

Kilburn Crags Awarded Editor's Pick for "Locals Only Hiking Trail" by NH Magazine!

By Melissa Pilgrim

Note: This article has been published on *GoLittleton.com*.

Littleton's best-kept secret hiking trail—the Kilburn Crags Trail—is a secret no more, thanks to receiving *New Hampshire Magazine's* editor's pick of the best "locals only hiking trail" for 2015's "Best of NH 2015" issue. And anyone who's ever had the pleasure of making the short, enjoyable 1.4 mile nature hike (round trip) can tell you why. The view at the top is spectacular and worth every step!

Known as "The Crags" to locals, this easy, scenic trail is located on the northeastern shoulder of Walker Mountain in Littleton, N.H. The trailhead and small parking area for it is on NH Route 18/135, also known as the St. Johnsbury Road. (And the parking area is *truly* small, only big enough to fit about four cars at a time, so plan to carpool if going in a group.)

The top elevation of The Crags is 1,300 feet. At the outlook you can see a picturesque view of Littleton, the gorgeous high peaks of the Presidential Range, parts of the pretty Ammonoosuc River Valley, and even area favorites like Lafayette and Cannon Mountain off to the right. Its' fantastic scenery looks beautiful in every season too, attracting hikers year round. The landscape of the both the woods leading up to it and the outlook at the top change dramatically throughout the spring, summer, fall, and winter months, making it seem like a completely different hike each season as well.

The trail is maintained by the wonderful volunteers from the Littleton Conservation Commission. And though hiking it most of the year is just fine, do use good judgment about the conditions of both the trail itself and the weather if you set out to attempt it in the winter months. (Winter Hiking Tip: bring snowshoes, for you may be the first to break the trail in *very* deep snow! But once it's all packed down it can normally be hiked on without snowshoes once again, especially towards the end of winter. However, the parking area most likely won't be plowed out at any time during the winter, so bring a shovel for that part too, just in case.)

The Kilburn Crags Hiking Trail is listed as a beginner's trail that is perfect for all skill levels. It attracts all ages as well as many furry, four-legged companions. (And yes, that means dogs are welcomed—please just pick up after them.) The trail starts by walking through a small field, then it heads into the woods where you can follow the direction arrows posted on trees to let you know the way to the top. There are two benches along the trail for when you want to rest or stop to look at all the peaceful nature and interesting wildlife surrounding you, especially the many species of birds. And there's one picnic table at the lookout where you can enjoy a nice snack or meal. (Please respect the "carry in, carry out" rule, for there are no trash cans available anywhere on the trail.)

The top lookout is a haven for photographers and artists, so be prepared to see many of these kinds, both amateurs and professionals, doing their craft any time you visit. It's also a wonderful spot to take family and pet photos with a unique backdrop. So keep that in mind, especially during foliage when you can get a truly stunning background provided by nature. And this hiking trail is a favorite destination for many elementary school class trips and scouting troop outings—helping to get little ones interested in both nature and hiking from an early age.

The Craggs has been a “local Littleton” favorite hike for years, and it’s wonderful that it’s now being recognized with this honor so that word can spread so everyone can come hike it to enjoy its’ beauty!