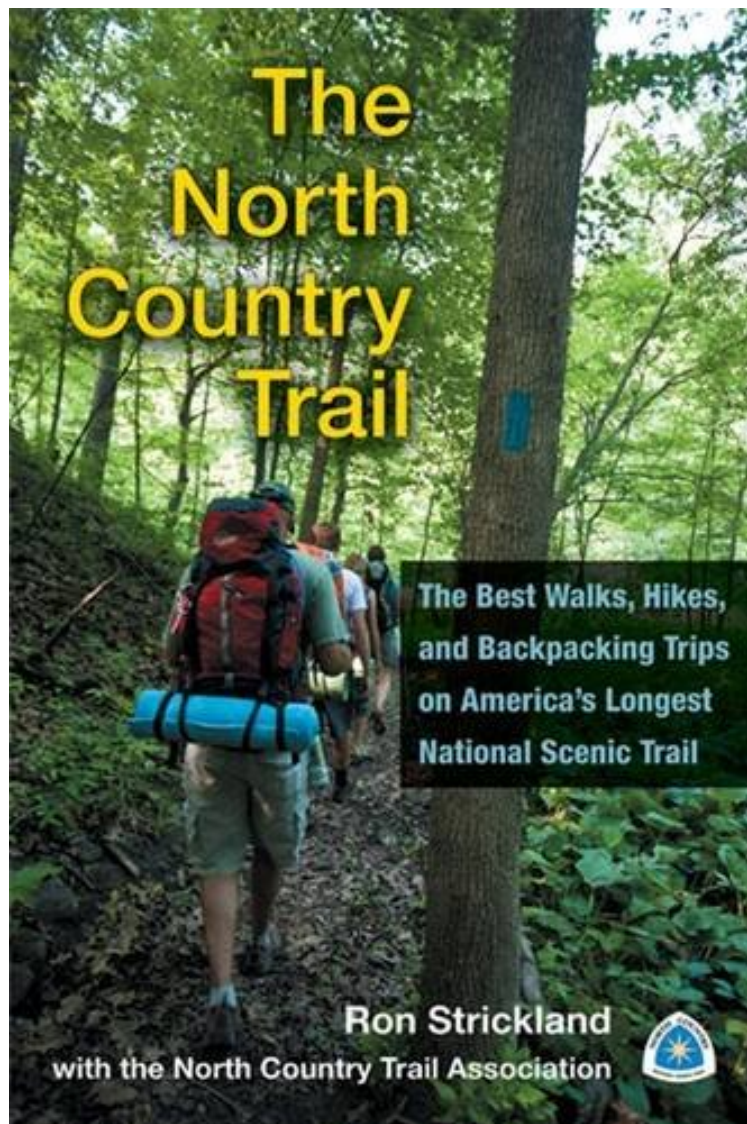


[Free] The North Country Trail: The Best Walks, Hikes, and Backpacking Trips on Americas Longest National Scenic Trail

The North Country Trail: The Best Walks, Hikes, and Backpacking Trips on Americas Longest National Scenic Trail

Ron Strickland, North Country Trail Association
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Ron Strickland, North Country Trail Association : The North Country Trail: The Best Walks, Hikes, and Backpacking Trips on Americas Longest National Scenic Trail before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The North Country Trail: The Best Walks, Hikes, and Backpacking Trips on Americas Longest National Scenic Trail:

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. A Delightful (and Academic) Contribution to Trail Literature
By Fritz R. Ward
Imagine you hiked the whole Appalachian Trail. Now imagine that you did it again. And you have almost walked as far as America's longest National Scenic Trail, the North Country Trail (NCT). At 4,600 miles, and growing, this trail begins at the New York-Vermont border and continues through 7 states, often on a circuitous route. And as author Ron Strickland, no stranger to long distance trails (he created the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail almost single handed) notes, this trail is also by far the most diverse of America's Scenic Trails. Not only does it boast a wide variety of ecosystems, but it also includes, and even revels in, cultural landmarks. Some hikers want as close to a pure wilderness experience as possible, and the NCT offers a lot of that, but it also features and even highlights local history and culture along its route. It is worthy of far more attention than it gets. But the problem is the sheer distance of the hike, destined to expand even further into Vermont and become even longer as more stretches of trail replace connecting road walks, makes through hiking this trail a difficult proposition. As a result, far fewer people know about this trail as opposed to the aforementioned AT and the increasingly popular Pacific Crest Trail. What the trail needs is a guidebook introducing walkers of all abilities to the highlights of this American treasure, and this is precisely what Strickland offers to his readers. As soon as readers open the cover of this book, they will quickly find it is not a typical hiking guide. For one thing, it is published by the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor press. Not many hiking guides find their way into the catalog of a prestigious academic publisher. But this one surely deserves it. One can learn more about American history and geography from the extensive side bars found on nearly every page than in many monographs. I particularly enjoyed the discussion of Hemingway's classic short story, "Big Two Hearted River" and reading about Pasty's reminded me of my Minnesota heritage. Readers will also learn about canals, America's earliest form of industrial transit, and throughout you will be reminded of the importance of volunteering to build, maintain, and preserve this (and other) spectacular trails. Despite nominal government administration of the National Scenic Trails, the simple truth is that they exist because private citizens build and maintain them. It is truly a "use it or lose it" type of natural resource. This book is structured by state and each chapter includes about 5 hikes highlighting some of the most beautiful sections of trail. The exception is Michigan, which merits 13 separate hikes, not even including the famous Pictured Rocks National Seashore. Hikes vary from 1 to about 20 miles (they are listed to the hundredths of a mile each!) although readers should note that, except in the case of loop hikes, the routes are one way affairs and you will want to have a shuttle car since the typical hike is about seven miles and described in a generally downhill direction, so a moderate hike will become somewhat more challenging if you have to retrace your steps back to your vehicle. Each trail description includes a page or so devoted to a general overview of the hike (difficulty, mileage, parking access, etc) a sketch map keyed to the 1:24,000 topographical maps available for the whole NCT, and few paragraphs on important natural and cultural history features found on each stretch of trail. This is followed by a detailed point by point description of the hike and a sketch map. In all, as I read this book, I found myself missing my Minnesota and Michigan family heritage, both geographical and cultural, and nearly overwhelmed by a desire to go explore these parts of the NCT. I was pleasantly surprised to find I had already hiked on a small section of it when I took a long day hike on the Superior Trail outside of Duluth, Minnesota. But if anything describes my life, it is the phrase "so many trails, so little time..." so for now, this book offers a vicarious opportunity to explore several parts of the country I have mostly only driven through. And it does a great job of that. I heartily recommend this book, even if you only have the opportunity to hike a few of the routes described within it.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By pat
This is a great book about a great trail.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Great Buy for the NCT beginner
By Jason D. Witter
I bought this book to get a better idea about the NCT and some hikes to do. It does just that. This is not a definitive guide for someone looking to thru-hike the NCT, but I enjoyed the details for particular areas. Used it as a reference for a recent trip to Manistee River section in MI, and it helped plan the trip a bit.

About the Author
Ron Strickland is a noted trail developer, author, and conservationist. He is one of only two living founders of National Scenic Trails. He is the author of seven books, including a memoir, *Pathfinder: Blazing a New Wilderness Trail in Modern America*, and *The Pacific Northwest Trail Guide: The Official Guidebook for Long Distance and Day Hikers*. He wrote *The North Country Trail* in collaboration with the North Country Trail Association (www.northcountrytrail.org). Visit Strickland's website at www.ronstrickland.com.