



The Value of Small Parks

Although parks like Manassas were initially established as cultural/historic sites, recent studies have discovered that these parks contribute significantly to conservation of regional biodiversity. Manassas lands act as a refuge, a migratory and dispersal bird rest stop and a corridor for animal movements. The park provides refuge for Red-headed woodpeckers (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) and is a summer home for the migratory Ruby-throated hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*). In addition, nearly 50 butterfly and over 200 moth species have been documented within the park. Insects are crucial to the ecosystem, as a food source for birds and as pollinators. You can catch a glimpse of the large Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly (*Papilio glaucus*)-the Virginia State insect-or if you are really lucky, you can see the Bumblebee Moth (*Hemaris diffinis*) which displays an excellent example of mimicry.



Red-headed Woodpecker

Photo by Fred Walsh

Ruby-Throated Hummingbird



Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly



Bumblebee Moth

Battlefield Biodiversity

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Capital Region
Manassas National Battlefield Park



Wood Thrush
(c) Hofmann-photography.de

provinces (Mid-Atlantic Coastal Plain and Southern Appalachian Piedmont) nurture a rich native biota and offer access to more northerly and southerly species. The bird life of Northern Virginia reflects these influences. Manassas is home to year-round residents; summer residents that migrate here to find breeding habitat; winter residents that find milder conditions here before returning north to breed; transients that rest and refuel in this region during spring and fall migrations; and visitors that show up in this region irregularly-the odd bird out, so to speak.



American Kestrel

Manassas National Battlefield Park is rich with bird life, over 160 species have been sighted and well over half of those species are migrants. Some migratory Birds of Conservation Concern, such as the Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*), have been sighted here as well. Of the 18 species listed for the Piedmont in 2008 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, nine have been sighted in the park. A complete bird list is available for download on the Park's web site: www.nps.gov/mana.

Northern Virginia's moderate climate and geographic location within two physiographic



Northern Bobwhite Quail
(c) Hofmann-photography.de

In April of 2010 the National Park Service signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that outlines a collaborative and proactive approach to promote and strengthen the conservation of migratory birds. The Natural Resource Division in Manassas has, through the planting of native warm season grasslands and the establishment of bird boxes for species of concern such as the American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), strived to increase habitat for migratory birds. In addition, with the release of Northern Bobwhite Quail (*Colinus virginianus*) to augment the current populations of Quail in the park, we hope to also help a non-migratory species of concern.

Stone Bridge Loop Trail 1.3 miles



Dutchman's Breeches



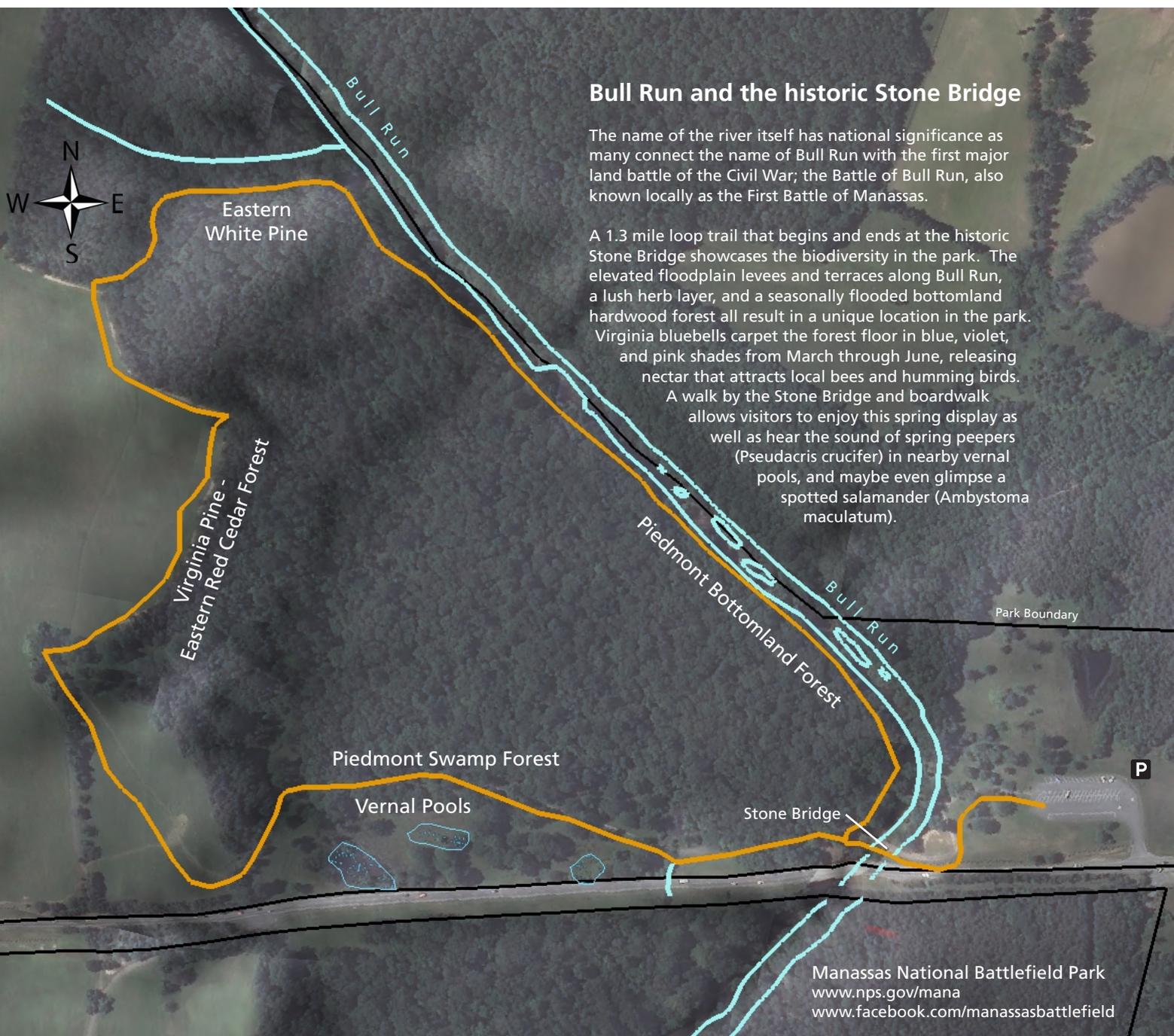
Spotted Salamander



Virginia Bluebell



Spring Peeper
Photo by John White



Bull Run and the historic Stone Bridge

The name of the river itself has national significance as many connect the name of Bull Run with the first major land battle of the Civil War; the Battle of Bull Run, also known locally as the First Battle of Manassas.

A 1.3 mile loop trail that begins and ends at the historic Stone Bridge showcases the biodiversity in the park. The elevated floodplain levees and terraces along Bull Run, a lush herb layer, and a seasonally flooded bottomland hardwood forest all result in a unique location in the park. Virginia bluebells carpet the forest floor in blue, violet, and pink shades from March through June, releasing nectar that attracts local bees and humming birds. A walk by the Stone Bridge and boardwalk allows visitors to enjoy this spring display as well as hear the sound of spring peepers (*Pseudacris crucifer*) in nearby vernal pools, and maybe even glimpse a spotted salamander (*Ambystoma maculatum*).

Manassas National Battlefield Park
www.nps.gov/mana
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