

Cape Cod

NATIONAL SEASHORE • MASSACHUSETTS



National Parks Centennial 1872-1972

Cape Cod National Seashore not only offers many recreational opportunities, but also reveals a chapter of New England history dating from the Pilgrims to the space age. Water activities in ocean, bay, and sound, and hikes along sand dunes and forest trails: these are your reward.

FIRST A LANDFORM

Cape Cod has been endowed with a scene of ever-changing charm — in time of storm it is wild, spectacular, and dramatic, always it is beautiful to behold and fascinating to study.

On the outer section of the cape, banks and cliffs of continental glacier sand, gravel, and clay, up to 175 feet high, rise from the beach. In contrast to the nearby busy ocean which pounds the eastern headland are many calm glacier ponds. Plantlife is more abundant in sheltered areas, with luxuriant forests in some places. Besides coniferous and hardwood upland forests, biotic zones include ocean beach, tidal flats, salt- and fresh-water marshes, ponds, swamps, and migrating dunes. Hundreds of thousands of birds use the Atlantic flyway in the Cape Cod area, and shore birds feed and nest on the flats. In summer, terns nest on the beaches, and, in winter, major concentrations of waterfowl are found just offshore and in the marshes.

THEN A LANDMARK

In 1616, John Smith described Cape Cod as “made of the main sea on one side, and a great bay on the other in the form of a sickle.” During the Age of Exploration, Cape Cod was known and visited by many European mariners and some historians believe this is the “Keel Cape” of Thorvald the Viking (1004).

Cape Cod’s historical significance is, of course, connected with the Pilgrims. Here they had their first glimpse of the New World and, at present-day Provincetown, made their first contacts with this strange, new land. Here they found their first seed corn, drank their “first New England water with as much delight as we ever drank in in all our lives,” and encountered the American Indian. From here they sailed to find the harbor that was to become their home.

Since 1602 fishing has played a major part in the life of the Cape’s people. In that year Bartholomew Gosnold named the cape for “...a great stoare of codfish.” Provincetown, Truro, and Wellfleet became well-known whaling centers, while Cape Cod square-riggers carried American products around the world. To guide them, five lighthouses were built within the present boundaries of the seashore; Long Point Light, at the very top of the “hook”; Wood End and Race Point Lights defining the end of the peninsula; Cape Cod, or Highland Light, visible 20 miles at sea; and Nauset Beach Light, about 1 mile north of Coast Guard Beach.

TODAY A LEGACY PRESERVED

Until recently, Cape Cod’s natural and historic scene was preserved by individuals, the towns, and the Commonwealth. The establishment of Cape Cod National Seashore in 1961 now more permanently assures this protection. Beach, heath, forest, and ponds are no longer threatened in one of the last expanses of uninterrupted natural lands along the Atlantic. Historic buildings, with traditional shake or clapboard siding, can be seen in natural surroundings. The national seashore ultimately will embrace some 27,000 acres of land, and promises to keep intact the resources, charm, and beauty of the Old Cape for future generations.



ACCOMMODATIONS AND SERVICES

Sleeping and campground accommodations, restaurants, gift shops, grocery and other stores, and gas stations are available in towns adjoining the seashore. For information and reservations, contact the chambers of commerce at Provincetown, Truro, Wellfleet, Eastham, Orleans, and Chatham.

REGULATIONS

To help preserve the natural beauty and the historic and scientific values of this national seashore, certain regulations have been established.

Driving. Drive carefully and observe posted speed limits. Report all accidents at once.

Fires. Wind and pitch-pine woods add up to high forest-fire potential. Open fires, except when authorized by permit, are not allowed. Permits are not required for stoves using manufactured fuels, or for charcoal grills when these are used in designated picnic areas or on sandy or rocky beaches bordering tidewater.

Pets must be kept under physical restraint when in developed areas or areas of visitor concentration. Leashes cannot exceed 10 feet. Pets are not permitted in public buildings, in picnic areas, or on protected beaches.

Swimming. Observe water-safety practices at all times. Lifeguard services and other facilities are provided at the following beaches: Coast Guard, Nauset Light, Marconi, Head of the Meadow, Race Point, and Herring Cove.

Fishing is in accordance with Federal, State and local laws. No license is required for salt-water fishing; appropriate Massachusetts and/or town license is required for fresh-water fishing and shellfishing.

Hunting is permitted during the specified season on upland game and migratory waterfowl. There is no open season on non-game species. Federal, State, and local laws apply.

Camping. All camping, including trailers on the beach, is prohibited except in private campgrounds. Reservations should be made for the summer season. No camping facilities are operated by the National Park Service. (A large State-owned campground is in Nickerson State Park in nearby Brewster. Reservations cannot be made at this campground; camping is on a first-come, first-served basis.)

Surfing areas are designated off the protected beaches in the National Seashore.

Bicycle trails. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on these paved trails. Bicycles may be rented at private concessions.

Horseback riding. A series of marked bridle paths are in the Province Lands area near Prov-

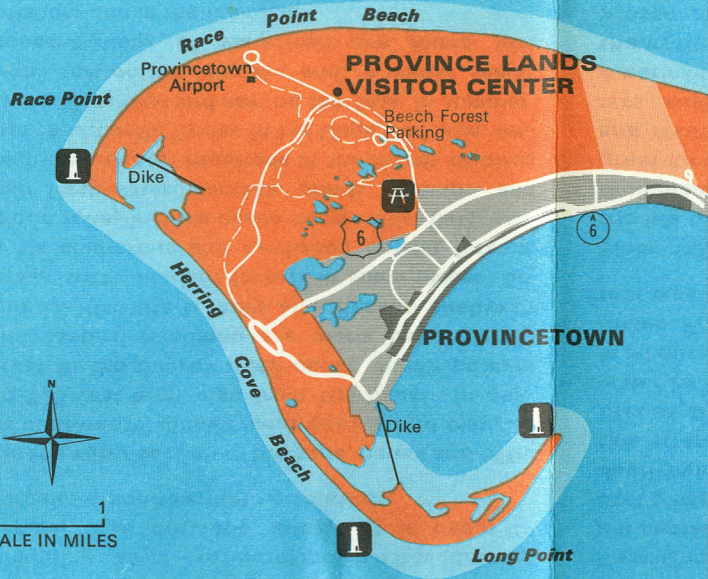
incetown. Mounts may be secured at nearby rental stables.

Over-sand vehicles must use designated sand routes only. A permit is required. Indiscriminate dune-driving is prohibited.

Natural features—flowers, trees, animals, dunes—are to be left undisturbed. Keep trails, roadsides, and other areas clean; use trash containers for all wastes.

Park rangers, who are responsible for enforcing the regulations, will give information and assistance to help make your visit more rewarding. Report accidents, injuries, or other emergencies to the nearest park ranger.

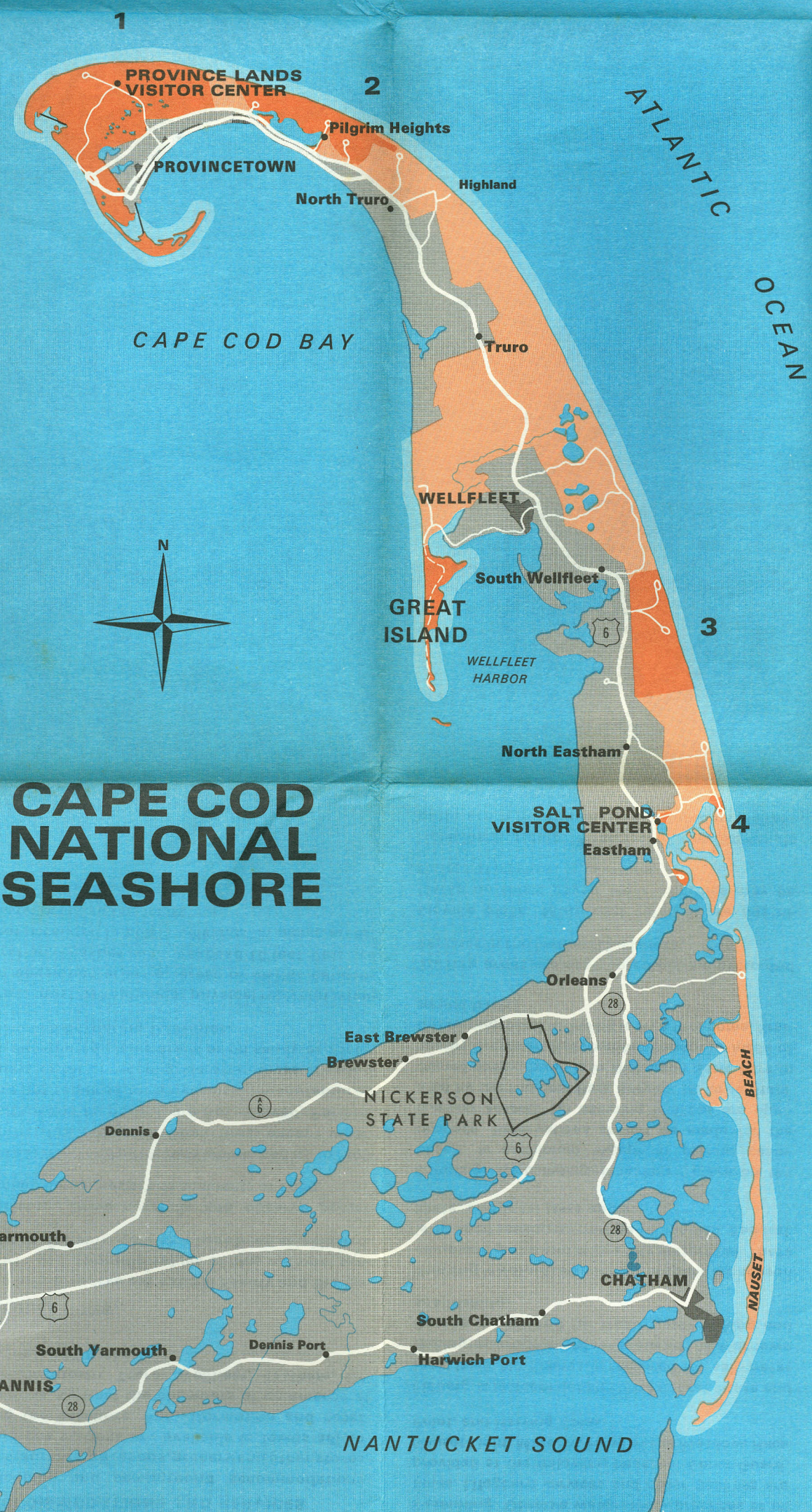




1 PROVINCE LANDS AREA

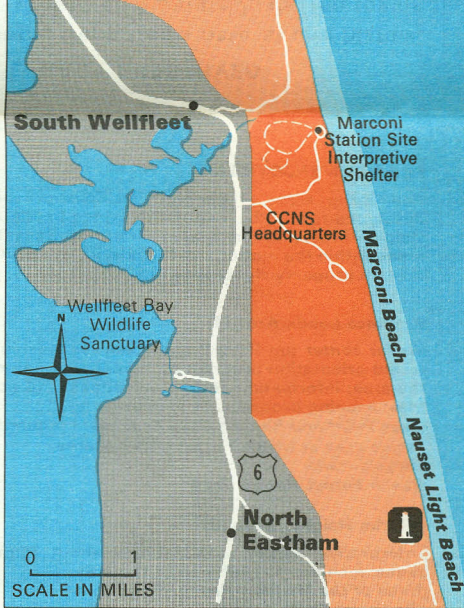


2 PILGRIM HEIGHTS AREA

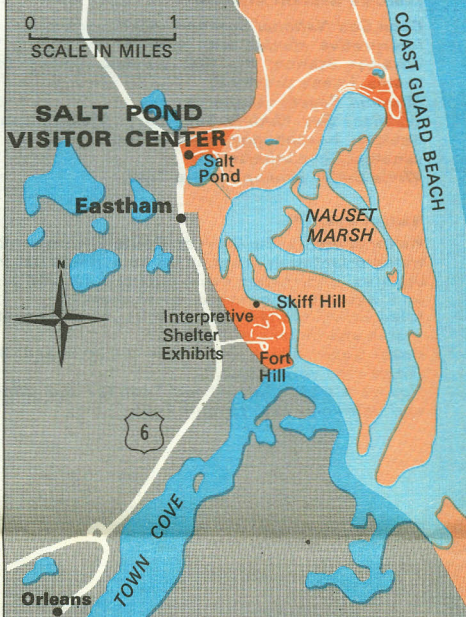


CAPE COD NATIONAL SEASHORE

3 MARCONI STATION AREA



4 NAUSET AREA



Lighthouse



Picnic Area



Heavy-duty Road



Light-duty Road



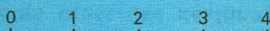
Bicycle Trail



Area open to public



Area within the Authorized Boundaries



SCALE IN MILES

NOTE: Private property rights MUST be respected

FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT

Four major areas of the National Seashore have facilities developed for use by visitors: Province Lands Area, Pilgrim Heights Area, Marconi Station Area, and Nauset Area. Other areas within the authorized boundaries are privately owned. Private property rights must be respected.

Province Lands Area (1)

Visitor center (on Race Point Road) with exhibits and illustrated orientation program on human and natural history of the area; information desk, publications, and activity schedules; evening programs at amphitheater.

Race Point and Herring Cove beaches; lifeguards.

Picnic area at Beech Forest parking area.

Bicycle trails.

Beech Forest Nature Trail.

Pilgrim Heights Area (2)

Interpretive shelter with exhibits about Pilgrims and Indians; includes a relief map of the area.

Head of the Meadow Beach; lifeguards.

Picnic area with tables.

Pilgrim Spring and Small's Swamp Self-guided Trails.

Marconi Station Area (3)

Cape Cod National Seashore headquarters.

Interpretive shelter with exhibits describing the Marconi Wireless Station, the first wireless station in the United States. Ocean overlook.

Marconi Beach; lifeguards.

Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary. Massachusetts Audubon Society; beachbuggy wildlife tours may be arranged at sanctuary headquarters.

White Cedar Swamp Nature Trail.

Nauset Area (4)

Visitor center (in Eastham on Route 6) with exhibits and illustrated orientation program on human and natural history of the area; information desk, publications, and activity schedules; evening programs at amphitheater.

Interpretive shelter with exhibits describing life of Nauset Marsh and Indians of the area.

Coast Guard Beach and Nauset Light Beach; lifeguards.

Picnic area with tables.

Nauset Marsh, Buttonbush Trail for the Blind, Fort Hill, and Salt Loop Self-guiding Trails.

ADMINISTRATION

Cape Cod National Seashore is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is South Wellfleet, MA 02663, is in immediate charge.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources." The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.