TRAILS OF HACKELEBARNEY STATE PARK

Tucked within Hacklebarney State Park are nine official trails, totaling almost five miles. For such a small area, the terrain is quite diverse and encompasses mixed hardwood upland forests, hillsides, a hemlock ravine, and freshwater stream environments. The Black River, fed by the Trout and Rhinehart Brooks, runs through the middle of the park. The Black River is flanked by massive boulders that create scenic pools and waterfalls. There are numerous picnic tables tucked in among the forest and along the stream. The trails of Hacklebarney allow for exploration and enjoyment of this glacial valley.

Haki Trail
Lt. Blue • 0.32 miles • Hiking
Moderate • Connector trail to river on gravel path

Trailhead On Main Trail about 0.4 miles from the parking lot. Haki Trail gently descends along the forested hillside above the Black River. The trail joins with the river just at the confluence where Trout Brook and the Black River meet. There is a restroom building and many picnic tables in this area. The confluence of the brook and river is a very scenic location.

Main Trail
White • 0.7 miles • Hiking
Easy • Runs through middle of park and connects to all trails

Trailhead At the southeast corner of the main parking lot. Main Trail travels the forested ravine hillside beginning along Trout Brook, turns south above the Black River and ends alongside Rhinehart Brook. The five-foot-wide packed gravel trail runs through the middle of the park, providing access to most of the other trails. The high point of the trail is on a shallow ridge with picnic tables among a grove of trees across from the playground. A walk down Main Trail and returning on Riverside Trail is a great way to see much of the park and its unique areas.

Playground Trail
Green • 0.35 miles • Hiking
Easy • Shortcut to playground area

Trailhead Off park entrance road just past the maintenance building. Look for small road and gate on left. Playground Trail heads southeast on a five-foot-wide asphalt path through a hardwood forest. The trail runs along a hillside and leads directly to the playground area, then continues to join with Main Trail across from the picnic area.

Riverside Trail
Red • 1.8 miles • Hiking
Moderate • Follows along river edge

Trailhead On left (east) side of Main Trail, approximately 75 yards from park office.
Riverside Trail, the longest trail, leads the visitor along the three major waterways in the park. Trout Brook and Rhinehart Brook are both tributaries which flow into the Black River. Riverside Trail follows a single-track, dirt path with natural obstacles as it travels alongside the creeks of this rocky ravine. Riverside Trail is very scenic with vistas, waterfalls and pools, fishing access, and many picnic tables along the way. Trail conditions vary depending on weather and water levels.

Three Pools Trail
Blue • 0.12 miles • Hiking
Easy • Six-foot-wide, packed gravel

Trailhead On Main Trail approximately 0.5 miles from the parking lot. Three Pools Trail descends along a moderate grade hillside and leads down into the ravine along the Black River to scenic flat-water pools in between small drop-offs and cascades.

Upland Trail
Pink • 0.5 miles • Hiking
Easy • Loop trail along ridge

Trailhead On Playground Trail. Upland Trail loops around the wooded uplands above the Black River. The trail leaves and rejoins Playground Trail and travels through hardwoods and cedar trees on a packed gravel and grass-covered path. There is a viewing platform and overlook on the north side.

Waterfall Trail
Purple • 0.1 miles • Hiking
Moderate • Short trail to waterfalls on Trout Brook

Trailhead On Main Trail. Waterfall Trail is a short trail that descends from Main Trail and joins Trout Brook just above a series of waterfalls and pools. The trail is a six-foot-wide asphalt and gravel path that descends a moderate grade slope to meet with Trout Brook. There is a wide bridge to cross to connect to Riverside Trail. Just downstream of the bridge, the creek drops over a series of large boulders with small pools and cascades.
Windy Ridge Trail
Yellow • 0.5 miles • Hiking
Easy • Mostly narrow single-track dirt path
Trailhead On Main Trail just after passing playground area. Windy Ridge Trail follows along the hillside bounded between the Black River and Rhinehart Brook, and then begins to descend and turn south and east to follow Rhinehart Brook. It joins with Main Trail and Riverside Trail at a bridge over Rhinehart Brook.

Wintershine Trail
Orange • 0.35 miles • Hiking
Easy • Crosses Hemlock hillside
Trailhead On Riverside Trail 0.5 miles from its start. Wintershine Trail travels along the hillside above the Black River through hemlock and mixed hardwood trees. The trail starts on a four-foot-wide gravel and dirt path and narrows to single-track over rocky terrain as it nears Trout Brook. As it crosses Trout Brook, large boulders create a few pools just near the bridge. The trail turns east, heads downstream and joins with Waki Trail.

TRAIL SENSE AND SAFETY

Trail Markings Official trails are marked with colored blazes on posts and trees. For everyone's safety, do not alter trail markings.

Be Prepared Consider bringing water, snacks, sunscreen, insect repellent, and a hat. Check the weather before you go, dress appropriately, and tell someone where you intend to go and when you plan to finish. Remember that trail conditions vary due to weather and water levels.

Pets must be on a leash no longer than six feet in length and under control of the owner at all times. Please clean up after your pets.

Keep Your Park Clean Through the Carry-In/Carry-Out Program, you can help keep the park clean and beautiful by carrying out your trash.

Tick Protection Make sure to use insect repellent, wear light-colored clothing, tuck pants into socks, stay on trails, check yourself when you get home, shower, and wash clothes immediately.

Be Bear Aware Bears are active in this area. Do not approach or attract bears by making food available. Bear sightings should be reported to the State Park Police, through the DEP’s 24-hour, toll-free hotline: 877-WARN-DEP (877-927-6337) or to the park office.

Emergency Park Police can be reached 24 hours a day by calling Trenton Dispatch at 1-877-927-6337.

Hacklebarney State Park is administered by
Spruce Run Recreation Area:
68 Van Syckles Road
Clinton, NJ 08809
(908) 638-8572

Hacklebarney State Park
119 Hacklebarney Rd
Long Valley, NJ 07853

All photos:
Bruce Hockenbury

Scan the QR code to learn more about this park.

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