

## Muskrat Cove



Muskrat Cove is a hidden sliver of woodland named for a population of muskrats inhabiting the forested streambanks in the area. This little known, picturesque oasis has well-tended pathways and careful plantings thanks to local residents. Just outside of the Metro-North Woodlawn parking area, a paved path heads into the cove. The park is accessible through an opening in the guardrail. On your right, a row of young, green ash trees commemorate the victims of September 11, 2001. The path winds under the Bronx River Parkway to reach forested streambanks and, finally, at the northern city limits, the bridge at Nereid Ave.

Returning from Nereid Bridge, one can follow a path to the right, which leads over the Parkway to Bronx Blvd. (See “Inside Track” for details.) Look on the streambanks for the presence of bollards used to tie up barges that held back the river while it was straightened during the modernization of the parkway.

Local groups are continuously working to beautify the area and restore its ecological integrity by removing graffiti, cleaning the area of debris, eradicating invasive plants, and planting hundreds of native trees and shrubs to reestablish the streambanks.

At this writing, the Muskrat Cove site, nestled between the Bronx River Parkway and the Metro-North Railroad, may be difficult to find due to poor signage, and the pathway has not been updated/paved for safe jogging, cycling, wheelchairs and roller blades. This will soon improve through a \$1 million capital project slated for 2007. Construction will last about a year.

Water access is limited due to sloping man-made boulders and steep eroding soils. Debris build-up occurs as trees and branches fall into the river.

### AMENITIES

*Restrooms:* At Woodlawn Cemetery entrance, located one short block and two crossings at traffic lights on 233<sup>rd</sup> St. and Webster Ave. Check with security guard at the cemetery.

*Playgrounds & Benches:* There are no benches or playgrounds at this site.

*Food:* Restaurant/Deli at 238th St. via Webster Ave/ Bronx River Rd. Convenience store at gas station on Bronx Blvd. off 233<sup>rd</sup> St. 1½ blocks west. More food and services along White Plains Rd. at E. 233<sup>rd</sup> St.

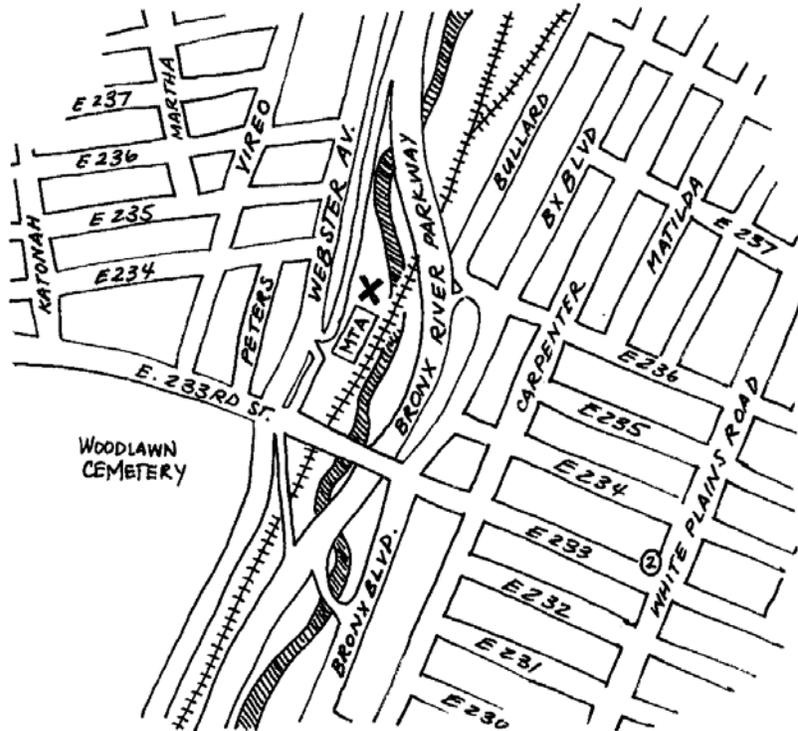
*Parking:* Street parking in the area limited. Pay parking at Metro-North station. Free on weekends and holidays.

### NOTED FLORA AND FAUNA

*Cabbage white butterfly, monarch butterfly, muskrat, woodchuck, common merganser, jewelweed, white pine, little brown bat.*

## DRIVING DIRECTIONS

*Driving (from the South):* Bronx River Pkwy. to East 233<sup>rd</sup> St. exit. Turn right onto Bronx Blvd. and right again onto 233<sup>rd</sup> St. Cross the river, and turn right onto Webster Ave. Go one short block to the Metro-North entrance. Free parking on weekends and holidays at Woodlawn Metro-North train station parking lot. See below to get to the cove entrance.



## PUBLIC TRANSIT

*Subway:* **2** Train to 233<sup>rd</sup> St. at White Plains Rd. Transfer to the **Bx31**, or walk west on 233<sup>rd</sup> St. to Webster Ave. Continue below.

*Bus:* **Bx31, Bx16** to E. 233<sup>rd</sup> St. and Webster Ave.

*OR Bx41* to White Plains Rd. and E. 233<sup>rd</sup> St. Transfer to the **Bx31**, or walk west on 233<sup>rd</sup> to Webster Ave. Continue below.

*Metro-North:* **Harlem Line** to Woodlawn Station. Walk around to Webster Ave. Continue below.

*Continue from above; From Webster Avenue and 233<sup>rd</sup> St:* Entrance to park is just north of E. 233<sup>rd</sup> St. on Webster Ave. Walk toward the Woodlawn Metro-North station, cross the Bronx River Pkwy. entrance ramp, and note the paved path at the entrance to your left.



## Inside Track

- GREENWAY PLAN:
  - Plans for the site include a new entry plaza and seating area, and a widened, repaved path on the west side of the river. Benches will be available at a few points along the paved path that will lead to a scenic pedestrian bridge north of Nereid Avenue. Interpretive trail signage is planned for this area.
  - When reconstruction is complete, there will be a 1.5 mile loop trail that includes the paved path on the west bank and a soft trail on the east bank that runs south from the pedestrian bridge to a sidewalk along the Bronx River Parkway and then back to the paved path on the west bank.
  - See “Bronx River Greenway Plan” available at [www.bronxriver.org/plans](http://www.bronxriver.org/plans) for the latest development information, or call 718-430-4665.
- During fair weather, homeless and the items they have collected may occupy the area under the Nereid Bridge.
- Volunteers have cultivated a flower and vegetable garden as part of their community ownership efforts.
- Some people walk large dogs off the leash.
- Hornets, wasps, bees, and other stinging insects spotted at many of the sites. Educators should ensure allergic students carry “epi-pens” or other bee-sting kits.
- Groups interested in participating in restoration and clean-up work may contact the Bronx River Alliance at 718-430-4665.

## SUITABLE ACTIVITIES

- Walking Tour.
- Tree and Plant ID.
- Birding and looking for animals.
- Clean up and restoration work with New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, the Bronx River Conservation Crew, Josie Burke, and other community volunteers.
- Water quality monitoring.
- Mapping, drawing, art-related activities.
- Quiet listening.
- Biking. (NOTE: as of Summer 2006, the pathways are only suitable for bikes with thick, sturdy tires or confident cyclists on other bikes.)