

Drew Gardens



Drew Gardens is a two-acre site in West Farms on the Bronx River. Formerly a dumping site, the garden, named for activist and founder Drew Hyde, has been in operation since the mid 1990's.

In addition to being a peaceful refuge for the community, the garden has become a living classroom for students of all ages to study the Bronx River, the urban forest, pollinator gardening, and the interdependency of plants and animals in these habitats.

The Bronx River is accessible from the garden's edge. Due to the remnants of a small dam, the river usually features a ripple at this point. When water levels are lower, there is a shallow edge about three feet wide in which a variety of species can be found when dip netting.

Central to the space are the educational garden beds where community members and students plant, maintain and harvest vegetables and herbs. Compost bins have been built near the beds, and gardeners are actively contributing to the pile. The site also features a native butterfly garden, a stage overlooking the river, and an open grassy area suitable for guided activities.

Community events and student projects are welcomed at Drew Gardens. The Phipps Greening Program manages the garden and all activities must be planned with them in advance. Programs at Drew Gardens can include indoor activities in cooperation with the West Farms Beacon Program if the appropriate space is available and the activities are within permitting guidelines.

AMENITIES

Restrooms: Restrooms are located at the Phipps Greening Program office. Access is dependent on their hours of operation. Restrooms may also be found in McDonald's at the corner of Devoe Ave. and E. Tremont Ave.

Playgrounds & Benches: Drew Gardens is not for free play. However, there is a deck/stage and grassy area suitable for picnicking, playacting or other "get moving" activities with permission from the hosts.

NOTED FLORA AND FAUNA

Canada goose, mallard duck, black-crowned night heron, cat-bird, black locust, Japanese maple, swallowtail butterfly, monarch butterfly, American eels, common eastern box turtle, common carp.

Food: Convenience stores, Twin Donut, Pioneer Supermarket, McDonald's and the Yi Pin Chinese Restaurant are located along E. Tremont in the immediate vicinity.

Access: Most of Drew Gardens is wheelchair accessible via an even wood chip and grassy path. The Beacon Program within CS214 has access to elevators. The Greening Program is planning to create raised beds for accessibility in 2007.

Parking: Parking is not permitted in the school parking lot without prior consent. Street parking is available on West Farms Rd. and on E. Tremont in front of the Bronx River Art Center. Do not park on Bronx St., the small demapped street to the west of the art center. There are bus stops directly in front of Drew Gardens; so parking is prohibited there.

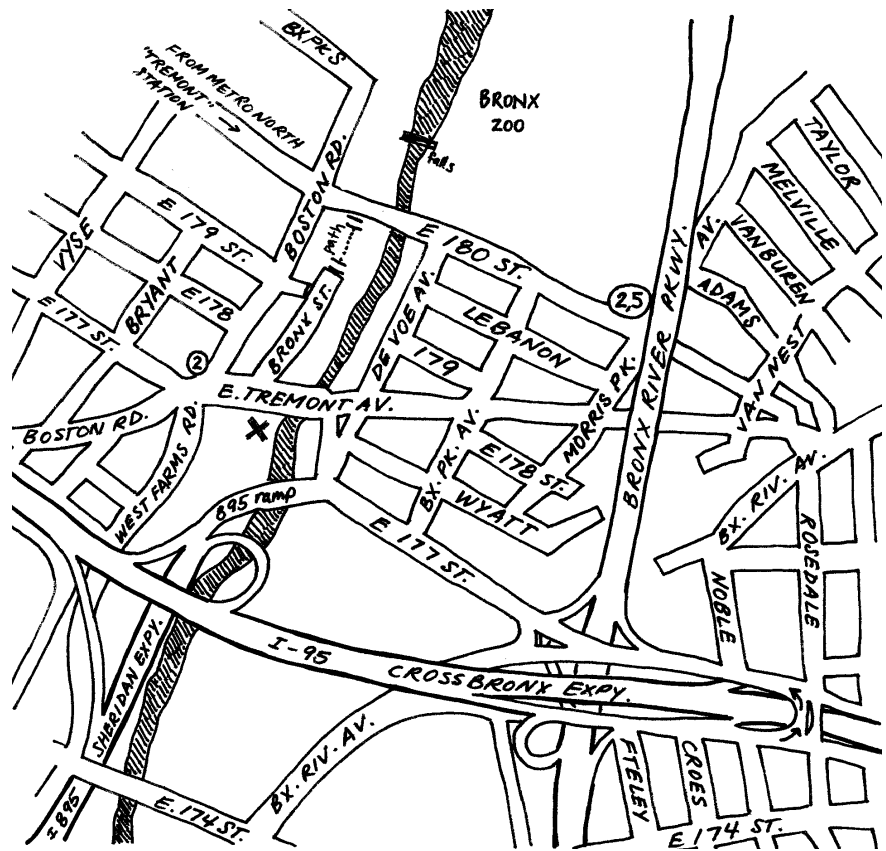
DRIVING DIRECTIONS

From the north: Take the Bronx River Pkwy. S to E 177th St. Follow two blocks to Devoe Ave. At the light turn right. Bear left and turn left onto East Tremont Ave. Continue below.

From the south: Take the Bruckner Expy. N[E] (I-278) to the Sheridan Expy. (I-895). Follow to the end (E. 177th St. exit). At the light turn left onto Devoe Ave. Bear left, and turn left onto East Tremont Ave. Continue below.

From the west: Take I-95 N[E] to exit 4B – the exit for the Bronx River Pkwy. North. Follow signage for the Bronx River Parkway (stay to the left as you approach the traffic light at Rosedale Ave; after you cross over I-95, move to the right lane), PASS the entrance for the parkway north, and then bear right. At the third light, make a soft right on to Devoe Ave. Travel one block and turn left on East Tremont Ave. Continue below.

Continue from above; From E. 177th St. & Devoe Avenue: After turning left on E. Tremont Ave., over the Bronx River, the Bronx River Art Center is on your right, the Drew Gardens entrance is immediately on the left — next to the Lorraine Hansberry Middle School/CS 214.



PUBLIC TRANSIT

Subway: **2** Train to West Farms Square/East Tremont Avenue at Boston Rd. Walk east (toward Bronx St.) on E. Tremont Ave. Drew Gardens is on the right (south) side of the street just before the river.

Bus: **Q44, Bx21, Bx40, Bx42** all stop at Drew Gardens and E. Tremont Av. on the west side of the river (just east of West Farms Square).

Metro-North: **Harlem Line** to Tremont Station. Take the **Bx40, Bx42** E past West Farms Square to Drew Gardens, on the right just before the river.

Inside Track

- GREENWAY PLAN:
 - South of Drew Gardens, the Bronx River Greenway will open up a one-mile section of parkland along the river. Scheduled to open in 2010, this segment of greenway is being implemented by the New York State Department of Transportation and will feature a one kilometer walking and biking loop along both sides of the river, overlook areas and a new boathouse and classroom facilities at Starlight Park.
 - Intersection of E. 177th St., Devoe Ave., and E. Tremont Ave. will be reconstructed, improving safety, greening the street, and calming traffic.
 - The riverbank opposite Drew Gardens will be converted into a park, and a natural, vegetated slope down to the river and be restored.
 - The greenway will cross E. Tremont Ave. just next to Drew Gardens, at a new signalized mid-block crossing where it will continue onto Bronx St., next to the Bronx River Art Center.
 - See “BRONX RIVER GREENWAY PLAN” available at www.bronxriver.org/plans for the latest development information, or call 718-430-4665.
- A good site for leaf pack study (macroinvertebrate analysis).
- Though public, the garden is kept locked to prevent vandalism. Contact the Phipps Greening Program Coordinator at 718-542-0109, or the Bronx River Alliance for access and to plan a visit.
- Site contains a steep grassy slope to the river.
- Ticks have been found in the taller vegetation near the southern end of the garden. Visitors need to dress accordingly if working in that area.
- Poison ivy is occasionally found off the path, close to the riverbank. This can be avoided by staying on the path in this section of the garden.

SUITABLE ACTIVITIES

- Garden tour.
- Water quality monitoring, including leaf pack studies.
- Restoration work (occasionally).
- Mapping, drawing, art-related activities.
- Gardening.
- Composting.
- Greenmarket visit, in season.
- Quiet listening and enjoying the view.

