

The Longwood Gardens Library and Archives staff encourage you to continue reading about hiking, the Appalachian Trail, and the natural world. You will find these titles at public libraries and local bookstores in your community.

The Appalachian Forest: A Search for Roots and Renewal

Bolgiano, Chris (1998)

“The Appalachian Forest describes a place once rich with old-growth woodlands – American chestnuts ten feet in diameter, tulip poplars more than two hundred feet tall, warblers and wild turkey abundant beyond imagining – whose landscape has been systematically devastated by cutting and mining. Comparing the past and present land and people of this region once known as The Great Forest, Chris Bolgiano finds the promise of ecological recovery.” (From the book)

The Barefoot Sisters Southbound (2008) and ***The Barefoot Sisters Walking Home*** (2009)

Letcher, Lucy and Letcher, Susan

“At the ages of twenty-five and twenty-one, Lucy and Susan Letcher set out to accomplish what thousands of people attempt each year: thru-hike the entire 2,175 miles of the Appalachian Trail. The difference between them and the others? They decided to hike the trail barefoot. Quickly earning themselves the moniker of the Barefoot Sisters, the two begin their journey at Mount Katahdin and spend eight months making their way to Springer Mountain in Georgia.” Their northbound journey is told in *The Barefoot Sisters Walking Home*. (From the publisher’s website www.stackpolebooks.com)

The Spirit of the Appalachian Trail: Community, Environment, and Belief

Bratton, Susan P. (2015)

“In this thought-provoking book, [the author] addresses the spiritual dimensions of hiking the Appalachian Trail... Rather than ask if wilderness and outdoor recreation have benefits for the soul, this volume uses both a quantitative and qualitative approach to investigate specifically how long-distance walking might enhance both body and mind.” (From the book)

Tangled Roots: The Appalachian Trail and American Environmental Politics

Mittlefehldt, Sarah (2014)

Written by an environmental historian and Appalachian Trail through-hiker, this book tells the story of the creation of the trail and the community involvement required to build and maintain it, from its origins through to present day.

Three Hundred Zeroes: Lessons of the Heart on the Appalachian Trail

Blanchard, Dennis R. (2010)

Inspired as a young man by stories of Grandma Gatewood, the author and his brother vowed to one day hike the Appalachian Trail. Forty years later, he keeps his promise to his late brother and sets out on the A.T. From the book: “As he walked the trail, Dennis reconnected with the Norman Rockwell America that seems lost and forgotten. He learned that not only are the difficulties of walking over 2,200 miles easily underestimated but that trouble can begin long before setting a first step on the trail.”



A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail

Bryson, Bill (1998)

A modern classic, now a 2015 film starring Robert Redford and Nick Nolte. From the book: “The Appalachian Trail stretches from Georgia to Maine and covers some of the most breathtaking terrain in America. If you’re going to take a hike, it’s probably the place to go. And Bill Bryson is surely the most entertaining guide you’ll find. Here’s the history and ecology of the trail and some of the other hardy (or just foolhardy) folks Bryson meets along the way – and a couple of bears.”

Walking with Spring: The First Thru-Hike of the Appalachian Trail

Shaffer, Earl V. (1983)

“Now a hiking legend, unknown Earl Shaffer set out in 1948 to prove the then-little-known Appalachian Trail could be walked in a single continuous journey from Georgia to Maine. This is Earl's own lyrical account of that historic first thru-hike, with poetry about the Trail, illustrated with photographs taken by him during the hike. This book is a classic of A.T. literature that has inspired thousands to attempt a similar ‘thru-hike’.” (From the Appalachian Trail Museum website www.atmuseum.org)

Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail

Strayed, Cheryl (2012)

After the death of her mother, the author (who had no previous hiking experience), impulsively hiked alone over 1,000 miles of the Pacific Coast Trail. It was a difficult and challenging journey, but was ultimately extremely therapeutic and rewarding. The book was made into a 2014 movie starring Reese Witherspoon.

Wildflowers of the Appalachian Trail

Adkins, Leonard M., Joe Cook, and Monica Cook (2006)

The author states in the introduction that “...the longer I study the environment of the trail, the more convinced I become that its greatest importance— much more than the recreational opportunities it provides— is its preservation of the natural world from the encroachments and destructions of our society.” He has provided a comprehensive field guide of the flora along the Appalachian Trail, along with folklore and anecdotes about each plant.



Community Read

Read. Think. Engage.