

Scenic Hudson Parks: Long Dock and Madam Brett

No town along the Hudson River has so well cobbled together contiguous walking parks along the shoreline as Beacon.

North-most is the municipal park newly named in honor of Toshi and Pete Seeger. The park, besides hosting a playground for children, and volleyball and basketball for adults, is the only park that has a river pool – a swimming pool-like enclosure ensuring safe wading for children in the Hudson River.

Next to Seeger Park is the Beacon Sloop Club which hosts the annual corn festival, strawberry festival, pumpkin festival and is home to the Hudson River sloop, *Woody Guthrie*.

Adjoining the sloop club is the wharf for the Hudson River ferry – the car crossing from Newburgh to Beacon until construction of the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge in 1963. While its purpose is to serve pedestrian commuters from Newburgh to the Beacon train station, it is also makes for a scenic boat ride.

Next door is Scenic Hudson's Long Dock which besides offering shoreline access contains the River Center – the restored historic Red Barn now used for the arts and environmental education. Long Dock once housed a ferry terminal, oil terminal, and junkyard. In an extensive reclamation project, Scenic Hudson personnel along with its numerous volunteers removed the contaminants of this site's industrial past to create a park attractive to wildlife and providing river access to walkers and kayakers – complete with a kayak pavilion for the storage of kayaks and rentals through Mountain Top Outfitters.

The packed-gravel, Clara Sauer Trail leads to Denning's Point, a New York state park. To the right is the Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries. The environmental exhibit at B.I.R.E. offers a concise history and science of the Hudson River. To the left is a 1.5 mile circular walking path which courses around the perimeter of the Denning's Point peninsula with access to the river and views of Pollepel Island. Denning's Point is closed from December 1 to March 31 for eagle wintering.

The walk away from the river towards Madam Brett Park is along truly scenic wetlands with a wildlife viewing platform. From there, a boardwalk along the Fishkill Creek leads to Madam Brett Park whose path concludes with a spectacular waterfall. From Seeger Park to Madam Brett waterfall, this leisurely walk is 5 miles. It is 3 miles returning back (skipping Denning's Point) to the free car parking at Long Dock Park or to the Beacon transportation station for those who have come by train, bus, or ferry.

To round out this day of exploration, for those with an artistic bent, the acclaimed Dia:Beacon museum is adjacent to this trail. For dining, Main Street in Beacon is lined with restaurants throughout. And for Sunday services, there is a church of every faith.

In Beacon is all that John Burroughs writes about in nature: "To the scientist, nature is a storehouse of facts, laws, processes; to the artist, she is a storehouse of pictures; to the poet, she is a storehouse of images, fancies, a source of inspiration; to the moralist, she is a storehouse of precepts and parables; to all may she be an object of knowledge and joy."



Waterfall at Madam Brett Park



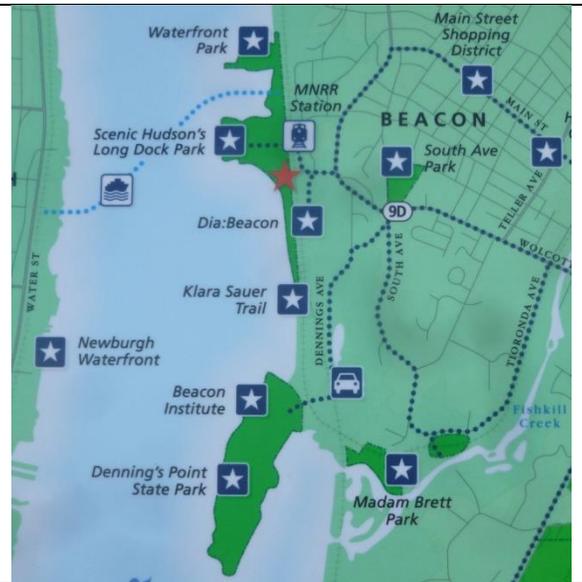
Long Dock Park



Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries



Seeger Park



Beacon shoreline map



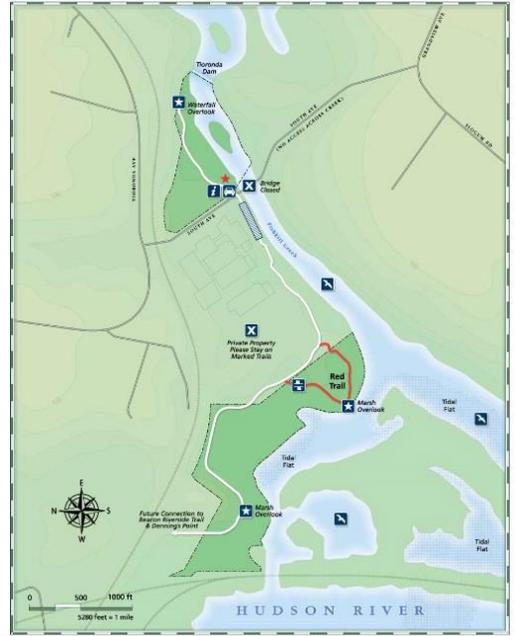
Wildlife observation platform



Boardwalk along Fishkill Creek



Long Dock Park map



Madam Brett Park map