

# Cape Cod

National Seashore  
Massachusetts

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



Mention Cape Cod and people think of different things: swimming and sunbathing, fishing and whaling, clams and cranberries, writers and artists, cottages and shops, Pilgrims and Indians. All are part of the ambience and charm that attract thousands of tourists to the Cape each year. To help protect the special qualities of this environment, the National Seashore was established in 1961 within the 64-kilometer-long (40-mile) section between Chatham and Provincetown. Each of the National Park Service sites within this area tells a part of the Cape Cod story.

The Cape is a glacial deposit that is constantly undergoing natural changes as winds and water move sand along the shorelines, tearing away one place and building up another. You can get a good sense of how quickly the land is diminishing at the Marconi Wireless Station site at Wellfleet,

where the Cape is only 1.6 kilometers (1 mile) wide. Much of the cliff has eroded away since Guglielmo Marconi first built his towers there in 1901. Another place to sense nature's power is near Provincetown where giant dunes are encroaching on the highway. Changing, too, though not so perceptibly, is the Cape Cod Bay shoreline. Great Island, where whalers used to congregate, is now connected to the peninsula; you can explore it via a trail.

The Cape's human history is just as rich as its natural history. In the Provincetown area you can see where the Pilgrims landed in 1620 before sailing across the bay to Plymouth. Five lighthouses within the Seashore attest to a long tradition of lifesaving activities, and the Eastham home of Edward Penniman denotes the once profitable whaling business, a chapter in the Cape Cod story.

## Recreation, Relaxation, and Restoration

Cape Cod National Seashore offers a variety of land and water recreational activities that can be as relaxing and soul-restoring as you make them out to be. Take time to look around and to try something different, whether it be bicycling or hiking or just sitting by the ocean watching the waves come in. Whatever you decide to do, we hope you return home refreshed by your stay on the Cape. See the map and text on the other side of this folder for information about the major Seashore sites where the activities listed here take place.

**Swimming** Lifeguard services and other related facilities are located at these beaches: Coast Guard, Nauset

Light, Marconi, Head of the Meadow, Race Point, and Herring Cove. Several towns also have public beaches; all charge fees. Please observe water safety practices at all times.

**Surfing** Areas for surfers have been designated at the beaches run by the National Seashore.

**Walks** The Seashore has a number of short self-guiding trails. We invite you to take a few moments and walk a couple of them to relax and gain an insight into the Cape's natural and human history. Perhaps their names will entice you: Fort Hill, Red Maple Swamp, Nauset

Marsh, Great Island, Pamet Cranberry Bog, Atlantic White Cedar Swamp, Small Swamp, Pilgrim Spring, Beech Forest. Folders about each of them may be obtained at the visitor centers. Buttonbush Trail, with special features for the blind, starts at Salt Pond Visitor Center.

**Bicycling** The Seashore maintains three bicycle trails ranging from 2.5 to 11.7 kilometers (1.6 to 7.3 miles). Ask for a folder on bike trails at the visitor centers. The Cape Cod Rail Trail follows an old railroad bed and connects the Seashore with Nickerson State Park. Motorized vehicles, including mopeds, are not allowed on these paved trails. Bi-

cycles may be rented within the towns.

**Horseback riding** Three bridle paths have been designated in the Seashore. Ask for a folder on "Horse Trails of the Province Lands" at the visitor centers. Horseback riding is restricted to these trails, because of the fragility of the environment. Horses may be rented at nearby stables.

**Fishing** Try your luck surf-fishing from the many beaches, but stay away from swimmers. No license is required for saltwater fishing, but a state license is required for freshwater fishing. Town licenses for shellfishing are required. Regulations

and fees vary among the towns.

**Hunting** Upland game and migratory waterfowl may be hunted in certain areas in the specified season. There is no open season on non-game species. Ask for a folder on hunting opportunities and restrictions. Federal, state, and local laws apply.

**Travel Services** In nearby towns you can find sleeping and camping accommodations, restaurants, gift shops, grocery and other stores, and gasoline stations. Reservations at motels, hotels, and private campgrounds are essential in the summer. For information and reservations, write to: Cape Cod Chamber

of Commerce, Hyannis, Mass. 02601. All camping, including trailers on the beach, is prohibited except in private campgrounds. The Park Service does not operate a campground, but Nickerson State Park in nearby Brewster offers camping on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Headquarters** The National Seashore is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The Seashore headquarters is located near the Marconi Station site. The superintendent's address is South Wellfleet, MA 02663. To telephone, call: (617) 349-3785.

Architecture is one of Cape Cod's appealing aspects. It reflects the residents' association with the sea. Salt breezes and winds turn natural shingles into

hues from light gray to dark brown. Steep roofs provide protection from storms, plus upstairs rooms. White clapboards reflect the summer sun—and New

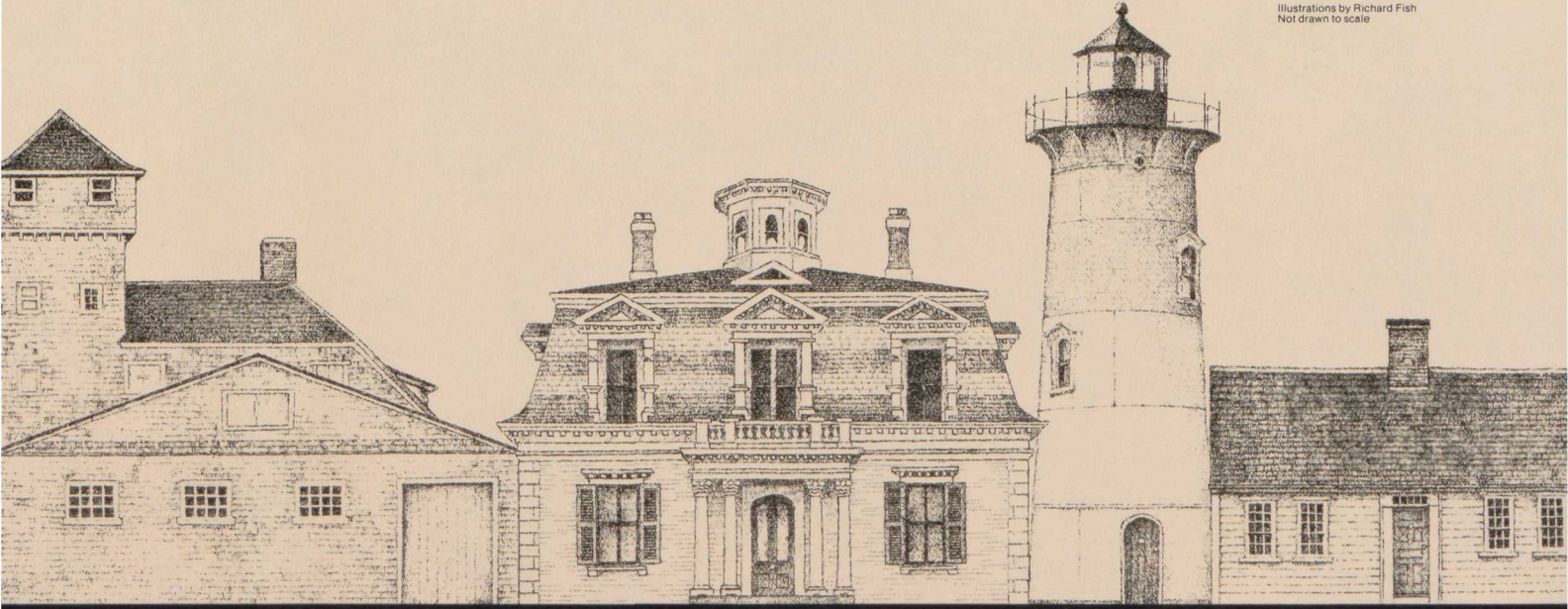
Englanders' simple, severe tastes. The examples below, from left: Old Harbor Lifesaving Station, representative of many once on the Cape, was moved to

Race Point from Chatham in 1977. Penniman House, atypically ornate, was built in Eastham in 1867 by a whaling captain. Nauset Lighthouse, now

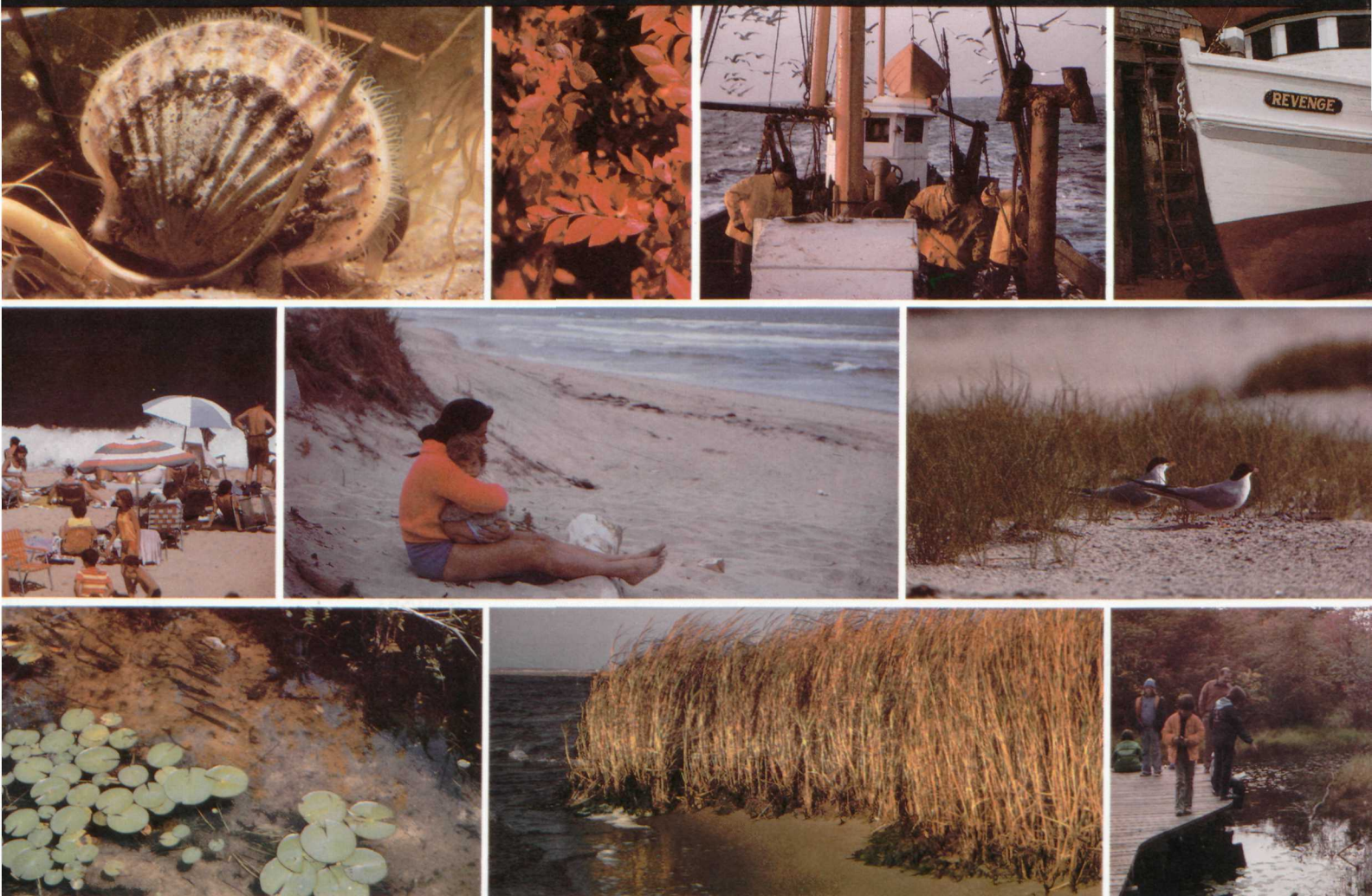
automated, was put into operation in 1923. Many like it still dot the coast. Atwood-Higgins House, built about 1730, represents the typical Cape Cod dwelling. This one

has clapboards only on the front side. Some of these structures are open for tours in summer and on weekends. Inquire at the visitor centers.

Illustrations by Richard Fish  
Not drawn to scale



## A Cape Cod Montage



### Regulations

National Park Service rangers are here not only to help you but to enforce regulations established to protect both you and the Seashore. Report accidents, injuries, or other emergencies to the nearest ranger. Please obey the regulations cited above with the activities and these:

Do not disturb any natural features—trees, animals, dunes. Do not pick flowers.

Keep trails, roadsides, and other areas clean. Use trash receptacles.

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

Over-sand vehicles must be used only on designated sand routes. A permit is required. In-discriminating driving is prohibited.

Open fires are not allowed except when authorized by a permit, which can be obtained at visitor centers. Permits are not required

for stoves using manufactured fuels, or for charcoal grills when they are used in designated picnic areas at Beech Forest, Pilgrim Heights, and Great Island, or on sandy or rock beaches bordering tidewater.

Pets must be kept under physical restraint.

Leashes must not exceed 3 meters (10 feet). Pets are not permitted in public buildings, in picnic areas, on protected beaches, or on nature trails.

### Safety Precautions

● Sand collapses easily. Climbing slopes or digging deep holes is hazardous.

● At the ocean, be alert for riptides and underwater obstacles. Keep children within reach.

● Be wary of too much sun exposure.

● Do not take glass containers, rafts, rubber tubes, snorkels, and masks to any beach.

● In summer, be alert for heavy traffic on narrow roads.

GPO: 1982-361-578/141

# Cape Cod



## Getting to and Around the Seashore

**Transportation**  
Motor vehicles—U.S. 6 is the primary route to and through the Seashore.

**Buses**—Lines run from Hyannis to Chatham and Provincetown.

**Air Service**—Flights operate between Hyannis and Boston, Providence, and New York, and also between Boston and Provincetown.

**Interpretive Services**  
The history and natural history of Cape Cod are

presented to you through the National Park Service interpretive program. Its major elements are listed below.

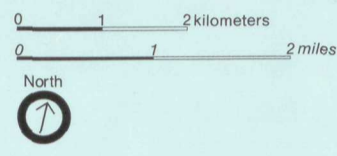
**Salt Pond Visitor Center** on Route 6 in Eastham and **Province Lands Visitor Center** on Race Point Road in Provincetown each contain exhibits, an audiovisual program, publications, and information services. The visitor centers are open daily from spring until early winter. In mid-winter, when

both visitor centers are closed, information services are available at Race Point Ranger Station in Provincetown and at park headquarters in South Wellfleet.

**Wayside exhibits and self-guiding trails** are found throughout the National Seashore.

**Guided walks, talks, and Evening Programs** are provided daily in summer and on a reduced schedule in spring and from Labor

Day through Columbus Day. Write to the superintendent for a current activity schedule or obtain a copy at a visitor center.



- Authorized National Seashore boundary
- Salt marsh areas within National Seashore
- Bicycle trail
- Hiking trail
- Ranger station
- Restrooms
- Showers
- Picnic area
- Handicap access
- Campground

Private property exists within the authorized boundary. Please respect owners' rights.

National Park Service beaches are supervised by lifeguards in summer only.

Access to Town Beaches regulated by town residence requirements or local entrance fee. Lifeguards generally provided summer only.

Eastham to Boston 138 km. 86 mi.  
Eastham to New York 443 km. 275 mi.