

East Rock was formed 200 million years ago as the continents were in the process of moving away from each other. Molten rock from deep in the earth surged through stress cracks formed in the sandstone bedrock of the New Haven area. The molten rock cooled to form dolerite, also known as basalt or traprock. Dolerite is much more resistant to erosion than the surrounding sandstone. As glacial action and the forces of weather eroded away the softer sandstone, East Rock (and other traprock ridges such as West Rock) became more prominent.

The summit of East Rock Park now rises more than 350 feet above the floor of the Mill River Valley at its base. The summit of East Rock is accessible by foot, bicycle, or car and provides views of New Haven, the Harbor and Long Island Sound.

East Rock Park offers over 10 miles of hiking trails. The Giant Steps Trail provides a spectacular 285-foot climb to the Summit. It is designated with red triangle trail markers and starts at the English Drive gate along the north side of Rice Field.

East Rock Park includes many special features including the Trowbridge Environmental Center and the Pardee Rose Garden. The Trowbridge Environmental Center is a nature center which is open to the general public and features displays and information about the local flora and fauna. The Pardee Rose Garden and Greenhouse is a favorite location for wedding photos that features extensive rose gardens and other flowering plants from early spring until mid fall. The garden has a unique raised tiered structure that resembles the top of a wedding cake. The park is open all year round.



Photo by CT Weekender

### Directions and Parking:

From I-91: Take Willow Street Exit (Exit 6) to end of ramp. Turn right onto Willow Street. At second light turn right on Mitchell Drive. Follow to first traffic light. The Park will be on your right with street parking near the entrance.

From Wilbur Cross Pkwy (15): Take Whitney Avenue Exit (Exit 61) towards New Haven. Pass the reservoir on your left and continue one mile to the flashing light at Cold Spring Street. Turn left onto Cold Spring Street. The Park will be on your left. Parking areas are also located at the top of the East Rock Peak and near North Meadow.

### Permitted/Prohibited Activities:

East Rock park is a year-round park. Trails are for hiking only. Swimming in the Mill River is prohibited. Rock climbing is prohibited. Dogs are permitted on leash. Please bag and pick up all animal waste.



Hiking



Bicycling



Pets on Leash

### For more information about this location, contact:

City of New Haven  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Trees  
(203) 946-6086

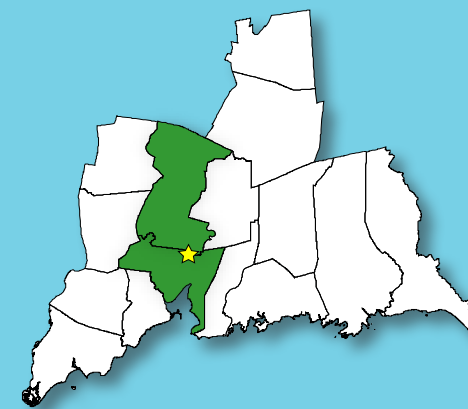
Questions regarding this brochure can be addressed to  
South Central Regional Council of Governments  
Phone: (203) 234-7555/Fax: (203) 234-9850  
E-mail: [trails@scrcog.org](mailto:trails@scrcog.org)

Scan QR Code to access the South Central Regional Council of Governments Recreational Trails Webpage



## Recreational Trails South Central Connecticut

# East Rock Park



New Haven &  
Hamden, CT

# East Rock Park



View from East Rock summit

Photo by Emmeline Alaconis, SCRCOG

## Trail Description:

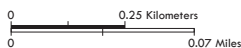
### Easy Walk to Moderate Hike

East Rock park offers something for everyone. In addition to a picnic area and scenic overlooks, there are trails of various difficulties for hikers to try. The Soldiers and Sailors Monument near the summit honors New Haven men who gave their lives in four wars.

Total trails distance is approx. 11.97 miles

## Legend

- |                          |                             |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Parking                  | Soldiers & Sailors Monument |
| Trailhead                | Locked gate                 |
| Scenic viewpoint         | Town Property               |
| Restrooms                | State Property              |
| Bridge                   | Wetlands                    |
| Unblazed Trails          |                             |
| Red (Giant Steps Trail)  |                             |
| Yellow                   |                             |
| Orange                   |                             |
| Blue                     |                             |
| White                    |                             |
| Grey (Fire Access Roads) |                             |



Trail Data and Content was provided by the City of New Haven. The Trail Map and Brochure was prepared by SCRCOG (2016).