

Scenic Hudson – Parks & Preserves: *Four-Mile Point Preserve*

Like the subtle sweetness of salad greens, the Hudson River Valley on this first day of autumn offers colorful glimpses of fall foliage yet to come. Driving up to Athens via the Thruway (Catskill exit 21), the sumac and ivy reds are the first to show themselves, though an occasional orange sugar maple splashes upon the scene, and the yellow leaves of hickory looking like late autumn is a reminder of how fleeting is this colorful affair. As clear blue skies of morning give way to noontime cumulous clouds, the sirens of Mother Nature beckon.



Four-Mile Point Preserve

Four-Mile Point Preserve on the western bank of the Hudson River just north of the town of Catskill off Route 385 is the northernmost Scenic Hudson property. With less than a half-mile of graveled, flat trails the river is easily reachable at this small, serene park. At the water's edge are a few picnic tables amidst a cedar grove. The three, short spur trails offer overlooks of the Hudson River and a remote marsh which has a viewing platform.

Websites: <http://scenichudson.org/sites/default/files/u2/fourmile-webmap.jpg>
<http://www.scenichudson.org/parks/fourmilepoint>

A few hundred yards down Four-Mile Point Road is the *Vosburgh Swamp*, also a Scenic Hudson property. While there is a quarter-mile access path into the swamp, it can be interspersed with weeds. Still, even pausing in the parking area provides a pleasant perspective of the Hudson River.

Website: <http://www.topoquest.com/place-detail.php?id=968609>.

For those needing boating access to the river, there is a NYS *Hudson River Valley Greenway* boat ramp and dock at Murderer's Kill just north of the village of Athens for both paddle boats and power boats.

Website: <http://www.hudsongreenway.ny.gov/Trailsandscenicbyways/watertrail/WTMap.aspx>

In Athens itself, there is additional river access, as well as the outfitter PaddleHead Boards which rents kayaks, paddleboards, and bicycles. Casual dining – indoors and out – is available at the Athens Riverside Café. Athens has a particularly quiet and open riverfront.

Just south of the village of Athens is *The Willows at Brandow's Point*, a 60-acre property owned by the NYS DEC and managed by the Greene Land Trust. Two miles of trails course through the tall fields and deep woods down to the Hudson River; long pants or gaiters are recommended.

Website: www.greenelandtrust.org/properties/trails-info-for-willows-at-brandow-point.

Also on Route 385 is the 50-acre *Cohotates Preserve* maintained by Greene County. A half-mile gravel road descends steeply to the Hudson River where the former ice house is now a sizable picnic area on the river – including benches and picnic tables. A half-mile dirt trail courses over

eight footbridges through the woods and along the shoreline, and a grassy circular path around a pond offers a different set of flora and fauna associated with marshland.

Website: <http://www.gcsxcd.com/env-ed/cohotate>.

Maps of each of these preserves are available on their respective websites. With all these preserves clustered within a few miles of each other, this collection of strolls and dining make for a pleasant day trip.



Vosburgh Swamp



Cohotates Preserve



Greenway at Murderer's Kill



The Willows at Brandow's Point



Four Mile Point Preserve map



Marsh Overlook at Four Mile Point