Questing!

Inspired by the British pastime of “letterboxing,” Questing has exploded in popularity on this side of the Atlantic during the past decade. People from toddlers and teens, to parents and grandparents, follow maps, clues and rhyming riddles searching for hidden “treasure” boxes in the landscape. Combining adventure and fun, Questers forge connections to distinct landscapes and foster a sense of stewardship about our natural and cultural heritage. Over a thousand adventure seekers of all ages have discovered the Barton Cove Treasure Box. Have you?

Our Barton Cove Quest explores the unique geologic stories of this rocky peninsula along the shores of the Connecticut River. The brochure can be found at our kiosk at the Barton Cove Day Use Parking area (Barton Cove Road, Gill, MA) or downloaded from our website http://www.h2opower.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Barton-Cove-Quest-2017.pdf The hidden box includes images and information to enhance your experience as well as a notepad, inkpad and hand-carved stamp for you to leave your mark.

Those who wish to delve deeper into the stories of dinosaur tracks at Barton Cove can explore “Impressions of a Lost World”, Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association’s amazing new online resource www.dinotracksdiscovery.org Want to dig a bit deeper, visit Memorial Museum’s new exhibit in Deerfield “Astronomy, Geology and Dino Tracks! Oh my!” focusing on Edward and Orra Hitchcock and Early Natural Sciences. There are so many ways to celebrate the unique stories of our local landscape and Questing can serve as a great jumping off point.
**Trails and Visitor Center**

Northfield Mountain’s trails are superb for autumn explorations and remain open seven days a week for hiking until we get four inches of snow. Since weather conditions, muddy trails and special events sometimes cause trail closures, it’s a good idea to check current trail conditions by calling (800) 859-2960 or checking our Facebook page.

**Dog walking:**
If you bring your dog along to enjoy the trails and recreation facilities, please make sure it remains on a leash at all times. Leashes are required by town ordinances at all facilities. We also require dog walkers to clean up after their pets.

**Hunting:**
Hunting is permitted on most of the Northfield Mountain trail system in accordance with Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife regulations. **Hunting is not allowed in Massachusetts on Sundays.**

**DEER SEASONS:**
- Shotgun
  - November 27—December 9
- Primitive Firearms
  - December 11—30

**BLACK BEAR SEASONS:**
- September 5—23
- November 6—25
- November 27—December 9

**Visitor Center:**
The Visitor Center is the hub of local facilities and programs owned and operated by First-Light Power Resources. It’s the place to make reservations, pick up QII riverboat tickets, get information and attend many programs. The center’s exhibits depict historic and modern uses of the Connecticut River. We are located on Route 63, two miles north of Route 2 in the town of Northfield (99 Millers Falls Road, Northfield, MA.) Stop by for a visit or give us a call at (800) 859-2960.

**Mountain biking:**
Twenty-five miles of double-track trails and three-state views make Northfield a beautiful place to ride. A helmet and tires at least 1½ inches wide are required. **Trails are closed to mountain bikes November 6 until May 2018.**

**Horseback riding:**
Riders love our 25 miles of mostly wooded carriage width trails. Check in at the Center for parking and trail information. We require all riders to clean up the area around their trailers. **Trails are closed to horses November 6 until May 2018.**

**Pavilion and Yurt Rentals**

**Pavilion**
A lovely 70-seat pavilion is available for rental at Riverview Picnic Area, adjacent to the riverboat launch in Northfield. It’s a great spot for wedding parties, company outings, and reunions with large grills, electricity and tables sheltered beneath a post-and-beam structure. A pavilion rental and riverboat charter turn your party into a memorable occasion. **Pavilion Rental Fee: $200 plus $100 refundable cleanup deposit.**

**Yurt**
Looking for a unique meeting space or terrific site to hold your child's birthday celebration? Try Northfield Mountain’s unusually cozy yurt. This round, canvas-covered structure, with rustic tables and chairs will hold up to 30 people. It is lighted, and has electrical outlets, as well as a pellet stove to keep guests comfortable. Located behind the Visitor Center adjacent to the pond and Northfield’s trails, the yurt is available during business hours. **Yurt Rental Fee: $100 plus $100 refundable cleanup deposit.**
**Heritage Riverboat**

The French King Gorge is one of the most scenic stretches of the Connecticut River in Massachusetts. Climb aboard the charming 44-seat Heritage Riverboat and enjoy a relaxing and informative journey down New England's great river. This 12-mile narrated cruise takes 1 1/2 hours.

**Riverboat Charters.**

The Heritage Riverboat is available for private charters. If you are looking for a unique outing for a social occasion or family event, let us schedule a cruise through the magnificent French King Gorge. Prices begin at just $375, cruises can be scheduled to meet your needs, and we can recommend caterers for on-board snacking.

Friday Packages: Charter and Pavilion Rental, $525.
Saturday and Sunday Packages: Charter and Pavilion Rental, $575.

**Riverboat Schedule**

**Through October 15**
Friday through Sunday
11:00 a.m. 1:15 p.m. 3:00 p.m.

**Riverboat Holidays**
Open:
Columbus Day Oct. 9

**Ticket Fees**
Adult .........................$12.00
Senior (62 and older) ....$11.00
Child (14 and under) ....$6.00
Group (15 or more) .... $10.00
School Group ............$6.00

**Camping and Picnicking**

**Munn’s Ferry Boat Camping Area**

Campers may access the campground by boat only though Columbus Day. **Reservations are required.** Munn’s is open from Memorial Day weekend to Columbus Day. Camping is limited to two nights (except for three day holiday weekends). Tent sites are $22 per night and the Adirondack shelter is $30 per night. Potable water is not available on site.

**Phone:** 413 863-9300

**Picnic Areas:**

Looking for a beautiful picnic area on the banks of the Connecticut River? Why not try Unity Park on First Street in Turners Falls, Barton Cove Campground off Route 2 in Gill, or Riverview Picnic Area near the Northfield Mountain Visitor Center? All have picnic tables and charcoal hibachis open on a first come, first served basis. Areas are open free of charge and remain open until dusk.
**Kids Cruise on Board the Heritage Riverboat**

Celebrate the beginning of fall and a new school year with a children’s cruise on board the Heritage Riverboat. These cruises are the perfect length for children to get a taste of the river as we head downstream through the scenic French King Gorge. Travel beneath the French King Bridge, towering 140 feet above the boat. Cruise alongside rocky cliffs, over the “Deep Hole” and enjoy an outing on the beautiful Connecticut River.

Sat., Sept. 9; 11:00 a.m.–noon
Fee: $6.00 for all ages
Pre-register by calling 800-859-2960 or on-line at www.bookeo.com/northfield

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**Astronomy Conjunction**

Northfield Mountain will host the 35th Annual Connecticut River Valley Astronomer’s Conjunction. Enjoy the camaraderie of amateur astronomers learning and observing together at Northfield Mountain. Held during the dark of the moon, the weekend will be jam-packed full of slide presentations, talks, and Friday and Saturday night sky viewing through telescopes of all shapes and sizes. Check out the conjunction website: [http://www.philharrington.net/astroconjunction/](http://www.philharrington.net/astroconjunction/). Registration forms available from Richard Sanderson at rsanderson@springfieldmuseums.org or by writing Jack Megas, Astronomy Conjunction, 311 Surrey Road, Springfield, MA 01118.

Fri. and Sat., Sept. 15—16;
For ages 12 and older

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**Canal Drawdown and Power Town History Stroll**

Enjoy a walk back in time along the popular canal side bike path in Turners Falls. Join local historian Ed Gregory, Northfield Mountain’s Kim Noyes, and Massachusetts DCR’s Janel Nockleby to discover the rich and colorful industrial history along this scenic paved path. The annual draw down of the canal offers a unique view and insight into the history of Turners Falls. Historical maps and photographs will help bring the sights and sounds of our industrial heritage alive. Wear comfortable walking shoes and meet at the entrance of the Great Falls Discovery Center (2 Avenue A, Turners Falls). Total walking distance is no more than two miles on flat terrain.

Thu., Sept. 21; 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.
For ages 16 and older
Free
Pre-register by calling 800-859-2960
Source to Sea Cleanup

Year 21 brings exciting collaboration when Franklin County lovers of clean open-space join forces at the Green River Swimming Area on Nash’s Mill Road. After morning refreshments, small groups will head to their respective communities to do the important work of removing debris from riversides and roadways to prevent contamination of our treasured water bodies. All volunteers are invited to return to the swimming area for lunch, camaraderie and live music provided by Tuff Riddim International.

Trash collected from the greater Gill – Montague area will be collected by volunteers with trucks and brought to the Montague Transfer Station for recycling and disposal in the Cleanup’s dumpsters. Debris from the Greenfield area will be brought back to the swimming area for pickup by the Greenfield DPW. People of all ages and abilities can join in and those with trucks can help transport trash. Weekday cleanups can also be scheduled for interested school groups. Co-sponsors include watershed-wide organizers; the Connecticut River Conservancy, FirstLight Power, the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District, Student Conservation Association/AmeriCorps, and the Deerfield River Watershed Assn.

Sat., Sept. 23; 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Free
Organized groups pre-register by calling 800-859-2960
Meet at Green River Swimming Area, 1 Nash’s Mill Road, Greenfield, MA

Animal Detectives

Explore the fields and forests at Northfield Mountain on this family program to discover what is happening in the animal world during fall. From insects underfoot to birds overhead, there’s activity everywhere as animals prepare for winter. The afternoon will be filled with games, stories, hands-on activities, and outdoor exploration. Taught by Kathy Richards, an environmental educator with over twenty years of experience, this program is geared towards families with children ages 5 – 10, although all ages are welcome!

Sat., Sept. 30; noon - 2:00 p.m.
For all ages
Free
Pre-register by calling 800-859-2960

Fire and Ice; Richard Little Geology Cruise

Geology comes alive through the clear and often humorous stories of Richard Little. Last year’s cruise sold out so be sure to reserve your seats early! This relaxing cruise on the Connecticut River will be filled with tales of drifting continents, earthquakes, dinosaurs, glaciers, Lake Hitchcock, and the strange origin of deep riverbed holes; all are part of the creation of our idyllic Valley. Professor Emeritus of Greenfield Community College, Richard Little has published three editions of Dinosaurs, Dunes, and Drifting Continents: The Geology of the Connecticut Valley and created videos about the rise and fall of glacial Lake Hitchcock and the 500 million year history of the Connecticut Valley. Professor Little continues his passion for educating about geology through “Fantastic Landscape Tours” to significant geologic areas like the US National Parks and Iceland. Don’t miss this overview of the amazing geology of our area by one of the region’s greatest geology educators. More information about Richard Little’s tours and publications is available at http://www.earthview.pair.com/

Sat., Sept. 30; 1:15 – 2:45 p.m. or
Sat., Sept. 30; 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
For ages 10 and older
Fee: $12 adults, $11 seniors, $6 children
Register on-line at bookeo.com/northfield or by calling 800-859-2960
Fall Foliage Atop Northfield Mountain

Spend an afternoon hiking and enjoying beautiful scenery, fall foliage and views from our summit. Seasonal natural history highlights, a look at past land use, fresh air and exercise will round out this fall outing. Participants in moderate condition, able to walk five miles and comfortable with an elevation gain of 900’ will be a good fit for this hike. Wear sturdy, closed-toed shoes that can get wet or muddy, dress in layers and bring a sense of adventure, snack and water. Heavy rain cancels.

Sat., Oct. 7; 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Free
Pre-register by calling 800-859-2960

Tree ID Using Bark and Habitat Clues

Join naturalist Nancy Goodman and take a close look at trees and other botanical wonders. Have you ever looked at a tree in winter and wondered what it might be? For more than half the year, bark provides the best clue to tree identification. We will be keying out some of the trees to see what we can learn. Become familiar with the characteristic bark of different trees in different habitats and at different stages of growth, as well as identification from leaves and other clues.

Bring binoculars, water, snack, sturdy walking shoes and the book *Bark* by Michael Wojtech, if you have a copy. This program is co-sponsored with the Athol Bird and Nature Club and will take place at Northfield’s scenic Riverview Picnic area along the Connecticut River. This location has an especially rich variety of tree species. Meet in the Riverview parking area in Northfield at 10 a.m. (intersection of Pine Meadow and Ferry Road, 100 Ferry Road)

Sat., Oct. 21; 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
For ages 16 and older
Free
Pre-register by calling 800-859-2960

Environmental Experiences for Early Childhood Educators: Growing Up Wild and Project Learning Tree

Growing Up WILD and Project Learning Tree's Environmental Experiences for Early Childhood build on children's sense of wonder about nature and invite them to explore the natural world around them. Through a wide range of activities and experiences, these new curriculums provide an early foundation for developing positive impressions about the natural world and lifelong social and academic skills. Educators taking this professional development workshop at Northfield Mountain will receive both multi-award winning curriculum guides for educators of young children. The activity guides feature over 150 experiences that engage children in outdoor play and exploration. Join instructors, Patti Steinman, Education Coordinator, Connecticut River Valley Sanctuaries and Kim Noyes, Northfield Mountain’s Education Coordinator, for a fun-filled day of interactive, hands-on activities. Gain experience and skills helpful for taking children outside to explore the natural world. This professional development workshop is great for teachers, camp counselors, child care providers, home school parents and other educators. Both curriculums are correlated to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards and the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework.

Sat., Oct. 28; 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
For Educators of Young Children ages 3-7
Fee: $50, Includes two Activity Guides
Co-sponsored with Massachusetts Audubon
Register online through Mass Audubon or call Arcadia at 413-584-3009 to register by phone.
Public Programs

**Beaver Moon Nighttime Adventure**

On the eve of the Full Beaver Moon join Kim Noyes for a nighttime adventure on the forested trails at Northfield Mountain. Traditionally, November was the time of year to set beaver traps before the swamps froze. It is also the time of year that beavers and many other animals are actively preparing for winter. This walk will celebrate the night and the shifting of the seasons. Bring water, a sense of adventure and dress in warm layers that can be shed as we get moving. Hot chocolate and tea around our cozy pellet stove will conclude the evening.

Fri., Nov. 3; 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
Free
Pre-register by calling 800-859-2960

**Western Massachusetts High School Cross Country Championships**

Come watch the top Western Massachusetts high school cross country runners compete for a place at the State Championships. This championship includes over 35 teams from Divisions I and II. All races are run on a 3.1 mile course with great spectator viewing.

Sat., Nov. 11;
Start times: 11:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., Noon, 12:30 p.m.

**Wildflowers in Winter**

Learning to identify wildflowers in winter can be a fun challenge. Join Dawn Ward to learn how to match the summer wildflowers with their winter attire. Photographs, clues and hands-on exploration will expand your knowledge of the winter landscape. Discover the amazing variety of shapes, forms and textures, learn lore and legend of our local plants and gain an appreciation of wildflowers in their dormant state. Dawn is an educator and naturalist, with a specialty in botany, who has been sharing her knowledge and appreciation of nature for over 20 years.

Wed., Nov. 15; 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
For adults
Free
Pre-register by calling 800-859-2960
**Special Day in Northfield**

The town of Northfield’s “Special Day” celebrates its 12th year with old-fashioned holiday fun for all ages from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Travel around the beautiful, historic town in true New England style with free horse-drawn hayrides and enjoy musical performances, crafts and local shopping. Visit Northfield Mountain staff to create your own bird related holiday gift at one of the downtown venues. Specific location and time will be shared via our Facebook page or by calling (800) 859-2960 closer to the event. A community bonfire, caroling, delicious snacks, history, art and more all round out this Special Day in Northfield.

**Enrichment and Education**

Please join us for one of many field trip opportunities offered throughout the year for schools and organized groups. Our goal is to provide quality learning experiences that are educational and engaging for all learners, using the outdoors as the classroom. All school programs support the recently revised Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Standards. This fall we offer a variety of opportunities to visit Northfield Mountain.

*Beyond the Schoolyard*, designed specifically for early childhood learners, is filled with activities, creative dramatics and sensory exploration. *Woodchucks, Warblers and Whirligigs and Incredible Insects* offer students in 1st through 3rd grade the opportunity to explore life in the field and study these amazing animals, live and up close. Equipped with nets, magnifying glasses and field guides students catch, observe and release insects. *Trees are Terrific* and *Seeds to Soil* offer the opportunity to explore the ecology of the forests and fall as a season of change for students in 4th through 6th grades. Field trips are offered Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays through October 27th.

Be sure not to miss the enrichment opportunity for early childhood educators slated for October 28th. Facilitated by Massachusetts Audubon and Northfield Mountain staff, “Environmental Experiences for Early Childhood Educators: Growing Up Wild and Project Learning Tree”, will be a fun-filled day of interactive and hands-on activities.

Please visit our website [http://www.h2opower.ca/firstlight-power/recreations/](http://www.h2opower.ca/firstlight-power/recreations/) for more information on opportunities this fall and throughout the school year. To schedule a field trip please contact Kim Noyes, Northfield Mountain’s Education Coordinator at (413) 659-4462 or by email at kim.noyes@firstlightpower.com. We look forward to your visit.