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Includes
PULLOUT CALENDAR OF URBAN PARK RANGER FREE PROGRAMS
It’s summer time in the City. School’s out, and for many, this is the perfect time to plan a get-away. From overnight camping trips to day trips to the beach, everyone enjoys an opportunity to escape the City’s summer heat and spend some quality time outdoors. When I was a child, my family would leave the city and spend a week camping and exploring the local beaches in coastal New England. I had friends who went to sleep away camp and came home with tales of canoeing lakes, exploring creeks, and roasting marshmallows. I am sure many of you have similar memories, or are looking for an opportunity to create similar memories with your family today.

What if I told you that it was possible to create these memories right here in New York City? That it was possible to canoe lakes, explore creeks, and roast marshmallows without ever actually leaving the City? There are many good reasons to take a more local approach to your outdoor adventures this summer. With skyrocketing transportation costs, staying here in the City can save you and your family a bundle. And you don’t have to sacrifice on adventure; you can sleep under the stars in Central Park; reach the top of a 45 foot climbing wall in Queens at Alley Pond Park; canoe to an offshore island in Brooklyn at Marine Park; use a map and compass to hike the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail in the Bronx at Van Cortlandt Park; catch frogs in Staten Island at Blue Heron Park. There’s fun for everyone and every age; from Junior Ranger Summer Day Camps to sandcastle building contests, there are numerous ways to create a lifetime of outdoor fun for everyone and every age.

Traveling home to the Bronx the other day, my five year old son looked out at the Meadowlands and said “that looks like a beautiful place to swim, doesn’t it Momma?” While he might not be able to swim there (yet), he knows what many of us should spend this summer learning: although we live in one of the largest and most dense metropolitan areas in the country we can still expect, and find, great outdoor adventures right outside our doorsteps.
AN INTERVIEW WITH QUEENS URBAN PARK RANGER, ANDREW DISALVO.

Where were you born? Where have you lived?
I was born in North Tarrytown, NY, which oddly enough doesn’t exist today; so maybe I’m just a figment of your imagination. Actually, North Tarrytown is currently Sleepy Hollow. I’ve lived in Hastings-on-Hudson, NY; Rochester, NY; Chestnut Hill, MA; St. Thomas, USVI; and Brooklyn, NY.

When did you start working with the Urban Park Rangers?
My first day on the job was at Central Communications on February 5, 2007. I worked there for two days, then bounced to Central Park for four days, then bounced to Salt Marsh Nature Center for five. After getting the sense that no one liked me, I began attending the training academy on Randall’s Island. Following the training academy, I was assigned to Forest Park. I’ve been at Forest Park for over a year, so chances are the people here enjoy my company.

Why did you become an Urban Park Ranger?
For starters, sitting in an office is not for me. I tried it one summer and I was very uncomfortable. So, upon returning from a teaching stint in the Caribbean, I looked for jobs in the outdoors and came upon this one. My background in education and science make this job a very good fit. Nothing beats patrolling through a park on a nice spring day.

What are your responsibilities as a Park Ranger?
The primary responsibility is education. I educate the public not only on weekend programs and during weekly school programs, but also if I am on routine patrol through a park. It’s rewarding to share my knowledge with others and know that they’ll likely pass it on to friends and family. Education gives people a better understanding and appreciation of the natural world. I also conduct law enforcement patrols, making sure all the animals and people in the park are safe. Lastly, I occasionally rescue animals. Those include everything from your typical dogs to red-tailed hawks!

What is the most interesting thing that you have encountered or experienced as a Ranger?
Recently someone decided to release his or her pet ferret in Forest Park. Of course the ferret had no idea where to go or what to do because it was a domestic animal, so it decided to crawl into a sewer by the golf course, which, of course, had to rescue it. You don’t get calls for ferrets too often, so it was a tricky but rewarding rescue because ferrets are pretty awesome animals. Just a note to New York City residents: releasing an unwanted pet in the park is not only illegal, but cruel to the animal. The survival instinct of a domestic animal is pretty much non-existent when compared to wild animals, so it will usually die or be killed by a predator fairly quickly. Just drop your pet off at Animal Care & Control or the ASPCA if you don’t want it. You’ll save not only the animal’s life, but a Ranger’s time as well.

What is your favorite park activity?
I’m big into photography, so I try to carry my camera with me wherever I go. I also like canoeing. You really feel detached from the city when you are out on the water. It’s a nice perspective.

THE BOUNTY OF FREE IN TIMES OF ECONOMIC FRUGALITY

By Denyse McAlpin
Great, the title of this article has drawn your attention. Now I can take the time to highlight FREE offerings the Urban Park Rangers have for you.

More than ever before, you can take advantage of our free programs. For starters, we have a number of Ranger led Explorer events offered in all five boroughs. They cover all the areas you’ve wished and hoped to explore within 29,000 acres of New York City parkland. Enter your adventurous side with canoeing, high and low adventure course offerings, hiking, biking, family camping, learning orienteering, and identifying species of living plants and animals in your urban environs. With capacity enrollment in our Junior Ranger Day Camp 2008, we have seen interest and participation in our program offerings increase with the decrease in consumer discretionary funds. We warmly invite you to join us!

Educators and home schoolers of levels K through 8: inquire at your local Nature Center in order to book an offering from our award winning The Natural Classroom series; a fun, hands on learning experience taught by Rangers in the classroom or park setting.
Alley Pond Park Adventure & Family Camping
In Northeastern Queens
www.nyc.gov/parks

Families! Free, Free, Free
Overnight camping Fridays and Saturdays in July and August. 
SUNDAY SPECIAL! Experience the adventure course on Sundays from May to November.
Visit www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers for more information.

Program Date                                      Reservation Date
To camp on July 4 or 5                             Call on Mon. June 30
To camp on July 11 or 12                           Call on Mon. July 7
To camp on July 18 or 19                           Call on Mon. July 14
To camp on July 25 or 26                           Call on Mon. July 21
To camp on August 1 or 2                           Call on Mon. July 28
To camp on August 8 or 9                           Call on Mon. August 4
To camp on August 15 or 16                         Call on Mon. August 11

Call after 9 a.m. on reservation day.

School / Youth Groups!
Low-cost adventure program with various elements. Choose from the following:

- High / low ropes adventure course
- Canoeing / fishing / orienteering
- Campouts

If you are interested in booking an Alley Pond Park Adventure Program, or to register for family camping please call 718.217.6034.

City of New York
Parks & Recreation
Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Adrian Benepe, Commissioner

Free Park “Ed-ventures” this Summer!
In addition to all the wonderful activities listed in the Urban Park Ranger events calendar, this summer the Rangers are offering MORE! Weekdays in the summer, bring the kids to parks around the city for drop-in programs. Kids love earning their Nature Detective badge as they explore the “wild” side of parks with the Rangers. Scavenger hunts, micro-safaris, “tree-mendous” hikes, and other wildlife experiences await!

BRONX
Crotona Park: Wednesday - Friday, programs at 11am and 2pm, locations vary
Orchard Beach: Wednesday - Friday, programs at 11am and 2pm, Pelican Bay Playground (section 2)
Van Cortlandt Park: Wednesday - Friday, programs at 11am and 2pm, Southwest Playground (Van Cortlandt Park South and Broadway)

BROOKLYN
Fort Greene Park: Wednesday - Friday, programs at 11am and 3pm, locations vary
Marine Park: Thursday, programs at 11am and 3pm; Wednesday and Friday, programs at 3pm, locations vary

Owl’s Head Park: Wednesday and Friday, programs at 3pm, locations vary
Prospect Park: Wednesday - Friday, programs at 11am and 3pm, locations vary

MANHATTAN
Central Park: Monday - Friday, programs at 11am and 3pm, locations vary
Inwood Hill Park: Monday - Friday, programs at 11am and 3pm, locations vary

Riverside Park: Wednesday, programs at 11am and 3pm, locations vary

QUEENS
Central Park: Wednesday, programs at 11am and 2pm, locations vary

Fort Totten: Wednesday, programs at 11am, Meet at entrance to Fort Totten, north of intersection of 212 St. & Cross Island Pkwy. (July only)

Kissena Park: Wednesday through Friday, programs at 11am and 2pm, Meet behind Kissena Playschool, near 164th Street and Oak Ave.

Rockaway Beach: Wednesday through Friday, programs at 11am and 2pm, Meet at B. 59th Street and the Boardwalk

For more information, visit nyc.gov/parks/rangers.

THE HERPCORNER - THE RED-BACKED SALAMANDER

By Mara Pendergrass,
Urban Park Ranger Sergeant

Warm sun, blue sky, furnace-blast breeze coming off the streets—ah, summer in New York City! It’s the perfect time to get away from all the concrete and glass and escape into the trees in search of leaf litter and cool, damp soil, and all the little creepy-crawlies that inhabit it. In amongst the ants, beetles, worms, centipedes, and roly-polies, you stand a good chance of finding one of their main predators, an odd little lungless, light-phobic amphibian known as the red-backed salamander.

Yes, you read it right — I said lungless. The red-backed salamander belongs to the family Plethodontidae, the largest of the salamander families found in the U.S., grouped so because none of them has lungs. All the air they need gets absorbed through their skin. Consequently, none of this family get very big; the northern red-backed salamander, *Plethodon cinereus*, tops out at 5 inches, and as an adult can be as small as 2 1/2 inches. They are long, slender creatures with stubby legs and smooth, slimy, dark gray — to dark brown-colored skin with a black and white, salt-and-pepper type motting on the belly. There are two dorsal color varieties, the red-backed phase and the lead-back phase; the red-backed variety has a dorsal stripe that is usually red, but can be yellow, pink, orange, or gray; the lead-backed variety lacks the stripe. Both varieties can be found in New York City parks. The species as a whole is common and widespread, and can be found in cool, moist coniferous, mixed, and hardwood forests from the Carolinas to Nova Scotia, and as far west as eastern Minnesota.

Being lungless isn’t the only thing that makes this salamander unique; it is in fact completely terrestrial, including the egg and larval stages. Every two years a female will find a mate and go through an elaborate mating ceremony during which the male will deposit a little sac of sperm that the female retrieves and uses to fertilize her eggs internally. She then lays a cluster of 6-12 eggs in June or July in a cavity under a stone or inside a rotted log, and coils around to tend them until they hatch about two months later — a level of care unusual in the amphibian world. To top it off, the little salamanders, unlike most amphibians, come out looking like little salamanders and not tadpoles! They mature in two years, ready to start this most unusual of amphibian cycles again.

Because they breathe exclusively through their skins, they have to keep themselves moist; the only time they will venture out from their logs or leaf litter is on damp or rainy nights when they roam far and wide in search of insects. The best bet for anyone hoping to find these little creatures, will be after a good rain when they will still be near the surface hiding under rocks, logs, boards, and whatever else is convenient. Roofing gently through the leaf litter will also bring results. Possibly one of the most amazing things about the red-backed salamander is how easy it is to find them in New York City; they are present in all five boroughs, sometimes in the most unexpected places. Wherever there is a patch of undisturbed, moist vegetation you stand a good chance of finding them. I once found a colony alongside the Jerome Park Reservoir across from the Bronx High School of Science! And for those who are really interested, or who are uncertain about turning over logs looking for salamanders and possibly coming face to face with a brown or garter snake—there are ongoing research projects run by the Department of Parks & Recreation's Natural Resources Group, that track salamanders in several parks throughout the city.

Just remember that these salamanders are fragile creatures and must be handled with extreme care. Do not hold them for long periods of time, and return them where you found them as soon as possible. If you have bug spray or sunscreen on your hands don’t touch them at all; they are very sensitive to chemicals.

Take only pictures; leave only footprints; and leave your parks better than you found them!
Central Park Zoo Education

By Alison Saltz, Theater Outreach Coordinator and Bonnie Bromberg, Elementary Education Instructor Central Park Zoo Education Department

THE CENTRAL PARK ZOO OFFERS A VARIETY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNGSTERS OF ALL AGES WITH OUR ONSITE ZOO SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND OUR TRAVELING OUTREACH PROGRAM.

Summer season is here which for many New York City children means activities such as hitting the pool, enjoying ice cream, and going to camp. The Central Park Zoo hosts many camp visitors over the summer months, however what many camp directors don’t realize is that the Central Park Zoo offers educational opportunities that travel directly to the camp’s front door.

Wildlife Theater is the Wildlife Conservation Society’s outreach program. They travel to all 5 boroughs plus communities north of the city, and parts of Long Island and New Jersey. If a camp group is planning to visit the Central Park Zoo a Wildlife Theater experience can enhance the “pre- or post-zoo” experience. Or if traveling is not an option for the campers a Wildlife Theater experience can be a fun treat.

The audience participatory, 30-45 minute, auditorium or classroom-sized shows, cover a diverse range of topics including the animals and ecosystems of the rain forest and the polar regions as well as insects and other basic animal concepts. The programs utilize a combination of drama, puppetry, and music to make summer learning fun. It’s geared for children in grades pre-Kindergarten through 4th grade.

Stephanie Katzman, Nursery School Camp Director, at Rhinelander Mini-Camp booked her third Wildlife Theater camp visit in three years. She says, “Because of the Animal Adventures Medley program we actually tied in the theme of the week based on what Wildlife Theater performed. We have what they do as a performance and then we tie it in with our art projects, readings, and activities. It’s interactive and with music and the kids get up and participate so they are not watching a video or just sitting. It’s interactive learning and it’s a great way to start a given theme. And then we tie it in to a Central Park Zoo visit.”

Some of the more popular programs with camp directors are from the Wildlife Theater classroom series. Directors can add a touch of the tropics to the camp day with a visit from the Youcan the Toucan puppet and experience a unique introduction to the rain forest using the five senses in the Sense of the Rain Forest Adventure. In Petunia Penguin Goes to School campers are transformed into a team of Antarctic scientists and a giant, talking penguin demonstrates the adaptations that help these birds survive the harsh polar habitat. Another camp option is learning basic animal concepts such as animal shapes, sounds, locomotion, and metamorphosis in the puppet-filled Animal Adventures Medley.

For more information on the Wildlife Theater camp-friendly programming check out www.wcs.org/wildlifetheater, email asaltz@wcs.org, or call 212.439.6540.

Also, if a parent is looking for a fun family program, check out about the Central Park Zoo’s General Audience Programs. The fall/winter session of programs will be listed on their website in September at www.nyzoosandaquarium.com/ceducation. Exciting School Programs with live animals are also available for preschool and elementary classes. You can watch the two videos on their website to find out more information.
Cool to Compost

By Bonnie McGuire, Urban Park Ranger Sergeant

Out of all the garbage that New Yorkers throw away, approximately 27% of it is food waste, yard trimmings, and compostable paper. On a city scale, only the yard trimmings can be collected and composted cost-effectively. However, everyone can do their part to reduce the amount of garbage they create. Consider a compost bin, a small container that can be kept in a community garden or backyard. A lot of different items can be put into a compost bin, but there is a delicate balance to make the compost develop best. There are "greens" that have a considerable amount of water and "browns" that are relatively dry. Balancing the two will keep your decomposers happy and prevent the formation of mold. The following is a short list of do's and don'ts (a complete list can be found at the NYC Compost Project website at www.nyc compost.org):

**DO NOT PUT IN THE BIN**
- Cat litter and dog waste
- Dairy products
- Fish and meat scraps
- Fats, oils, and grease
- Invasive weeds
- Weeds with seeds
- Diseased plants
- Dead animals
- Sand
- Glossy or colored paper
- Large branches
- Coal and charcoal ash

**PUT IN THE BIN**
- Greens
  - Fruit and vegetable scraps
  - Coffee grounds
  - Tea bags
  - Dry grains
  - Fresh leaves and green plants
  - Grass clippings
  - Flower bouquets
- Browns
  - Dry leaves
  - Nut shells
  - Corn stalks
  - Straw and hay
  - Newspaper
  - Shredded paper
  - Egg shells
  - Old potting soils

So, why compost? For starters, it produces a wonderful, nutrient rich soil that you can use in gardens and houseplants. It also reduces the amount of waste that is produced and needs to be shipped to other states' landfills, thus reducing the amount the city is paying to do this. And if you're into it, you can find a whole variety of decomposers such as beetles, millipedes, centipedes, sow bugs, and many others. A compost bin opens up a whole new world for discovery.

Should you not have a place for a compost bin, or are unwilling to haul your food waste to a community garden, don't worry, you can start a worm bin! Worms are wonderful little creatures that will eat 1/3 of their weight in food scraps every day. Worm bins can be easily kept in a small apartment as they don't take up a lot of space. Simply add some water, don't let them get too hot or cold, and keep feeding them fruit and vegetable scraps. After a little while, you will have worm castings to add to your potted plants or garden.

Oh, and don't worry, neither the compost bin nor the worm bin smell bad. They are both easy to keep, and reduce the amount of waste we throw away.

Check out the website at www.nyc.compost.org or visit the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation website at www.nyc.gov/parks to view opportunities to learn more about composting and recycling.

Join the Urban Park Rangers to learn more about composting. See the calendar for details.

Staten Island    July 6    Blue Heron Park
Staten Island    September 7    Blue Heron Park

Sustainability

By David Hurd, Director of the Office of Recycling Outreach and Education for Council on the Environment of NYC

In July 2006, the City Council passed Mayor Bloomberg's landmark Solid Waste Management Plan to improve the way the City manages solid waste after the closing of the Fresh Kills Landfill in 2001. The plan's benefits include reducing the environmental impacts associated with shipping solid waste by truck, the adoption and enforcement of borough self-sufficiency in the handling of waste, and a renewed emphasis on recycling and waste reduction.

The Office of Recycling Outreach and Education (OROE), a program of the Council on the Environment of New York City (CENYC), was created as part of the Solid Waste Management Plan in order to implement a grassroots, community district approach to recycling education. OROE provides "hands-on" outreach to promote reuse, waste prevention, composting, and recycling with the goal of increasing public awareness of, and participation in, New York City's residential recycling program. The Office of Recycling Outreach and Education is also expanding opportunities to recycle materials that are not currently designated in the City's residential recycling program.

Each day in New York City twelve thousand tons of waste is collected from residents, delivered to transfer stations, loaded on to long haul trucks or rail cars for disposal in incinerators or landfills in other states. New Yorkers only recycle half of the bottles, cans, paper, and other items that are acceptable in the city's residential recycling program. Diverting materials from landfills and incinerators reduces greenhouse gasses that cause global warming. Recycling conserves both natural and economic resources. For each piece of paper, metal can, glass jar, and plastic bottle that is recycled, an equivalent natural resource is preserved. The demand for recycled commodities is rising. Paper, cardboard, metal, and plastic are commanding record prices as feedstock for new products.

The Office of Recycling Outreach and Education offers free services to New York City residents to assist them in creating an environmentally sustainable city. Services include presentations that show how to create effective recycling programs in residential buildings. Visit the Council on the Environment on the web at www.cenyc.org.
Urban Park Rangers

EXPLORER PROGRAMS

Active Conservation
Help us improve hiking trails, remove invasive plants, monitor animal populations, or plant native wildflowers. Bring water, a snack, and wear work clothes.

Artistic Expression
Amateur and experienced artists and craftspeople are encouraged to bring craft, sketching, and writing materials provided, but bring your own camera for photographing programs.

Birding
The Urban Park Rangers will teach you everything you need to know to get started, and try out your new skills on the trails. Each program highlights different bird types and special park areas for bird. Look for seasonal highlights.

Camping
Bring a flashlight: a tent (some are available to borrow); bedding, and dinner. Some programs require reservations. See listing, along with instructions. Space is limited!

Canoeing
Get wet with the Urban Park Rangers and learn to canoe. In Brooklyn, you’ll be paddling as a pro and ready for adventure. First-come, first-served, unless otherwise noted. Bring a hat, water, sunscreen, and a snack. Ages 8 and up. Be prepared to get wet/dirty.

Explorers
will be set with different fantastic activities. themed programs geared towards youngsters and children of all ages.

History
Come hear the fantastic stories our parks have to tell.

Hiking
Come on a program. Adventure and leisure hikes, nature and historic walks and tours, orienteering and more in every borough.

Fishing
Bring your own pole (some are available to borrow). freshwater: bring bait; saltwater: bring bait provided.

Nature Exploration
Learn about flowers and birds, wildlife, or stars in the sky. Request a topic if you have them; a flashlight for evening walks.

Night Programs
Explore the parks at night. Camp, hike, bird, star-gaze, and more.

Orienteering
Learn to use a map and compass. Wear sturdy shoes; bring a snack, water, and binoculars if you have them.

Performing Arts, Live!
See, hear and participate in poetry, music, acting, readings, open microphone nights in our beautiful parks and nature centers.

RANGER STATIONS & NATURE CENTERS

BRONX
Crotona Nature Center, seasonal (CNC): Crotona Park. Enter the park at Crotona Park East. 718.885.3466

Orchard Beach Nature Center, seasonal (OBNC): Pelham Bay Park. Section 2 of Orchard Beach. 718.885.3466


Van Cortlandt Nature Center (VCNC): Van Cortlandt Park. Enter the park at W. 246th St. & Broadway. 718.548.0912

QUEENS
Avery Island Park Adventure Center (APPAC): Avery Island Pond Park. Enter at Winchester Blvd., under the Grand Central Parkway. 718.217.6034

Fort Totten Visitor Center (FTVC): Fort Totten Park. Woodhaven Blvd. & Forest Park Drive. 718.846.2733

Fort Totten Visitor Center (FTVC): Fort Totten Park. Enter park at fort entrance, north of intersection of 212 St. & Cross Island Pkwy. and follow signs to Old Fort Totten/visitor Center. 718.352.1769

STATEN ISLAND
Blue Heron Nature Center (BHNC): Blue Heron Park. 220 Polson Avenue, between Amboy Road & Hylan Boulevard. 718.967.3542

High Rock Ranger Station (HRRS): High Rock Park. Park in the lot at the end of Neville Avenue, off Rockland Ave., and follow signs.

Brooklyn

Fort Greene Visitor Center (FGVC): Fort Greene Park. Enter the park at Myrtle Avenue and Washington Park. 718.722.3218

Belvedere Castle (BC): Central Park. 79th St. mid-park. 212.628.2345

Dana Discovery Center (DDC): Central Park. 110th St. & Lenox Ave. 212.860.1376

Inwood Hill Nature Center (IHNC): Inwood Hill Park. Enter park at W. 218th St. & Indian Road. 212.304.2365

SPECIAL EVENTS
Our Special Events celebrate nature and are great for all ages! For information, call 311 and ask for the Urban Park Rangers, or visit www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers

City of New York
Parks & Recreation
Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Aiden Benepe, Commissioner

Urban Outdoors in New York City
www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers
SUMMER 2008

WEDNESDAYS, THURSDAYS, AND FRIDAYS

Nature's Playground / Riverside Park 11 a.m.-3 p.m. / River Run Playground, enter the park at 83rd Street

The Urban Park Rangers invite you to attend weekly nature-themed programs geared towards youngsters and children of all ages. Come fly with the birds, or make your own bug. Each day will be filled with different activities.

WEDNESDAYS IN JULY - AUGUST

Fishing Factsoids / Central Park 1 p.m. / Meet outside the Dana Discovery Center

Would you like to learn how to fish in the park? The Urban Park Rangers and Central Park Conservancy show you the proper methods and techniques. We explore/learn about the ecology of the Meer and some fantastic solutions in place to protect it.

FRIDAYS IN JULY - AUGUST

Nature's Playground / Riverside Park 3 p.m. / Morningside Playground (Morningside Park 120th Street)

The Urban Park Rangers invite you to attend weekly nature-themed programs geared towards youngsters and children of all ages. Come fly with the birds, or make your own bug. Each day will be set with different fantastic activities.

Saturday, July 5 cont’d

The Reef Deal / Crotona Park 2 p.m. / CNC Come on by for your newly restored lake-indian Lake, while learning all about our underwater neighbors.

Brooklyn
Early Birding / Marine Park 8 a.m. / SMNC

Living Log / Prospect Park 11 a.m. / Meet at Picnic House (Prospect Park West at 3 St.) Find out much more life there than is "dead!" Check out the life on this trail on this morning hike with the Rangers.

Celebrate Independence Day with a guided tour of historic Fort Greene Park and discover the role this park played in the American Revolution.

Pondorous Ponds / Prospect Park 1 p.m. / Meet at the Audubon Center (What animals and organisms live in the ponds of Prospect Park? Join us as we explore with non-natives and imagineers to find out.)

Birding for Kids / Fort Greene Park 3 p.m. / FGVC Bring the kids to the park for a day of birding by sight and song watching. Children 12 and under. Limited number of children's binoculars available.

Manhattan
Lights, Camera, Central Park 1 p.m. / Meet at park entrance north side of 60th street, just west of Fifth Ave. Look for birds in the blockbuster season is in full swing. Test your movie trivia knowledge as we walk through the park's best-known movie locations.

Nightlife Highlights / Fort Tryon Park 8:30 p.m. / Meet at Margaret Colvin Circle (just north of 190 St. and Fort Washington Ave.) Explore the park in search of fireflies and other denizens of the dark. Bring a flashlight and your sense of adventure.

Queens
Canoeing / Fort Totten 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. Enjoy views of the bay. Throg Neck Bridge, and the old fort, all from the water, as you learn the basics of canoeing skills. You’ll also be taught safety rules.

Manhattan
Canoeing / Fort Totten 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 4 listing.

SOARING SERIES

Brooklyn
SOARING SERIES

SOARING SERIES

SOARING SERIES

SOARING SERIES

Brooklyn
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American Revolution Weekend: Valentine-Varian House / Varian Park 11 a.m. / Meet at Van Cortlandt Ave. and Bainbridge Ave. See July 5 listing.

Patricia Games / Pelham Bay Park 11 a.m. & 6 p.m. / OBNC

The children of the Revolution played games too – just different ones! Find out what they were, and how to make your own toys.

into the Depths / Crotona Park 11 a.m. & 2 p.m. / CNC Learn about and interact with the aquatic creatures that make Indian Lake their home.

Brooklyn
\n
North Shore Walking Tour Series:

Queens
Canoeing the Creek / Marine Park 11 a.m., 12:30 p.m., & 2 p.m. / Meet at Burnett St. And Avenue U Enjoy a day of canoeing on beautiful Cemebten Creek. Enjoy creekside views of wading birds and basking terrapins. Ages 8 years and older. Arrange first. Space limited and served.

Grand Army Plaza Monument Walk / Prospect Park 11 a.m. / Meet under the Arch Discover the history and significance of Grand Army Plaza, the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, as well as the fountain and surrounding statues of JFK Plaza.

Explore the Ravine Live / Prospect Park 1 p.m. / Meet at Picnic House (Prospect Park West at 3 St.) Take a nature hike and explore the last remaining forest in Brooklyn on this guided tour of one of Prospect Park’s most secluded & rustic areas.

Manhattan
Woodblock Printing / Inwood Hill Park 12 p.m. / IHNC Create your own wood block print. All materials provided, just bring your imagination.

History
Come hear the fantastic stories our parks have to tell.

Hiking
Come on a program. Adventure and leisure hikes, nature and historic walks and tours, orienteering and more in every borough.

Fishing
Bring your own pole (some are available to borrow). freshwater: bring bait; saltwater: bring bait provided.

Nature Exploration
Learn about flowers and birds, wildlife, or stars in the sky. Request a topic if you have them; a flashlight for evening walks.

Night Programs
Explore the parks at night. Camp, hike, bird, star-gaze, and more.

Orienteering
Learn to use a map and compass. Wear sturdy shoes; bring a snack, water, and binoculars if you have them.

Performing Arts, Live!
See, hear and participate in poetry, music, acting, readings, open microphone nights in our beautiful parks and nature centers.

SPECIAL EVENTS
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Friday, July 4

Manhattan
Canoeing / Inwood Hill Park 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. / Meet at Fort Totten / Look for your independence by canoeing freely on the marsh. Great for first-time canoeists, families must be accompanied by an adult.

Queens
Canoeing / Fort Totten 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. Enjoy views of the bay. Throg Neck Bridge, and the old fort, all from the water, as you learn the basics of canoeing skills. You’ll also be taught safety rules.

Saturday, July 5

Bronx
Canoeing Club / Van Cortlandt Park 9 a.m. / VCN

American REVOLUTION WEEKEND:
Washington’s Troops on the Hill / Van Cortlandt Park 11 a.m. / Meet at Fort Totten and CNC. This is a great program for kids to get an idea of the prospect of our exploring the park, as we discuss the Brooklyn’s role in the Revolution.

AMERICAN REVOLUTION WEEKEND:
Hike To Glover’s Rock / Orchard Beach 1 p.m. / OBNC See listing above.
Sunday, July 6 cont’d

Queens

CREATING OF LIFE SERIES:
Rockaway Beach 12 p.m. / Meet at B. 52 St. and the Boardwalk. What do scat, tracks, nests, and shells all have in common? Join the Rangers to find out!

History of Fort Totten / Fort Totten 10 a.m. / Meet at Canoeing to the fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. Explore the nineteenth century fortress that guarded the nation’s harbor from possible naval attack and learn about the history of Willett’s Point.

SIGNs OF LIFE SERIES:
Fort Totten 2 p.m. / Meet at Canoeing What do scat, tracks, nests, and cocoons all have in common? Join the Rangers to find out!

SIGNs OF LIFE SERIES:
leaves at Rose and Oak Aves. What do scat, scat, nests, and galls all have in common? Join the Rangers to find out!

Lanten Tour / Fort Totten 7:30 p.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. Discover the dark coves of Fort Totten for a history tour by lantern.

DOCUMENTARY AFTER-DINNER SERIES:
Forest Park 7:30 p.m. / Join us for some riveting adventures on film! Special features will include segments of the Planet Earth series uncut and straight through.

Staten Island

Canoeing 101 / Blue Heron Park 10 a.m. / BHNC Reduce your garage and create wonderful soil at the same time. View several different working compost bins, as well as an aerobin.

Maps ‘n’ More / Willowbrook Park 2 p.m. / Meet by Canoeing a guided tree walk, as we learn to identify different types of trees, view some of NYC’s great trees, and discover the forest floor. Are you a nature detective? Can you point out your favorite satellite?

Saturday, July 12

Queens

Canoeing / Fort Totten 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 4 listing.

Canoeing / Pelham Bay Park 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 4 listing.

Brooklyn

Early Bird / Marine Park 8 a.m. / SMNC Explore the nineteenth century fortress that guarded the nation’s harbor from possible naval attack and learn about the history of Willett’s Point.

Nature Bingo for Kids / Van Cortlandt Park 11 a.m. & 1 p.m. / VCNC Discover it all on this Ranger-led tour of the park.

Nature Photography / Cunningham Park 12 p.m. / Meet at parking lot on Union Timpiece and 197 St.

Queens

Canoeing / Fort Totten 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 4 listing.

CREATING WITH NATURE SERIES:
Kissena Playschool, off Burnett St. and Avenue E: What is this area here? Who built it, and is it still used? These, and other burning questions, will be answered today.

Intermediate Canoeing / Pelham Bay Park 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy.

River Tours / Fort Totten 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 4 listing.

Intermediate Canoeing / Pelham Bay Park 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 4 listing.

Nature Photography / Cunningham Park 12 p.m. / Meet at parking lot on Union Timpiece and 197 St.

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Intermediate Canoeing / Pelham Bay Park 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 4 listing.

River Tours / Fort Totten 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 4 listing.

Nature Photography / Cunningham Park 12 p.m. / Meet at parking lot on Union Timpiece and 197 St.
Sunday, July 20 cont'd

Manhattan

Photography/ Inwood Hill Park / 10 a.m. / HNHC Join the Urban Park Rangers on a wildlife hike from Inwood Hill through Fort Tryon Park to Inwood Hill Park. See July 4 listing.

History Club: City Hall Park and the Brooklyn Bridge / City Hall Park 11 a.m. / Meet at the Fountain (outside the park at Washington and Park Row) See today’s Brooklyn Listing.

Queens

Family Fun / Fort Totten Park 10 a.m. / FVFC Bring the family out for some fun. Join the rangers for craft projects, games, and storytelling.

GEMS OF QUEENS SERIES: Powell Cove Creek 1 p.m. / Meet at 11 Ave and 138 Pl. More than half of Powell’s Cove Estate is literally submerged under the waterway of Ray’s Bay, but you won’t have time to get wet to learn about the various plants and animals that inhabit this ecosystem. From corals to crabs, this cove’s got it all.

Living Rocks / Rockaway Beach 12 p.m. / Meet at B. 52 St. and the Boardwalk / Join the Park Rangers on a tour of what rocks aren’t interested in? Think again. Come find out who makes them their home.

History of Fort Totten / Fort Totten 1 p.m. / Meet at the entrance to the fort, north of intersection of 21st St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See today’s listing.

Living Logs / Kissena Park 1 p.m. / Meet at Rose and Oak Aves. Where do trees grow when they don’t? Do they stay there? Come learn about nature’s recyclers!

Living Logs / Forest Park 2 p.m. / FPV Where do trees grow when they don’t? Do they stay there? Come learn about nature’s recyclers!

DOCU-MENTARY AFTER-DINNER SERIES: Forest Park 7:30 p.m. / FPV See July 6 listing.

Staten Island

Park Pickup / Blue Heron Park 10 a.m. / BHNC Give Mother Nature a hand by removing what doesn’t belong. Gloves and bags provided. Wear boots.

Living Log / Willowbrook Park 1 p.m. / Meet by comfort chair. We’ll explore several logs in the park in search of snakes, worms, insects, and more.

Friday, July 25

Canoeing / Fort Totten 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 21st St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 4 listing.

Saturday, July 26

Brooklyn

John Muir Trail / Van Cortlandt Park 11 a.m. / Meet at the northeast corner of the Parks. Stretched between the legs and get some air as we traverse the park’s only east-west trail. Hike ends on the east side of the park.

What’s the “Bug”? / Pelham Bay Park 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. / OBNC Are all bugs insects? Are all insects bugs? Learn the answer and much more as we go looking into a bug’s life!

Ranger Puppet Theater / Crotona Park 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. / CNC See July 12 listing.

Canoeing at the Meier / Central Park 11 a.m. / Meet at South 60 St. and 105 Ave.

Canoeing at the Meer / Central Park 11 a.m. / South side of Harlem Meer. See July 13 listing.

Staten Island

Nativity Scavenger Hunt / Fort Totten Park 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to the Fort. Search for clues on the east side of the park in search of bats, raccoons, opiodusi, and night herons.

MANHATTAN

Go Fish! / Inwood Hill Park 2 p.m. / HNHC Join the Rangers as we teach you to catch your own fish. Rods and bait provided.

Canoeing at the Meer / Central Park 11 a.m. / Meet at South 60 St. and 105 Ave.

Canoeing at the Meer / Central Park 11 a.m. / Meet at South 60 St. and 105 Ave.

Staten Island

History of Quiet Places at Staten Island / Blue Heron Park 10 a.m. / BHNC What’s in a name? Learn the origins of the many different names of streets, parks, and beaches of Staten Island, from Abbey Road to Jacob Riis. See July 17 listing.

Dinosaurs & Damsels / Prospect Park 1 p.m. / Meet to explore the Prospect Park Center Dinosaur and damselflies, that is. Join us as we go in search of these bewitched insect beauties.

Down the Fort / Fort Greene Park 1 p.m. / FGVC Join the rangers for a look at the fortifications for each of the forts at Fort Greene. See July 17 listing.

Canoeing at the Meer / Central Park 11 a.m. / Meet at South 60 St. and 105 Ave.

Queens

Fishing for Kids / Van Cortlandt Park 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. / VCNC Family fun at the lake! We’ll teach all the basics, and provide poles and bait.

Canoeing at the Meer / Central Park 11 a.m. / Meet at South 60 St. and 105 Ave.

Wednesday, July 31

Brooklyn

Lawn Chair Theater / Marine Park 7:30 p.m. / SMNC Enjoy an outdoor theater presentation of the classic story, ‘The Birds.’ Call 718.421.2021 for information.

Staten Island

Staten Island Clean up / Marine Park 1 p.m. / Meet in front of the Marine Park Boathouse.

MANHATTAN

Have a Ball! / Inwood Hill Park 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. / Meet at Bennett St. and Avenue U See July 6 listing.

Canoeing at the Meer / Central Park 11 a.m. / Meet at South 60 St. and 105 Ave.

Queens

Canoeing at the Meer / Central Park 11 a.m. / Meet at South 60 St. and 105 Ave.

Staten Island

Canoeing at the Meer / Central Park 11 a.m. / Meet at South 60 St. and 105 Ave.

Queens

Canoeing at the Meer / Central Park 11 a.m. / Meet at South 60 St. and 105 Ave.

Staten Island
**Staten Island**

**Porous Ponds / Willowbrook Park 11 a.m. / Meet by comfort station off Eton Pl. See July 7 listing.**

**Sunday, August 8**

**Canoing / Fort Totten 10 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See 8 a.m. listing.**

**Saturday, August 9**

**Brooklyn**

**Early Bird / Marine Park 8 a.m. / SMNC**

**Animal Tracking / Cunningham Park 11 a.m. / Meet at parking lot entrance to Cunningham Park across the street from the ballfields.**

**Brooklyn Trivia / Fort Greene Park 1 p.m. / FGVC**

**Queens**

**Brooklyn Saltwater Fishing / Bayridge Marina 11 a.m. / Meet at Marina (alongside Cross Island Pkwy, at 28 Ave.) See August 6 listing.**

**Queens**

**Brooklyn Family Fun Day / Highland Park 6 p.m. / Meet at Jamaica Ave. and Elton St. Bring your family and enjoy all the fun-filled activities, followed by an outdoor movie screening.**

**Sunday, August 9 cont’d**

**Canoeing / Bayside Marina 11 a.m. / Meet at Marina (alongside Cross Island Pkwy, at 28 Ave.) See August 6 listing.**

**Queens**

**Brooklyn Early Bird / Marine Park 8 a.m. / SMNC**

**Queens**

**Brooklyn Early Bird / Marine Park 8 a.m. / SMNC**

**Brooklyn Living Log / Prospect Park West at 3 St.**

**Robert F. Wagner Jr.**

**Sunday, August 10**

**Brooklyn**

**Canoeing / Van Cortlandt Park 11 a.m. / Meet at Van Cortlandt Park Comfort Station.**

**Brooklyn**

**Living Log / Prospect Park West at 3 St.**

**Queens**

**Brooklyn Red-tailed Hawk/Ranger Tour / Prospect Park West at 3 St.**

**Queens**

**Brooklyn Summer Canoeing / Van Cortlandt Park 11 a.m. / VCNCH Learn the basics, or practice what you know! First-time, first-served. Bring water, sunscreen, and a snack. Ages 8+. Register to participate: 718.967.3542 after 2 p.m. on August 4.**

**Brooklyn**

**Canoeing / Van Cortlandt Park 11 a.m. / Meet at Van Cortlandt Park Comfort Station.**
Saturday, August 23 cont’d

Bridges of Manhattan Series: Randall’s Island to Astoria / Triborough Bridge 12 p.m. / Meet at Exit E, FDR Drive Drive Join the Rangers as we cross the East River via footbridge onto Randall’s Island and explore Randall’s and Wards Islands. Then, it’s on to the Triborough Bridge and Astoria Park in Queens. Tour ends in Astoria.

Queens

Community Family Day / Roy Wilkins Park 1 p.m. / Meet inside the park, near the Meckin and Foch Boulevards entrance. This event is for families with children! Learn about birds and your role to protect them.

History of Fort Totten / Fort Totten 9 a.m. / Meet at entrance to Fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 6 listing.

Saturday, August 30 cont’d

BIRDING AT MANHATTAN SERIES:

Inwood Hill Park 11 a.m. / Meet in the park at the Audubon Center.

Central Park Unlocked Series: Blockhouse #1 / Central Park 10 a.m. / Dana Discovery Center Free and fun for all, Dana Discovery Center offers a stroll through the park in search of herbs, plants, and bushes. We’ll focus on uncommon teas and flowers that grow in the park.

Wildflower Walk / Central Park 1 p.m. / Belvedere Castle. Learn to recognize native and non-native plant species that thrive in the Belvedere Castle area. We’ll also take a stroll through lovely Shakespeare Garden, which holds many herbs and flowers mentioned in his writings.

Queens

35 Annual Park Fair / Forest Park 10 a.m. / Meet at Buddy Monument, at the intersection of Myrtle Ave. and Park Lane South Raffles. Games, nature walks by the Urban Park Rangers. It’s for the whole family. Hall Block Association.

Saturday, August 30 cont’d

Manhattan

Central Park Unlocked Series: Blockhouse #1 / Central Park 10 a.m. / Dana Discovery Center Free and fun for all, Dana Discovery Center offers a stroll through the park in search of herbs, plants, and bushes. We’ll focus on uncommon teas and flowers that grow in the park.

Knot for Nothing / Fort Totten Park 10 a.m. / FCVC Every seen a ‘bird’ knotting which knot to use or how to tie something down, up, or together? Come learn and practice some of the most basic knots. Avoid those situations in the future, and you’ll thank yourself for knot-knowing.

History of Fort Totten / Fort Totten 1 p.m. / Meet at entrance to the fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 6 listing.

Staten Island

Canoeing Basics / Clove Lakes Park 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. / Meet on Martling Ave. at the pond. Release your stresses with a peaceful ride on the water. Instruction and life jackets provided. First-come, first-served.

Sunday, August 31

Brooklyn

Ruggin’ Out / Pelham Bay Park 11 a.m. / OBNC Join us for a micro-safari, in search of some of our six-legged neighbors.

Queens

Women of the Revolution and Beyond / Fort Greene Park 10 a.m. / FCVC Today, we’re recognizing the contributions of great women in American history. Join us as we explore the history of significant north end, you’ll have a rare opportunity to enter the Blockhouse, built during the war of 1812.

Flower Walk / High Rock Park 9 a.m. / HRRS Take a look at the winged wonders of the Greenbelt. Explore the forest and see several of our rare and special red-legged blackbirds and much more.

Fresh Kills / Fresh Kills Landfill 10 a.m. & 6 p.m. / Meeting location TBA See July 12 listing.

New York State Symbols / Blue Heron Park 1 p.m. / BHNC Do you know what our state bird is? How about the state tree? Join the Urban Park Rangers to discover those things and more. See how many you can fill in the park.

Sunday, September 7

Brooklyn

Great Trees of the Bronx / Pelham Bay Park 11 a.m. / PBRS They’re all around us, but a few are truly special. We’ll take you on a tour of the ancient and mighty.

Queens

NEIGHBORHOOD WALKING TOUR SERIES:

Coney Island 10 a.m. / Meet on the Boardwalk in front of the Parachute Jump. Which knot to use or how to tie something down, up, or together? Come learn and practice some of the most basic knots. Avoid those situations in the future, and you’ll thank yourself for knot-knowing.

History of Fort Totten / Fort Totten 1 p.m. / Meet at entrance to the fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 6 listing.

Staten Island

Canoeing / Clove Lakes 10 a.m. / Meet at the pond. Release your stresses with a peaceful ride on the water. Instruction and life jackets provided. First-come, first-served.

Thursday, August 28

Brooklyn

Nature-Inspired Art Show / Marine Park 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. / Meet at the Audubon Center.

Creating with Nature / Fort Greene Park 1 p.m. / FCVC Bring the kids to the park for an afternoon of creating nature-themed crafts. Materials provided, children 12 and under.

Manhattan

Central Park Unlocked Series: Hallett Nature Sanctuary / Central Park 9 a.m. / Meet on 59th Street between Central Park West and the Reservoir. Look for bird seeders, bees and other native pollinators.

Creating with Nature / Fort Greene Park 1 p.m. / FCVC Today, we’re recognizing the contributions of great women in American history. Join us as we explore the history of the Audubon Center.

Queens

Women of the Revolution and Beyond / Fort Greene Park 10 a.m. / FCVC Today, we’re recognizing the contributions of great women in American history.

Sunday, September 13

Brooklyn

Wildflower Walk / Van Cortlandt Park 1 p.m. / VCNC Discover late summer flowers on the last of our seasonal flower walks.

Queens

Early Birding / Marine Park 8 a.m. / SMNC The Redcoats are Coming (and Hessians too!) / Fort Greene Park 1 p.m. / FCVC See July 12 listing.

Children’s Hour / Marine Park 1 p.m. / SMNC An afternoon of creative nature crafts. Materials provided. Children 12 and under.

Manhattan

Little Red Light House / Fort Washington Park 1 p.m. / Meet at the Little Red Light House See July 19 listing.

The Lower Manhattan Parks Series:

Four Squares / Madison Square Park 11 a.m. / Meet at the corner of W. 26 St. and 5 Ave. Join us on a walk from our newest stop to the next as we wind our way from Madison Square to Union Square to Stuyvesant Square to Tompkins Square, and everything in between. Square comfortable shoes and bring water.

Queens

Early Birding / Fort Totten 9:30 a.m. / Meet at entrance to the fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 6 listing.

Staten Island

Early Birding / Clove Lakes Park 9 a.m. / Meet at comfort station.

Brooklyn

Little Red Light House / Fort Washington Park 1 p.m. / Meet at the Little Red Light House See July 19 listing.

Richard and Roy Wilkins Parks 9 a.m. / Meet at the corner of W. 26 St. and 5 Ave. Join us on a walk from our newest stop to the next as we wind our way from Madison Square to Union Square to Stuyvesant Square to Tompkins Square, and everything in between. Square comfortable shoes and bring water.

Queens

Early Birding / Fort Totten 9:30 a.m. / Meet at entrance to the fort, north of intersection of 212 St. and Cross Island Pkwy. See July 6 listing.

Staten Island

Early Birding / Clove Lakes Park 9 a.m. / Meet at comfort station.

ADULTS ONLY Camping / High Rock Park 6 p.m. / Meeting location TBA Limited equipment provided.

Register to collect, call 718.967.3542 on September 8 after 9 a.m.

Sunday, September 14

Brooklyn

Advanced Canoeing on the Hutchinson River / Pelham Bay Park 11 a.m. / PBRS Not for the inexperienced! If you're good with a paddle and enjoy toning, it's the perfect opportunity to go where few others do. To register, call 718.548.0912 on September 8 and leave a message.

www.nyc.gov/parks/summer
Join the Urban Park Rangers!

Looking for hiking in your borough? Need motivation? The Urban Park Rangers offer adventure & leisure hikes, nature & historic walks and tours, and oneloopcoo events.

Join the Urban Park Rangers!

Looking for canoeing in your borough? Want to meet other paddlers? The Urban Park Rangers offer basic canoeing programs and canoe expeditions.

Join the Urban Park Rangers!
The Living Log

By Anne-Marie Vaduva, Urban Park Ranger

New York City is crazy about trees! Through the MillionTreesNYC initiative we are on our way to planting one million of them by the year 2017.

The benefits of living trees to people and to the environment are many and varied. A single mature tree can release enough oxygen back into the atmosphere to support two human beings. And while it’s at it, that tree will also absorb approximately 48 pounds per year of that pesky global warming gas, carbon dioxide. Living trees make and clean our air, their leafy canopies lower temperatures by shading buildings and concrete streets, help reduce asthma rates, beautify our neighborhoods, and just make us feel happy.

All of these benefits would not be possible if not for the trees and plants of yesteryear that died and decomposed to form humus, the organic component of soil that is vital to growth.

The decomposition and recycling of a mature tree can take up to 200 years, and during that time it becomes an ecosystem in itself — home and cafeteria for wild creatures that feed off the dead wood, as well as each other.

The first creatures to make their way inside the solid wood must eat their way through. Primary consumers such as engraver and click beetles as well as termites eat the wood, but others such as carpenter ants and wood-boring mites cut tunnels through the wood to make sheltered homes that protect them from the elements. Wood is mostly made up of cellulose, which most organisms on earth cannot digest, which is why beetles have special chemicals in their digestive systems to break it down, and termites actually carry around protozoa in their digestive tract that breaks down the cellulose. The termites eat the protozoa’s byproducts.

The first wave of wood invaders bring with them bacteria and fungi that once inside also begin to break down and eat the wood. They transform nitrogen, a nutrient vital to plant and animal life, from an unusable form in the wood into a usable form released in the soil.

In its last stages of decomposition, the rotting log transforms into a carpet of mosses and lichens, and earthworms, fungi, and bacteria complete the cycle of turning wood into soil. A new tree seedling may begin its life on the site of an old log, and this natural cycle has come full circle.

The Urban Park Rangers have 9 Living Log programs this summer. See the calendar for details.
By Mindi Rambo, National Park Service

“In the end, we will conserve only what we love. We will only love what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught.”
—Baba Dioum, Senegalese Poet

Without conservation, many places of cultural, historical and natural importance can be lost to future generations. This is why conservation is one of the touchstones of all the National Parks of New York Harbor parks.

Take Gateway National Recreation Area’s Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge for example. Through the careful management of the refuge, the National Park Service hopes to preserve the greatest possible number of plant and animal species for the enjoyment and education of generations to come.

Visitors to Jamaica Bay can take part in programs that explore and explain conservation issues at the site. There are bird walks that touch on some of the more than 300 migratory birds that use the wildlife refuge as a stopping point. There are even nighttime programs that allow visitors to witness the mating tumult of the horseshoe crabs and learn more about why these animals are important to the ecosystem. If flowers and plants are more your speed, the refuge offers plenty to look at and talk about.

Gateway National Recreation Area is a 26,000 acre national park that consistently ranks among the Top 10 visited in the nation. Gateway offers programs that speak to the park service’s conservation mission by allowing visitors to not only learn more about ongoing efforts but to become stewards of the park.

To learn more about stewardship and volunteer opportunities, please call Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge at 718.318.4340.

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The 61st Annual
Macy’s Fishing Contest in Prospect Park
at the Prospect Park Audubon Center
at the Boathouse, July 16 to 20
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

The Macy’s Fishing Contest has been a Brooklyn tradition since 1947, giving thousands of kids the opportunity to learn about fishing and aquatic ecology. The free contest is open to kids 15 and under, with equipment and instruction provided. Come out to win prizes daily! Individuals may sign-up at the contest, but groups must pre-register at (718) 287-3400 x114. Volunteers welcome. call (718) 965-8960. www.prospectpark.org

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Summer is farmers market season!
Come to 45 locations throughout NYC and buy fresh foods straight from the farmers who grow, raise, bake and catch it.

For a full schedule and map, visit: www.cenyc.org

Greenmarket is a 501(c)(3) non-profit Program of the Council on the Environment of New York City. Since 1976, our staff, volunteers and farmers have been working together promoting regional agriculture to preserve farmland and ensure a continuing supply of fresh, local produce for New Yorkers.

To make a fully tax-deductible donation to Greenmarket, please call 212.788.7476 or visit us at www.cenyc.org
Get WILD with the Urban Park Rangers!
Bring the whole family
See birds of prey up close and personal, then watch their aerobatics as they soar and dive before your eyes!

East Meadow, Central Park
(Enter park at 99th Street and 5th Avenue)
OUTDOORS
in New York City

THE FREE NEWSPAPER OF OUTDOOR ADVENTURE
JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER 2008

www.nycgovparks.org/rangers

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