand, I suppose they were. They cheered when I entered, as if they had been waiting all morning for me and decided to start toasting and drinking to random things until I arrived. After the cheers died down and introductions were

finally made, they formed a huddle and emerged saying they had decided to make me an honorary member of their gang. They serenaded me with, “Happy Trails,” and inducted me with an honorary duct tape name tag that read, “Honorary Member—Keep it Classy—Bloody Choad.”

Pressing on before they gave me an honorary bike and matching beer-stained jersey, I soon arrived in Waterloo, home to the northernmost point on the coast-to-coast American Discovery Trail.

Backroads and lots of farm countryside took me to Grundy Center, a small town northeast of Des Moines. Due to road construction in the area, both of the town’s motels were sold out. “No problem,” I thought. “I’ll figure something out.” I walked into a dollar theater hopeful that watching an evening movie might somehow solve my problem. It didn’t. As I walked out of the theater back into the humid evening air, I watched sadly as the rest of the audience sauntered back to their cars and minivans to return home. “I’ll just ask someone if I can go home with them,” I naively thought, thinking nothing unusual about getting a stranger to take me in for the night. But they were all in their cars and gone before I could get up the nerve to ask.

Heading over to the sheriff’s office, I searched for an empty jail cell. There was no room at the inn, so to speak, but an officer agreed to drive me to a city park on the edge of town.

“Over there is the sewage treatment plant and down the hill is a pond. Hope the bugs don’t get you too bad,” the officer said as he closed the door to his cruiser and drove off. I crawled in my bag liner on top of my Tyvek ground cloth and started swatting mosquitoes. Three hours later, not having slept a wink, I packed up my things in defeat.

It was 16 miles to the next town of Conrad. Crossing town again at midnight this time, I eventually stopped in one of the full motels for a last ditch effort. The clerk took pity on me and offered to put me up on a rollaway cot in their board room. That gave me a four-hour nap and a good continental breakfast, which energized me for the next morning.

Entering Des Moines, the trail follows the

Neal Smith bike path around Saylorville Lake to the north. Not wanting to camp out in a swatfest again, I pushed 45 miles into Des Moines on a brutally hot day with full sun. Worse, due to limited services in that section, I only drank two quarts of water for the day.

Despite two nights of hospitality from locals who took me in, my body started to fall apart west of Des Moines. A new pair of shoes had helped my feet recover from the gravel roads, but now my left Achilles tendon was sore from the increase in mileage. Using a pen knife, I cut the heel counter out of my shoe to relieve pressure on my tendon. Next, my right quad started sending shooting pain down to my knee. I generally pride myself for being able to stay injury free, but this felt wrong. I was on the tail end of the trip. Shouldn't I be in better shape, not worse? I began popping ibuprofen and running when I could, walking the rest of the time. I tried slowing down my daily mileage, but that was primarily dictated by the spacing of the towns.

Western Iowa is the less developed side of the state and I needed to figure out lodging in lodgeless towns. During previous trips I have tried fire stations for a free bed, which can work if they are staffed full time. I've tried churches, sometimes being allowed to sleep in a fellowship hall or classroom. I even went into a bar one night, determined to go home with someone. But in western Iowa, I found a new plan. Most towns had a Casey's gas station, which could supply dinner, breakfast, and a restroom. All I really needed was a soft place that was insect-free. I noticed that in almost every town a few homes had camper trailers parked in the side yards. After explaining my trip and reassuring them of my many fine credentials, I'd ask to sleep in their camper and was usually met with welcoming acceptance.

Iowa's trail finishes on the beautiful Wabash Trace, a 63-mile rail-trail along the southern edge of the state to Council Bluffs, which neighbors Omaha, Neb., across the Missouri River. The trail offers tall shade trees leaning far over the railroad right of way, giving an endless green tunnel to block out the sights and sounds of the outer world and intensify the crunching of your steps, lost in a farmland wilderness.

Arriving in Council Bluffs and eager for some celebrating, I found out others had already started the party. Baseball's College

World Series was having its biggest game that night and any hotel that wasn't yet sold out was charging their tip-top rates for a bed. I found one of the last rooms in town and enjoyed a nice dinner and a reflective evening.

The next day, I ran to the Omaha airport from downtown and flew home. Iowa was fun. It was much more than corn and soybeans. The people were friendly but a little guarded. Since this was my first trip post-9/11, I can't determine if the hesitation to take me in—or even accept what I was doing—was due to social conservatism unique to Iowa, or if the war on terror has made people wary—even about the dangers of an unshaven sweaty guy asking to camp in your yard. In talking with locals, more than a few of them said, "Well, you just have to be careful." Yes, I agree, but I think we've always had to be careful. In a small diner during lunch, one elderly woman in another booth had finally decided I no longer posed a threat and said I ought to wear a shirt that said, "I'm OK," confessing that seeing such a shirt would surely prove that I could in no way be anything but honest. (Note: Don't tell the terrorists this trick.)

My encounters with the locals is always the highlight of these trips. I loved the various reactions I got when I told people I was on a 500+ mile run. Many thought it was interesting. A few were truly impressed and pressed me for stories. An equal number of people, however, didn't even register what I'd said, like the docent at a historical site, who, when I entered soaking wet from a morning run in the rain and informed her of what I was doing, clasped her hands and gave a meek shrug.

Sometimes there is a language barrier that I'm determined to break through. At a motel in West Branch, home to Herbert Hoover, I told the foreign-speaking clerk that I had run over 100 miles to get there. She smiled and said, "Uh huh," as she handed me my room key. So I repeated, "I started in Illinois and I came here—walking (trying to help with familiar words)." "Yes," she said, still not getting it. So I pulled out a map, pointed to Moline, and made the "fingers walking" gesture across the map all the way to her hotel. Her eyes lit up. "All... today?" she asked. "Yes," I said, finally satisfied with the partial understanding. Sometimes, that's all we can hope for.

When to Run Across Iowa

By Brian Stark

June is a good month to cross Iowa. It is warm but not deathly hot. Bugs can be an issue at night but a tent or motel could fix that. Most of all, June is a good color to see Iowa. It's one of the few states that can so drastically change its appearance with the farming seasons. An early spring tour would amount to not much more than green fuzz on the ground. Midsummer would be almost tunnel-like with corn stalks at full-height. In winter, besides cold and windy, Iowa would be brown and empty with remnants of what had been there before.

June, I was told correctly, turned out to be the perfect month to tour Iowa as the corn and soybeans were tall enough to blow in the wind, giving that trademark grain-waving visual, but not so tall as to block the view. Furthermore, mild summer days protect the traveler from extremes in temperature.

Brian Stark, an ADT Society board member, realizes his dreams and then figures out how to pay for them. He has published a book about a 5,000-mile solo trail run across America titled, "Getting to the Point. In a dozen pairs of shoes." It is available online at www.discoverytrail.org.



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2007 Long-Distance ADT Travelers As of July 2

Each year brings more people to the ADT who want to experience what our country and its trails have to offer. Some are continuing journeys started in past years, while others are just beginning. The ADT Society website, www.discoverytrail.org, has links to many of their journals for an in-depth look at their experiences and discoveries.

Traveler	Start Date	Mode	Heading	ADT Miles	Last Location
Mike & Crystal Davis with dog, Beaner	January 28	Hike/Bike	W	2,813	Canon City, Colo.
Joyce & Peter Cottrell Hiking from Elizabethtown, Ohio to Denver, Colo.	April 2	Hike	W	1,594	Ft. Morgan, Colo.
Trey Crispin	Mar 13	Hike	W	631	Burr Oak State Park, Ohio
Jim Hopson	April 30	Hike	W	649	Murray City, Ohio
Josh James	April 12	Hike	W	1,092	St. Meinrad, Ind.
Debbie Schachner Resumed April 21	2005	Hike	E	3,875	West Union, Ohio
Jim Shaner	2004	Walk	W	772	Londonderry, Ohio
Dave Toolan & Stuart Hamilton Resumed May 17	2006	Hike	W	2,639	Woodland Park, Colo.

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THE OUTDOORS AT YOUR DOORSTEP

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Discovery Trails Act Legislation Update

The National Discovery Trails Act (House Bill H.R. 74) continues to gain co-sponsors in the House of Representatives. The act would add a new category of trails to the National Trails System Act called Discovery Trails, with the ADT being the first of this kind. Introduced by Rep. Roscoe Bartlett of Maryland, H.R. 74 now has 11 co-sponsors, including Rep. Mike Castle of Delaware. Rep. Castle held a press conference for the legislation at Cape Henlopen State Park in April that was attended by the director of natural resources in Delaware, the superintendent of Delaware parks, Cape Henlopen Park representatives, and others, as well as the media. Rep. Castle said, "The National Discovery Trails Act would make important changes so that the American Discovery Trail can finally become the first coast-to-coast trail while also allowing Delaware to become part of the National Trails System. I will work for the passage of this important bill, which allows Americans to explore their country from one end to the other and also stresses the importance of protecting our natural resources."

We continue to ask ADT supporters to contact their representatives and encourage them to sign on as co-sponsors of the act. The more co-sponsors we get, the greater our chances to see this needed legislation pass this session. For sample letters and information you can use to contact your representative, visit the ADT website.

Marking the ADT

The American Discovery Trail consists of a compilation of many shorter trails as it crosses the country. It has never been the intention of the ADT Society to supersede these local trails, but rather to help promote these smaller trails by making them a part of our larger network.

This goal is demonstrated in the way that the ADT is marked along its route. The current official means of identifying the route of the ADT is by the use of the ADT logo on either decals or plastic signs. The signs are placed so as to indicate the correct direction of travel by means of either an arrow or a tilting of the sign in the direction of a trail turn. Permission for placement of the ADT sign is obtained from the land managing agency in each area.

When the ADT follows an existing trail that has its own marking system, we use their marking system. However, ADT signs are placed at trailheads or where trails intersect to keep the ADT traveler from getting lost. Sometimes there are occasional additional ADT signs along a marked trail that serve as a reminder that this trail is a part of the ADT.

Trail signs are helpful for both the trail user and the landowner. They are intended to guide users in the right direction and keep them on the trail so they do not stray onto property where they may not be welcome.

Fifty Hikes in Ohio

Longtime ADT Society member and supporter Ralph Ramey has recently published the third edition of his popular hiking guide, *Fifty Hikes in Ohio*. The introduction in his book mentions the American Discovery Trail, lists it in the resources section, and includes ADT segments in several of the 50 hikes described in the book.

Ramey is an avid hiker, naturalist, and conservationist, so he had no problem doing the on-the-ground research for his most recent book. He even celebrated his 78th birthday by ordering a new pair of his favorite hiking boots. The retired chief of the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and a recent inductee into the Ohio Natural Resources Hall of Fame, Ramey has hiked throughout the world but still enjoys his hikes in the Buckeye State. The book is published by The Countryman Press.

Making Connections... ***Coast to Coast***

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