

CORE CREEK PARK 04

IN BRIEF

Though this hike stays mostly on paved trails, Core Creek Park offers wooded retreats and paths that can be easily explored using Lake Luxembourg as a landmark. This park is great for family gatherings, as it offers exceptional facilities and recreation for all.

DESCRIPTION

Core Creek Park is a perfect leisure spot for the entire family. The hiker who wants to explore trails can do so, whereas less adventurous family members can relax in comfort under the shelter of one of the park's many pavilions, with restrooms nearby. Benches are scattered throughout the park, offering walkers respite as needed.

Activities and facilities within the park—hiking, bicycling, tennis, picnicking, playgrounds, and ball fields—also make it well suited for company picnics and play-group gatherings. In May, Lake Luxembourg buzzes with boats carrying anglers reaping the benefits of the glistening waters. The lake is stocked with trout annually, and those wielding hook or fly can also expect to catch bass,

Directions

From Interstate 95 northbound/southbound from central Philadelphia, take Exit 44 for PA 413 toward Levittown/PennDel. Keep right at fork, follow signs for Levittown, and merge onto PA 413; after 1 mile, turn left at Woodbourne Road. Go 2.9 miles and turn left at Ellis Road. Go 0.4 miles and turn left at Fulling Mill Road, and then take a left at Fulling Mill Rd; go 0.2 miles and turn left at Tollgate Road. Park in the last lot on the left, directly in front of the lake near the boat-rental shack.
901 Bridgetown Pike, Langhorne, PA 19047.



KEY AT-A-GLANCE INFORMATION

LENGTH: 2.8 miles

CONFIGURATION: Figure-8

DIFFICULTY: Beginner

SCENERY: Glistening lake and forest with big glimpse of civilization

EXPOSURE: Full sun—full shade

TRAIL TRAFFIC: Moderate

TRAIL SURFACE: Mostly paved

HIKING TIME: 1 hour or less

DRIVING DISTANCE FROM CENTER CITY: 40 minutes

ACCESS: Daily, dawn—dusk, year-round; free admission

MAPS: USGS Langhorne

WHEELCHAIR TRAVERSABLE: Most of the trails are paved or smooth enough for wheelchairs.

FACILITIES: Several restrooms throughout park

SPECIAL COMMENTS: Paved trails and wooded paths with plenty of facilities; great picnic spot for large parties and families. More information: (215) 757-0571; www.buckscounty.org/government/departments/ParksandRec/Parks/CoreCreek.aspx.

GPS Trailhead

Coordinates

UTM Zone (WGS84) 18T

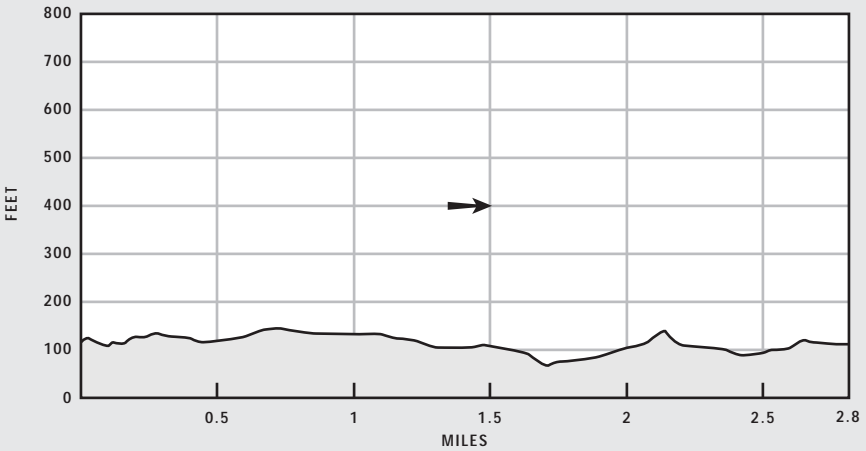
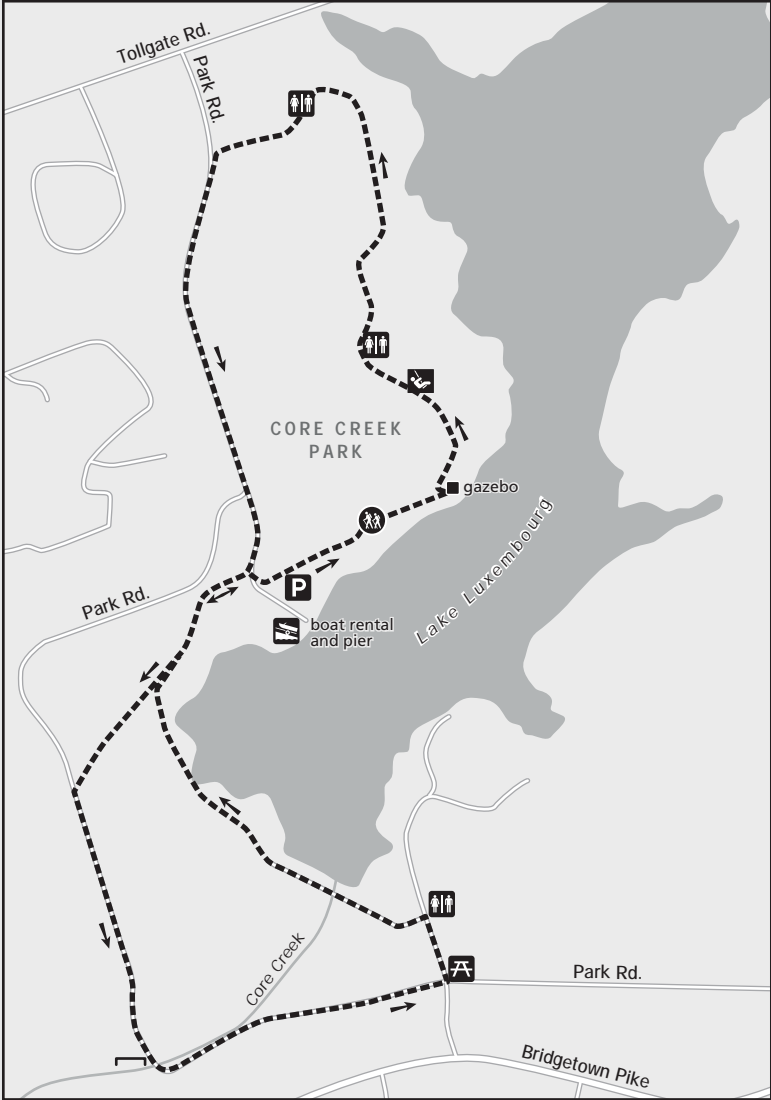
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Northing 4449940

Latitude N 40° 12' 6.1"

Longitude W 74° 55' 1.3"

04 Core Creek Park



A classical-style gazebo looks out on Lake Luxembourg.

walleye, catfish, bluegill, carp, and other native species. Powerboats are limited to those with electric motors, which keeps the park relatively serene.

Take a canoe or an aqua-cycle to a marshy inlet and spot blue herons as they seek privacy amongst the cattails. Host a family cookout, but don't forget to bring your own charcoal. Teach the kids how to ride their bikes on one of the park's many paved trails. Bring a pair of binoculars and enjoy a variety of resident and migratory birds. But even if you're just looking for a new hike, Core Creek offers a variety of trails, both paved and not.



Start from the commemorative arbor entranceway, beside the parking lot. The arbor is dedicated to Bucks County crime victims and their families. In 1998, the Network of Victim Assistance (NOVA) came together with victims, Bucks County commissioners, Bucks County Park & Recreation officials, and police chiefs to designate a five-acre space in Core Creek Park for the memorial. Since 1998, 30 trees and three benches have been placed in memory or in honor of loved ones lost to or affected by violence. In partnership with Mothers Against Drunk Driving of Bucks County, an entranceway was added to this arbor in the fall of 2004.

As you continue along the arbor path, you will see a classical-style gazebo with six roman columns and a dome rooftop. Enjoy the view from its stone bench and look out toward the meditative waters. Stay as long as you like, then continue along the path and around the bend, where there is a view of the children's playground, to the left. Pause to refresh at a nearby water fountain. Soon afterward, the path splits. If you want a shorter hike, take the trail to the left; for a longer walk, stay right.



The pier by the boat rental attracts all kinds of spectators.

Watch for squirrels as they scamper from tree to tree, or spot an occasional northern cardinal as it brightens up the brush. Sparrows, starlings, and robins are also common year-round residents. For a closer look at the birds, amble along one of the many dirt paths that lead toward the lake. In clearings, you may see birds swooping from oak to maple, and from pine to birch.

Once you have had your birding moment and have circled the next bend, a parking lot ahead provides access to the road from which you entered the park. Wheelchair travelers can easily maneuver this roadway because the traffic is reasonably light, especially on the weekdays, and the speed limit is low. Once you arrive at the road, you will be near the rear of St. Mary's Medical Center on your right. Hospital workers and visitors may emerge, looking for a break from long shifts of caring for others, remembering that the best caretakers are those who take care of themselves.

An area to your left, surrounded by a fence and marked with Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) signs, is called a pocket wetland. Funding for the wetland, which is intended to reduce pollution from nitrogen, phosphorous, and other nutrients, was awarded to the Bucks County Conservation District through the DEP and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Princeton Hydro, a water and wetland resources-management firm, provides consulting services for the project. According to Dr. Fred Lubnow of Princeton Hydro, this is one of many such projects implemented in the park during the last ten years.

“Once the wetland is established,” Lubnow said, “the plants aid in slowing storm water flow and allowing solids to drop out as well as assimilate nutrients that otherwise enter the lake and stimulate algal growth. Once complete, it will aid in improving the water quality of Lake Luxembourg.”

Directly ahead is the lake’s boat-rental shack and pier, indicating that you are close to your parking lot. You may stop your hike here or set off on another loop that will add an extra mile. (If you are disabled, please note that the last quarter mile of this hike is not paved.) The field adjacent to the parking lot catches the wind coming off the lake, thus making it a popular spot for kite flyers. Turn right at a junction, onto a path that angles toward the bath facilities and a pavilion, bringing you a view of the western part of the lake.

This trail leads to another park road that hugs the back of a nearby housing development and eventually leads to the opposite side of the lake. Before you turn the bend on the left, stop and listen to the trickling waters of the creek that flow beneath the road and off into the neighboring woodlands.

Continue along the road until you reach the Duchess Lane picnic area. This well-equipped park-within-a-park offers a view across the lake to the boat-rental shack where you began this walk. This mesmerizing lake view may distract you from noticing the majestic white birch tree that reaches out from the left. Adventurous hikers can explore dirt paths to the right that cut through the woods and provide other fine views. After you’ve explored this area, continue through the picnic area and pick up a path on your left that hugs the lake’s southern end.

Unfortunately, your path stops at a grassy area, making a full figure-eight inaccessible to wheelchairs. This area does, however, provide a different vantage point for lake viewing. From here, a northern trek leads you back to the paved trail on the side of the lake and, ultimately, to the parking lot where you started. Here you can get a last look at the pier and the gulls that gather and bask, hoping for stray French fries to highlight their day.

NEARBY ACTIVITIES

HISTORIC NEWTOWN

*(Restaurants, boutiques,
quaint Victorian architecture)*

www.newtownhistoric.org

THE BRICK HOTEL *(Restaurant)*

1 East Washington Avenue, Newtown
(215) 860-8313

www.brickhotel.com

ROUGET *(French cuisine)*

2 Swamp Road, Newtown
(215) 860-4480

TEMPERANCE HOUSE INN & RESTAURANT AND TAVERN

5 South State Street, Newtown
(215) 860-9975

www.temperancehouse.com

SESAME PLACE

*(Children’s theme park;
can be especially busy on weekends)*

100 Sesame Road, Langhorne
(215) 752-7070

www.sesameplace.com