



Jamaica Bay Visitor Programs

Spring 2009

March

Plover Day

Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse

Saturday, March 7

9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Help park staff install protective fencing for threatened shorebirds.

Dress for the weather and bring work gloves. Reservations required.

Harvesting the Heavens

Floyd Bennett Field

Radio Controlled Flying Field

Friday, March 13

8 p.m. – 10 p.m.

Join the Amateur Astronomers

Association to see the bounty of the evening sky. Telescopes provided.

Dress warmly.

Fort Tilden Birds

Fort Tilden

Building 1

Saturday, March 14

9 a.m. – noon

Enjoy birding during the winter to spring transition with naturalist, Ron Bourque. Look for hardy resident birds as well as waterfowl, sea birds and other spring migrants. Bring binoculars. Reservations required.

Bathhouse Architecture

Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse

Saturday, March 14

2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Join a park ranger to discover the architectural features of the Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse. This iconic structure is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Reservations required.

Visit Gateway NRA on the web at:
www.nps.gov/gate



Black throated blue warbler

Jamaica Bay's natural habitats brim with migrant birds during springtime. Join a park bird watching program this season to learn about these beautiful long distance flyers.

Plover Day

Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse

Sunday, March 15

9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Help park staff install protective fencing for threatened shorebirds.

Dress for the weather and bring work gloves. Reservations required.

Tour the Tip at Breezy

Fort Tilden

Building 1

Saturday, March 21

10 a.m. – noon

American Littoral Society naturalist Mickey Maxwell Cohen leads this three-mile nature walk around the wild, western tip of the Rockaway Peninsula. Participants will carpool to the site from Fort Tilden. Binoculars and magnifying glass will be helpful. Reservations required.

Step into Spring

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, March 21

2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Explore the West Pond Trail with a park ranger on the first full day of spring. Bring binoculars. Reservations required.

Operation Beach Sweep

Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse

Sunday, March 22

10 a.m. – noon

Assist park staff with a beach cleanup at the Breezy Point Tip. Catch a glimpse of shorebirds as they wing their way back north. Dress for the weather and bring work gloves. Reservations required.

Faces of Change

Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse

Sunday, March 22

2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Learn about the people who have helped preserve and protect Jacob Riis Park through the years. Reservations required.

Woodcock Watch

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

Sunday, March 22

7:15 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Wait and watch in the dusk for the elusive American woodcock and his elaborate courtship display. It's a spring spectacle that's not to be missed. Bring binoculars. Reservations required.

NYC Audubon

Early Spring Bird Walk

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, March 28

10 a.m. – noon

Hike around the West Pond and gardens with naturalist Don Riepe. Look for early migrating birds such as egrets, osprey and phoebes. Bring binoculars. Reservations required.

**Gateway NRA
Jamaica Bay Unit
Floyd Bennett Field
Building 69
Brooklyn, NY 11234
(718) 338 – 3338**

For Reservations:

Canarsie Pier
(718) 763 - 2202

Education Program Office
(718) 338 - 4306

Floyd Bennett Field
(718) 338 - 3799

Fort Tilden
(718) 318 - 4300

Jacob Riis Park
(718) 318 - 4300

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
(718) 318 - 4340

Plumb Beach
(718) 338 -3799

Research Learning Center –
Jamaica Bay Institute
(718) 338 - 3338 ext. 222

Visitor Program Office
(718) 338 - 3338 ext. 224

**For information on programs at
other units of Gateway NRA,
contact:**

Staten Island Unit, New York
(718) 354 - 4500

Sandy Hook Unit, New Jersey
(732) 872 - 5970

www.nps.gov/gate

**Gateway NRA
Office of Communications and
Public Affairs**
(718) 354 - 4606

Programs are subject to change
due to weather or other concerns.
Please call the park before
attending.

Explore the Shore

Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse
Sunday, March 29

11 a.m. – noon

Explore the forces shaping the beach during this hour long ranger – led program. Wear waterproof footwear. Reservations required.

April

Stargazing

Floyd Bennett Field
Radio Controlled Flying Field
Friday, April 3

8 p.m. – 10 p.m.

Observe the stars over Brooklyn. Telescopes provided. Dress warmly.

Junior Ranger

Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse
Sunday, April 5

10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Calling children of all ages! Join a ranger and explore the nature and history of Jacob Riis Park. Reservations required.

Late – riser Bird Walk

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Sunday, April 5

1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Not everyone can catch the early bird. Amble through the gardens and around part of the West Pond to see who is up at this late hour. Bring binoculars. Reservations required.

National Park Week April 18 – 26

Open Country Birds

Floyd Bennett Field
Main Entrance Ranger Station
Saturday, April 18

9 a.m. – noon

Seek out meadowlarks, northern harriers and other birds with naturalist Ron Bourque and take a listen for tree frogs too. Participants will carpool to sites on the field. Bring binoculars. Reservations required.

Fort Tilden Walking Tour

Building 1
Saturday, April 18

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Learn about the history of Fort Tilden, the Coastal Artillery

Command, and other national park sites that have a coastal defense story to tell. Reservations required.

Together Green Volunteer Day

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Sunday, April 19

11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Celebrate National Park Week and National Volunteer Week by helping to save the park's treasured natural resources. In partnership with NYC Audubon and Together Green, the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge is hosting this volunteer stewardship event. Spend a day "in the field" alongside park rangers and NYC Audubon members and help remove invasive, non-native plants from the park. Reservations required.

Operation Beach Sweep

Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse
Wednesday, April 22

9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Assist park staff with a beach cleanup at the Breezy Point Tip. See shorebirds as they wing their way back north. Dress for the weather and bring work gloves. Reservations required.

Earth Day Beach Cleanup

North Channel Bridge
Wednesday, April 22

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Help us spruce up the shoreline of this busy Jamaica Bay site. Groups are welcome. Reservations required.

NYC Audubon

Spring Migration Walk
Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Saturday, April 25

10 a.m. – noon

Learn about the mysteries of migration while observing warblers and other spring migrants with naturalist Don Riepe. Bring binoculars. Reservations required.

Graffiti: Going, Going, Gone!

Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse
Saturday, April 25

11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Volunteer during National Volunteer Week and help to remove graffiti at Jacob Riis Park and Fort Tilden. Reservations required.

Low Tide at Dead Horse Bay

Floyd Bennett Field
Main Entrance Ranger Station
Saturday, April 25
noon – 2 p.m.

American Littoral Society naturalist Mickey Maxwell Cohen leads this discovery of little known woodlands, coastal thickets, and a treasure – laden beach. Bring binoculars. Reservations required.

Junior Ranger

Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse
Saturday, April 25
2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Calling children of all ages! Join a ranger and explore the unique nature and history of Jacob Riis Park. Reservations required.

Planting with Sprouts

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Sunday, April 26
1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Young sprouts (4 years and up), with their families, will wrap up the National Park Week celebration during this volunteer planting project and exploration of plant parts from roots to blooms. Reservations required.

May

Flight of the NC – 4

Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse
Friday, May 8
1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Join a park ranger for a talk on the 90th anniversary of the first transatlantic flight by the NC – 4 from the Rockaway Naval Air Station, the site of present day Jacob Riis Park.

May 9 is International Migratory Bird Day!

Migration's On!

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Saturday, May 9
9 a.m. – noon

Spring migration brings in warblers, orioles, swallows, and red – winged blackbirds, too. Explore this May abundance with naturalist Ron Bourque. Bring binoculars. Reservations required.

Beach Birds

Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse
Saturday, May 9
1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Join this birding tour of Jacob Riis Park beach and search for threatened shorebirds. Bring binoculars. Reservations required.

Beach Plums at Plumb Beach

Plumb Beach Round House
Sunday, May 10
9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

May means hundreds of native beach plums are in glorious bloom at Plumb Beach. Examine the flowering shrubs and the maritime habitats of Plumb Beach with American Littoral Society naturalist Mickey Maxwell Cohen. Bring binoculars, magnifying glass, and insect protection. Reservations required.

Mother's Day Flowers and Birds

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Sunday, May 10
10 a.m. – noon

Birds are bountiful and buds are blooming. Look for beautiful birds and spring blossoms with a park ranger. Bring binoculars. Reservations required.

Harvesting the Heavens

Floyd Bennett Field
Radio Controlled Flying Field
Friday, May 15
8 p.m. – 10 p.m.

Join the Amateur Astronomers Association to see the bounty of the spring night sky. Telescopes will be provided. Dress warmly.

Morning Walk with a Ranger

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Saturday, May 16
10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Explore the nature of the refuge with a park ranger. Bring binoculars. Reservations required.



Birds in Culture

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Sunday, May 17
10 a.m. – noon

Celebrate Birds in Culture – the theme of this year's International Migratory Bird Day. Stroll through the gardens and seek out colorful migrant birds, many of which travel long international distances. Bring binoculars. Reservations required.

Beach Campfire

Jacob Riis Park
Bay 14 (Beach 169 St.)
Friday, May 22
7 p.m. – 10 p.m.

Join us for a traditional National Park Service campfire in a beautiful beach setting. A sing-along will follow. Bring a beach chair or blanket, and marshmallows! Reservations required.

Junior Ranger

Jacob Riis Park Bathhouse
Saturday, May 23
2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Calling children of all ages! Join a park ranger and explore the unique nature and history of Jacob Riis Park. Reservations required.

High Time for Horseshoe Crabs

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Sunday, May 24
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

It's May's new moon and the tides are right for the beginning of horseshoe crab mating season. Join a park ranger on this early evening walk to see these ancient and interesting sea creatures. Wear waterproof boots. Reservations required.

Jamaica Bay Sunset Cruise

Sheepshead Bay
Saturday, May 30
5 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Enjoy a 3-hour boat tour of Jamaica Bay with the American Littoral Society. Learn about the history, ecology and wildlife of the bay. See nesting peregrine falcons, osprey, egrets, and more. Cost: \$45 includes narrated tour and onboard snacks. For information and reservations call (718) 318 – 9344.

Continuing Programs

Advanced Saltwater Fly Tying Workshop

Floyd Bennett Field
Building 272

Wednesdays, March 25 – April 22
7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Join expert fishermen for 5 workshops to cover the art of saltwater fly tying. There is a \$25 fee. Reservations required. Space is limited. Call (718) 338 – 3799 for more information.

Fly Casting Workshop

Floyd Bennett Field
Quarters “A” Field

Sundays, May 17 – June 14
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Join expert fishermen for 5 workshops to cover the art of saltwater fly casting. There is a \$50 fee. Reservations required. Space is limited. Call (718) 338 – 3799 for more information.

P.A.R.C.S. Model Aircraft

Floyd Bennett Field
Radio Controlled Flying Field

Open Daily (Weather Permitting)

Join the Pennsylvania Avenue Radio Control Society at their “mini-airport in an airport.”

Historic Aircraft Restoration Project

Floyd Bennett Field
Hangar B

Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Explore our collection of vintage aircraft and talk with the skilled park volunteers who are restoring them to their former glory.



Floyd Bennett Field’s military and aviation history comes alive in Hangar B. Visitors are welcome every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Floyd Bennett Gardens Association

FBGA offers community gardens and educational workshops to the public at Floyd Bennett Field. FBGA is a not-for-profit volunteer membership organization in partnership with the National Park Service. For more information call the FBGA: (718) 338 – 4255.

Note: Due to the restoration of the Ryan Visitor Center the FBGA schedule is subject to change. Please call (718) 338 – 3799, check www.fbga.net, or the bulletin board at the Community Garden to confirm and for specific program locations.

Cool Weather Crops

Saturday, March 14

Ryan Visitor Center

2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Start your garden early, and make the most of the growing season. Learn all you need to know to grow onions, carrots, beets, lettuce, greens, potatoes, and so much more.

Growing the Best Summer Vegetables

Saturday, March 21

Ryan Visitor Center

2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Get tips and techniques for a successful garden season. This class will cover tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, squash and more.

New Gardener Workshop

Saturday, April 4

Location to be announced

2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

New to gardening? Come learn about soil, plants, watering, and community gardening, and bring your questions too.

Organic Gardening 101

Saturday, April 18

Location to be announced

2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Do organic vegetables really taste better? Organic gardening is good for you and the environment. Learn what you need to know to go organic!

Annuals and Perennials

Saturday, April 25

Location to be announced

2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Learn about local favorites that do well in sun and shade and the technique for dividing perennials.

What’s Eating Your Plants?

Saturday, May 9

Location to be announced

2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Find out which bugs are attacking your plants, how to identify them and their damage, and how to eliminate insects from your garden.

Lasagna Gardening

Community Garden Gazebo

Saturday, May 16

2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Make double duty out of your gardening bed. Is it a compost pile or a bed for gardening? It's both! Learn about this ingenious method, and grow while creating compost.

Herbal Brews

Saturday, May 30

Location to be announced

2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Grow herbs or buy fresh, but come find out how to brew herbal teas, foot soaks and hair rinses.



Rockaway Artists Alliance

The Rockaway Artists Alliance galleries at Fort Tilden in Studios 6 and 7 are open to the public on Saturdays from noon to 5 p.m., and on Sundays 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. All exhibitions are free of charge. For more information, call RAA at (718)474-0861, or visit their website at:
www.rockawayartistalliance.com.

Geoff's Painting Class Show

Studio 6
March 8 – March 29

Wine and Dine

Studio 6
April 18 – May 17

A Color Mix of Quilts & Artwork

Studio 7
April 18 – May 17

Open Mic Night

Studio 7
Thursdays at 7:45 p.m.
Music, poetry, vocals, performance art, etc.

Rockaway Theater Company

The Rockaway Theater Company presents a selection of musicals, comedies and dramas at Fort Tilden's historic Post Theater. For additional information, including audition dates and to purchase tickets, call (718) 850 – 2450.

The Gilleece Twins and Chris Benedict

Sunday, March 15 at 2 p.m.
Featuring great Irish Folk Music and an old fashion sing- along.

Crimes of the Heart

May 8, 9, 15, 16, 22 & 23 at 8 p.m.
May 10, 17 & 24, at 2 p.m.

Look for updates on park programs at www.nps.gov/gate.

Coming this Summer

Beginning Kayaking Canarsie Pier

This free program will provide beginning instruction on the use of kayaks, one of the greenest and healthiest ways to enjoy Jamaica Bay from the water. Kayaks, paddles and personal floatation devices will be provided. Plan on getting wet, and dress appropriately. Call for reservations, beginning on June 1: (718) 338 – 3799.



Individual Sailing Instruction Floyd Bennett Field

Ryan Visitor Center
Thursdays
6 p.m. – 8 p.m.
This program will provide beginner and intermediate sailing instruction. There will be a small fee to cover program cost. Space is limited; make reservations after June 1.

Youth Group Camping

Floyd Bennett Field
Ecology Village
Mondays through Thursdays
July 6 – August 27
Kids camp overnight in tents, prepare meals outdoors, practice teamwork and explore nature in the urban outback of Floyd Bennett Field. Call (718) 338 – 4306 for more information on leader training, fees and scheduling.

Youth Group Sailing

Floyd Bennett Field
Ryan Visitor Center
July and August
Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Youth groups develop an appreciation for the marine environment while learning the basics of sailing. Program accommodates 25 participants per day. Space is limited, reservations required.

A Message from the Superintendent

Spring is a time of renewal, especially around Gateway's Jamaica Bay Unit. Big changes are occurring at all of the park's sites. These changes include building restorations, new programs and partnerships, and an invigorated interest in the ecology of the bay and the preservation and protection of the treasures found in New York City's National Parks.

Recently, the park received a grant to purchase kayaks. Small boats such as canoes and kayaks have always been one of the greenest and healthiest activities in the park, and one of the finest ways to enjoy Jamaica Bay. Through our new program "Beginning Kayaking," the National Park Service hopes to introduce the benefits of nature, fresh air, and exercise to a wider audience. This program will begin this summer at Canarsie Pier, and is free of charge. In keeping with this theme, the park is also expanding the number of places around Jamaica Bay where car – top boats can be launched. A permit, valid at sites for the year, can be purchased at Floyd Bennett Field. For more information call (718) 338 - 3799, or visit the park's website for updates.

Perhaps the most exciting development is the revitalization of the William Fitts Ryan Visitor Center at Floyd Bennett Field. Since opening in 1931, over 75 years of use have taken their toll on the building. A long anticipated restoration is now underway that will bring the park's visitor center in line with the best in the national park system, while preserving the historic character of the building. The first phase will last about 18 months.

The park's staff and I look forward to welcoming you all back in the coming months, and hope that you enjoy all that your park has to offer.

Sincerely,
Pete McCarthy
Superintendent
Jamaica Bay Unit



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Gateway National Recreation Area
 Office of Communications and Public Affairs
 210 New York Avenue
 Staten Island, NY 10305

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Visitor Programs Jamaica Bay Unit Spring 2009

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

**Gateway National Recreation Area
 Jamaica Bay Unit
 New York**

**General Superintendent
 Gateway National Recreation Area**
 Barry T. Sullivan

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 Jamaica Bay Unit**
 Pete McCarthy

**Assistant Superintendent
 Jamaica Bay Unit**
 Joseph Green

**Chief of Interpretation
 Jamaica Bay Unit**
 Kathy Krause

Program Guide Production
 John Lincoln Hallowell

**United States Park Police
 24 - Hour
 Emergency Number:
 (718) 338 - 3988**

Gateway's Ryan Visitor Center Gets a \$4.8 Million Facelift



The Ryan Visitor Center in 1938, when it was the Administration and Passenger Terminal building for Floyd Bennett Field.

The National Park Service is set to begin a long – awaited phase one restoration and improvement project at the William Fitts Ryan Visitor Center at Floyd Bennett Field. The work will include the repair and restoration of interior finishes and architectural features that will bring the building back to its 1939 appearance when it served as the New York City municipal airport's passenger terminal and administration building.

Improved amenities will include new exhibits, a new bookstore, fully renovated restrooms, an elevator, and new information and permitting areas; visitors will also enjoy the comforts of a new heating and air conditioning system. A full upgrade of the building's electrical and plumbing system will also be part of this \$4.8 million restoration. The work will return the historic building to its former glory as a popular destination, while providing the park with a 21st century visitor center.

To facilitate the restoration work, on February 1, 2009 Gateway National Recreation Area closed the Ryan Center for approximately 18 months. During this time period, the ranger staff and all visitor services will transfer to the Ranger Station at the main entrance to Floyd Bennett Field. For more information on the closure, please call (718) 338 – 3799 or visit us on the web at www.nps.gov/gate.