



52 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

HUMANE TRIP ADVISORY

October 2011

Dear Colleagues:

UFT Humane Education Committee offers the following listing of potential trip sites for New York City teachers and their students. We support most sites listed as fostering humane concerns. We have noted those we believe to be inappropriate for students.

This document was created thanks to input from the following teachers:

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We welcome your feedback and suggestions for additional sites to be included. Please provide comments and ratings for sites we have listed with “pending” ratings if you have visited these sites.

Please use the form at the end of this document to submit information for possible inclusion in future revisions of this Humane Trip Advisory.

Thank you.

PLEASE NOTE: Five stars is the highest possible rating. Zero stars indicate a site that we believe to be inappropriate for students.

1. Trip Site: Alley Pond Environmental Center

Trip Address: 226-01 Northern Blvd., Douglaston, NY

Trip Phone Number: 718-229-4000

Website: www.alleypond.com/

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: Grades 2 -- 8

Additional information: Nature Trails/guided tours, live animal exhibits including native wildlife, age appropriate arts & crafts projects

Comments: This is a very popular place for school trips. You need to book early in the year as it has become a popular venue.

Rating: 5 stars

2. Trip Site: Brooklyn Grange Farm

Trip Address: 37-18 Northern Blvd, Long Island City

Trip Phone Number: 718-404-2023

Website: www.brooklyngrangefarm.com/

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: Grades 3-12

Additional information: Site is a fully-functioning rooftop farm, the largest in the NYC area. Students will learn about food production, sustainability, composting, organic food, local food. They will also have a chance to eat straight from the farm! See a teacher's classblog about this site at <http://5-316-2010.blogspot.com/2010/10/to-roof-to-farm.html>.

Rating: 5 stars

3. Trip Site: Catskill Animal Sanctuary

Trip Address: 316 Old Stage Road Saugerties, NY 12477

Trip Phone Number: 845-336-8447

Website: <http://casanctuary.org/>

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades k - 12**

Additional information: **Located two hours north of New York City, CAS provides a safe and loving haven for abused horses and farmed animals. Since 2001, CAS has provided refuge for over 1,700 such animals, and served as a center to raise awareness of their mistreatment and its impact on all of us. Many of these animals have previously never known warm shelter, spacious pastures, good food, or the touch of a kind hand.**

Comments: **Great place for a class trip if you can get a bus.**

Rating: **5 stars**

4. Trip Site: **Charles A. Dana Discovery Center**

Trip Address: **Lenox Avenue at 110 Street, New York, NY 10026**

Trip Phone Number: **212-860-1370**

Website: www.centralpark.com/guide/attractions/discovery-center.html

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades Pre-k to 12**

Additional information: **The Harlem Meer is a thriving aquatic ecosystem that supports a wide variety of fish, waterfowl, turtles, plants and microorganisms. Some of the fish living in the Meer include largemouth bass, pumpkinseed sunfish, bluegill sunfish, carp and chain pickerel.**

Comments: **Catch-and-release fishing is offered at the Harlem Meer.**

Rating: **3 stars We do not support their fish catch and release program.**

5. Trip Site: **Ecology Village National Park Service, Gateway National Recreation Area**

Trip Address: **Gateway National Recreation Area, Building 70, Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn, New York 11234**

Trip Phone Number: **718-338-4306**

Website: www.nps.gov/gate/forteachers/ecology-village-camping-teacher-training-course.htm

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades 4 - 8**

Additional information: Located at Gateway National Recreation Area's Floyd Bennett Field, Ecology Village offers students in grades 4 – 8 the only curriculum-based overnight camping program in the New York City area. During the camping trip, students explore nature, prepare meals outdoors, practice teamwork and participate in hands-on environmental stewardship. This inquiry-based program was recently revised to reflect NYC DOE learning standards and Scope and Sequence in science.

Comments: **Pending**

Rating: **5 stars**

6. Trip Site: **Gateway National Recreation Center**

Trip Address: **Gateway National Recreation Area, Building 70, Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn, New York 11234**

Trip Phone Number: **718-338-4306**

Website: www.nps.gov/gate/index.htm

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades k – 12**

Additional information: **Gateway is a great place to hike, bicycle, swim, sail, canoe, bird watch or attend musical events. There are activities each season. Check the website for links to Gateway's three units –Jamaica Bay / Sandy Hook/Staten Island. Operating hours, fees, directions and other information can also be found on the site**

Comments: **Pending**

Rating: **4 stars**

We do not support their fishing program.

7. Trip Site: **Greenbelt Environmental Education Center**

Trip Address: **200 Nevada Ave., High Rock Park Staten Island , New York 10306**

Trip Phone Number: **718-667-7475**

Website:

www.nycgovparks.org/sub_your_park/vt_the_greenbelt/vt_gb_06_headquarters.html

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades k - 12**

Additional information: **Greenbelt headquarters and the Greenbelt Environmental Education Department are located in rustic High Rock Park. The education center, which received landmark status in 1971, offers science, art and hiking programs for school groups. A popular summer camp also attracts children from all parts of New York City. The center publishes an environmental magazine for “young naturalists” and offers school recess programs, teacher workshops and intergenerational classes on and offsite throughout the year.**

Comments: **Pending**

Rating: **4 stars**

8. Trip Site: **Green Chimneys**

Trip Address: **400 Doansburg Road, Box 719. Brewster, NY 10509-0719**

Trip Phone Number: **845- 279-2995. Ext 383**

Website:

www.greenchimneys.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=510:wildlife-center-tours&catid=109:farm&Itemid=273

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades 2 -12**

Trips are generally booked 6 months in advance.

Additional information: **They are a residential (NPS) site for special education kids. They are raptor rehabilitators and also maintain a farm sanctuary for livestock and wildlife that is unable to return to their natural habitats. They sponsor several events in the spring (raptor releases, etc.) that schools and/or the general public can attend. Farm Tours are available on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 10 am or 1 pm, and Saturdays at 10 am only and take 60 to 90 minutes.**

www.greenchimneys.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=133

Comments: Pending

Rating: **4 stars**

9. Trip Site: **Green Meadows Farm**

Trip Address: **73-50 Little Neck Parkway Floral Park, NY 11002 - 0245**

Trip Phone Number: **718-470-0224**

Website: www.visitgreenmeadowsfarm.com/

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Green Meadows program is designed for students at the primary school level.**

Additional information: **We have received numerous complaints from teachers about this facility.**

Teachers complain that there are dozens of school buses and many hundreds of kids pouring into the facility at the same time. Several teachers have said that they had to wait on line for nearly an hour before being allowed into this site.

Teachers have stated that they are concerned at seeing “wooden long boxes with baby rabbits, guinea pigs, and chicks who were being mobbed and squeezed by about 30 kids at a time, with no supervision or instruction about how to handle an animal.” Teachers have told us that.

“These animals seemed terrified. The rabbits were paralyzed from fear. The guinea pigs were constantly running to try to get away from the kids' hands.”

The ASPCA's Humane Law Enforcement Division said “they've been called out to the place many times, but unless an animal is sick or injured, there was nothing they could do.” They urged teachers to call the Health Department, which regulates how many kids they can have around the animals at one time. If they exceed a certain number, they get a violation. But without constant vigilance, there's not much that can be done.

Comments: **We do NOT recommend this trip.**

Rating: **0 stars**

10. Trip Site: **Hudson River Park Trust**

Trip Address: **353 West Street (at W. Houston Street), Pier 40, New York, NY 10014**

Trip Phone Number: **212-627-2020**

Website: www.hudsonriverpark.org/education/teachers.asp

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades k - 12**

Additional information: **Throughout the year, the Hudson River Park Trust offers FREE field trips, tours, lectures, and teacher training workshops for K – 12 schools. A field trip to Hudson River Park can enhance your classroom lessons through place-based, hands-on activities. Park staff will work with you to plan and execute a successful trip. Programs include ‘Changing Waterfront’, Garden Trees, Insects and Birds’, Water Quality and Plankton’, and ‘Fishing and Biology’**

Comments: **Pending**

Rating: **3 stars**

We do not support catching and release fishing programs

11. Trip Site: **Prospect Park Audubon Center at the Boathouse**

Trip Address: **The Audubon Center at the Boathouse is located just inside the Lincoln Road/Ocean Ave. entrance to the Park. [Click here to view this location on Interactive Map.](#)**

Trip Phone Number: **718-287-3400**

Website: www.prospectpark.org/audubon

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades k - 12**

Additional information: **The Audubon Center is the result of a trailblazing partnership between the Prospect Park Alliance and Audubon New York. The first urban-area Audubon Center in the nation, it is a place of active discovery with hands-on exhibits and innovative programming for children and adults. Exhibits allow visitors to explore the world of nature through interactive technology, using the Park’s diverse natural habitat as a venue for learning and fun. Groups can visit the Prospect Park Audubon Center during open hours Thursday – Sunday noon to 5 p.m. by making an appointment. Call (718) 287-3400 x 303 for the Audubon Center group visits.**

Comments: **Pending**

Rating: **4 stars**

12. Trip Site: **Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus**

Website: www.ringling.com/

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Ringling Brothers believes this site is suitable for all grade levels.**

Comments: **IF** this circus returns to NYC, we strongly urge you NOT to take your students here. We don't believe that children should be exposed to elephants that sit on their hind legs or lions and tigers that jump through hoops of fire. We think that children learn nothing about the normal behaviors and needs of "wild" animals from this show but instead will come to realize that animals are sometimes exploited to entertain people.

Rating: **0 stars** We do NOT recommend this trip.

13. Trip Site: **Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research & Preservation**

Trip Address: **428 East Main Streer, Riverhead, NY 11901**

Trip Phone Number: **631-369-9840 or 631-369-9826**

Website: www.riverheadfoundation.org/

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades K to 12**

Additional information: **The primary mission of The Riverhead Foundation is the rescue, rehabilitation and release of sick and injured sea turtles, seals, dolphins and whales.**

Comments: **The Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research & Preservation offers a wide range of engaging programs that will enhance any student's knowledge and appreciation of the marine environment and habitats. Programs include school visits and tours of the facility,**

Rating: **4 stars**

14. Trip Site: **Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden**

Trip Address: **1000 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, NY 10301**

Trip Phone Number: **718-425-3556 for more information and to book class trips.**

Website: www.snug-harbor.org/programs.html

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades K – 12**

Additional information: **Programs include horticulture as well as science and nature.**

Comments: **Pending**

Rating: **Pending**

15. Trip Site: **Solar 1**

Trip Address: **23rd Street & East River**

Trip Phone Number: **solar1.org**

Website: <http://solar1.org/>

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades k - 12**

Additional Information: **They offer programs that discuss – Renewable Energy, Sustainable Design and Estuary & Park Ecology. Solar One is a vendor for the NYC DOE. Please contact them via their website to receive more information about program fees.**

Comments: **Pending**

Rating: **4 stars We do NOT support their “oyster gardening” program.**

16. Trip Site: **Urban Park Rangers**

Trip Address: **Get information about exploring NYC parks at www.nycgovparks.org/sub_your_park/park_list/index.html**

Trip Phone Number: **Call 311**

Website:

[www.nycgovparks.org/sub_about/parks_divisions/urban_park_rangers/pd ur.html](http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_about/parks_divisions/urban_park_rangers/pd_ur.html)

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades pre-k to 12**

Additional information: **New York City parks provide the vital habitats in which our native plants and animals live. In parks, you will find the Urban Park Rangers at Ranger Stations and Nature Centers. The Urban Park Rangers’ mission is to link New Yorkers to the natural world. Rangers teach people to care for the environment and the parks, protect the parks and their wild residents, and restore New York City’s natural heritage.**

Sign up for a variety of email newsletters including one specifically designed for NYC teachers at

www.nycgovparks.org/newsgroup/lists/index.php?p=subscribe&id=1

Comments: **Pending**

Rating: **4 stars**

17. Trip Site: **Wildlife Conservation Society**

Trip Address: **2300 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, NY 10460**

Trip Phone Number: **718-220-5100**

Website: www.wcs.org/

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades k - 12**
Additional information: **Zoos and parks include the following.**

Bronx Zoo

New York Aquarium

Central Park Zoo

Prospect Park Zoo

Queens Zoo

Comments: **Some of the exhibits are spacious and wonderful. These provide an outstanding opportunity to actually see live animals interacting with each other and engaging in, at least some, natural behaviors. The Wildlife Conservation Society also supports actual wildlife conservation at various sites in Africa, Asia, as well as North, South and Central America. While some people oppose all zoos, some of the animals living here -- such as the gorillas -- are being hunted and eaten as “bushmeat” in the wild.**

Problems at the various zoos and parks focus largely on housing animals in exhibits that are extremely small and animals that cannot meet their behavioral, social and psychological needs. Some cases have led to stereotypic behaviors in animals such as Gus, the Polar Bear in the Central Park Zoo.

www.polarbearsinternational.org/sites/default/files/ihc/IHC_BehaviorMgt.pdf This problem has been resolved, to some extent, by providing Gus access to a back den as well as food-related enrichment and toys.

If you decide to visit one of the Wildlife Conservation Society’s zoos, consider having your students compare how various species of animals live in the wild to how they live at the zoo including the amount of space they have and how their interaction with members of their own species compares in the zoo and in the wild. What are the benefits and drawbacks of each living arrangement?

Rating: **3 stars**

18. Trip Site: Woodstock Farm Animal Sanctuary

Trip Address: **35 Van Wagner Road, Willow, NY. 12498**

Trip Phone Number: **845-679-5955**

Website: www.woodstocksanctuary.org/

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: **Grades 1 - 12**

Additional information: **Surrounded by the Catskill Mountains in the town made famous for peace and music, Woodstock Farm Animal Sanctuary provides shelter to cows, pigs, chickens, turkeys, ducks, sheep, and goats who have been rescued from cases of abuse, neglect and abandonment.**

Visitors can come face to face with these animals who most only know as *dinner* and learn about the devastating effects of modern-day agribusiness on the animals, the environment and human health. Here you can frolic with goats in a large open pasture, sit down with a pig who wants nothing more than a belly rub, cuddle with chickens who seek out your attention or get nuzzled by some very friendly sheep!

Comments: **This site is about 2 hours north of Manhattan. It's a wonderful place for a class trip but requires getting a bus.**

Rating: **5 stars**

Some additional sites for teachers or parents and children:

Monk Parrots at Green-Wood Cemetery

Naturalist Steve Baldwin gives an entertaining tour of sites where the Monk Parrot is nesting around the New York metro area, especially near the entrance to Green-Wood Cemetery and around Brooklyn College. His site at www.brooklynparrots.com/ lists all the latest details.

Owls, Bats & Raccoons in Central Park

Central Park is a green oasis among desolate grey urban canyons for birds. The park sees a high concentration of migrants. Several groups, including Audubon Society at www.nycaudubon.org/home/ and Dr. Robert "Birding Bob" DeCandido at www.birdingbob.com give wildlife tours.

Dear Colleagues:

Please use the same format we have used throughout the document if you wish to contribute information about sites we haven't listed or if you wish to comment about sites already listed in our Humane Trip Advisory. This document will be revised periodically.

Please include the following information as well.

Your name _____

Name or number of school where you teach _____

Your school address including borough and zip code _____

Grade level you teach _____

School phone number _____ Home phone number _____

Information for Humane Trip Advisory

Trip Site: _____

Trip Address: _____

Website: _____

Grade level of students appropriate for this site: _____

Additional Information: _____

Comments: _____

Rating: _____

E-mail to HumaneEd@aol.com with the words **Humane Trip Advisory** in the **subject line.**

THANK YOU.