



2019 Discover the Power of Parks Annual Report



From left to right, Interpretive Rangers Molly Ryan, Alexandria Clifton, Kyle Krupa, Nell Davis, Thomas Cummings, Simone Maule, Eilís Donohue, Sarah Sherwood, and Matthew Pyster.

Discover the Power of Parks invites visitors to New Hampshire State Parks to enhance their park visit by engaging with interpretive programs at parks statewide. This program is a collaboration between the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR), the Student Conservation Association (SCA), and Eversource Energy with program support from the Corporation for National Service (AmeriCorps).

Program Overview

SCA NH Corps recruited and trained nine educators early in their careers to act as Interpretive Rangers and provide educational activities, guided hikes, and informal lessons for park visitors of all ages. The

goal of all of these programs was to connect participants with nature and build their appreciation for New Hampshire's natural and cultural heritage. Programs also encouraged effective stewardship of park resources by educating on Leave No Trace principles, hiking safety, and recycling, among other topics. In addition, this program provides a valuable professional development opportunity for the participants.

The state parks that hosted Interpretive Rangers this year were: Bear Brook, Crawford Notch, Ellacoya, Franconia Notch, Greenfield, Jericho Mountain, Miller, Monadnock, Moose Brook, Odiorne Point, Pawtuckaway, Umbagog, Wallis Sands, and White Lake.

Measuring Success

Bear Brook Field Trips

The Discover the Power of Parks Interpretive Rangers begin their summer by hosting 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students from Manchester, Hooksett, Deerfield, Pembroke and Allenstown for field trips at Bear Brook State Park. The Interpretive Rangers lead a total of sixteen field trips and two field days during this period for students who had been part of the SCA NH Corps winter environmental education program (new this year was one weekend field trip for an afterschool program partner). A list of participating schools can be found in Appendix A. Many of the more than 1,000 students who visited Bear Brook during this time had not been to the park before, and these field trips provided an opportunity to introduce them to the park's forests, marshes, ponds and vernal pools, and encourage future exploration of New Hampshire State Parks.

Discover the Power of Parks Programs

With support from SCA NH Corps Education Coordinator Kari Amick and State Park staff, Interpretive Rangers developed engaging programs to deepen the connection visitors have with State Parks and encourage safety and stewardship within the parks. Programs built upon past Discover the Power of Parks successes and specific park features and needs, enriched by the creativity of the Interpretive Rangers.

Some unique programs from this year's Interpretive Rangers include:

- Kyle Krupa and Matthew Pyster, rangers for Pawtuckaway and White Lake respectively, developed a pirate-themed recycling game to encourage park visitors to recycle right.
- Molly Ryan, at Bear Brook State Park, took the initiative to restore some of the materials from the Bear Brook nature museum and bring them into a vacant portion of the CCC Museum.
- Alexandria Clifton, at Greenfield State Park, taught an assortment of educational programs where visitors were encouraged to create watercolors of local flora and fauna while learning more about them.
- Nell Davis, at Monadnock State Park, provided hiking safety information to park visitors and assisted on no less than thirteen rescues on the mountain.
- Thomas Cummings, at Umbagog State Park, also partnered with Jericho Mountain and Moose Brook to provide



Nell Davis hikes Monadnock with a stop sign to encourage visitor questions.

programs throughout the Great North Woods. As part of this effort, he tabled at the Jericho ATV Festival.

- Simone Maule and Matthew Pyster, working jointly at Ellacoya State Park, used sandcastles to teach visitors about limnology.
- Eilís Donohue and Sarah Sherwood, working jointly at Franconia Notch, captured visitor attention with engaging ‘test your knowledge’ tabling displays on a range of topics.
- During the fall season, several interpretive rangers roved the trails of their parks to provide information to hikers. These included Thomas Cummings and Alexandria Clifton at Miller, Kyle Krupa at Pawtuckaway, and Simone Maule and Matthew Pyster at Crawford Notch.



Kyle Krupa leads an outreach program with students from the Deerfield After School program.

Outreach Season

This year seven of the nine Interpretive Rangers lead fall outreach programs. During this period, Interpretive Rangers based at Bear Brook State Park, Monadnock State Park, and White Lake State Park went out into the communities surrounding their parks to teach programs at libraries, schools, and other non-profits that had not been reached during the earlier education season. Additionally, the Umbagog Interpretive Ranger conducted some outreach in the Great North Woods during the summer. A full list of outreach partners can be found in Appendix A.

During both outreach season and the Discover the Power of Parks programs, the Interpretive Rangers interacted with thousands of park visitors, campers, hikers, and community members. They recorded the number of visitors they reached and reported the following:

Park	Interpreter	Total # of Program Attendees	Total Park Visitor Contacts (excluding program attendees)
Greenfield State Park	Alexandria Clifton	1309	1192
Monadnock State Park	Nell Davis	2582	10607
Bear Brook State Park	Molly Ryan	1330	881
Pawtuckaway State Park	Kyle Krupa	2061	1036
Franconia Notch State Park	Eilís Donohue & Sarah Sherwood	5720	10506
Ellacoya State Park	Simone Maule & Matthew Pyster	912	1341
White Lake State Park	Matthew Pyster	1389	3147

Seacoast Parks	Kyle Krupa & Molly Ryan	636	n/a
Crawford Notch	Simone Maule	2845	9445
Umbagog State Park	Thomas Cummings	567	1231
Miller State Park (Sept/Oct only)	Alexandria Clifton & Thomas Cummings	1359	1938
Monadnock Outreach	Alexandria Clifton, Thomas Cummings & Nell Davis	186	178
Bear Brook Outreach	Kyle Krupa & Molly Ryan	488	102
Ossipee Outreach	Simone Maule & Matthew Pyster	491	85
Great North Woods Outreach	Thomas Cummings	472	385
Totals		22,347	42,639

This means the total visitor contacts, including both program attendees and park contacts, was 64,986 this year; of these, 2,387 occurred during outreach activities.

Social Media Outreach

The Interpretive Rangers contributed to the NH State Parks blog, collectively writing 42 blog posts that span from the beginning of their service term to the end. Posts were also shared on the NH State Parks Facebook page, allowing the rangers to reach both park visitors and potential park visitors. On average, each post received over 700 views. The Interpretive Rangers wrote about a range of topics that both encouraged visitors to come explore State Parks and provided the information necessary for them to be safe and conscientious park visitors. Some of the most popular posts by views for this season were 'Odiorne Point's Hidden History,' by Molly Ryan (3121 views), 'Pawtuckaway's Mountain Trail,' by Kyle Krupa (2055 views), and 'Animal of Interest: Eastern Red-Spotted Newt,' by Eilís Donohue (1848 views).

Program Marketing

Discover the Power of Parks participants that take part in five programs are awarded a Discover the Power of Parks patch. This year three of those patches were awarded; two were completed at Umbagog and one was completed at White Lake.

Building on Success

The Division has committed to contract ten Interpretive Rangers for the 2020 calendar year (two Interpretive Rangers will be in-kind). It is expected that programs will be offered at all of this year's program sites next year, and the tenth Interpretive Ranger will most likely cover Pillsbury and Sunapee State Parks.

Some program goals we will be working on for 2020 include:

1. Administration

- a. Ensure we provide Interpretive Rangers with adequate housing and office resources throughout the program season from June through October.
 - b. The SCA NH Corps Education Coordinator will seek out trainings to provide more comprehensive support to Interpretive Rangers during the field season in the form of strengthened feedback and guidance for interpretive programming.
 - c. Develop a consistent method for State Park supervisors to provide feedback on the program and Interpretive Rangers at the end of each season.
2. Advertising and Marketing
- a. Continue to write and publish blogs throughout the SCA NH Corps program year (January through October).
 - b. Data from this year's blog posts will be used to help guide interpretive rangers toward engaging blog post topics and titles.
 - c. We plan to pilot an 'Umbagog News' program at Umbagog State Park, where the Umbagog Interpretive Ranger will produce a weekly news flyer with park rules, local events, and information about interpretive programs.
3. Programming
- a. Programs should grow and change as the season progresses to ensure visitor engagement is maintained; Interpretive Rangers will also work to develop innovative ways to engage visitors who return year after year and may be familiar with programs from past years.
 - b. Continue to build on the success of recycling programs at parks.
 - c. Continue engaging with day camp groups as the schedule permits, particularly at beach parks.
 - d. Interpretive Rangers will reach out to partners to collaborate on programming. This year rangers worked in collaboration with the Allenstown Historical Society to open the Civilian Conservation Corps Museum and Old Allenstown Meeting House at Bear Brook, and with the Seacoast Science Center for programs at Odiorne Point.
 - e. Outreach programs will be increased on quiet weekdays where possible; for example, during the lull between the end of the summer season and the beginning of leaf peeping season, weekday outreach may be possible around Franconia. The Ossipee interpreters also had a high level of interest in their outreach programs and may be able to extend them to Fridays throughout the fall.

Next Steps

Interpreters for 2020 will be beginning their education service in January, and transitioning to their park placements in June. During December of 2019 there will be meetings between DNCR staff and the SCA NH Corps staff to follow up on some of the points above and ensure that the program builds on its success in 2020. We look forward to another successful program year!

Appendix A

Field Trip Participants

School	Town	Grade Level
Allenstown Elementary School	Allenstown	3 rd Grade
Beech Street School	Manchester	3 rd Grade
Deerfield Community School	Deerfield	3 rd Grade
Green Acres School	Manchester	3 rd Grade
Hallsville Elementary School	Manchester	4 th & 5 th Grade
Henry Wilson Elementary School	Manchester	4 th Grade
Highland Goffe's Falls School	Manchester	4 th & 5 th Grade
Hooksett Memorial School	Hooksett	3 rd Grade
Inti Academy	Manchester	Afterschool Program
Jewett Street School	Manchester	4 th Grade
McDonough Elementary School	Manchester	4 th Grade
Pembroke Hill School	Pembroke	4 th Grade
Smyth Road Elementary School	Manchester	4 th Grade
Webster School	Manchester	4 th Grade
Weston Elementary School	Manchester	4 th Grade

Outreach Partners

	Organization	Town
Merrimack Valley	Armand DuPont Middle School	Allenstown
	Barrington Public Library	Barrington
	Beech Hill School	Hopkinton
	Deerfield After School Program	Deerfield
	Gilford Public Library	Gilford
	Girls Inc.	Manchester
	Girl Scouts, Brownie & Cadette Troops	Hampton
	Goodwin Library	Farmington
	Henniker Community School	Henniker
	Jennie D. Blake Elementary	Hill
	Lego League	Stratham
	Manchester Public Library	Manchester
	Plaistow Public Library	Plaistow
	Portsmouth College Women's Club	Portsmouth
	Raymond Middle School	Raymond
	Second Start	Concord
	Seacoast Homeschool Group	Kingston
Smyth Public Library	Candia	
Sutton Boys & Girls Club	Sutton	
Monadnock Region	Cheshire Children's Museum	Keene
	Cushing Academy	Ashburnham, MA

	Dublin Christian Academy	Dublin
	Gay-Kimball Library	Troy
	Hampshire Country School	Rindge
	Harrisville Library	Harrisville
	Horatio Colony Museum	Keene
	Ingalls Memorial Library	Rindge
	Jaffrey Parks & Recreation	Jaffrey
	Jaffrey Public Library	Jaffrey
	Monadnock at Home	Jaffrey
	Monadnock Homeschool Group	Rindge
	Monadnock Waldorf School	Keene
	Olivia Rodham Memorial Library	Nelson
	Peterborough Town Library	Peterborough
	The River Center	Peterborough
	Robin's Nest Nature Preschool	Peterborough
	Victory High School	Jaffrey
Ossipee Region	Belknap County Nursing Home	Laconia
	Bristol Homeschool Group	Bristol
	Conway Public Library	Conway
	Freedom Elementary School	Freedom
	Lake Crescent School	Wolfeboro
	Ossipee Central School	Ossipee
	Ossipee Region Homeschool Group	Rumney
	Robert Frost Public Charter School	Conway
Great North Woods	Berlin Public Library	Berlin
	Jericho ATV Festival	Berlin
	North Country Community Rec Center	Colebrook