

Trail Name: Piper Mountain Trail

Gilford, NH

Trail Description: Southern New Hampshire Trail Guide. 3rd Edition. 2010. Compiled and Edited by Gene Daniell and Steven D. Smith. Appalachian Mountain Club Books. Boston, MA.

Piper Mountain Trail – Description

The Piper Mountain Trail (blazed red) provides direct access to Piper Mtn. from the lower end of the Belknap Carriage Rd. Grades are mostly moderate. It leaves the Carriage Rd. on the right (south), 0.4 mi. from Belknap Mountain Rd., just beyond a bridge over Gunstock Brook. There is no parking at the trailhead, but parking space is available 0.1 mi. below the trailhead (on the left, just before the gate) or 0.1 mi. above the trailhead (at a pull off on the right). Leaving the Carriage Rd., the trail soon swings left and crosses a brook spanned by a bridge then ascends rather steeply along the blue-blazed boundary of Belknap Mountain State Forest. At 0.2 mi. the grade eases as the trail enters private land that has been selectively logged; in this section it crosses several overgrown skid roads. At 0.6 mi. it crosses a muddy logging road (go straight across, following signs and blazes), leaves the logged area, and ascends through mixed forest. At 0.8 mi. the trail swings left and climbs through a ledgy area, passing a restricted outlook northwest. The trail continues climbing over ledges and through patches of oak woods, with several turns; follow blazes and cairns carefully. It passes a good view southwest to Mt. Kearsarge at 1.1 mi., continues up through spruce forest, and emerges on open ledges at the north summit of Piper Mtn. Here there is a rock throne with a view west. The trail continues another 25 yd. across open ledges to a second rock throne with an excellent view east. Here the orange-blazed Old Piper Trail joins from the left (north) and the green-blazed Whiteface-Piper Link joins from the right (south) . Descending, the Piper Mountain Trail drops northwest into the woods from the west-facing rock throne which has a red blaze on the back. Look for a finger-like cairn with a red blaze at the beginning of the descent.

Distance from Belknap Carriage Rd. (1,030 ft.) to:

- North summit of Piper Mtn. (2,030 ft.): 1.3 mi. (2.1 km.), 1,000 ft., 1 hr. 10 min.