

## Bronx River Forest, Burke Bridge



The Bronx River Forest is a remnant of the magnificent red maple-hardwood floodplain forest that once blanketed the Bronx River Valley. Over the years, the river and forest have served as a major bird migration route and provided homes for a diversity of wildlife, including heron, muskrat, beaver and turtles. A network of wooded pathways throughout the forest from Gun Hill Rd. to Kazimiroff Blvd. serves as a peaceful refuge.

The New York City Department of Parks & Recreation's Natural Resources Group (NRG) have installed boardwalks in the area which will keep the newly restored forest floodplain landscape accessible to nature seekers and athletes, while preserving it for plants and wildlife by removing use impact.

Visitors can tour part or all the loop trail which starts just south of Burke Bridge and runs along the east and west banks of the river. Walking the full loop takes between 30 and 45 minutes. The Alliance is currently designing interpretive trail signage for the floodplain trail, and an NRG sign explaining the restoration work has already been installed on the northwest side of Burke Bridge.

Water sampling may be taken at the riverbank just below Burke Bridge. Water samples may also be taken by using bucket or airless collector on ~20' of rope from the crest of the bridge. A remarkable diversity of trees and wildlife thrive in the forest. Tree identification, bird viewing and other flora/fauna and watershed lessons are a good fit for this site.

### AMENITIES

*Restrooms:* Men and women's restrooms located at both the French Charley Playground near Allerton Ballfields at the Kazimiroff Blvd. entrance and at the Rosewood Playground, northeast of Burke Bridge.

*Playgrounds & Benches:* Plenty of benches in managed land area; a few at Burke Bridge. French Charley Playground is clean with improved equipment. Rosewood Playground (also improved) is located just north of the Burke Ave. stairs leading into the park.

*Food:* Food and services along Burke Ave., Allerton Ave., and White Plains Rd.

*Parking:* Street parking near French Charley Playground, up the stairs to Webster Ave. and 204<sup>th</sup> St. One may also park along Bronx Park East near the Burke Ave. stairs into the park.

### NOTED FLORA AND FAUNA

*Robin, starling, chipmunk, praying mantis, red winged blackbird, red maple, river birch, red tailed hawk, pokeweed, mica cap.*

## DRIVING DIRECTIONS

*Driving north or south:* Bronx River Pkwy. to Allerton Ave. exit. If entering at French Charley/Allerton Ballfields, use Mosholu Pkwy. exit.

*To Burke Ave. entrance:* Turn east onto Allerton Ave. then left onto Bronx Park East. Travel north to Burke Ave. Stairway down to Bronx River Forest is on the left at Burke Ave. Continue below for directions to Burke Bridge.

*To Allerton Ballfields:* Exit on Mosholu Pkwy. Turn west onto Kazimiroff Blvd. Ballfields are visible on your right, but no stopping. Continue as it bends to the left. Turn right onto Mosholu Pkwy. Right onto Bainbridge Ave., right onto E. 204<sup>th</sup> St. stairway to ballfields at the end of E. 204<sup>th</sup> St. at Webster Ave. Continue at bottom of section for directions to Burke Bridge.

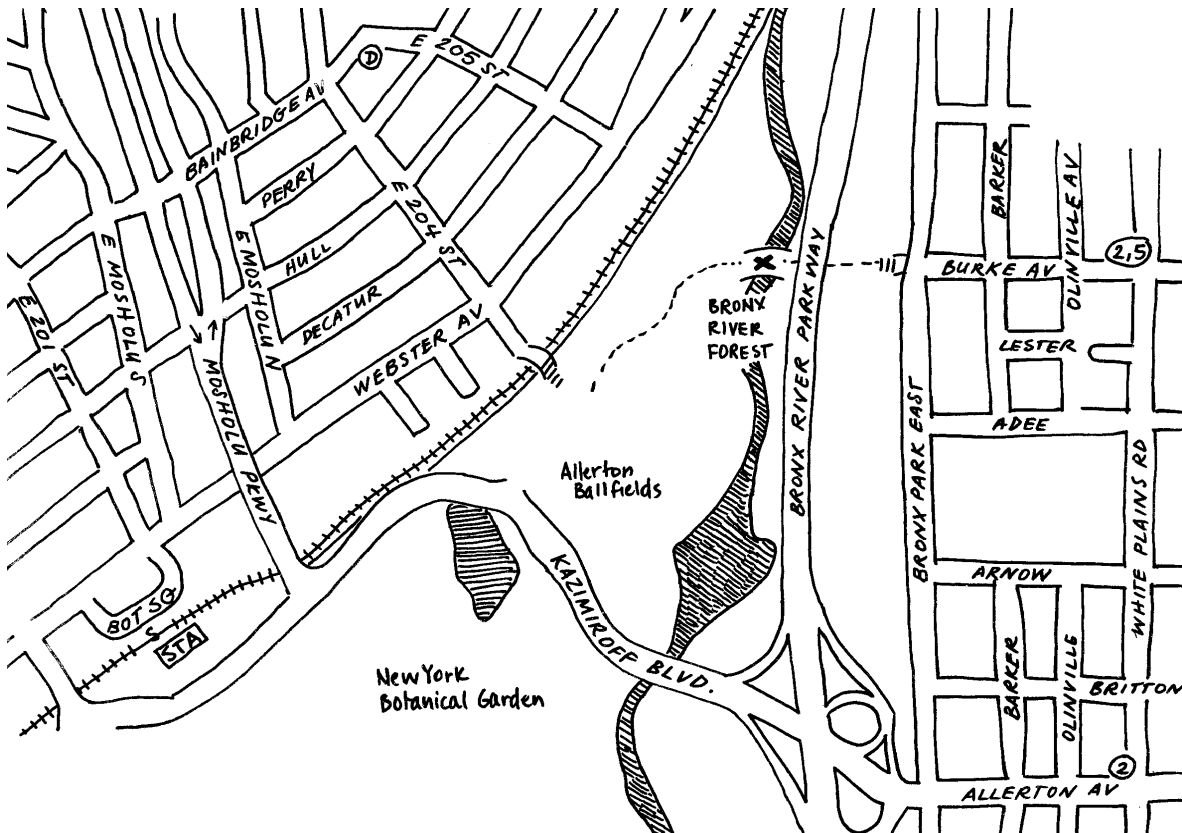
## PUBLIC TRANSIT

*Subway:* **D** Train to 205<sup>th</sup> St./Bainbridge Ave. at Norwood. Walk east (toward Perry Ave.) on E. 204<sup>th</sup> St. to park stairway and Allerton Ballfields. Continue below for directions to Burke Bridge.

*OR* **2, 5** Train to Burke Ave. at White Plains Rd. Walk west (toward Olinville Ave.) on Burke Ave. to Bronx Park East. Burke Ave. stairway to Bronx River Forest is just across the street. Continue below for directions to Burke Bridge.

*OR* **2** Train to Allerton Ave. at White Plains Rd. Walk west (toward Olinville Ave.) on Allerton Ave. at Bronx Park East, this street becomes Dr. Theodore Kazimiroff Blvd. Continue over the river and parkway. The Allerton Ballfields are on your right. Continue below for directions to Burke Bridge.

*Bus:* **Bx55, Bx41** to Webster Ave. and E. 204<sup>th</sup> St. **Bx25, Bx26** to Kazimiroff Blvd. and the Allerton Ballfields. **Bx39** to White Plains Rd. Debarck at Burke Ave. or Allerton Ave. **Bx10, Bx16, Bx30, Bx34** all stop at the D Train, 205<sup>th</sup> St. Station. Continue below for directions to Burke Bridge.



*Metro-North: Harlem Line* to Botanical Garden Station. From Garden side of station, follow Kazimiroff Blvd. north as it bears right to Allerton Ballfields. Continue below for directions to Burke Bridge.

*Continue from above; From Burke Ave. stairway:* Follow greenway path straight (west) and go under the Bronx River Overpass to Burke Bridge.

*From Allerton Ballfields and E. 204<sup>th</sup> St. stairway:* A Bronx River Forest Interpretive sign and map is located across from the bottom of this stairway. Turn left onto greenway path at bottom of stairs. This path tracks back into the forest. Bear right, then left at the fork, follow path through new plantings in the floodplain, and bear right to Burke Bridge.

### Inside Track

- GREENWAY PLAN:
  - An improved pathway winds north from the Allerton Ballfields to Burke Bridge. The paved portion and much of the boardwalk on the east bank is wheelchair accessible and offers an open view of the floodplain. However, the path on the east side is a bit steep just before Kazimiroff Blvd.
  - Lighting and benches have also been modernized along the Bronx River Greenway path.
  - 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.
- While all indications are that illicit activities have declined markedly over recent decades, some illegal activity persists. However, these activities are less evident in daytime hours. Check with the Alliance staff if you have any questions or concerns.
- Stinging Nettle and Poison Ivy are present on and around bridges and path — check Burke Bridge BEFORE leaning over!
- Paths may be muddy.
- Cucumber vine may ensnarl ankles — watch where you walk along path edges.
- Regardless of the issues listed above: with proper supervision, this is a safe site for all ages and well suited for any naturalist or biological study.
- 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 the NYC Parks, the Bronx River Conservation Crew, Neighborhood Initiatives Development Corporation, and other community volunteers.
- Water quality monitoring.
- Mapping, drawing, art-related activities.
- Quiet listening.
- Biking.
- Canoe/kayak put-in point near Kazimiroff Blvd. on east side of river. Contact the Alliance regarding access and guided tours. (See “Public Boat Launch and Portage Site Map” in Greenway Plan, Chapter 5, at [www.bronxriver.org/plans](http://www.bronxriver.org/plans).)