



Mount Kearsarge

Elevation 2,937 feet

Located in Warner and Wilmot, New Hampshire, Mt. Kearsarge, one of the oldest mountains in the state, is the home of both Winslow and Rollins state parks. Because of its easy accessibility from the parks and outstanding summit vistas, Mt. Kearsarge is a popular family hiking destination. Views include nearby Sunapee, Ragged and Cardigan mountains and more distant Mt. Monadnock and Ascutney. On very clear days views extend to the White Mountains, the Green Mountains of Vermont, the Atlantic Ocean and Boston.

The exposed granite summit is a good place to see evidence of past glacial activity. During the glacial period more than 25,000 years ago, a great ice sheet more than a mile thick moved over Kearsarge and much of New Hampshire. Glacial striations; grooves cut in rock by the movement of glacial ice, can be seen on the summit, as well as on ledge outcroppings in the Winslow picnic area. In addition, large boulders, called glacial erratics, can be seen from the trails. The mass of ice was powerful enough to move the boulders, which were left behind when the ice sheet retreated. The bare summit is the result of a 1796 forest fire which burned the vegetation and exposed the soil to wind and water erosion.

Governor Endicott of the Massachusetts Bay Colony made an exploration of the New Hampshire wilderness to find the source of the Merrimack River in 1652. Members of the expedition are believed to be the first Europeans to see Mt. Kearsarge. It is shown as “Carasarga” on the map they produced, believed to be a name derived from a Native American word meaning “notchpointed-mountain of pines. The evolution of the mountain’s name has included “Kyasarge” in the 1749 charter for Perrystown (Sutton), “Chi a Sarge” in a 1755 Perrystown’s proprietors meeting, and “Kyar Sarga” on a 1774 map. “Kearsarge” appeared on an 1816 map of Merrimack County.

For further information contact:

Winslow State Park
PO Box 192
North Sutton, NH 03260
603.526.6168

Rollins State Park
PO Box 219
Warner, NH 03278
603.456.3808

nhstateparks.org

