

Greenbelt Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Maryland



The biggest thing we want people to see is that nature is for everyone; outdoor spaces are for everyone. Alex Troutman

Swallowtail
ANDREW BOSS/FICKR
BACKGROUND
© MARK MUSE

Discover a Suburban Oasis

When nature is your destination, you will discover Greenbelt Park. In an increasingly urban region, the park's trails, campgrounds, and picnic areas provide solitude and fun in one of the largest forested areas near Washington, DC. We invite you to escape the crowds, slow your pace, and immerse yourself in nature—just as the park's designers intended.

Only 10 miles from the nation's capital, Greenbelt Park was born out of President Franklin Roosevelt's

desire to create new, green towns where people would live closer to nature. Adjacent to a national model community experiment of the 1930s, Greenbelt Park offers recreational opportunities and is a vibrant national park, treasured by neighbors and travelers alike.

Come visit the park in all seasons. Enjoy the fragrant blooms of spring, ferns and wildflowers of summer, vibrant colors of fall, and crisp breezes of winter. Walk your dog or go biking along the park's forested

roads. Escape for a hike deep under a canopy of trees. Step away from city life in a peaceful, neighborhood national park.

Beavers reside at the park.
© KIT WILLIAMS

Discover Greenbelt Park

History of the Land

Centuries ago, trees and flowers covered these rolling hills; animals roamed the woods; and people hunted, gathered plants, and fished. As the human population increased, the forests were cleared for farmland. Corn, tobacco, and other crops thrived in the fertile soil. Improper crop rotation depleted the soil's nutrients. With less crop production farming ceased. Erosion scarred the land. In time nature took over, and the soil started to recover in the early 1900s. The regrown forest has since flourished.



Autumn foliage
NPS/GLYNN WILSON

Experiments in Urban Living

The city of Greenbelt, the nation's first planned community, was designed as a "garden city" with businesses, recreation facilities, and schools. By 1937 the first residents arrived, drawn to a community focused on families. In 1950 Greenbelt Park was established to provide a welcoming refuge for recreation. Many structures in the park are original, built during the Mission 66 era to improve facilities across all national parks.



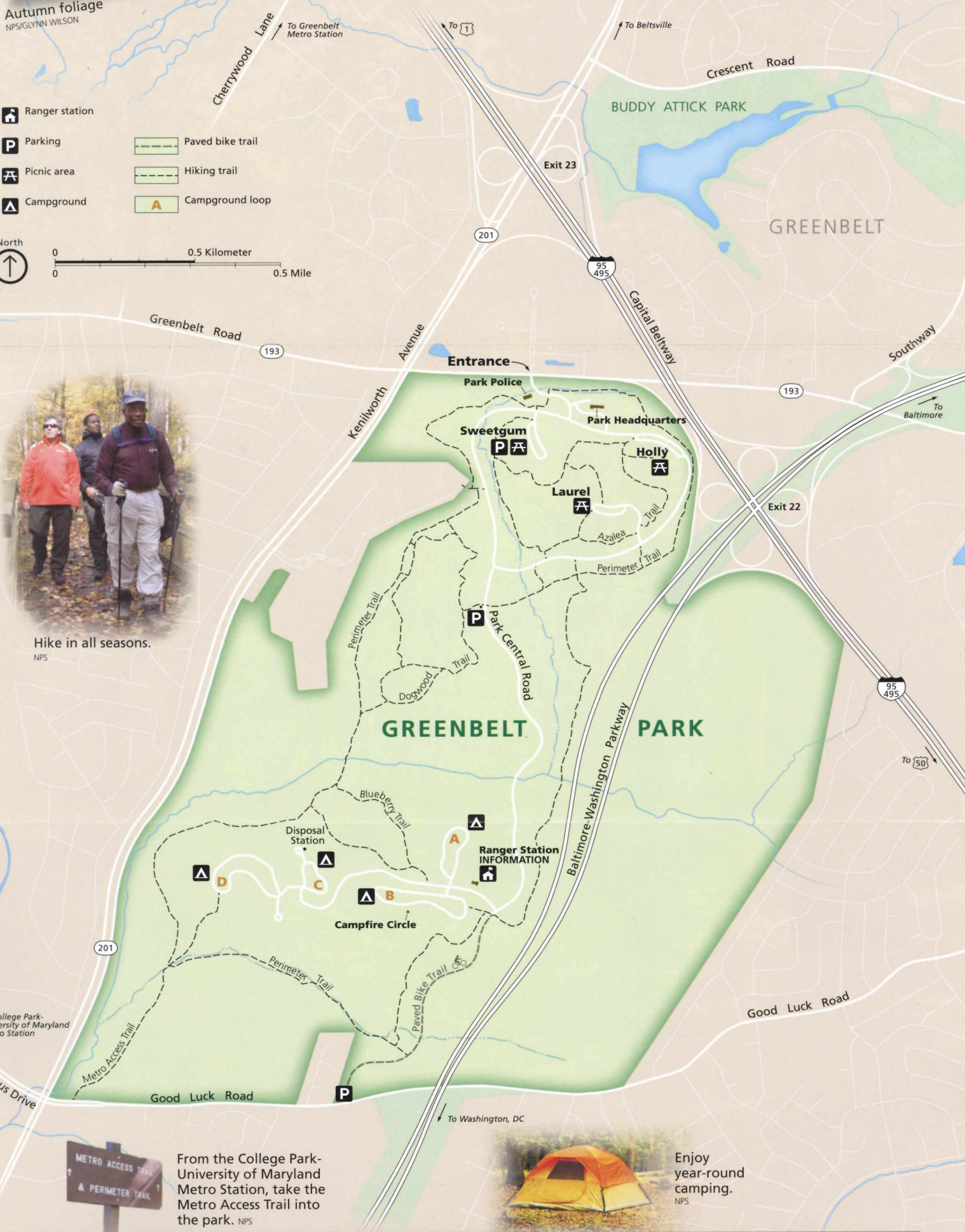
Camping in the 1960s
H. ARMSTRONG ROBERTS/CLASSICSTOCK

Reconnecting with Nature

Refresh, revitalize, and recharge at Greenbelt Park. The natural environment offers an opportunity to escape the stress of modern life. Doctors now prescribe outdoor activities to treat and prevent health problems. Discover direct benefits from spending more time in nature. Start with a walk along a section of over ten miles of park trails, enjoy a picnic in Sweetgum, or relax under the stars next to a warm campfire at your campsite at Greenbelt Park—a hidden gem in the National Park System.



Junior Ranger walk
NPS/KEVIN P. BARRY



From the College Park-University of Maryland Metro Station, take the Metro Access Trail into the park. NPS



Enjoy year-round camping. NPS

ACTIVITIES FOR ALL

Programs Park staff offer guided walks, talks, and evening campfire programs on nature and history. For schedules check the Ranger Station, park website, or bulletin boards. Junior Ranger Activity Books are at the Ranger Station.

Camping A 174-site, year-round campground accommodates tents, RVs, and trailers up to 36 feet. Picnic tables, campfire grills, water spigots, restrooms, showers, and an RV disposal station are available. No utility connections. Camping is limited to 14 days per year. Camp only in designated areas. Reserve sites at www.recreation.gov (fee).

Hiking Get information at the Ranger Station. **Azalea Trail** (1.1-mile loop) links picnic areas and crosses plant communities that grow along streams and hillsides. **Blueberry Trail** (1.1-mile loop) starts near the campground entrance and leads through abandoned farmland, mature forest, marsh, and bottomland along a stream.

Dogwood Trail (1.4-mile short loop; 1.6-mile long loop and 0.2-mile connector trail) starts at Park Central Road parking area and links with Perimeter Trail. **Metro Access Trail** (0.7-mile one-way) runs from Good Luck Road to campground Loop D. **Perimeter Trail** (5.3-mile loop) winds through beautiful scenery and Still Creek.

Picnic Areas Sweetgum is first-come, first-served for groups of under 25 people. For 25 or more, reserve Laurel or Holly picnic areas at www.recreation.gov (fee). Each has picnic tables, water, restrooms, and grills (charcoal fires only).

Biking A 0.5-mile paved trail starts at Good Luck Road parking area and accesses Park Central Road. Stay on the paved trail. Leave dirt and boardwalk trails for hikers.

Accessibility We strive to make facilities, programs, and services accessible to all. Restrooms and picnic areas are accessible. Service animals are welcome.

VISITING GREENBELT PARK

Hours The park opens daily at 7 am; visit our website for seasonal closure times. The Ranger Station is open 8 am to 3:45 pm daily except January 1, Thanksgiving Day, and December 25. The campground is open to registered campers and guests 24 hours daily.

Getting to the Park While many visitors drive to the park, taxis, public buses, ridesharing services, and Metrorail's Green and Yellow lines (within walking distance of the campground) make the park easy to visit from Washington, DC. For Metro schedules and fares contact www.wmata.com or 202-637-7000.

Help Preserve the Park Do not approach, disturb, or feed wildlife. • All vehicles, including bicycles, trailers, and RVs, must stay on paved surfaces. Park only in designated areas. • Do not remove, deface, or destroy plants, animals, rocks or other natural and cultural features; federal law protects them. • Please practice Leave No Trace principles. Leave what you find.

Enjoy a Safe Visit Obey posted speed limits. Yield to hikers, joggers, and bikers. • Trails are only for hikers and leashed pets; do not shortcut. • Wear proper clothing, and apply insect repellent. • Pets must be on a leash no longer than six feet or be otherwise confined. • For firearms regulations and to report unusual activity, contact the US Park Police at 301-344-4250.

Emergencies call 911

More Information Greenbelt Park is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. Learn about the national parks at www.nps.gov.

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www.nationalparks.org

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