



SECTION 1: MUSKRAT COVE TO THE BRONX RIVER FOREST — 3.25 miles

Muskrat Cove

Getting there by subway: #2 to 233rd Street. Walk west on 233rd Street. Cross over the Bronx River Parkway and the Metro North tracks. Turn right onto Webster Avenue and right again toward the entrance of the Metro North station; turn left down a small path and walk north – river will appear on your right – to the entrance of Muskrat Cove. **By bus:** Bx31 and Bx16 to Webster Ave and 233rd Street.

Muskrat Cove is a hidden sliver of woodland named for a population of muskrats inhabiting its forested banks. It is a picturesque oasis with well-tended pathways and careful plantings thanks to local residents. 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, then under the high-arching Nereid Avenue Bridge. Return back the way you came. Then, before you come to the Bronx River Parkway overpass, follow the path on your right up the embankment to the sidewalk that runs along the Bronx River Parkway. The trail goes over the railroad tracks and leads to Bronx Boulevard. Turn right onto Bronx Boulevard and follow it to the Shoelace Park entrance south of 233rd Street and across from Our Lady of Mercy hospital and school.

Shoelace Park

Getting there by subway: #2 to 233rd Street. **By bus:** Bx31 to Bronx Boulevard or the Bx16 to Webster Ave and 233rd Street.

The paved path descends from Bronx Boulevard to follow the channel of the river, which was straightened during the Robert Moses highway construction program in the early 1950s. From 233rd to 211th Street, the river flows uninterrupted through pleasant parkland, providing a respite for wildlife and residents. Available facilities include playgrounds, a canoe put-in at 219th Street and restrooms.

At 211th Street, continue south past the guardrail onto Bronx Boulevard, and follow the path under the Gun Hill Road overpass. On your left, the river meanders through the last remaining oxbow formation in the Bronx. In the median just before the intersection at Duncomb Avenue, there is a fairly well hidden set of stairs leading down to the river.

Bronx River Forest

Getting there by subway: #2 to Gun Hill Road. **By bus:** Bx28, Bx30, and Bx41 to Gun Hill Road. From Gun Hill Road, turn left on Olinville Avenue to reach Duncomb Avenue.

Here you have the option of (1) continuing south along the river by going down the stairs, turning left at the bottom and following the dirt path through the Bronx River Forest until you reach the paved bike path at Burke Bridge. *Note that this path is picturesque but isolated, and after heavy rainfall is often muddy.*

Or (2), stay on the street and continue south along Bronx Boulevard. Enter the park on the bike/pedestrian path on your right just before the intersection at Duncomb Avenue; go past a playground. When you reach a stairway in a high wall to your left, there will be an underpass below the parkway on your right. Go through the underpass to arrive at the Burke Bridge.

The Bronx River Forest contains one of the last remaining stands of old growth forest in New York City. The forest is also the site of a recent restoration project completed by the Parks Natural Resources Group. As a part of that project, the floodplain has been returned to a more natural state, improvements have been made to the pathways and Burke Bridge, and invasive species have been replaced with native flora.

Here, again you have two options. One is to follow the paved greenway path. The other is to walk along the paths by the river. For the paved path, follow the greenway signs and marked paths along what is the old Bronx River Parkway roadbed. The walk continues through a hardwood forest, which is an excellent spot to watch for bird migration. If you continue along this path, you will pass the Allerton Ballfields and the French Charley playground. Kazimiroff Boulevard is ahead of you. Take a left at Kazimiroff and walk along the sidewalk to Bronx Park East.

To walk along the river, follow the forest trails and boardwalks on either side of the Burke Bridge for a survey of the area's flora, including blue beech, tulip tree, and sweetgum. Although designated as wheelchair accessible, the path on the east side is steep just before Kazimiroff Blvd. (To visit the New York Botanical Garden, see "Side Trip" on reverse.) Walk east along Kazimiroff Boulevard to the intersection of Bronx Park East. Use care at the ramps to the Parkway. Take a right at Bronx Park East.