



## THE FOREST QUEST

### Woodstock, Vermont

Physical Difficulty: Moderate

Special Features: Natural - Vermont's National Park with its tall trees. The oldest continuously managed forest in the United States.

Walking Conditions: Carriage roads and trails

Duration: 1:30

Bring: Binoculars, Field Guide

**To get there:** From Interstate 89, take Exit 1. Follow Route 4 West about 13 miles, through Quechee and Taftsville to Woodstock. Turn right onto Route 12 North and bear right after the iron bridge, continuing 1/4 mile. Park in the Billings Farm & Museum parking lot. Use the crosswalk at Route 12 to access the National Park.

### Clues:

After crossing the crosswalk, while looking sharp  
 Enter the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Park  
 Make a right on Mountain Road to start your quest  
 Look up at the giants, making this such a special forest.



### Stop 1

Passing the Forest Center, staying on the main road is best  
 Make your way to the Woodshed exhibit after a few steps

**Deforestation** occurred a long time ago  
 Many trees were cut all over New England you know.

Can you find a reason written near?  
 Take a moment to share with your peers.  
 (If building is closed, move on to Stop 2)

## (Sharing Space)

The families living here, decided to take a stand  
And practice **stewardship**, caring for the forest and the land.

(This land became a National Park in 1992)



### Stop 2

Outside the building, there is a map at hand  
Showing when some trees were planted on this bare land.  
See the carriage roads built long ago  
Opening the land for all to see and grow.

Trees are kept for wildlife and recreation  
Others are cut for firewood and wooden creations.  
It takes many people to manage the health of the forest  
You will find out more as you go on this Quest.



### Stop 3

Make your way back  
Along where the wood is stacked.  
You can take a walking stick if you wish  
Be careful for no heads want to be hit.



### Stop 4

Behind the woodshed at the edge of the forest  
A sign with a word you have learned earlier on in this Quest  
Take a moment to read  
What does this word mean?

(**Stewardship** is an ethic that embodies the responsible planning and management of resources to last for many generations.)

### **(Thinking Space)**



#### Stop 5

Go 10 steps in the forest, don't leap  
Many different cones and leaves at your feet.  
A healthy forest has diversity  
Can you make a beautiful display with your creativity?

### **(Creative Space)**



#### Stop 6

Do you notice metal tags at the base of any trees?  
How many can you spy, what do you think the reason could be?

### **(Thinking pause)**

Tree monitoring is what we do here  
Staff and college students measure trees every few years.





### Stop 7

Take the Sugar House Trail to the left  
Going uphill, not too big a heft.  
Notice the bodies of trees on the ground  
**Decomposition** is happening all around.

Can you spy a home for an animal up or down a tree  
Old trees provide homes for wildlife and food you can see.  
**And Forest Succession** takes place year after year  
Nature's way to recycle and renew, let's cheer!

(**Forest Succession** occurs as one community of plant species replaces another.)

Now take a hike  
Till a road comes in sight  
On the way shake hands with a tree  
Do their barks look the same to you and me?

### (Observation Space)



### Stop 8

Now up Mountain Road we go  
Until to the left Upper Meadow the way does show.  
Silent walk for a while and recognize  
Old friends of leaf and bark alongside.

At North Peak Trail sign you have the task to find  
A special bird marker, one of a kind.  
Behind a tree by the trail  
It is secured by a nail.

### (Investigation Space)

The National Park monitors bird populations every year

As changes to the environment sometimes bring tears.

Volunteers stand at these sites listening to all the bird songs  
Close your eyes, listen, point in the song's direction, to whom does it belong.

Recording numbers provides information  
That help make decisions for good **conservation**.

### (Listening Skill)



#### Stop 9

Down you go towards the end of your Quest  
Take the trail on the left  
Stay straight, up a hill on into the forest  
Looking for a special place built of wood, do your best.

When you reach this secret spot of the past estate  
Notice how life depends on our forest, so much is at stake.  
Some trees are dressed in needles or leaves  
Do you know what **deciduous** and **evergreen** means?



#### Stop 10

There is a nice covered porch on which to sit and reflect  
And finding the treasure box with the stamp to collect.  
Leave us your name, the date and your town  
And if you choose a reflection to put down.

Return by the field you past a moment ago  
At the carriage road, make a left, you will know where to go.  
Congratulations on completing your Quest.  
You are really one of the very best!

This Quest was redone in 2020 by staff at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP and Vital Communities. The original Forest Quest was created by Steve Glazer in 2002, as part of the Forest for Every Classroom program.

**Please be a good steward of the land: leave it better than you found it and pack out any trash you find.**



Valley Quest is a collection of 160+ treasure hunts that share and teach the natural gems and cultural heritage of the Upper Valley with children, families, adults, and visitors. It is a program of Vital Communities, a regional nonprofit working to engage citizens, organizations, and communities in creating solutions to our region's challenges. Learn more at [vitalcommunities.org](http://vitalcommunities.org).

Have a suggestion, question, comment, or idea for us? We'd love to hear from you. Reach us at [valleyquest@vitalcommunities.org](mailto:valleyquest@vitalcommunities.org) or 802-291-9100.