



Visitor Programs and Events

Spring 2015

New York – *Listings for Brooklyn & Queens*

The National Park Service Centennial

The concept of national parks originated in the United States, and the first national park was Yellowstone, created by Ulysses S. Grant in 1872. The National Park Service (NPS) as a federal agency was created by an act of Congress in 1916, so the launch leading up to the century mark begins. The Centennial provides an opportunity to reintroduce the National Park Service to all Americans and expand their understanding of who we are and how we affect their lives.

The NPS will connect with future generations by telling the stories of what we do and how it connects with visitors. Focusing on the future of the NPS and the public we serve honors the success of our past as we continue to protect and preserve for future generations. The contributions of NPS employees, parks and programs will be celebrated to ignite the passion of the NPS in order to carry our stewardship into the next generation. But you should know that the most important part of this celebration is you – our visitor– and the reason that the NPS exists.

The major Centennial Goal is to connect with and create the next generation of park visitors, supporters and advocates. One of the centennial initiatives is “Find Your Park,” so you can connect with, visit and support your local park. Note that this is “find *your* park” not find your *national* park, and, *your* park may be an historic site. We want people to connect with their local park, whether city, state, national and get involved.



Find Your Park and Tell Us

Please find your park, and tell us about it by entering the Gateway Photo Contest that will be held this summer. Last year the theme was *tell a story with a picture*, and the photos had to be of Gateway, but this year we are opening the contest to photos of all NYC area parks, whether city, state or national. So the theme for this year will be “*Tell us about your park.*”

We want pictures that show your park in context of its setting and demonstrate, people, nature, communities against the backdrop of NYC metropolitan area.

We will be issuing a special centennial edition of this guide so stay tuned, so you can find out what is happening, and how you can be a part of this celebration. Contest details will be forthcoming. We want every one of you to be a part of the NPS Centennial Celebration.

Entry III by Jake Danishevsky, taken at Jamaica Bay, was entered in the 2014 Gateway Photo Contest.

Cruise, Discover and Explore Celebrate the NPS Centennial

We offer several special programs for those who want to cruise, discover and explore.

Day of Discovery Jamaica Bay, Friday, April 10: Bird/nature walk; Talk: Tips and Techniques of Nature Photography; Cruise on the American Princess: with NPS rangers, Don Riepe, Catherine Granton; includes: coffee, donuts, box lunch, walk, talk and cruise: 7am to 2pm.

Jamaica Bay Ecology Cruise, Saturday, May 30; Twilight Cruise on Golden Sunshine, with Don Riepe, wine, cheese, fruit, snacks. 3-6pm

Kayak/Camping Excursion: May 30, 11am to May 31, 4:30pm. Paddle from Floyd Bennett Field to Fort Wadsworth for an overnight camp out, limited space for experienced paddlers. *Reservations required for these programs; fees for Day of Discovery and Twilight Cruise. Please see full information below in listings.*

Programs March

Woodcock Watch

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge –
Queens

Thursday, March 5

6PM-8PM

Wait and watch in the dusk for the American woodcocks and their amazing flying tricks. These birds, also known as timberdoodles, mudbats, or bogsuckers, put on a spring show that is not to be missed! Program will begin with a brief indoor presentation. Bring a flashlight. Distance: ♥ 2 miles. Bus: Q52, Q53.

Starting Your Spring Garden

Floyd Bennett Field – **Brooklyn**
Ryan Visitor Center

Sunday, March 8, 2PM

Make the most of your garden this year. There are so many things to grow long before you plant your tomatoes! Growing tips for lettuce, greens, onions, potatoes, cole crops, and so much more. 718-338-3799.

Made for the Shade

Floyd Bennett Field – **Brooklyn**
Ryan Visitor Center

Sunday, March 15, 2PM

You can have a beautiful garden regardless of how much sun you receive. Learn about the many annual and perennial varieties that will shine for you where the sun doesn't. 718-338-3799.

Spring Peepers

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge –
Queens

Saturday, March 21

6PM-7:30PM

Celebrate the first full day of spring with the spring peeper chorus. Join a ranger to discover these tiny but fascinating tree frogs on a stroll to Big John's Pond. Please wear sturdy shoes and dress for the weather. Bring a flashlight. Distance: ♥2 miles. Bus: Q52, Q53.

A Springtime Hike at

Breezy Point– **Queens**

Meet at Fort Tilden, Bldg 1 and
carpool to Breezy Point

Sunday, March 22, 2015

10:00-12:30 PM

Carpool in a caravan led by Mickey Maxwell Cohen of the American Littoral Society to the little known western of the Rockaway Peninsula. Highlights will include dune foliage, shore birds and a surprising assortment of rocks and minerals used in the construction of the Breezy Point Jetty. Binoculars and a magnifying glass will be helpful. This is an American Littoral Society /NPS Partnership Program. Subway & bus: Take the #2 or #5 train to Flatbush Ave. / Brooklyn College and then the Q-35 bus past Floyd Bennett Field and just over the Gil Hodges Memorial Bridge. Ask driver to let you off at Ft. Tilden. By car: From exit 11s on the belt parkway, head south and over the Marine Pky. Bridge. Stay on right and take the right ramp toward Breezy Point. Make a quick left into fort at the first light. Go to end and park by Bldg One or at the nearby Post Chapel. (♥2 miles)

Tips for a More Productive Garden

Floyd Bennett Field – **Brooklyn**
Ryan Visitor Center

Sunday, March 22, 2PM

Make the most of your limited space. Ideas to help you improve yields and extend your season by intercropping, succession planting, wide rows, cold frames, raised beds and more. 718-338-3799.

Amelia Earhart

Floyd Bennett Field – **Brooklyn**
Ryan Visitor Center

Thursday, March 26, 2PM

Children, ages 4 to 7, help celebrate Women's History Month by visiting the Ryan Visitor Center Golden Age Discovery Room for a story about pioneering aviator Amelia Earhart.

What's With The ♥?

Our hikes, and paddles are great ways to get your heart going. Just look for the ♥ next to the program listing for programs that require walks of a mile or more, or moderate exertion.

Star Gazing

Floyd Bennett Field –
Brooklyn

Community Garden

Friday, March 27, 8PM-10PM

Come gaze at the wonders of the night sky over Floyd Bennett Field with the Amateur Astronomers Association. Weather permitting; clear or partly clear skies only. Telescopes will be provided.

Early Spring Migrants

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge -
Queens

Saturday, March 28

10AM-1PM

Come look for ospreys, egrets, laughing gulls, oystercatchers and many other spring birds returning to Jamaica Bay. Easy hike to the East and West Ponds as well as upland trails. This is a NYC Audubon / American Littoral Society/ Gateway NRA partnership program led by naturalist Don Riepe. To reserve, call (718) 474-0896; email: donriep@gmail.com (♥2 miles)

Sizzling Summer Crops

Floyd Bennett Field –
Brooklyn

Ryan Visitor Center

Saturday, March 28, 2PM

Learn how to grow summer's favorite vegetables from our award-winning gardener: tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, beans, and much more! 718-338-3799.

To receive this program guide and notifications of special events, via email send a message to Charles.Markis@nps.gov with program guide in subject line.

The Big Floyd Bennett Field Hike

Floyd Bennett Field, [Brooklyn](#)
Ryan Visitors Center

Sunday, March 29, 10AM– 2PM

Join a National Park Service Ranger for a brisk 3.5 mile hike across the runways, forests, fields and shoreline of Floyd Bennett Field's North side. Have lunch at the Ryan Visitors Center and then embark on the 3 mile afternoon leg of the hike, to the South side of Floyd Bennett Field.

Reservations are required for either hike. Dress for the weather, wear good walking shoes and bring water and a snack or lunch. ♥ 3.5 miles.

APRIL

**Golden Age Discovery Zone
Floyd Bennett Field – [Brooklyn](#)
Ryan Visitor Center**

Thursday, April 9, 1PM-2PM

Floyd Bennett Field was home to New York City's first municipal airport. Join us for a story about airports at New York City's first airport in the Golden Age Discovery Room at the Ryan Visitor Center.

Centennial Jamaica Bay Day of Discovery: Birding Walk, Photography Talk and Nature Cruise

**Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
and Riis Landing – [Queens](#)**

Friday, April 10, 7AM-2PM

Join us for a Day of Discovery in NYC's Jamaica Bay, during the spring bird migration. Jamaica Bay is on the Atlantic Flyway and there are more than 335 bird species that have been seen here. The day begins with refreshments before participants embark on a birding and nature walk at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. This is followed by a morning talk on nature photography by naturalist Don Riepe. Then carpool to Riis Landing to board the American Princess for lunch and a nature cruise. The fee for the Day of Discovery is \$98/person. To reserve, call (718) 474-0896; e-mail: donriepe@gmail.com ♥1mile.

Tell a Story with a Picture: Photography Forum Part I

**Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge –
[Queens](#)**

Saturday, April 11, 10AM-12PM

This is a two-part workshop that will analyze pictures submitted by group members. This presumes a knowledge of F-stops, shutter speeds, lenses, and photo mechanics. We will concentrate on telling a story with images and the development of the eye of a photo journalist. The program begins with an analysis of a picture and proceeds with examination of images and a discussion of their content. The group is then tasked with taking pictures for the next session, which will take place the following week.

Tell a Story with a Picture: Photography Forum Part II

**Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge –
[Queens](#)**

Saturday, April 18, 10AM-12PM

This is a two-part workshop that will analyze pictures submitted by group members. During this second week, participants will return with three images to share with the group for review and discussion. If there is interest, group may be able to have succeeding ongoing sessions. Led by Charles Markis, Gateway Program Guide and publications editor.

Fort Tilden Historic Walking Tour

**Building 1 at Fort Tilden –
[Queens](#)**

Saturday, April 18, 10AM-12PM

Join a park ranger for a walking tour of fascinating historic Fort Tilden. Learn about its role in 20th century coastal and air defense. ♥ 2 miles.

**Hike the Trails of the
North Forty Natural Area
Floyd Bennett Field– [Brooklyn](#)
Ryan Visitors Center
Sunday, April 19, 2015
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

Join American Littoral Society naturalist Mickey Maxwell Cohen and discover the birds, wildflowers, and spring foliage in this developing maritime woodland. Participants will carpool from the Ryan Visitors' Center to the North Forty trailhead at Floyd Bennett Field. Insect repellent, binoculars, and a magnifying glass will be helpful. This is an American Littoral Society/NPS Partnership Program. Subway: IRT #2 to Flatbush Ave. Q35 bus south to Floyd Bennett Field, last stop before the Gil Hodges Memorial (Marine Pky.) Bridge. Car: Belt Pky. to Exit 11S. Take Flatbush Ave. south to park. Bus: B41 to Nostrand Ave. then Q35 to the park entrance. Proceed to the Ryan Visitor Center to meet the group. ♥ 2 miles.

Exhibit Opening : Wildlife in an Urban National Park

**Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge–
[Queens](#)**

Sunday, April 19, 2-4PM

Please join us for the opening of this exhibit by Don Riepe, former park ranger, now with the Audubon and American Littoral Societies, who has been photographing nature in an urban setting for many years.

Star Gazing

**Floyd Bennett Field –
[Brooklyn](#)**

Community Garden

Friday, April 24, 8PM-10PM

Come gaze at the wonders of the nights sky over Floyd Bennett Field with the Amateur Astronomers Association. Weather permitting; clear or partly clear skies only. Telescopes will be provided.

We are repeating the Jamaica Bay by Land, Sea and Air Family Fun Day on Sunday, June 14, we did in 2012, at the Ryan Visitor Center, Floyd Bennett Field. Save the date!

Junior Ranger Day

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge –

Saturday, April 25 **Queens**

10AM-4:30PM

Floyd Bennett Field - **Brooklyn**

10AM-4:30PM-

Family fun for kids: Come to the visitor centers at both Floyd Bennett and the Refuge for Junior Ranger Activities all day, have fun and earn a Junior Ranger Badge!

Earth Day Cleanup

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge–

Queens

Sunday, April 26, 10am-1pm

Meet at the refuge visitor center and then car pool to selected areas around the bay. Celebrate Earth Day by removing marine debris from the bay and learn about the history, wildlife and ecology of Jamaica Bay.

Bring gloves, boots and lunch. This is an American Littoral Society/Gateway NRA partnership program. For more info and reservations call (718) 474-0896;

email: donriepe@gmail.com.

The Prepared Paddler

Floyd Bennett Field, **Brooklyn**

Ryan Visitors Center

Monday, April 27

6:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Interested in going paddling in Jamaica Bay? Get an overview of paddling best practices. Learn about the skills and equipment you will need, so you can plan your next trip. Space is limited; call 718/338 3799 to make a reservation.

MAY

Celebrate Beach Plums at Plumb Beach

Plumb Beach Round House–

Brooklyn

Sunday, May 3, 2015

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Enjoy the profusion of Beach Plum blossoms while learning about the ever-changing Plumb Beach with American Littoral Society Naturalist, Mickey Maxwell Cohen.

Learn about heroic plans to halt the most severe ongoing beach erosion in our area. Binoculars and a magnifying glass will be helpful. This is a Gateway N.R.A. / American Littoral Society Partnership Program. Car: Eastbound on the Belt (Shore) Pky. Entrance to Plumb Beach parking is from the eastbound side, just east of Knapp Street exit. Careful, it's very easy to miss.

Can you Canoe?

Floyd Bennett Field, **Brooklyn**

Gateway Marina

Sunday, May 17, 9-11AM

Enjoy this beginner's paddle along Dead Horse Bay with a National Park Service Ranger. Open to the public, ages 6 and up with an adult. Dress to get wet; bring sunscreen, a snack and water. Canoes, personal floatation devices, paddles and instruction will be provided. Reservations are required; call 718 338 3799 for more information. ♥ one mile.

On the Home Front – Women of WWII

Floyd Bennett Field – **Brooklyn**

Ryan Visitor Center

Thursday, May 21, 1PM-2PM

Military women stepped up to win the war on the home front, working in all fields, freeing men to fight the war. Join us for a lecture and power point program about the women who took part in the war effort.

Star Gazing

Floyd Bennett Field – **Brooklyn**

Community Garden

Friday, May 22, 8PM-10PM

Come gaze at the wonders of the night sky over Floyd Bennett Field with the Amateur Astronomers Association. Weather permitting; clear or partly clear skies only. Telescopes will be provided.

The ♥ symbol denotes a hike or walk of moderate activity. Enjoy your park as you improve your health!

Beach Campfire

Jacob Riis Park– **Queens**

Bay 14 (Boardwalk and Beach 169th St.)

Friday, May 22, 7PM-10PM

Kick off the traditional beginning of the summer season and enjoy the evening on the beach at our annual start-of-summer campfire. Bring a blanket or chair to sit on, a musical instrument if you play one, and fixing to make s'mores or roast marshmallows.

Horseshoe Crab and Shorebird Hike

Jamaica Bay Wildlife

Refuge– **Queens**

Saturday, May 23rd

11am-2pm.

Meet 11am at the refuge visitor center then car pool to the American Ballfield Beach in Broad Channel. Observe the annual mating ritual of the horseshoe crab and see shorebird species that come to feed on the eggs. Kids welcome. This is an NPS / American Littoral Society/ NYC Audubon partnership program. ♥ one mile. To reserve, call (718) 474-0896; email: donriepe@gmail.com.

Floyd Bennett Field

84th Anniversary

Floyd Bennett Field –

Brooklyn

Ryan Visitor Center

Saturday, May 23

10AM-5PM

Help us celebrate the anniversary of Floyd Bennett Field's opening as New York's first municipal airport, the field's important role in aviation history, and its function as a naval air station.

Watch for the announcement of the National Park Service Centennial to occur in April in our special edition.

Camp Gateway Walk Up and Paddle

Floyd Bennett Field, [Brooklyn](#)
Seaplane Ramp
Monday, May 25
9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Kayak tryouts for those who have never done it before. Open to the public, ages 6 and up with an adult. No reservation required. Dress to get wet; bring sunscreen, a snack and water. Kayaks, personal floatation devices, paddles and instruction will be provided. ♥ one mile.

Canarsie Walk-up and Paddle

Canarsie Pier, [Brooklyn](#)
Saturday, May 25
1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Kayak tryouts for those who have never done it before. Open to the public, ages 6 and up with an adult. No reservation required. Dress to get wet; bring sunscreen, a snack and water. Kayaks, personal floatation devices, paddles and instruction will be provided. ♥ one mile.

Centennial Kayak Camping Excursion from Field to Fort

Floyd Bennett Field, [Brooklyn](#)
Seaplane Ramp
Saturday and Sunday
May 30 and 31
11:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Adventure across the Hudson River estuary, as you join other *experienced* paddlers on a 12 mile paddle from Floyd Bennett Field to Staten Island's Fort Wadsworth. Enjoy a campfire and restful night camping in the urban outback and then paddle back to Floyd Bennett Field the next day. Space is limited; call 718/338 3799 for more information. This is for experienced paddlers, reservations required. ♥ 12 miles!

Centennial Jamaica Bay Ecology Cruise

Sheepshead Bay, Pier 2–[Brooklyn](#)
Saturday, May 30 3-6pm
Meet at Pier 2 (Emmons Avenue & Bedford Avenue) at 2:30pm to board the 100' boat, the "Golden Sunshine". Cruise the backwater marshes of Jamaica Bay and learn about the history, management, wildlife and ecology of the 13,000 acre preserve. See egrets, herons, ibis, oystercatchers and migrating shorebirds. Kids welcome. This is an NPS/American Littoral Society/NYC Audubon partnership event. The charge \$55/person and that includes wine & cheese, fruit, snacks. For info and reservations, call (718) 474-0896; email: donriepe@gmail.com

Star Gazing

Floyd Bennett Field – [Brooklyn](#)
Community Garden
Friday, June 5
8:30PM-10:30PM

Come gaze at the wonders of the night sky over Floyd Bennett Field with the Amateur Astronomers Association. Weather permitting; clear or partly clear skies only. Telescopes will be provided.

Continuing Programs

Canarsie Walk-up and Paddle

Canarsie Pier, [Brooklyn](#)
Saturdays
May 23 – August 29
1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Kayak tryouts for those who have never done it before. Open to the public, ages 6 and up with an adult. No reservation required. Dress to get wet; bring sunscreen, a snack and water. Kayaks or canoes, personal floatation devices, paddles and instruction will be provided. ♥ one mile.

Continuing Programs

Camp Gateway Walk Up and Paddle

Floyd Bennett Field,
[Brooklyn](#)
Seaplane Ramp
Saturdays and Sundays
May 23 – August 30
9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Kayak tryouts for those who have never done it before. Open to the public, ages 6 and up with an adult. No reservation required. Dress to get wet; bring sunscreen, a snack and water. Kayaks or canoes, personal floatation devices, paddles and instruction will be provided. ♥ one mile.

Riis Landing Walk-up and Paddle

Riis Landing, [Queens](#)
Sundays
May 24 – August 30
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Kayak tryouts for those who have never done it before. Open to the public, ages 6 and up with an adult. No reservation required. Dress to get wet; bring sunscreen, a snack and water. Kayaks or canoes, personal floatation devices, paddles and instruction will be provided. ♥ one mile.

Continuing Talks

The Golden Age of Aviation at Floyd Bennett Field

Ranger Talks
Floyd Bennett Field –
[Brooklyn](#)
Ryan Visitor Center
March 1 – May 30
Daily, 2PM-2:30PM
Ranger led interpretive talk.

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Next page