

GREENING



*Caucasian
Wing Nut Tree,
The Brooklyn
Botanic Garden*



Parks continues to create a greener and healthier city. By acquiring more parkland each month and through aggressive planting and Greenstreet development, Parks has ensured a more beautiful New York for generations to come.



GREENING

RESTORATIONS

*Street trees in
mid-town
Manhattan*

Parks' Natural Resources Group (NRG) manages \$70 million in projects including grants, public works mitigations, and damages claims. In 1998 and 1999, NRG received the Times Mirror Magazine North American Conservation Prize, the Nature Conservancy Oak

Leaf Award for Environmental Protection, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency Award for Environmental Excellence for its work as Chair of the **New York/New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program Habitat Work Group**. As Chair, NRG has coordinated diverse regional concerns and acquisition and

restoration priorities and enforcement strategies for a sustainable harbor.

NRG also received \$2 million from the New York/New Jersey Government Oil Spill Trustee Fund to restore salt marshes in Northwest Staten Island, and \$15 million from the New York State Clean Water Clean Air

BRONX RIVER

Commissioner Stern declared 1999 **“The Year of the Bronx River.”** Throughout the year, Parks focused on restoring the river and generating support among government agencies, local businesses, and the Bronx communities that border the River. On November 19, 1999,



Bond Act for forest restorations at Alley Pond, Bronx River, Inwood Hill, Fort Tryon, and Riverdale Parks and Seton Falls.

NRG’s Rare & Endangered Plant Propagation Program has re-introduced thirty endangered plant species collect from seed, such as the Purple Milkweed and the Nantucket Juneberry, and restored them into the urban wild.

Parks hoisted 20 rust-ridden and derelict vehicles from the depths of the Bronx River at Starlight Park, heralding the start of the \$60 million Bronx River Action Plan and initiating the Adopt-The-River program. This public/private partnership, modeled after the Adopt-A-Highway program, supports restoration and management activities along the river corridor. Con Edison is the first corporate partner to participate in the program. The Bronx

One of the twenty abandoned cars removed in the continuing restoration of the Bronx River

River plan details five core goals: complete and restore the Bronx River Greenway to create continuous access; create new parks and restore existing ones along the River; create and implement an effective management plan for the Greenway; restore the Bronx River to health; and increase community stewardship through volunteer and recreational programs.

PARK ACQUISITIONS

In FY98 and FY99, Parks acquired 351.39 acres of new parkland, including the 160.74 acre Paedergat Basin Park in Brooklyn, the 70.29 acre Staten Island Industrial Park, the 21.06 acre Powells Cove Park in Queens, the 4.3 acre Pugsley Creek Park in the Bronx, and the 1.61 acre Washington Market Park in lower Manhattan. This brought the total acreage acquired during the Giuliani administration to over 1601 acres by the end of 1999. As of January 1, 2000, 13.67% of City land was parkland.

GREENSTREETS

Greenstreets are triangles, malls, and traffic islands that have been converted from concrete areas to green spaces by removing pavement and planting trees, shrubs, and flowers. Parks has planted more than 800 greenstreets since 1996, including 157 in the Bronx, 173 in Brooklyn, 101 in Manhattan, 243 in Queens, and 126 on Staten Island. In addition to agency in-

house forces, Parks works with community groups to help maintain the growing number of sites. By 2001, 2001 greenstreets will be planted throughout the five boroughs.



*The Bobwhite Quail
Project X release
in Pelham Bay Park,
Bronx*

URBAN PARK RANGERS

Throughout 1998 and 1999, the Urban Park Rangers continued to excel in promoting stewardship of parks among New Yorkers through programming and ecological restorations, conducting 1,821 programs which served 73,831 people.

In 1998, the Urban Park Rangers secured funding through New York State grants for three new nature centers. By 2001, the Rangers will manage eleven centers citywide, including the Blue Heron Nature Center in Staten Island, Pier A in Battery Park and the Salt Marsh Nature

Center in Brooklyn's Marine Park. Parks' **Project X** initiative promotes biodiversity in city parks by reintroducing native species that had disappeared from the urban ecosystem. Project X received international press coverage for its 1998 Luna Moth release in Central Park. Over FY98 and 99, Project X reintroduced Screech Owls, Baltimore Checkerspots, Bobwhite Quails, Wood Frog Ebony Jewelings, Gray Treefrogs, Sweetfern, Skunk Cabbage, and American Columbine to their native habitats.

Parks Enforcement Patrol (PEP) ensures that reasonable behavioral norms are met by Park users. In FY98 and 99, PEP issued 28,469 summonses to

violators of Parks' rules and regulations. During the summer of 1999, 23 Skate Patrols prevented accidents and regulated traffic flow along the drives of Central and Prospect Parks. In addition to issuing summonses for illegal activities, Skate Patrols enforce proper behavior among bikers and in-line skaters and provide a positive example for the public.

PLANNING

Parks continued to work closely with the Department of City Planning on the completion of the **Greenway Master Plans**: the development of miles of paths throughout New York City, connecting existing paths into





*Newly renovated
Columbus Circle,
Manhattan
made way for more
green space*

continuous routes for recreation and transportation. These routes each form a part of the 350-mile New York City Greenway System. Many of the new paths border the waterfront, creating river views and fishing and boating opportunities.

Working with the Historic House Trust, the Planning Division oversaw the completion of a \$250,000 preservation and interpretive study of the historic fortifications at **Fort Totten**. Parks worked with the Fire Department and its consultant team to develop a Master Plan for the entire 220-acre fort.

Parks also worked with the Departments of Transportation and City Planning to test a new configuration of **Columbus Circle** and to hire a consultant team of engineers and landscape architects to undertake permanent redesign. A more welcoming green space was opened for the

period until Columbus Island is redesigned.

GRANT AWARDS

In 1998 and 1999, state grants to Parks exceeded \$6.5 million, with \$6,138,000 coming from the New York State Clean Water Clean Air Bond Act (CWCA) and the Environmental Protection Act (EPF) and \$472,000 from the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) and, Botanical Gardens, and Aquariums programs (ZBGA).

Federal grant awards totaled \$12 million, including \$10.9 million from HUD-CDBG for Recreation Service programs and \$1.1 million from the Department of Interior/National Park Service Land & Water Conservation Fund.



TREES

Over the last six years, Parks has planted more than **70,000 street trees**, including 14,319 in FY99 alone. Parks planted 16,592 trees in FY98, 17,415 in FY97, 13,545 in FY96, and 8,200 trees in FY95. In FY00, Parks will plant an additional 15,000 trees.

For years, city parks and streets had been plagued with thousands of dead trees. Parks eliminated the backlog of 9,127 dead trees by Labor Day 1997, and then set a new standard that any dead tree must be removed within 30 days after it is reported. To date, nearly

A Climber and Pruner takes to the trees in Highbridge Park, Bronx

60,000 dead trees have been removed. Parks also plans to remove over 7,000 stumps in FY00, after removing nearly 8,000 stumps in FY98 and FY99. In November 1997, Parks initiated a program of routine block-by-block maintenance for street trees. Thanks to increased fund-

for the dramatic decrease in requests is improved tracking. Using a computer program called Tree Manager, each borough has eliminated the duplicate counting that occurred when using a paper filing system. Increases in forestry expense contract spending has allowed Parks' in-house crews to



*Monarch Birch
at Eastern Parkway
Gatehouse
in Brooklyn Botanic
Garden*

ing from Mayor Giuliani and the City Council, street trees will be pruned on a ten year cycle.

FORESTRY REQUESTS

In FY99, Parks received 12,150 public requests for forestry services, down from 39,461 in FY98 and 70,055 in FY97. One reason

address service requests more quickly and efficiently.

ARBORIST'S APPRENTICES

Two years ago, Parks created the **Arborist's Apprentice Training Program** to increase the pool of qualified applicants to fill vacancies. Ten Parkies successfully

passed the qualifying field exam and are now working as arborists.

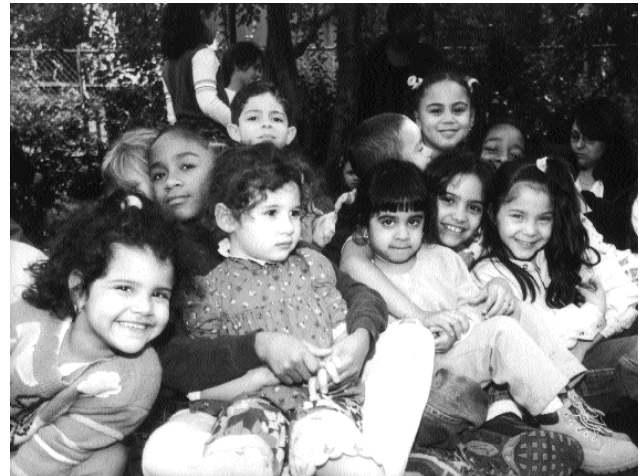
THE NEW YORK TREE TRUST

The New York Tree Trust, a program managed by Parks and the City Parks Foundation, was established in 1994 by Commissioner Stern to protect, preserve, and enhance New York City's street, park, and forest trees. Throughout 1998 and 1999, the New York Tree Trust ran programs geared toward increasing urban conservation and stewardship. Among the most significant are the **One-Stop Tree Shop**, which expedites tree planting throughout the City, and **Stewardship for Young Trees** which provides citizen participation in the maintenance of 1,000 street trees. Also in 1999, the Tree Trust produced the 2000 Edition of *Great Trees of New York City: A Guide*. This book features photos and descriptions of New York City's most beautiful trees.

GREENTHUMB

Founded in 1978, GreenThumb remains the nation's largest urban gardening program, assisting 700 neighborhood groups in the creation and maintenance of community gardens. GreenThumb was initiated in response to the city's severe financial crisis during the 1970s, which resulted in a serious loss of population and housing in neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs. As GreenThumb gardens grow

older, they become more sophisticated and better integrated with other community institutions. Nearly 90% of GreenThumb gardens offer public programming aimed at improving quality of life for residents of all ages. Parks worked in conjunction with the Department of Housing



Preservation & Development to coordinate the transfer of over thirty gardens to Parks. Currently, 701 sites participate in the GreenThumb program.

Attendees at the 1999 dedication ceremony of "El Jardín de Paradiso" on the Lower East Side of Manhattan