

## AT A GLANCE

### Habitat

Fresh- and saltwater marshes, grasslands, and upland shrub.

### Terrain

Relatively flat. Mainly crushed stone paths with an extensive synthetic boardwalk extending into the marsh. Many trails wheelchair-accessible. Minimal car birding.

### Birds

More than 200 species. Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, Ruddy Duck, Common and Hooded Mergansers, Green-winged Teal, Bufflehead, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed, Cooper's, Sharp-shinned, and Rough-legged Hawks, Peregrine Falcon, American Kestrel, Merlin, Snowy Owl, Tree, Barn, and Cliff Swallows, Bobolink, Savannah, Grasshopper, and Vesper Sparrows, Cedar Waxwing, Least Bittern, Clapper Rail, Double-crested Cormorant. Spring: sandpipers and yellowlegs. Summer: Egrets, night-herons, Black Skimmer, Indigo Bunting, and Orchard Oriole.

### When to go

Excellent year-round for raptors. November through May for waterfowl. Spring and fall for migrants; day lists of up to 120 species possible.

### Amenities

The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission headquarters in DeKorte Park has an environmental center with restrooms and water. Benches throughout the area offer good views. New Jersey Meadowlands Festival of Birding held each September.

### Access

New Jersey Meadowlands Commission park. Open daily 8 a.m. to dusk.

### Tips

A spotting scope is useful for watching distant waterfowl. There is little shade, so a hat and sunglasses are essential.

### For more info

Richard W. DeKorte Park, (201) 460-8300, [www.njmeadowlands.gov/environment/parks/rdp.html](http://www.njmeadowlands.gov/environment/parks/rdp.html). Recent sightings at the Meadowlands Blog, [www.meadowblog.typepad.com](http://www.meadowblog.typepad.com).

[www.BirdersWorld.com/hotspotsmap](http://www.BirdersWorld.com/hotspotsmap)

## richard w. dekorte park lyndhurst, new jersey 40°47'7.96"N 74°6'17.03"W



Richard W. DeKorte Park is a 110-acre greenspace on the Hackensack River located approximately 10 miles west of Manhattan. From the Lincoln Tunnel, take Rt. 3 west to Rt. 17 south. Turn left on Valley Brook Ave. and drive for two miles to the park entrance. In winter, watch for raptors in the fields along the approach road.

By the late 1960s, the New Jersey Meadowlands was a sorry emblem of rampant environmental degradation, a sprawling trashopolis sulking in the shadow of Manhattan.

The 30-square-mile area has undergone a reclamation of remarkable scope and success. Thanks to the work of the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission, what was once a national shame is now among the premier urban wildlife spots in the country.

Of the many areas to bird in the Meadowlands, I particularly enjoy Richard W. DeKorte Park, where well-kept walkways and trails make exploring easy, even with my three young children. They love to look for butterflies, muskrats, and snakes along the trails, then spend time at the charming museum in the nature center.

The park is home to more than 200 bird species, including many breeders. Expect to see songbirds, raptors, bitterns, rails, shovelers, teal, and mergansers. Spring, summer, and fall see the most action, but I like to come in winter, too. Last year, at least two Snowy Owls spent several weeks in the Meadowlands, while Northern Harriers, Peregrine Falcons, Rough-legged Hawks, and other raptors often appear. — Adam Marcus

Adam Marcus is a writer in Montclair, N.J. He wrote about Inwood Hill Park, Hotspot Near You No. 1, in our October 2006 issue.

### sites nearby

#### Schmidt's Woods Park

7 miles from DeKorte Park in Secaucus. One of the last remnant woodlands in the Meadowlands. A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron rookery was discovered in 2004.

#### Saw Mill Creek WMA

Adjacent to DeKorte Park and accessible from Laurel Hill County Park in Secaucus. Osprey, Clapper Rail, Marsh Wren, and egrets.

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