

THE NORTH WOODS

Welcome to Central Park's North Woods!
There is plenty to discover in this woodland ecosystem.

What is a woodland ecosystem?

Woodland ecosystems consist of the forest floor, the understory, and the tree canopy. They are made up of living things, like plants and animals, and non-living things, like water, soil, and rocks. Although the North Woods is a designed landscape, it is still a functioning woodland ecosystem.

Trees

The woodlands are the only places in Central Park where you can observe trees in all stages of life, from seeds to dead logs. The young saplings in the North Woods may grow to be a part of the canopy, while mature trees provide shade and shelter for plants and animals. Dead logs can be hosts to a lot of life, including mushrooms, insects, and young plants.

Mushrooms

Healthy woodland ecosystems have rich soil and a thick layer of leaf litter covering the ground. Mushrooms and other decomposers are essential components of a healthy woodland because they break down dead plants and animals to provide nutrients for other plants, animals, and insects.

Wildlife

Many animals can be found in the North Woods because it offers plenty of food, water, and shelter to support diverse species. Woodpeckers drill for food and create nests in standing dead trees, while cardinals make their neat, round nests out of twigs in the lower branches of shrubs. Squirrels build their messy-looking nests, called dreys, in the sturdy upper branches of tall trees.

On your walk

Begin at the Charles A. Dana Discovery Center. Walking along the Loch should take about 40 minutes, including stops to observe and discuss woodland ecosystems.

Plan your visit

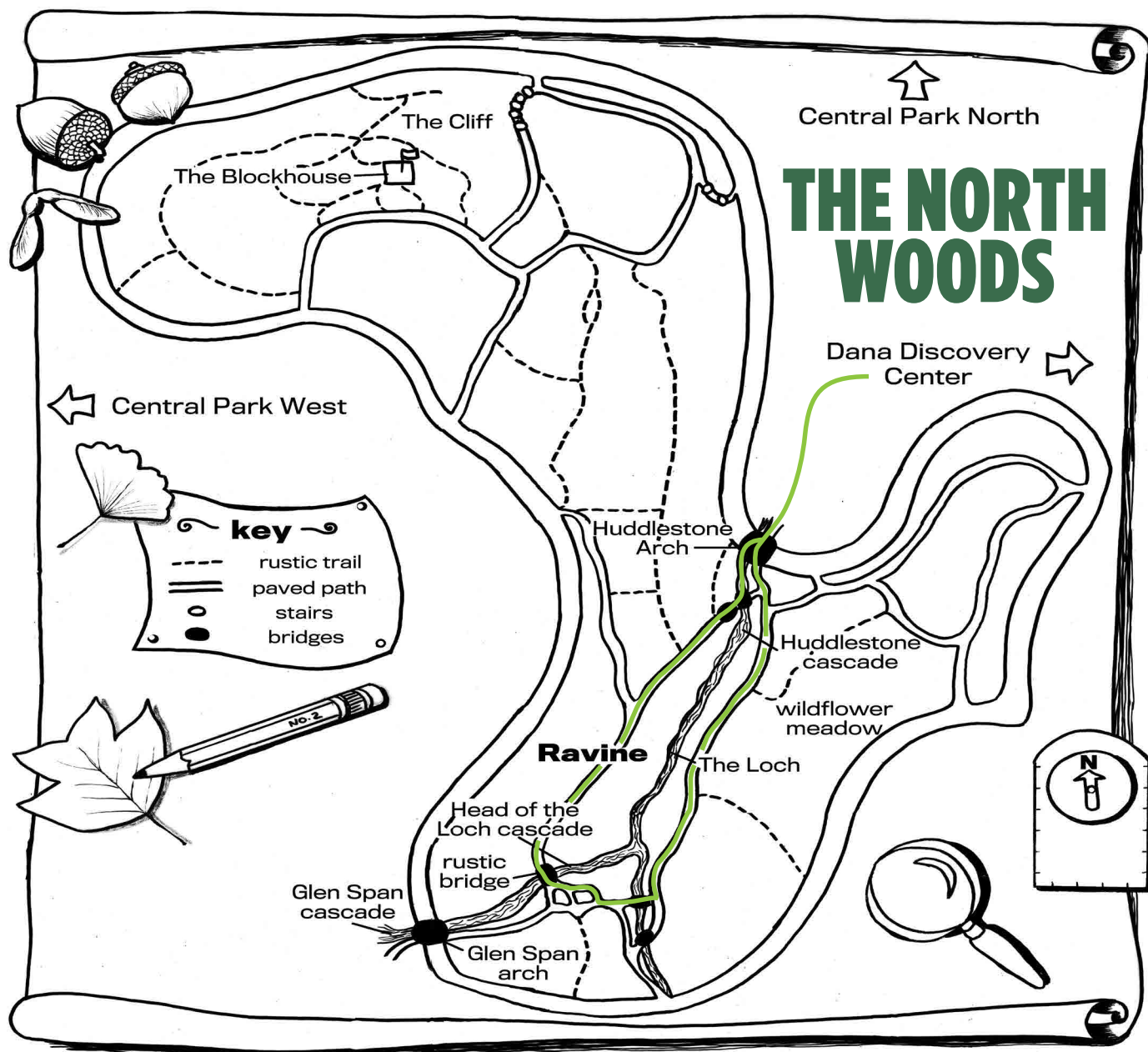
Enhance your experience by checking out a free Discovery Kit that includes binoculars, a hand lens, pencils, sketch paper, and child-friendly field guides. An optional Discovery Journal provides fun activities for children to do in the Park. Advance registration required for groups of five or more. For more information, contact the Dana Discovery Center at **347.443.0656**.

Discover Responsibly

Do your part to keep the North Woods healthy and beautiful. Follow these three rules while you explore:

- 1. Keep the wildlife wild.** Wild animals have unique diets and human food isn't good for them.
- 2. Put garbage in its place.** Litter pollutes the Park and can be harmful to animals if eaten.
- 3. Respect the landscape.** Fenced areas give animals and sensitive plantings a break from people.

Tell us what you discover



Illustrations by Anne Yen

Discover Central Park

The Central Park Conservancy offers a variety of educational programs and resources to help children explore and discover Central Park, and develop skills for learning and inquiry, all in the world's greatest outdoor classroom. Learn more: centralparknyc.org/discovery

About the Central Park Conservancy

Central Park is New York's 843-acre backyard, a beloved and essential public space that serves as an escape from the stresses of the City. Funded primarily by individual donations, the nonprofit Central Park Conservancy cares for the entire Park, making sure it remains clean, beautiful, free, and open to all, every day. We tend to the largest and smallest details of the Park's maintenance and restoration, while seeking innovative ways to nurture a living masterpiece that feels welcoming to our 42 million visitors each year.