



Many New Hampshire libraries lend winter gear like snowshoes and trekking poles through their "Library of Things." © Jerry Monkman/EcoPhotography

Your winter, your way

Discover the joys of winter in New Hampshire—close to home and free to explore.

When many people think of winter in New Hampshire, downhill skiing comes to mind. Hitting the slopes is a beloved tradition for some, but it's not the only way to enjoy the season. For those looking for something closer to home—or a little easier on the wallet—there are plenty of other ways to embrace winter's beauty.

For those living in New Hampshire's urban areas, it can be easy to overlook the abundance of accessible outdoor spaces that transform into peaceful, snow-dusted wonderlands each winter. Whether you're in Manchester, Nashua, Keene or Portsmouth, you're never far from a trailhead that leads to fresh air, quiet woods, and the kind of winter magic that doesn't require a lift pass.

The Nature Conservancy's preserves across the state are open year-round and offer a variety of ways to enjoy the season. Bundle up and take a walk or cross-country ski along the Great Bay shoreline at the Lubberland Creek Preserve in Newmarket, where the salt marshes and estuaries take on a serene beauty in the

colder months. Or head to the Ossipee Pine Barrens to snowshoe through rare pitch pine-scrub oak forest, one of the last of its kind in New England.

You can also explore the Manchester



Snowshoeing is fun at any age.
© Jerry Monkman/EcoPhotography

Cedar Swamp Preserve, where boots are all you need to enjoy a peaceful winter walk on the accessible trail just minutes from the city. It's also a great place to pull a sled full of kids! At the Loverens Mill Cedar Swamp in Antrim, visitors can enjoy a quiet snowshoe through towering evergreens and frozen wetlands, perfect for soaking in the stillness of the season.

And if you don't have the gear—

don't worry. Many libraries across New Hampshire now offer a "Library of Things," where you can borrow snowshoes, trekking poles, sleds, crampons, backpacks, and more. It's a growing movement to make outdoor recreation more accessible to everyone, regardless of income or experience.

Spending time outdoors in winter isn't just good for your body—it's a proven boost for your mental health. Building a snowman or taking a short walk in nature can reduce stress, improve mood, and help you feel more connected to the world around you. And when the days are short and the nights are long, that connection matters more than ever.

So this winter, think beyond the slopes. Grab your warmest coat, a thermos of something hot, and a friend or two. There's a whole season of beauty waiting just outside your door—and it won't cost you a thing.

Plan your visit at nature.org/nhpreserves.



Hannah Deschenes © Sydney Baker

Q&A: Hannah Deschenes

Hannah is Donor Relations Manager in New Hampshire.

Tell us a bit about yourself, Hannah! I grew up in southern New Hampshire and went on to study history while competing on the swim team at the University of Maine. After that, I moved to upstate New York to earn my MA in Museum Studies from the Cooperstown Graduate Program. These days, I live in Exeter with my cat, Charlie. In my free time, I enjoy coaching and teaching swim lessons, hiking, going to the beach, and seeking out other outdoor adventures.

What first sparked your connection with nature? My love for nature started at my grandparents' camp on Burke Mountain in Vermont. Built by my great-grandparents and passed down through generations, it's where I spent summers learning to fish, exploring the woods, and developing a lifelong appreciation for the outdoors.

What drew you to work at TNC? I'm passionate about mission-driven work and being part of something bigger than myself. TNC's dedication to protecting New Hampshire's landscapes and telling the state's incredible nature story felt like the perfect fit. It's exciting to be surrounded by people who care as deeply as I do about making a positive impact.

What's a place in nature that inspires you? The Himalayas have always fascinated me, especially Mount Everest. One day, I'd love to travel to Nepal and take the trek to Everest's base camp (though I think I'll leave the summit to the pros!).

What's a book, movie, or podcast you'd recommend right now? I just finished an amazing book about the first successful summit of Mount Everest by the British expedition team in 1953, titled *Everest 1953: The Epic Story of the First Ascent (Legends and Lore)*. It's a gripping mix of history, adventure, and pure human determination, and perfect if you need a dose of inspiration to chase your own big goals.

NATURE NEW HAMPSHIRE



The Northern Lights © Dennis Wasonga/TNC
Photo Contest 2022

December 18: Join us for a Winter Solstice Soirée

The winter solstice marks the shortest day of the year. Celebrate this turning point and light up the year's longest night with The Nature Conservancy in New Hampshire.

Join us on Thursday, December 18th, for what has become a much-anticipated yearly gathering of friends, food and fun.

Details are still coming together on time and location. Keep your eyes on [nature.org/nhevents](https://www.nature.org/nhevents) and our social media channels for the latest details.

We're thrilled to invite you to visit with us, celebrate partnership, mingle with other nature lovers and celebrate the season!