



Gimli and Legolas Quest

Orford, New Hampshire

Physical Difficulty: Difficult

Special Features: Natural, Vista

Walking Conditions: Trail

Duration: 2:30

Season: May-Oct

Bring: compass, binoculars, field guide, water, and perhaps a snack.

Prepare properly for a hike.

To get there: Take I-91 to Exit 15. Follow signs to Orford. Turn right (south) on Route 10 and then left (east) on Route 25A. Follow Route 25A for approximately six miles to Baker Road (a.k.a. Baker Farm Road) on your right. Turn and follow Baker Road for one mile to the red hut on the right and the blue-signed trailhead on the left. The Quest starts on the trailhead going southeast.

Overview:

This Quest climbs up fabulous Mt. Cube on the Cross Rivendell Trail. The Rivendell Trails Association established and maintains the Cross Rivendell Trail as an educational and recreational resource. The trail now includes some 38 miles of trail across the four Rivendell towns: Orford, Fairlee, West Fairlee and Vershire.

Clues:

A note to Questers: Some clues are close together, some are far apart!

Over rock and root this trail will lead,
Through forests bright, woods dark and still.
Follow the trail: at first gentle climb,
But fork left (east) at the Rivendell sign.
Step over stones that float in mud.

Find the path that meets the walls
 That in a story written long ago
 Could be Mordor, seen by Sam and Frodo.
 A maple sundered, cleaved right through:
 The Orcs who hated trees were here.
 Take the path up small stone steps.
 To walk in silence I have found is best
 To hear the woodland creatures cry-
 A scamper, whistle, chirp, and run.

Watch for a pair of tall ash trees,
 Evenly matched as they grow in a "V",
 Rising out of crumbled rocks.
 Between two rocks the trail turns.
 Switching northeast you will find
 A whale rock of mammoth kind,
 Nuzzled against a tall white birch.

The forest will change to hemlocks tall.
 Now you will head south on the trail a while.
 Can it be you've traveled less than a mile?
 Admire the view on the left,
 Where trees were cleared out.
 You can take a rest here,
 But a better view awaits, no doubt.

Stride through silence, soft soil, and hemlocks.
 But always, too, there will be the rocks,
 Rocks where, if you were Frodo or Sam,
 Gollum could hide out to spy on you.
 Landslide rocks create the path you're on.
 Rest at the next view on the big ledge.
 See Sunday Mountain? Avoid the edge!

Just as the trail leaves this rock overlook,
 Look on the right for a boulder
 Where you'll see the box in its crevice folder!
 Now you may return to your car,
 But if you want to climb more,
 Trek on to the summit—
 It's another sweet sight to adore!

This Quest was created by Mike, Simon, and Aidan Brooks in 2003 and updated in 2018.

Other things to do nearby: This hike connects to the Appalachian Trail if you are hungry for more hiking!

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 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.

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