

Mike Woessner - Favorite Hike Series

Mts. Morgan, Percival Loop - 4.8 mi., 1550ft., 3hr. 10 min.

This is my favorite fall hike. The summit of Percival offers unprecedented views of Lakes Squam and Winnepesaukee to the southeast.

The trail leaves the west side of NH 113 (Holderness), 0.5 mi. Northeast of its junction with Pinehurst Rd. *There is ample parking here and across the street at the Rattlesnake trailhead.

***Note: These trails are on private property and maintained by the Squam Lake Association. The trails are usually closed during “mud season” April – May.**

The Mt. Morgan trail leaves the parking lot on a logging road and soon turns left. Take a right at the next fork and begin a steep ascent (1.7mi.) to the Crawford - Ridgepole Trail. Turn right toward Morgan summit. You will soon come to a ladder leading through some boulder caves. If you are not so adventurous there is a trail that goes around the caves and meets back up with the Crawford-Ridgepole Trail. A short spur trail leads to the summit of Morgan. It's about another 0.5 mi. to the summit of Mt. Percival. Here there is an open summit with a large ledge to enjoy the view and have some lunch.

There are 2 ways to descend the summit. From the ledge overlooking the lakes, to the far right, the trail descends through a series of boulder caves. It is NOT recommended to descend this way. If you wish to explore the caves (highly recommended) take the trail to the left which descends east from the summit. This trail will intersect with the boulder cave trail after a steep descent. Take the trail right and climb up through the caves. (great for kids!) * Do NOT do this trail if you are claustrophobic.

After climbing out of the caves take the same trail as before off the summit and descend the mountain. This is a very steep descent for the first mile. Take care if there are a lot of dry leaves covering the trail that can make it very slippery.

Once the trail levels off look for a connector trail to your right. This will bring you back to the Mt. Morgan trail. Taking a left on the Mt. Morgan trail will bring you back to the parking lot. If you miss the connector trail you will come to the parking lot for Mt. Percival. It's just a short road walk back to the other lot, to your right on NH 113.

Reference: AMC's : “Southern New Hampshire Trail Guide” pages 156 – 157, AMC White Mountain National Forest – Map & Guide.

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