



## ELECTRONIC SENSORS PROTECT BIRD NESTS

Parks' Urban Park Service (UPS) is making use of new technology at Rockaway Beach to protect some of New York City's most treasured feathered friends. UPS has purchased portable electronic security devices to protect the nests of piping plovers and lease turns, two endangered bird species that make their nests at Rockaway Beach. The devices project infrared beams, creating an invisible "fence" around the nests that detects heat and motion. If the beams are disturbed, the devices send a radio signal to a nearby Ranger or PEP officer.



*Electronic Sensor*

Piping plovers and lease turns migrate to Rockaway each spring and remain through mid-August. They build their nests on the beach and gather food at the shoreline. This year, there are 12 pairs of piping plovers and 125 pairs of lease turns. Typically, Urban Park Rangers protect the birds using signage, temporary fencing, and cages which are erected around the birds' nests to prevent gulls and crows from disturbing the eggs. But isolated incidences of vandalism to the cages prompted

UPS Chief Alex Brash to purchase the security devices.

The portable devices, manufactured by Sensor Electronics ([www.sensor.org](http://www.sensor.org)) of Britain, are made of weatherproof fiberglass and are approximately 4' tall. Each sensor projects two infrared beams that can be angled to create a corner. The beams extend 120 feet, although Ranger Plover Supervisor Dennis Annuziata reports that they have picked up heat and motion at much farther distances. If anybody wanders into the nesting area, nearby Rangers receive a radio signal alerting them to the presence of the intruder. Previously, Rangers had to remain on the beach all day to watch over the nests.

UPS bought four sensors in May for \$4500 each. Two of the sensors are used at Rockaway Beach and two are used for special events. UPS officers used the sensors for the first time at the Easter Eggstravaganza to protect the egg hunt area from unwanted visitors during the night. According to Chief Brash, the sensors have allowed UPS to reduce its overnight security staffing, resulting in cost savings.

Sensor's U.S. distributor can be reached at (914) 606-1000. *For additional information, call Alex Brash at (212) 360-2718. Written by Emily Willits.*

## FROM THE PIP DESK...

Exposed metal plugs in critical areas of old sectional safety surfacing are the most common reason that PIP inspectors fail the surfacing. To avoid IAs, all metal plugs should be below the grade of the surfacing and covered with their original rubber cap or with a soft substance such as silicone.

## DINOSAURS STILL ALIVE IN FLUSHING MEADOWS

The Triassic Age lives on less than 200 yards from the Van Wyck Expressway at the southeast edge of Meadow Lake in Queens. Three colorful, full-sized dinosaurs—a dimetradon, a herrerasaurus, and a kannemayeria—stand on green, yellow, and black speckled safety surface near the 7-foot high grasses and pin oaks growing in Flushing Meadows Park, their scaly skin rippling in the sun. On the concrete path leading to the safety surfacing, strange three-toed feet have imprinted themselves distinctly.

Despite their age, these beasts are some of the newest members of the menagerie of animal art that have enlivened Parks' playgrounds under the administrations of Parks Commissioner Henry J. Stern. The lifelike dinosaur animal art is the result of a collaboration between Landscape Architect and Project Manager Katherine Bridges of Parks' Capital Division and Vito Cannella, a freelance sculptor and former dinosaur artist at the American Museum of Natural History.

The dinosaurs are made from an innovative fiberglass-reinforced water-borne casting and molding resin

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## BOARDWALK BICYCLES A HIT AT CONEY ISLAND

Park Supervisors at Coney Island have traded in their vehicles for lighter modes of transportation. Two years ago, the City Parks Foundation purchased a motorized ATV for use on the sand and boardwalk at Coney Island. Unlike heavy trucks, the ATV is neither harmful to the boardwalk nor hazardous for pedestrians.

This season, Brooklyn Operations took its vehicular downsizing a step further. The borough purchased two large tricycles fitted with boxes for \$650 each and a mountain bike for \$400. Supervisors at Coney Island use the environmentally-friendly bikes to patrol the boardwalk and transport supplies. According to Brooklyn Chief of Operations Nancy Barthold, the bicycles have been a success. "Not only are we customer-friendly, but our workers are getting in shape," she said.

*For additional information, contact Nancy Barthold at (718) 965-8922. Written by Emily Willits.*



*Supervisors at Coney Island use an ATV and bicycles to patrol the boardwalk.*

# LITTER INITIATIVE KEEPS CITY CLEAN AND GREEN

Corporate sponsorships enable Parks to provide recreational programming, festivals, and sports clinics to thousands of New Yorkers each year. It is unusual, however, for private corporations to provide support for maintenance-focused activities. This spring, Parks embarked on a unique, maintenance-oriented partnership when Home Depot and *The New York Times* sponsored a citywide Litter Initiative.

Mayor Giuliani and Commissioner Stern kicked off the Litter Initiative with a press conference in Sara D. Roosevelt Park on May 2. A centerpiece of the initiative is a Home Depot donation of 2,000 garbage cans and one million garbage bags to help clean up litter in the city. Parks will also launch anti-littering programming for children in After School programs, Playground Associates programs, and Urban Park Rangers workshops.

New signs in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean and Russian with slogans such as "Trash Cans: They're Convenient, Easy to Use and Could Save You \$100" will remind park-goers of potential littering fines, and similar slogans will run in *The New York Times*, the Litter Initiative's media sponsor. Parks also plans to discourage litterers by revoking permits and retaining clean-up bonds for permittees who fail to leave their permitted areas litter-free. *For additional information about the litter initiative, contact Bradley Tusk at (212) 360-81309. Written by Emily Willits.*



*Recycling Bins*

Recycling is a key component of Parks' litter initiative. Operations is initiating a pilot program in fifteen parks, three in each borough, to recycle bottles, cans and paper.

Each recycling site will receive a paper bin, can and bottle bin, and information post. The bin slats are constructed from 100% recycled post-consumer plastic lumber, the same material used to make milk cartons. The paper bins have a plastic lid with 85% recycled plastic. The bottle and can lids are made from 80% recycled cast aluminum from discarded items such as soda cans and automobile parts. In total, the complete container is fabricated with 95% recycled content.

Parks first experimented with recycling in the early 1990's. The program was discontinued due to heavy levels of non-recyclables being thrown into the bins. The current initiative will focus on neighborhood parks with regular users. Signs, promotional materials, and an increased interest in recycling will also help make this effort successful.

Operations is also working to ensure that recycling is taking place in all administrative buildings and recreation centers. Operations is working closely with Parks managers and Sanitation to monitor the recycling and coordinate pickups. *For additional information about recycling, call Laura Gaul at (212) 360-8221. Written by Keith Kerman.*

— "Dinosaurs," continued from page 1 —

system called Aqua-Resin. Unlike most resin systems, Aqua-Resin is non-toxic and does not produce hazardous fumes. Cannella began each sculpture by creating a solid styrofoam prototype. From this he made a mold. Then he applied successive layers of Aqua-Resin and fiberglass inside the mold to create the final pieces of the animal cast, forming a hollow shell.

Cannella assembled the pieces and filled each sculpture with a 2-part liquid urethane foam to complete the shape. He coated each sculpture with epoxy resin for weatherproofing and then added a graffiti coating. Because the resin is applied in layers, the animals will retain their color even if they are chipped. Aqua-Resin was invented by Louis Lieberman, a local artist with a background in chemistry and biology. It can be purchased from R. L. Lucas, Inc. (212-964-7883). *For additional information, contact Katherine Bridges at (718) 760-6635. Written by Marc Dember.*



*A kannemayeria watches over Flushing Meadows.*

## SUMMER IRRIGATION TIPS

36 lawns citywide have been designated "A" Lawns by the Parks Inspection Program. These lawns will be held to higher standards of care than other lawns. The following tips can be used to keep all lawns in top shape during the hot summer months:

- Make sure every area of your lawn receives at least one inch of water weekly. You can put empty tuna-fish cans on the lawn to see how long it takes one inch of water to collect using your irrigation system.
- Water early in the morning so that all the water can be absorbed before it gets hot.
- It is not necessary to water the whole lawn at once; for example, you might choose to irrigate one third of the lawn each day. It is better to give a lawn a large amount of water once or twice a week than a little each day. *For additional information about "A" Lawns in your district, contact Jeremy Peterson at (212) 360-8230. Written by Paul Schwartz.*

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