

Where to Find Information on Parks

by Christine Bruzzese

Department of Parks Annual Reports.

Known at various times as Department of Parks and Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs, etc. this agency has issued *Annual Reports* fairly regularly since 1871. These reports generally contain discussion of the past year's activities in park design, maintenance and operation, financial and other statistics and photographs and maps. Some reports were issued for individual boroughs. Holdings vary by title of report and are not complete.

Minutes. *Minutes and Documents of the Board of Commissioners of the Department of Parks* are kept from 1881 and then 1898 to 1930. These summarize the Board's monthly meetings with the texts of resolutions given and information on contract proposals and bids.

Ordinances. *Ordinances, Rules and Regulations* of the Department of Parks were issued irregularly from 1914 to 1931. From November 1931 to May 1963, *Rules and Regulations* appeared. Generally, these are compilations of regulations on conduct, proper use of park facilities, traffic in parks, etc.

Department of Parks publications.

Various reports of the Department of Parks have been published, describing conditions in city parks, renovation and improvement plans, chronicling the history of certain parks or the agency. From 1988 to 1990, the Natural Resources Group of the Department of Parks and Recreation prepared a series of reports for selected parks entitled

Natural Areas Management Plan. The plans include results of an ecological assessment of each park, recommendations for improving and preserving the ecological environment, maps and diagrams and other information.

North Manhattan Parks from 1990 is a study of city parks in that area with historical overview of each park and its neighborhood, recommendations for improvement, discussion of capital projects.

Newsletters, press releases. The *Daily Plant* is the current Department of Parks and Recreation newsletter, reporting on events, accomplishments, new developments and other matters. It was published from 1983 to 1990, and then resumed publication in 1994. The City Hall Library maintains print copies from 1983 to 2001. Electronically, the *Daily Plant* can be found on the Parks website from 1995 to present. *Playgrounds* was a series of press releases issued from 1956 to 1961, announcing openings, completions of construction and other news in city playgrounds controlled by the Dept. of Parks. Original photos and maps often accompany the text.

Websites. The Department of Parks and Recreation website is located at www.nycgovparks.org. News, publications, information on different parks and services and much more is available here. At the Department of Records website, www.nyc.gov/records, under the link "*Publications*," city agency publications can be found under the topic "Recreation/Parks."