



A Premier Urban Park







Gateway National Recreation Area is a special place which speaks to a new generation of park-goers. Located in the heart of the nation's largest metropolitan area, it touches the lives of some twenty million people. For these urban dwellers, the park offers fun, adventure and a chance to teach future generations the fragile balance between man and his environment.



Superintendent's Message



This year marks the 75th anniversary of the National Park Service, one of the great success stories of our nation. When the agency was born in 1916, *National Geographic* wrote that "as playgrounds for recreation and instruction, our national parks are without rivals on any continent." Today, this statement is no less true with our park system embracing some of the finest scenic, recreational and historic areas in America.

And just as the lands under the Agency's stewardship have grown, so also has the Park Service itself which has ventured into bold new programs including "bringing the parks to where the people are" with urban projects such as Gateway National Recreation Area.

Congress established Gateway in 1972 as a way of offering recreation, wilderness and cultural experiences to millions of people in the nation's largest metropolitan area who otherwise might never have the opportunity to visit a national park. Almost twenty years later, that still remains our goal.

Gateway is a year-round park whose opportunities are as varied as the interests of its visitors. Overnight camping trips for organized youth groups, special events, excellent beaches for swimming and fishing, ballfields, outdoor concerts, wintertime nature walks and environmental education programs are among the park's many popular activities.

For its constituency, Gateway serves as a conduit through which National Park Service ideas and ideals are transmitted. Because Gateway does not exist in a vacuum however, we are always exploring newer and better ways to expand the recreational opportunities for the more than 20 million residents of the New York metropolitan area. At the same time, we are careful to protect the fragile resources under our care.

With support from the communities which surround Gateway, from elected officials and from the private sector which helps fund many of our programs, Gateway National Recreation Area will continue to bring the parks to where the people are, for here is where we belong.

Kevin C. Buckley
General Superintendent





Gateway

Urban Park



In the late 1960's, Gateway National Recreation Area was merely a dream held by a few citizen groups, the National Park Service and a number of elected officials, most notably the late Congressman William Fitts Ryan of Manhattan. During his distinguished career, Ryan had devoted himself to working for the people of New York, but his legislation to establish a national park in America's largest metropolis was his greatest success.



The creation of Gateway opened a new frontier for the Park Service. Carved from land that was once the property of the State of New Jersey, New York City, the Army and the Navy, Gateway offered inner-city millions recreational, cultural and educational programs all within an hour of their doorstep. At the same time, Gateway presented the Park Service with its greatest challenge: creating harmony between man and nature in an area of intensive use.

Gateway is a patchwork park

Gateway's 26,000 acres include beaches, dune areas, wetlands, forests and the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, below, a prime example of reclaimed land.

whose 26,000 acres are divided into four units scattered around New York Harbor: Breezy Point on the Rockaway Peninsula; Jamaica Bay; the southeastern shore of Staten Island; and Sandy Hook, New Jersey. Together they offer beaches for swimming and fishing; miles of bike paths and nature trails; dozens of ballfields; one of the finest bird sanctuaries along the Eastern seaboard; and natural areas to enjoy and more importantly, from which to learn.



Historic Resources



Nestled amid the beaches and marshes of Gateway are historic resources

rich in the lore of the region which form an integral part of the park. A 1764 lighthouse, one of the country's first lifesaving stations, a charming Victorian Army post and deserted airbases all tell of a time when the lands of Gateway served as strategic points for guarding the nation's busiest harbor.

As its name implies, Gateway National Recreation Area takes its character from two arms of land, Sandy Hook and Breezy Point, which form a natural gateway to the port of New York. For almost 300 years, European settlers, then later immigrants, passed through this channel on their way to settle the New World. As the port's stature increased, so also did the country's defense of its estuary giving rise to a number of fortifications along the harbor including 19th century gun batteries, and Nike missile sites. All but abandoned today, these relics offer hours of exploration for curious visitors.

Gateway also counts among its historic treasures Floyd Bennett Field, New York's first municipal airport. Never a success commercially—its location was deemed too far from the city—the field was nonetheless a frequent site of aviation history. It served as a take-off point for the daring fliers of the 20's and 30's including Wiley Post, Howard Hughes, Charles Lindbergh, Amelia Earhart, Col. Roscoe Turner, and "Wrongway" Corrigan. Later used by the Navy as a training base, the field still holds many of the original structures which today host special events, overnight camping for children, nature programs and athletic events. Present plans call for major development of this area which would target programs and activities for visitors, while at the same time preserving the character of the field.

Cultural Treasures:
Floyd Bennett Field, take-off and landing point for aviator Charles Lindbergh; Sandy Hook lighthouse, the oldest working unit in the nation; and Ft. Hancock, former military post at entrance to New York Harbor.

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NETT FIELD



Recreational Activities



Among national parks, Gateway is unique. Although the park has one percent of the acreage of Yellowstone, its yearly visitation is more than that of Yellowstone and Yosemite combined, making it some of the most intensely used land in the National Park System.

Gateway's playgrounds teem with activities: swimming, fishing, running, horseback riding, hiking, boating, archery, biking, tennis, baseball, football, soccer and sailing. And for more serious-minded athletes, there's a biathlon, the Staten Island half-marathon, fishing contests, horse shows, league ball and an all-women lifeguard competition.

Gateway's far-flung riches also include land for planting community gardens, staging summer concerts and holding special events like the annual City Gardeners' Harvest Fair and Earth Day celebrations.

In 1990, 5.8 million people visited Gateway. To meet the demands of such heavy use, the park employs some 800 people including dedicated rangers and support staff, hard-working maintenance personnel, an outstanding force of U.S. Park Police and one of the finest lifeguard services in the nation. Gateway also prides itself on its volunteers who lead school groups, help with wildlife pro-



grams and assist visitors.

With the unwavering support of the area's Congressional delegation, Gateway has begun planning and construction on a series of major capital improvements. Projects already underway include rehabilitation of Canarsie Pier in Brooklyn where visitors enjoy outdoor concerts and fine dining, upgrading the beach center at Sandy Hook in New Jersey, and refurbishing Jacob Riis Park, one of New York's most popular beaches.



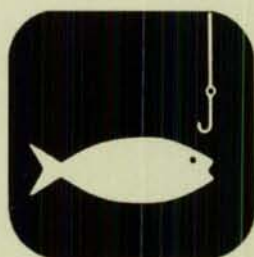
Sports-lovers find plenty of events at Gateway including an all-women's lifeguard contest, above, held each year at Jacob Riis Park. Gateway boasts

activities for every interest from swimming and fishing, to annual festivals like the City Gardeners' Harvest Fair, left and center.

Outdoor Classrooms For thousands of children in the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area, Gateway offers organized learning programs throughout the school year from ranger-guided trail walks to laboratory activities with seashore animals. For information on what's available in a particular area contact individual units of Gateway. Teachers note: because of popularity of programs, reservations must be made in advance.

Anglers' Delight Gateway's waters offer excellent fishing for both the amateur and serious-minded sportsman. Surf casting off Sandy Hook and Breezy Point yields striped bass, bluefish and fluke while the waters of Jamaica Bay offer summer flounder, blackfish and during cold weather, winter flounder.

Historic Treasures Nestled amid the dunes of Gateway's sandy shores are historic treasures to be explored. Two forts, gun batteries, one of the first life-saving stations in the nation, the country's oldest working lighthouse and historic airbases all tell of a time when the lands of Gateway served as strategic points in defense of New York Harbor. For the military buff, the forts offer a history of weaponry from 19th century cannons to the 1970's Nike missile. Must see spots: the lighthouse and Ft. Hancock at Sandy Hook and Ft. Tilden at Breezy Point.



Plethora of Plants Gateway's rich soils and diverse habitats enable it to sustain a variety of plant and tree life. Spring wildflowers such as purple thistles, white ox-eyed daisies and yellow black-eyed Susans blanket the park. In beach areas, grasses and seaside goldenrod stabilize dune movement while upland areas are good examples of coastal woodlands with fast-growing white poplar, cherry and willow trees along with many different evergreens. At Ft. Tilden, Russian olive trees and Japanese black pine adorn the grounds, planted years earlier by the Army to camouflage gun positions. Among the park's prized possessions: a pristine holly forest at Sandy Hook, one of the largest stands of the prickly-leaved tree on the East Coast.

Swimming Cool, clean waters and miles of sandy beaches within an hour of city living draw millions of bathers to Gateway's Jacob Riis Park in Queens and to Sandy Hook in New Jersey each summer. Open from Memorial Day through Labor Day, the beaches offer lifeguard protection during summer months.



Getting There



Breezy Point District - Jacob Riis Park

Subway: IRT 2 (5 also rush hours) to Flatbush Ave. - Q35 bus to park; or IND A or CC to Rockaway Park - Q22 bus to park.

Bus: Connect with Q35 Green Line bus at Flatbush Ave. corner Nostrand, Kings Highway, or Ave. U (Kings Plaza). Bus proceeds onto bridge. Ask driver for stop; or Q21 or Q53 to Beach 116th St. then Q22 or Q35 to park.

Auto: Belt Parkway to Exit 11-S, continue directly south across Marine Parkway-Gil Hodges Bridge to park; or Woodhaven Blvd. to Cross Bay Blvd., west on Beach Channel Drive to park.

Canarsie Pier

Mass transit: BMT LL to Rockaway Parkway - free transfer to B42 bus to entrance of Canarsie Pier.

Auto: Belt Parkway to Rockaway Parkway, Exit 13.

Floyd Bennett Field

Subway: IRT 2 (also 5 rush hours) to Flatbush Ave. - take Q35 to park. Ask driver to let you off at Floyd Bennett Field.

Bus: Connect with Q35 Green Lines bus at Flatbush Ave. corner Nostrand, Kings Highway, or Ave. U (Kings Plaza).

Auto: Belt Parkway, Exit 11-S, Flatbush Ave. south to traffic light just before the Marine Parkway-Gil Hodges Bridge. Turn left into Floyd Bennett Field at light.

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

Subway: IND A or CC to Broad Channel Station. Walk west to Cross Bay Blvd., then north about three quarters of a mile to Refuge Visitor Center on left.

Bus: Green Lines Q21 from Liberty Ave. (Queens) or 116th St. (Rockaway) to Refuge; or Q21 from New Lots Ave. (Brooklyn) or Far Rockaway (Queens) to Refuge.

Auto: Belt Parkway to Cross Bay Blvd., Exit 17S (Rockaway). Cross North Channel Bridge. Refuge is about 1 mile past the bridge on the right.

Sandy Hook Unit

Train: New Jersey Coast Line to Red Bank - Boro bus 4 to Highlands. Phone (800) 772-2222 (NJ only) or (201) 762-5100 for schedule information.

Bus: Academy Lines from New York City to Highlands. Phone (201) 291-1300 or (212) 564-8484 for schedule information.

Auto: Garden State Parkway to Exit 117 (or US 9 and NJ 35 south) to NJ 36 to park.

Staten Island Unit Miller Field

Bus: S-76 from ferry terminal to New Dorp Lane and Miller Field.

Auto: Verrazano Bridge from Brooklyn on Goethals Bridge from New Jersey, take Staten Island Expressway to Hylan Blvd. exit, south on Hylan Blvd. to New Dorp Lane, east on New Dorp Lane to end of street and entrance to Miller Field.

Great Kills

Bus: S-78 or S-79 from ferry terminal to Great Kills Park entrance. X-13 express bus from Manhattan to entrance.

Auto: Verrazano Br. from Bklyn, Goethals Br. from NJ. take SI Expwy to Hylan Blvd. south to Park.



Classrooms for Discovery



For thousands of street-bound city schoolchildren, Gateway serves as an outdoor classroom to explore the world around them. Here they taste olive berries for the first time, hear crickets chirp and wonder what magic brings birds back each year to nest.

Gateway offers a wide range of learning programs at a special environmental study center established in cooperation with the New York City Board of Education. Participants of all ages learn about seashore animals, marine life, birds and habitats, as well as such ecological topics as recycling. For thousands of children each year, ranger and self-guided nature

walks, overnight camping trips and special workshops all demonstrate the delicate balance between man and nature and the need to preserve the earth's resources for the future.

The park also has a Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center. Addressing the need to recruit minorities from urban areas into the Park Service, the programs include a park ranger training course along with teaching more traditional clerical and construction skills, all of which prepare students for their life work.

Throughout the park, rangers help thousands of city youngsters discover the wonders of nature each year. Special programs include trail walks, craft classes and overnight camping (inset). Gateway also offers Job Corps training (right insert) to inner-city youths.





Natural Treasures



Gateway National Recreation Area's natural treasures are important to the region. Its ocean beaches, wetlands, dunes, uplands and forest are among the last remaining undeveloped land in the most highly commercial and industrial region in America. Together these resources play host to not only millions of visitors each year, but also to a wide variety of wildlife. Mindful of its responsibility to preserve the resources under its care for future generations, the Park Service has undertaken a number of conservation efforts to ensure their survival.

For bird-lovers, Gateway offers hours of enjoyment with Breezy Point home to the most diverse group of beach-nesting birds on Long Island including the threatened Piping Plover, and the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, an important stopover on the Atlantic flyway. Almost 600,000 adults and children visit the refuge's 9,155 acres each year to view the thousands of water, land and shorebirds that stop during migration. Careful management of this wildlife area has increased the number of species with 326 recorded over the years.

Besides its population of birds, Gateway is home to small mammals, reptiles, amphibians and butterflies including the migrating monarch which alights each year at Staten Island's Great Kills Park as well as other areas in the park.

Plant life is also abundant at Gateway from beach grass and seaside goldenrod which adorn the dunes, to fast growing trees such as white poplar, cherry, willow and a variety of evergreens in upland areas. At Sandy Hook visitors will find an ecological wonder—one of the last undisturbed holly forests in America.

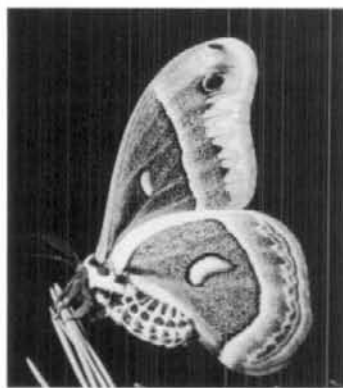
Gateway's Future

Moving into the last decade of the twentieth century, Gateway finds itself in an era of immense promise and challenge. Anticipated refurbishment and development of major areas will soon expand the recreational, cultural and educational opportunities for the millions of people the park serves. At the same time, great care must be taken to preserve the natural treasures which are at Gateway's core.

It has been said that all parks, wherever they are, have a common denominator—the ability to renew something deep within every person who visits. For Gateway's constituents, it's the chance to rediscover the joys of nature's diverse playgrounds in the shadow of a city skyline.

The park's diverse habitats host a variety of wildlife including a solitary tern, at right. Conservation programs which protect nesting areas have helped increase the park's bird species to more than 300. Other wildlife at Gateway: small mammals, amphibians, reptiles and colorful insects like the cecropia moth.



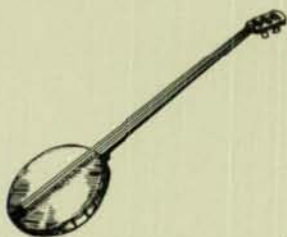
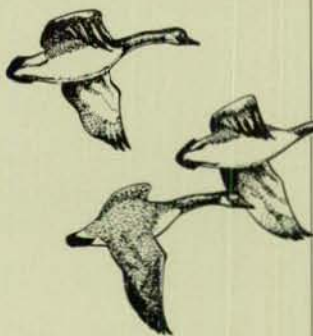


Park Highlights

Trail Adventures For thousands of city residents, Gateway offers an extensive network of trails. Bikers and joggers will delight in the miles of paved roadways and paths at Sandy Hook, Breezy Point, Floyd Bennett and Miller Fields, and Great Kills Park. Elsewhere, self-guided walks off the beaten path lure nature lovers to the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Sandy Hook and Breezy Point. Also at Jamaica Bay, trails for horseback riding.

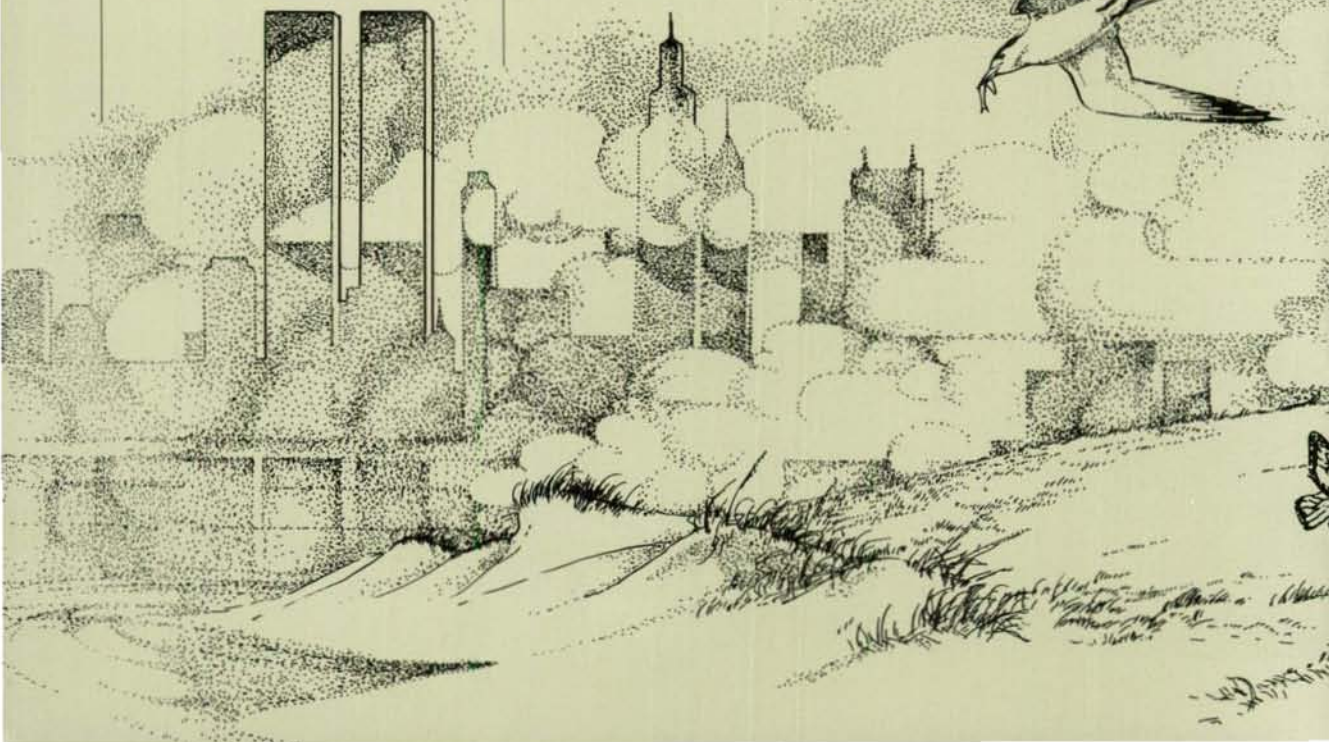
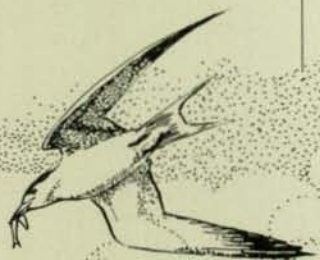
Play Ball! Within the park's boundaries are fields for baseball, soccer and football. Enthusiasts will find excellent league ball at Miller Field and an annual rugby tournament at Breezy Point. Throughout the park there are also areas for casual pickup games. At Floyd Bennett Field, a concession offers public tennis courts and a golf driving range. For information and reservation of playing times contact individual units.

Special Events Each year, Gateway hosts a number of special events: concerts, festivals, fairs and other people-oriented activities. Annual favorites include the City Gardeners' Harvest Fair at Floyd Bennett Field, summer concerts at Canarsie Pier and a model airplane show at Great Kills Park in Staten Island.



Birders' Paradise Located near Kennedy Airport, Gateway's Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge is one of the most important urban wildlife refuges in the northeastern United States. Encompassing 9,155 acres, it comprises diverse habitats: salt-marsh, upland field and woods, several fresh and brackish ponds and an open expanse of bay and islands—all located within the limits of New York City. Situated on the Atlantic flyway, the refuge is nationally and internationally renowned as a prime birding spot where thousands of water, land and shore birds stop during migration. More than 326 species have been recorded here during the last twenty-five years.

Ranger Programs Park Service Rangers offer a variety of interesting programs throughout the year: guided walks, environmental education, tours of historic sites, seasonal events. A calendar of these programs is available at all unit headquarters. Activities include astronomy classes at Great Kills Park, moonlight walks at Sandy Hook and bird watching at the Refuge. Call individual units for more information.





Visitor Information and Regulations

The uniformed park employees can answer any questions that you may have concerning regulations or other matters. Look for them, they are there to help you.

1. In each Gateway unit there is at least one location with toilet facilities for the handicapped. Because facilities are limited, it is best to discuss any visit by a handicapped person with Gateway personnel in advance. 2. Parking is available throughout the park. 3. Do not bring glass containers onto the beach. 4. Do not walk on sand dunes, for they are easily destroyed. 5. Lifeguards are at designated beaches from Memorial Day through Labor Day. For your safety, swim only at these protected areas. 6. Fires are prohibited except by permit or in designated areas, and then are allowed only in fireplace grates. Dispose of burning charcoal by soaking it thoroughly with water. 7. Dogs, except seeing-eye dogs, are prohibited on the beach. Elsewhere all pets must be leashed or kept under restraint. 8. Park only in designated areas and on paved surfaces. 9. Areas of the park are given over to nesting birds which are on the endangered species list. Please stay away from marked nesting areas. Violators are subject to a \$500 fine or six months in prison or both. 10. Motorcycles must stay on park roads. They are not permitted on oversand routes in the park. 11. Poison ivy is abundant throughout the park, especially at Sandy Hook. Remember the adage: "Leaflets three, let it be." 12. Do not litter; use trash cans. 13. No fishing license is required for saltwater fishing, but state game and fish laws that apply to size and number of fish must be complied with.

Numbers to Call

Information about the park or its units is available by contacting:

- Superintendent, Breezy Point/Jamaica Bay Unit, Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn, New York 11234 (718) 338-3706
- Superintendent, Staten Island, 26 Miller Field, Staten Island, New York 10306 (718) 351-8700
- Superintendent, Sandy Hook, P.O. Box 530, Fort Hancock, New Jersey 07732 (908) 872-0115
- Public Affairs Office, Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn, New York 11234 (718) 338-3687-8

Gateway National Recreation Area

Gateway National Recreation Area is administered by the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior.

Manuel Lujan, Jr., Secretary of the Interior
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