

PARKS

AN INSIDER'S GUIDE TO PARKS IN FAIRFAX COUNTY

National Parks

GF Great Falls National Park
9200 Old Dominion Drive, McLean
www.nps.gov/grfa
Great Falls Park is open daily from 7 a.m. until dark. The Visitor Center and bookstore are open from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. daily, spring through fall seasons. Picnic, hike along the Potomac River. Swimming and wading in the Potomac are prohibited.

GW The George Washington Memorial Parkway
www.nps.gov/gwmp
703-289-2500
The GW Parkway includes more than 25 sites, ranging from historic homes to wildlife preserves. Join a ranger for a free program or explore sites independently. Some park sites, including Turkey Run Park, Theodore Roosevelt Island, Great Falls Park, etc., close at dark. The Parkway itself remains open 24 hours a day to vehicle traffic.

WT Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts
1551 Trap Road, Vienna
www.nps.gov/wotr/
The only national park dedicated to presenting the performing arts. From May through September, multiple amphitheaters in the park present musicals, dance, opera, jazz, and popular and country music. Explore the park without the crowds from October - April. The Barns at Wolf Trap offer indoor entertainment through the winter months.

State Park

MN Mason Neck State Park
7301 High Point Rd. Lorton
www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/mas.shtml#703-339-2385 or 703-339-2380 (visitor center)
masonneck@dcr.virginia.gov
The park's visitor center was expanded in 2010 to include a new exhibit room, gift shop and meeting room. There are several exhibits in the center, and with a view of Belmont Bay. Visitor center staff can answer questions and provide information on park trails, facilities and local points of interest. Pond study, bird watching, canoe trips, nature walks and talks, and GPS adventures are just a few of the exciting programs offered by park rangers.

Regional Parks

BR Bull Run Marina Regional Park
7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville
www.nvrpa.org/park/bull_run/
Main park open all year for picnicking, hiking and family camping. Bull Run Public Shooting Center open all year. Group Camping open daily Jan. 7 through Nov. 11. Mini and disc golf open April through October. Hours vary.

Atlantis Waterpark (at Bull Run Marina Regional Park)
7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville
www.atlantisbullrun.com/
703-631-0552
Atlantis Waterpark features pools, a giant dumping bucket, waterslides, and fun-filled activities for all ages. Atlantis is open from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day, and is a member of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority Family of Waterparks. Aantis also features picnic pavilions, a deck great for sunning and playing, as well as plenty of shade. Neptune Reef snack bar sells food, beverages and sweets.

FH Fountainhead Regional Park
7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station
www.nvrpa.org/park/fountainhead/
703-250-9124
The observation deck of the Marina Building at Fountainhead commands a spectacular view of the widest point of the Occoquan Reservoir. Summer activities include catfish tournaments, children's fishing tournament, paddleboat tours and more.



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HO Hemlock Overlook Regional Park
13220 Yates Ford Road, Clifton
www.nvrpa.org/park/hemlock_overlook/
800-877-0954; 571-281-3556;
Hemlock Overlook Regional Park offers a variety of outdoor and environmental education. Programs at Hemlock Overlook are open to the public and groups by reservation. Only the hiking and horse trails may be used without prior arrangement.

MBG Meadowlark Botanical Gardens
9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna
www.nvrpa.org/park/meadowlark_botanical_gardens/
703-255-3631
This 95-acre complex of large ornamental display gardens and unique native plant collections round and include walking trails, lakes, more than 20 varieties of cherry trees, irises, peonies, an extensive shade garden, native wildflowers, gazebos, birds, butterflies, seasonal blooms and foliage. The Atrium's indoor tropical garden setting is a popular meeting, reception, wedding and workshop location. Interpretive displays accompany a restored 18th-century cabin. A picnic area beside the Gardens is available to visitors. Meadowlark

presents gardening and horticulture workshops, tours, field trips, concerts and volunteer programs.

OB Occoquan Regional Park
9751 Ox Road, Lorton
www.nvrpa.org/park/occoquan/
703-690-2121
This park offers 400 acres of recreational space and a touch of the past with its historic brick kilns and the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial. Park lands, trails and associated waters are part of the Fairfax Cross-County Trail. Kayak rentals. One hour Tour Boat Rides on the Occoquan River to Belmont Bay and back. Offered Saturdays noon-5 p.m., Sunday 1-8 p.m., April 2 through Nov. 27. \$10 adults, \$5 children 12 and under, under age 4 are free.

PB Pohick Bay Regional Park
6501 Pohick Bay Drive, Lorton
www.nvrpa.org/park/pohick_bay/
Pohick Bay is located on the Potomac River 25 miles south of the nation's capital. The boat launch facility is one of only three public access points to the Potomac River in northern Virginia. Pohick Bay offers canoes, kayaks, paddle boats and jon boats for rent on the weekends, as well as family and group camping, hiking, picnic areas and a large play area for children. For those interested in swimming, the park offers one of the largest, outdoor freeform pools on the east coast. Pohick Bay Regional Park, located on Mason Neck Peninsula is an ecologically fragile

land that shelters an abundance of wildlife, including the bald eagle. Nature lovers can expect to see blue birds, osprey, heron, deer, beavers and rare sightings of river otters.

Pirates Cove Waterpark
(at Pohick Bay Regional Park)
6501 Pohick Bay Drive, Lorton
www.piratescovepohick.com
703-339-6102
Pirates Cove Waterpark is located at Pohick Bay Regional Park. Visitors can cool off under the 300-gallon dumping bucket, fire the water cannons and splash down the waterslide or search for buried treasure at Buccaneer Beach sand play area. Pirates Cove also features picnic pavilions, a deck for sunning and playing, as well as plenty of shade. Captain's Galley snack bar features food, beverages and sweets. Pirates Cove is open from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day.

PB Pohick Bay Golf Course
10301 Gunston Road, Lorton
www.nvrpa.org/park/pohick_bay_golf_course
703-339-8585
This scenic golf course is located on the Mason Neck Peninsula in Lorton. Pohick Bay's practice facility features a driving range with practice putting and chipping greens, and lessons from PGA pros. A full-service pro shop features an array of name-brand golf clubs, equipment and





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Frying Pan Farm Park, Herndon

apparel. Other services include club making, custom club fitting, regripping, reshafting and tournament coordinating.

SR

Sandy Run Regional Park

10450 Van Thompson Road, Fairfax Station
www.nvrpa.org/park/sandy_run/
703-690-4392

The park is open to the public for the purpose of education, training, practice, and racing for competitive and recreational sculling and rowing. Only shells and other boats authorized by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority may be launched from the docks or shoreline of Sandy Run. Sandy Run offers a facility for team training and competition for Olympic, college, high school and club canoe, kayak and crew athletes.

Arts Center

WAC

Workhouse Arts Center

9601 Ox Road, Lorton
www.lortonarts.org
703-584-2900

The Workhouse Arts Center consists of seven studio buildings, the main galleries and the recently opened Youth Arts Center. Visitors are encouraged to interact with artists. In addition to visual arts, the Workhouse Arts Center is home to performing arts, including theater, film institute, musical and dance performances. The education department supports both the visual and performing arts, offering classes and workshops in a variety of disciplines. Future plans for the Workhouse include an event center, amphitheater, Workhouse Theatre, restaurants, apartments, music barn and garden/horticultural area. Other buildings on site, yet to be renovated, may provide for other activities such as a visitors center, a blacksmith shop, theatre scene shops and rehearsal space.

Fairfax County Parks

1 Annandale Park

7701 Royce Street, Annandale
nature center
50.7 acres, district park

2 Baron Cameron School Site

11300 Baron Cameron Avenue, Reston
softball (unlit), soccer/football (unlit), biking/
hiking trails, picnic area, playground
60 acres, district park

3 Braddock Park

13451 Braddock Road, Clifton
Softball field (lit), soccer/football (unlit and lit),
minigolf, biking trail, equestrian trail, hiking
trail, open picnic areas
227.1 acres, special purpose park

4 Burke Station Park

6031 Kerrwood Street, Burke
basketball, tennis (lit), hiking trail, playground, tot
lot
18.1 acres, community park

5 Centre Ridge North

Field Encampment Road And St. Germain Drive,
Centreville
basketball (lit), tennis (lit), biking/hiking/nature
trails, playground
8.9 acres, community park

6 Clarks Crossing

9850 Clarks Crossing Road, Vienna
soccer/football (unlit), biking/equestrian/hiking
trails, open areas
143.8 acres, district park

7 Collingwood Park

8200 West Boulevard Drive, Alexandria
soccer/football, basketball, tennis, playground
12 acres, community park

8 Cub Run RECenter

4630 Stonecroft Blvd, Chantilly
pool, water playground, fitness center, trails,
playground
9.3 acres, special purpose park

9 Dranesville Tavern

11919 Leesburg Pike, Herndon
historic structure, natural/picnic areas, meeting
room
14.6 acres, cultural resource park

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Sources: National Park Service, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, Virginia State Parks and Fairfax County Park Authority. Map courtesy of Fairfax County Park Authority. Designed & compiled by Jean Card and Laurence Foong. Photos by Craig Sterbutzel.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Sharon Bulova in Fairfax Villa Park.

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'My Favorite Parks'

BY SHARON BULOVA
CHAIRMAN, FAIRFAX COUNTY BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS

The tree I am standing next to in this photo is one of a number of large American Beech trees that populate the forests in Villa Park where I like to hike and jog. Villa Park is located in the central Fairfax area, with an entrance into the park off of Park Drive near Shirley Gate Road.

This park is unique. It has been left in its natural wooded condition and designated a Heritage Resource park to preserve features such as Native American quarries and work/chipping areas. It also contains remnants of the never-completed Independent line of the Manassas Gap Railroad. While no track was ever laid along this rail line, it played a significant role in the Civil War, serving as a little-known transportation route for both Confederate and Union soldiers. The earthworks served as protection during skirmishes.

A number of years ago a Civil War historian told me that he believed soldiers had carved their initials into trees located in Villa Park. The trees near my running path are covered with initials and symbols carved into the smooth grey bark. On the larger trees, the markings have become pretty much unreadable. I don't know if it's true or not, but I like to think these may be the trees my history buff friend was referring to.

When running along this trail, I imagine passing Native American Indians chipping arrow heads out of hunks of quartz and Civil War camp sites with soldiers drawing water from the Popes Head Creek and passing time by carving their initials or troop insignia in the smooth-barked Beech trees growing nearby. The experience is a perfect marriage of my love for history and nature.

Some other favorite Fairfax parks that

interpret our county's fascinating history and showcase its environmental beauty:

❖ Riverbend Park in Great Falls, includes more than 400 acres of forest, meadow and ponds. Trails include a 2.5-mile portion of the Potomac Heritage Trail linking national and regional parkland. Kayakers and canoeists can enjoy exploring many islands in the Potomac River.

Riverbend's visitor center overlooks the Potomac River and has an outdoor deck that is an ideal place to relax or have a snack after a hike. It has a wonderful interpretative display about the historic Native American presence in the area.

❖ In the South County Hybla Valley area, Huntley Meadows Park contains 1,425 acres of majestic forests, wildflower-speckled meadows and vast wetlands bursting with life. Some of the best wildlife watching in the Washington metropolitan area is enjoyed here. From the wetland boardwalk trail and observation tower, people have excellent views of beavers, frogs, dragonflies and herons. Huntley Meadows is well known as a prime birding spot, with more than 200 species identified in the park.

❖ Lake Accotink Park, located on 7500 Accotink Park Road in Springfield, is one of my favorite parks. Not only is this 493-acre park one of the most scenic in the county, it is also one of the most fun. In addition to boating, hiking, canoeing, and mini-golfing, you can always find a nice quiet spot to enjoy a picnic on the lake. Children love the beautiful antique carousel.

Lake Accotink was originally created to provide drinking water for troops stationed at Camp Humphries (which is now Fort Belvoir) during the early 1900s. The Norfolk Southern Railroad tracks carry D.C.-bound VRE commuter rail passengers over the Lake Accotink Dam. Remains of an older former railroad trestle make up part of the four-mile trail that winds around the lake and park.



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Lake Fairfax Park

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AN INSIDER'S GUIDE TO AREA PARKS

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Scotts Run, McLean

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10 Fairfax Villa Park

4420 Belden Street, Fairfax
historic structure, biking/historic/hiking trails, natural areas
59.7 acres, community park

11 Fred Crabtree Park

2801 Fox Mill Road, Herndon
Little league (lit), soccer/football field (unlit), historical structure, biking/equestrian/hiking/nature trails
208.5 acres, district park

12 Frying Pan Farm Park

2717 West Ox Road, Herndon
historic structure, biking/equestrian/hiking trails, open areas, playground
135.3 acres, multiple resource park

13 Great Falls Nike Park

1089 Utterback Store Road, Great Falls
baseball field (lit), soccer/football field (unlit), basketball (unlit), tennis (unlit), playground, biking/hiking trails
45.5 acres, district park

14 Grist Mill Park

4710 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy, Alexandria
baseball, soccer/football, basketball, biking/hiking trails, playground
75.5 acres, district park

15 Huntley Meadows Park

3701 Lockheed Boulevard, Alexandria
nature center, historic structure, biking/hiking/nature trails, observation tower, boardwalk
1444.8 acres, natural resource park

16 Hybla Valley Park

3431 Lockheed Boulevard, Alexandria
tennis, hiking trails, open areas
1.2 acres, neighborhood park

17 Lake Accotink Park

7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield
basketball, volleyball, minigolf, trails, picnic
448.1 acres, multiple resource park

18 Lake Braddock School Site

9200 Burke Lake Road, Burke
soccer/football (unlit), fitness trails, open areas
13.1 acres, community park

19 Lake Fairfax Park

1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston
softball (lit), soccer/football (unlit), amphitheater, carousel, campground, tour boat, picnic shelters
479 acres, multiple resource park

20 Lake Mercer Park

9500 Silverbrook Road, Fairfax Station
historic structure, biking/hiking/historic trails, fishing
196.5 acres, multiple resource park

21 Langley Fork Park

6250 Georgetown Pike, McLean
baseball (lit), soccer/football (unlit), basketball (unlit), biking/fitness trails
54 acres, district park

22 Laurel Hill Park

8515 Silverbrook Rd., Lorton
baseball (unlit), softball (unlit), clubhouse, driving range, 18 hole, disc golf, picnic areas, hiking/biking
1197.5 acres, countywide park

23 Lee District Park

6601 Telegraph Road, Franconia
softball, soccer/football, tennis, basketball, volleyball, trails, treehouse
138 acres, district park

24 Lewinsville Park

1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean
baseball, soccer/football (lit), basketball, tennis, biking/fitness trails, picnic, playground, tot lot
37.7 acres, district park

25 Mason District Park

6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale
softball (lit), soccer/football (unlit/lit), basketball (lit), tennis (lit), shuffleboard, dog park, amphitheater, biking/hiking/fitness
121.2 acres, district park

26 Muddy Hole Farm Park

7941 Kidd Street, Alexandria
soccer/football, basketball, tennis, hiking trails, picnic areas, playground
13.6 acres, community park

27 Newington Heights Park

8590 Heller Road, Lorton
soccer/football, basketball, tennis, biking/hiking trail, playground
69.3 acres, district park

28 Nottoway Park

9537 Courthouse Road, Vienna
baseball (lit), soccer/football (lit), basketball (lit), tennis (lit), trails, picnic
90.9 acres, district park

29 Patriot Park

12111 Braddock Road, Fairfax
little league (lit), soccer/football (lit)
130.5 acres, district park

30 Pope Head Park

5635 Rivercomb Court, Clifton
soccer/football, basketball, tennis, biking/fitness/hiking trails, picnic, playground
75.6 acres, district park

31 Poplar Tree Park

4718 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly
baseball (lit), soccer/football (lit), biking, hiking, picnic, playground
48.3 acres, district park

32 Riverbend Park

8700 Potomac Hill Street, Great Falls
nature center, historic structure, biking/equestrian/hiking trails, picnic areas, craft room
411.2 acres, multiple resource park

33 Rolling Valley West Park

6512 Sydenstricker Road, Burke
softball, soccer/football (lit), basketball, tennis, biking, hiking, playground
20.7 acres, community park

34 South Run District

7550 Reservation Drive, Springfield
baseball, soccer/football, basketball, tennis, recenter, equestrian, playground, swimming
196 acres, district park

35 Spring Hill Park

1239 Spring Hill Road, McLean
swimming, fitness rooms, racquetball, picnic, playground, soccer/football
46.1 acres, district park

36 Wakefield Park & RECenter

8100 Braddock Road, Annandale
softball, soccer/football, basketball, tennis, recenter, biking, fitness trail, skate park
292.6 acres, multiple resource park



Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, Chantilly



Frying Pan Farm Park, Herndon



Burke Lake Park, Fairfax Station