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Seeing a bird's nest, playing on wide open fields, examining wildflowers, and camping are just a few of the things you can enjoy in Greenbelt Park.

An Urban Oasis

Greenbelt Park is a retreat from the stress of city life and a refuge for native plants and animals. Just 12 miles from downtown Washington and 23 miles from Baltimore, its 1,100 acres contain facilities for camping, hiking, biking, picnicking, and other outdoor recreation.

Hundreds of years ago trees and flowers covered these rolling hills, and wildlife roamed the woodlands. Algonquin Indians and other tribes hunted, fished, and gathered plants throughout the area.

Then the colonists arrived. Trees fell before the broadax. Forests gave way to farmland. Wildlife retreated with the frontier. For the next 150 years people cleared the land, plowed the fields, and planted tobacco, corn, and other crops. The fertile soil returned high yields, but the people did not give back as much as they took from the soil. The land wore out, producing less each season. Farming ceased. Erosion scarred the land until finally nature slowed the process and new growth began.

The soil began to recover in the early 1900s. Today mixed pine and deciduous

forests testify to the land's ability to rebound. In a few years—unless outside forces interfere with the process—the pines will have disappeared, and hardwood forests will again cover the area.

In the 1930s Greenbelt, Md., became the first planned community in the United States built as a federal venture in housing. From the beginning it was designed as a complete city, with businesses, schools, and facilities for recreation. In 1950 the National Park Service established Greenbelt Park and acquired land for the establishment of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. The parkway, which opened in 1954, was created to provide an uninterrupted, scenic route for passenger vehicles between the two cities.

Deer, squirrels, and red foxes make their home at Greenbelt Park, as do blue jays, cardinals, and other birds. In spring displays of flowering dogwood, laurel, and azalea catch the eye. In summer visitors strolling along the park's trails are surrounded by wildflowers or ferns lining deep-cut streams. The colors of changing leaves in autumn are as vivid as can be

found anywhere in the region. In winter a new world opens up. Crisp days and sunlight filtering through bare tree branches provide an invigorating atmosphere for observing nature.

The park offers activities for the naturalist and casual visitor, and it has a conveniently located campground for visitors to the Nation's Capital. Greenbelt Park is an oasis where you can relax in an exceptional outdoor setting.



Watch for white-tailed deer throughout the park.

Enjoying Your Visit

Picnicking There are three picnic areas: Sweetgum, Holly, and Laurel. Holly and Laurel may be reserved. Sweetgum is available first-come, first-served. Each area has restrooms, water, picnic tables, and grills (only charcoal fires are permitted).

Camping Open year-round, the 174-site campground accommodates tents, recreational vehicles, and trailers up to 36 feet long. Restrooms, showers, picnic tables, water, and grills are provided. There are no utility connections, but a disposal station is available. Camping is limited to 14 days per year. Fees are charged. Campsites are first-come, first-served. Reservations are available Memorial Day through Labor Day. For reservations call 800-365-2267, or visit <http://reservations.nps.gov>.

Lodging, Services, and Transportation Greenbelt Park is in a metropolitan area and close to motels,

restaurants, grocery stores, service stations, and shopping centers. Buses and the Metrorail at Greenbelt, College Park/University of Maryland, and New Carrollton provide service to and from Washington, D.C. Schedules and fares vary with the time of day; rush hours have more frequent service and higher fares. For trip planning call 202-637-7000 or visit www.wmata.com.

Park Programs Guided walks, talks, and evening programs are offered seasonally. Check bulletin boards, ask at the ranger station, or visit our website for schedules.

Accessibility Restrooms and picnic areas are accessible for visitors with disabilities. For information about services and facilities call 301-344-3948.

Preservation of the Park Stewardship—saving our natural and cultural resources for future generations—is something everyone can enjoy. Please help us safeguard this park by treating it with respect.

- Do not remove, deface, or destroy any plants, animals, rocks, or natural or cultural features—all are protected by federal law.
- Do not disturb, feed, or approach park wildlife.
- Pets must be on a leash no longer than six feet, or otherwise confined.
- All vehicles, including bicycles, must stay on the paved roads. Their use on any trail or off the pavement is strictly prohibited. Parking is permitted only in designated areas.
- The park closes at dark.



Exploring Greenbelt Park

Nature Trails Explore four marked trails to discover the park's plants, animals, ecology, and history.

Azalea Trail (1.1 miles) This trail connects the three picnic areas and passes through plant communities that grow along streams and on hillsides.

Perimeter Trail (5.3 miles) This trail is popular for hiking and horseback riding. It circles the park's western section and leads to some of the most beautiful scenery in the area. *Note:* Horses are not available for rent in the park.

Dogwood Trail (1.4 miles) Start at the parking area on Park Central Road. Self-guiding brochures tell about the ecology, early land use, and nature's recovery found along this trail.

Blueberry Trail (1 mile) This trail begins just beyond the campground entrance and traverses a section of abandoned farmland, mature forest, marsh, and stream bottom.

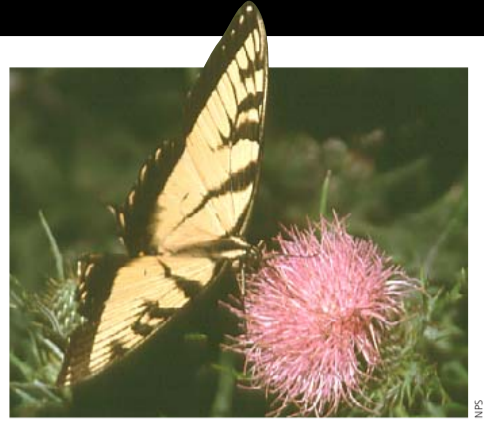
Safety and Regulations

- Always use caution and common sense so that your visit will be safe and enjoyable.
- Observe speed limits while traveling park roads, and yield to hikers, joggers, and bikers.
- Stay on the trails; do not shortcut.

To report an unusual activity in the park, call a park ranger: 301-344-3944. Or, call the U.S. Park Police: 301-344-4250. Emergencies call: 911.

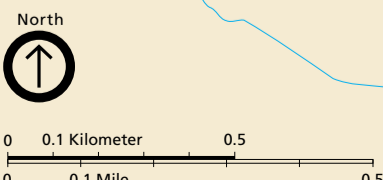
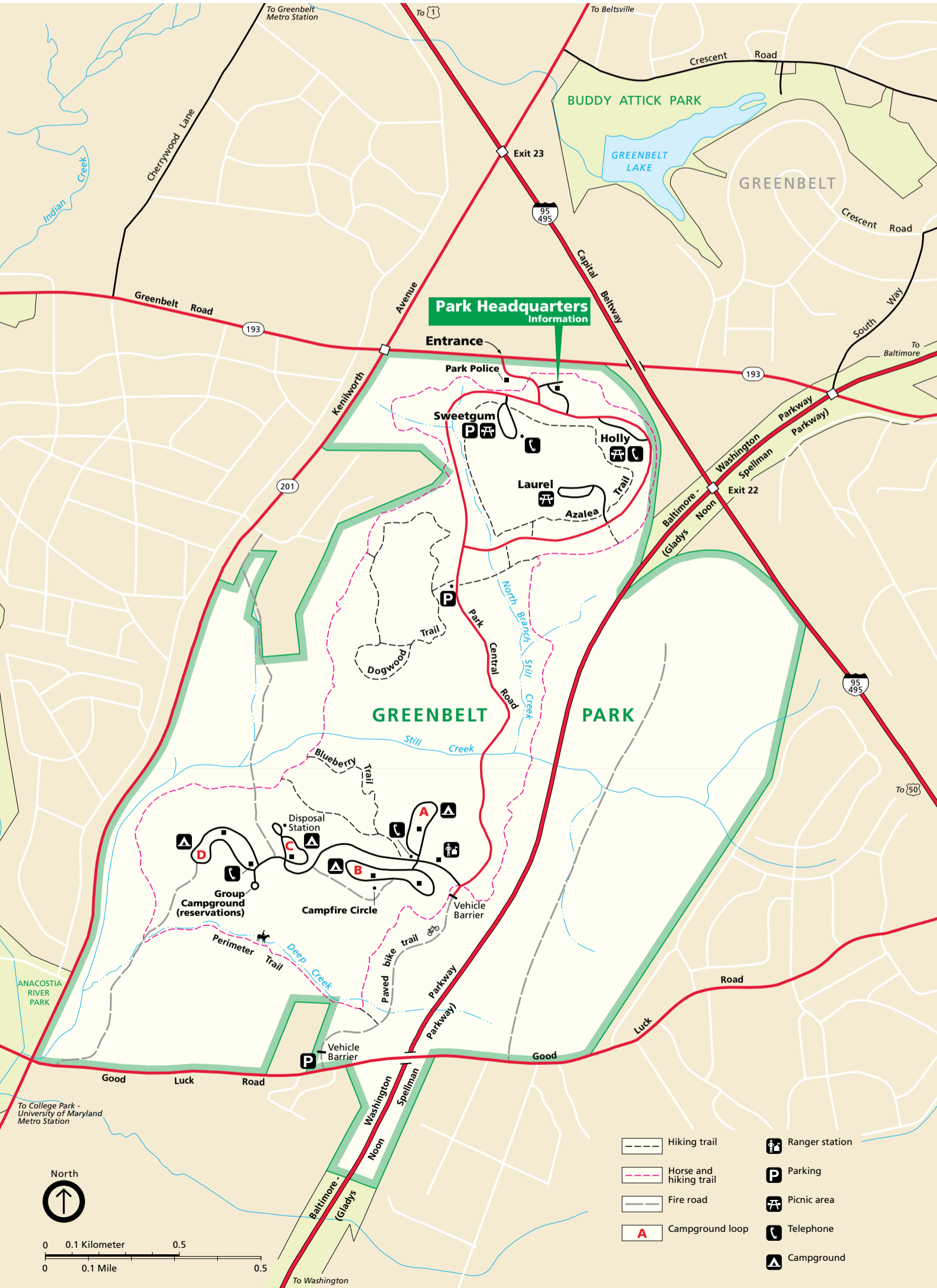
More Information
 Greenbelt Park
 6565 Greenbelt Road
 Greenbelt, MD 20770-3207
 301-344-3948
www.nps.gov/gree

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A tiger swallowtail butterfly sips a flower's nectar.

Greenbelt Park is one of more than 380 parks in the National Park System. The National Park Service cares for these special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. To learn more about national parks visit www.nps.gov.



- Hiking trail
- Horse and hiking trail
- Fire road
- Campground loop
- Ranger station
- Parking
- Picnic area
- Telephone
- Campground