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Walkway Over the Hudson Nancy Kennedy/Shutterstock



Great Blue Heron Brian Lesenby/Shutterstock



Hudson-Athens Lighthouse Scott Keller



Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site Loretta Blauvelt

The Hudson River was one of the original "highways" used by Native Americans and continues to be a corridor of commerce to this day. This 63-mile section of the Water Trail features Vanderbilt Mansion, Kingston (the state's first capital), the City of Poughkeepsie and the Walkway Over the Hudson, the City of Beacon, and four lighthouses in Athens, Saugerties, Kingston and Esopus.

Glacial Lake Albany Glacial Lake Albany was formed when ice "plugged" the Hudson between Storm King Mountain and Breakneck Ridge (see Map 4) about 16,000 years ago. The lake existed for about 4,000 years. The surface of the lake was roughly 150' (feet) above current sea level. The 150' contour interval shown on this map represents Glacial Lake Albany's shoreline and shows where you would have been able to paddle then. A drysuit would have been essential!

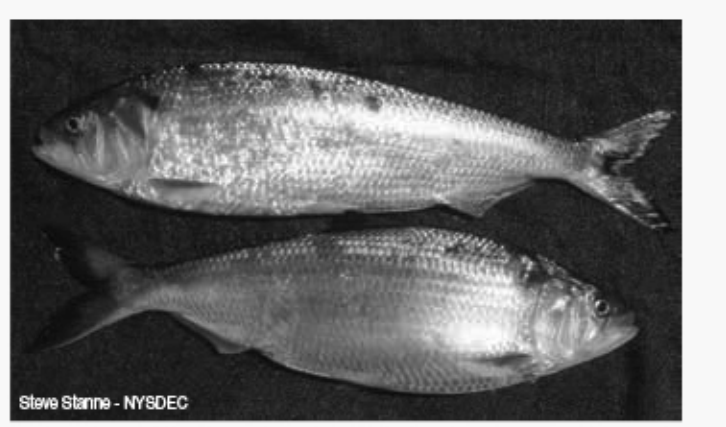


Riverkeeper patrol boat R. Ian Fletcher. Courtesy Riverkeeper

Immature bald eagles are mostly chocolate brown with varying amounts of white over the body, tail, and underwings. The iconic white head and tail develop about age five.

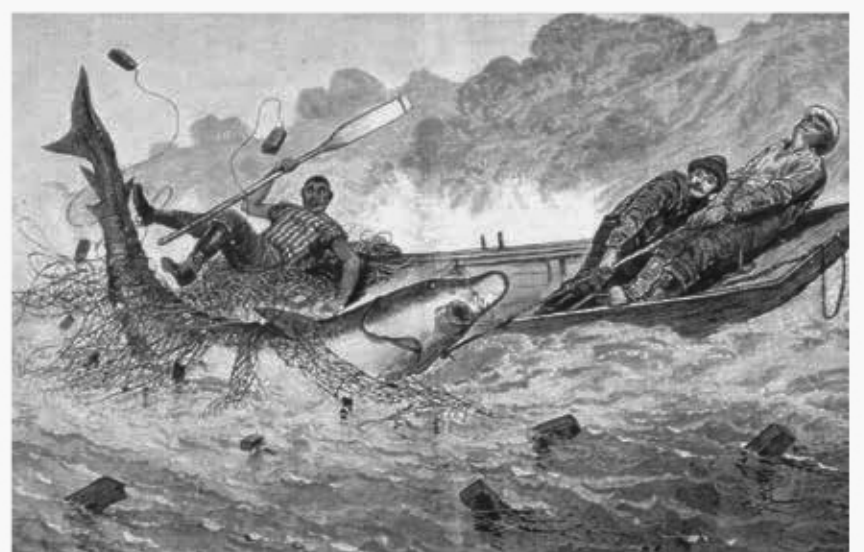
Bald eagles' primary prey is fish, though they will opportunistically take some mammals, waterfowl, seabirds and carrion, especially during winter.

In the 20th century, reproductive impairment from pesticides and heavy metals caused virtual elimination of the bald eagle in New York. Since the 1972 ban on DDT, eagles are once again producing young, and populations are increasing.



Adult American Shad. Steve Girano - NYSDOC

Other Resident and Migratory Birds - Other species commonly seen on the Hudson include Canada geese, double-crested cormorants, turkey vultures, and great blue herons. Many species of migratory waterfowl pass through the Hudson Valley every year during the spring and fall migrations. Some of the species seen include osprey and various duck species.



Sturgeon fishing at Hyde Park, Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper late 1800s.

Sturgeon - Sturgeon are the most primitive fishes found in the freshwaters of New York. They are large fish and have five rows of bony plates along their body. Atlantic sturgeon live primarily in the ocean but migrate to the lower Hudson River for spawning. This species can grow to as much as eight feet long. Shortnose sturgeon is an estuarine species with one sustained population in the lower Hudson. Spawning occurs between Coxsackie and the Troy Dam. The National Marine Fisheries Service classifies both species as endangered.



A good-sized Atlantic Sturgeon from the Hudson. Courtesy Hudson River Fishery Unit - NYSDOC



The bustling Rondout Creek waterfront in Kingston, at the Hudson River Maritime Museum.

Striped Bass - Like shad, striped bass travel back and forth from the ocean to the Hudson River to complete their life cycle. Unlike shad, striped bass are plentiful. They have traditionally supported both commercial and recreational fisheries. The commercial fishery was closed in 1976 due to polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) contamination, but the spring run of striped bass still attracts great numbers of anglers eager to try their luck. Striped bass roam widely along the Atlantic coast and up the coastal estuaries like the Hudson River to spawn in the late spring and early summer. They travel north to Maine in summer and then to South Carolina in the fall and winter. Their primary spawning range in the Hudson is from Croton Point to Catskill.

Great Estates The Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area (HRVNH) was created by Congress in 1996 to recognize, protect, and promote the Hudson Valley's natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources. The Great Estates seen along the shores of the Hudson River are descended from an architectural tradition going back to the first Dutch and Huguenot settlers.

Dutch and Huguenot Influences - The houses built by Dutch colonists during the 17th and early 18th centuries are the only examples of Dutch architecture in North America. Farmhouses, such as Pieter Bronck's brick residence (1663) in Coxsackie, feature distinctive pitched roofs with gable ends, prominent roof beams, and open fireplaces.



Clermont State Historic Site.

The French Huguenots who emigrated to the banks of the Walkkill Creek and founded the settlement of New Paltz built stone houses that combined Northern European and medieval building traditions with those of their Dutch neighbors. Historic Huguenot Street in New Paltz is arguably the oldest street in America with its original houses. Huguenot Street includes three intact homes with portions that date back to the 1690s: the Bevier-Elting, Jean Hasbrouck, and Abraham Hasbrouck houses. The buildings are of local stone, with steeply pitched shingled roofs and Dutch jambless fireplaces.

Origins of the Great Estates - As second- and third-generation colonists became more prosperous, many early landholdings expanded. Frederick Philipse I, a Dutch carpenter who emigrated in the 1650s, successfully acquired a large amount of land and two mill sites, the Lower Mills in Yonkers and the Upper Mills on the Pocantico River in the village of Sleepy Hollow. The core of Philipse Manor dates back to the 1680s, but its transformation into a country



Olana is the home, studio and designed landscape of Hudson River School painter Frederic Edwin Church. Courtesy Olana State Historic Site

estate began under Frederick Philipse III, who remodeled it into a Georgian-style mansion in the 1750s. Farther up the river, Robert Livingston acquired a royal patent for a vast tract of land in Columbia County, and one of his sons built a Georgian-style country house he named Clermont.

After the Revolutionary War, Americans celebrated their independence through a new style of architecture that attempted to shed the colonial trappings of the past, but they still clung to the neoclassicism inherited from England. Several important houses were destroyed during the war and rebuilt in the Federal style. In its elegant post-war incarnation, Clermont established a new standard for the country house and the prominence of the Livingston family. Federal-era mansions, such as Ten Broeck Mansion (1798) in Albany, Boscobel (1804-07) in Cold Spring, and Locust Lawn (1814) in New Paltz, demonstrated the increasing wealth of the Hudson River Valley.

Table with 2 columns: Estate Name and River Mile. Lists estates like Olana, Clermont, Blithewood Manor, etc.

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Water Quality Following European settlement, the Hudson River was used for industrial waste discharge and untreated sewage disposal. At the height of these practices, recreational use of the river nearly disappeared. In the late 1960s, citizen environmental groups—coupled with changes in environmental regulatory policies and enforcement policies—spearheaded a river cleanup. A cleaner river has led to renewed interest in recreation. Today, the Hudson River estuary is among the healthiest on the eastern seaboard, and sustained efforts by many groups continue to keep the river clean. To help, report pollution by contacting the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation at 1-800-847-7332 or www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/393.html. To learn more about protecting our river and for volunteer opportunities, contact the Hudson River Estuary Program (http://on.ny.gov/1w0KKIG), Harbor Estuary Program (www.harborestuary.org/), or the Hudson River Foundation (www.hudsonriver.org/).

Sponsor Atlantic Kayak Tours. The most experienced kayak outfitter on the Hudson River. Guided kayak tours and programs available at Norrie State Park (Norrie Point Paddlesport Center) for beginner to advanced paddlers. High-quality equipment provided. See our website for more information. AtlanticKayakTours.com

Commercial Fishing & Whaling

The Hudson River has been home to vibrant fisheries since humans first settled here. Shad, Atlantic and shortnose sturgeon, alewives, blueback herring, striped bass and oysters were all harvested by Native Americans and European settlers. Sturgeon, also known as Albany beef, were prized for both their meat and eggs (roe). Today many commercial fisheries are closed due to overfishing both in the river and in the ocean, where many of these fish spend most of their lives.

For some sixty years after the Revolutionary War, the Hudson River was also home to one of the world's major industries—whaling. The British blockade during the war stifled the New England whaling industry and led to the Hudson River becoming a major whaling hub. The first Hudson River whaling port was in the present day City of Hudson, with other ports at Newburgh and Poughkeepsie. By the mid-nineteenth century other fuels began to replace whale blubber, and the industry quickly ended in the Hudson River Valley.



Hudson River Valley Greenway and National Heritage Area

The Hudson River Valley Greenway was created by New York State to continue and advance the state's commitment to the preservation, enhancement and development of the world-renowned scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources of the Hudson River Valley while continuing to emphasize economic development activities and remaining consistent with the tradition of municipal home rule. The Greenway's programs include regional planning, a land and water trail system, and the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. On the web: www.hudsonsgreenway.ny.gov.

The Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area was designated by Congress in 1996 and is one of forty-nine federally-recognized National Heritage Areas throughout the United States. Through a partnership with the National Park Service, the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area collaborates with public agencies, non-profit groups and private sector partners to interpret, preserve and celebrate the nationally-significant cultural and natural resources of the Hudson River Valley. In this way, the Heritage Area works to inspire public stewardship for these resources and related economic development activities for the benefit of the nation. The Heritage Area has established a network of designated Heritage Sites, classified by theme and amenities. On the web: www.hudsonrivervalley.com.



Bald eagles can often be seen nesting and hunting prey near the Hudson River.

