

USEFUL TIPS

Protecting Against Ticks and Lyme Disease

Each year several thousand cases of Lyme Disease are reported in Connecticut, and the numbers are climbing. The disease, caused when a bacterium carried by the deer tick enters the bloodstream, is endemic to Simsbury and its surrounding areas. To avoid contact with ticks, stay on open paths, avoiding thick brush and grass. Wear long pants tucked into socks. Permethrin products applied to clothing and newer DEET repellents on skin are extremely effective. Careful full-body inspection is a critical posthike ritual, as is an awareness of the signs of Lyme Disease. (For more information about Lyme Disease, contact the Connecticut State Department of Public Health).

Avoiding Rabies

Over 3,000 confirmed cases of wild animal rabies have been reported in the state since 1991. Raccoons and skunks are the most common carriers, but hikers should be suspicious of any mammal, especially those that are active during daylight hours and/or behaving strangely. Rabid animals may appear viscous, friendly or confused. Bites from rabid animals spread the deadly virus and must be avoided at any cost. Move away from any suspicious animal; a stout walking stick may offer some protection. Report any physical contact to your physician immediately.

