

Field Guides for State Day Trips

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Field guides to ferns. Field guides to seashells. Field guides to forest types, to the weather. Field guides to the birds, of course. And now, ever more specialized guides, including a new series from a Connecticut publisher, Perry Heights Press of Wilton.

In its Road to Discovery Guide series, Perry Heights has issued four new books that explore Connecticut's flora and fauna, geology, fossils and fisheries, each of them with suggested day trips.

"Great Day Trips to Connecticut's Critical Habitats," by Robert Craig, looks at some of the state's representative or unusual habitats, many of them with plants or animal species infrequently seen elsewhere.

It is particularly strong on eastern Connecticut habitats, where Craig had done extensive scientific research. In describing the Boston Hollow section of Ashford, for example, a northern hardwood and conifer habitat, Craig notes that you can find hobblebush there, a shrub more often seen in northern New England, as well as the northern waterthrush, a bird species more typically found to the north.

Greg McHone's "Great Day Trips to Discover the Geology of Connecticut" includes a primer on the state's geology, followed by a series of suggested outings where representative features of the state's geology can be seen first-hand, some of them easily accessed in state parks.

Brendan Hanrahan's "Great Day Trips in the Connecticut Valley of the Dinosaurs" details the long history of fossil research in the valley and places where dinosaur footprints or fossil remains can be seen today, including Dinosaur State Park in Rocky Hill.

Lastly, Bob Sampson, in "Best Fishing Trips in Connecticut, from Ponds to Pounding Surf," suggests a series of freshwater and saltwater outings where anglers can pursue trout, bluefish, and other kinds of fish. It would be especially helpful for the beginning angler.

The series is available at independent bookstores in Connecticut, at www.cttrips.com, and at some museum gift shops.