



FILE PHOTO

Birder's World calls the Meadowlands one of the "premier urban wildlife spots" in the U.S.

WILDLIFE

From landfill to bird's-eye view of Meadowlands

Magazine touts Lyndhurst park

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LYNDHURST – The rough-legged hawks, hooded mergansers and cedar waxwings that grace the Meadowlands these days probably don't care that a national magazine has cited Richard W. DeKorte Park as one of best birding destinations in North America.

But the scientists, public officials and environmentalists who helped turn the area from a landfill into a thriving wildlife habitat took pride this week after receiv-

ing accolades in the February issue of Birder's World.

The magazine called the region among "the premier urban wildlife spots in the country."

"The fact that it came back and has become such a great spot for birding, we had to let our readers know about it," said Matt Mendenhall, associate editor at Birder's World, which has a bimonthly circulation of about 30,000.

The Meadowlands has become a major stopover for birds along the Atlantic Flyway, one of the most active migration routes

in the U.S.

The state Meadowlands Commission has led the effort to turn the area into a wildlife preserve. A 6.5-acre piece of DeKorte Park, called the Kingsland Overlook, was the first landfill to be capped and turned into parkland in New Jersey.

Birder's World cited the park for its 200 bird species, well-kept trails, boardwalk and abundance of other creatures like butterflies, muskrats and small snakes.

The park is one of 84 birding spots that the magazine has pro-

filed since October 2006. Other New Jersey sites include the Celery Farm in Allendale and Barnegat Lighthouse State Park.

About 30,000 people visit DeKorte Park each year. The Commission, which has headquarters in the park, holds free guided bird walks with the Bergen County Audubon Society on the first Sunday and third Tuesday of every month at 10 a.m. A birding festival has been held every September for the last six years.

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