

Cape Cod

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Seashore
Massachusetts



Mention Cape Cod and people think of different things—swimming and sunbathing, fishing and whaling, clams and cranberries, writers and artists, cottages and shops, Native people and Pilgrims. All are part of the ambience and charm that attract visitors to the Cape each year. National Park Service sites within Cape Cod National Seashore tell different parts of the Cape Cod story.

Beach at Herring Cove © ROBBIE MCQUEENEY

Cape Cod is a glacial deposit that is continuously undergoing natural change as wind and water move sand along the shorelines, tearing away one place and building up another. You can get a sense of how quickly the land is diminishing at the Marconi Station Site at Wellfleet, where the peninsula is only a mile wide.

Much of the high cliff has eroded since Guglielmo Marconi first built his towers there in 1901. Changing, though not so perceptibly, is the

Cape Cod Bay shoreline. Great Island is now connected to the peninsula and can be explored by trail.

Native people began living on the Outer Cape about 10,000 years ago. Oral tradition and a vast archeological record tell us of their history here. The Pilgrims arrived in 1620 and stayed briefly before sailing across the bay to Plymouth. Later, residents constructed buildings that reflected the sea's influence on their lives (see *below*).



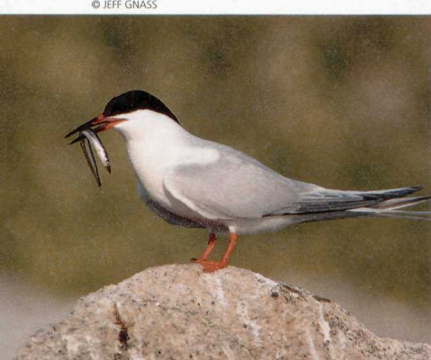
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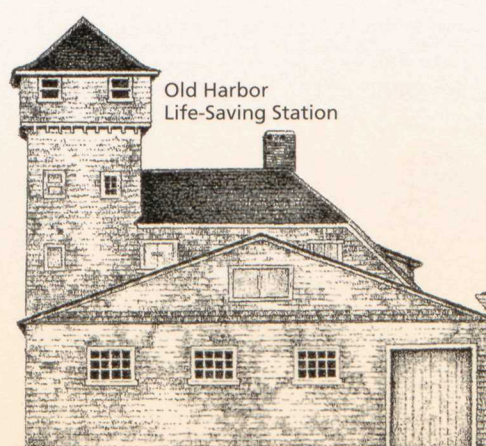
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Photos (left to right): Fishing boats at Provincetown Harbor, Highland Light, rose and rose hips, roseate tern, salt marsh, ranger and children study marine life.

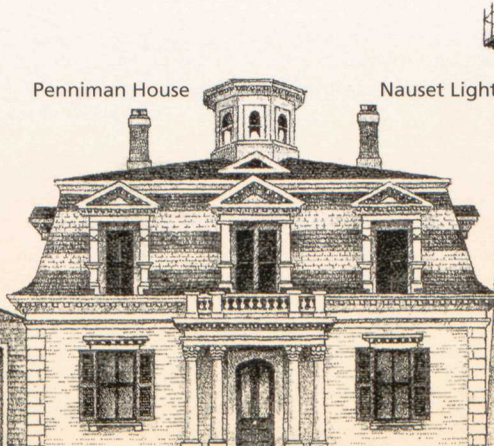
The Old Harbor Life-Saving Station built in 1897–98 was moved from Chatham to Race Point near Provincetown in 1977. Captain Edward Penniman's 1868 house in Eastham

is unusually ornate and denotes the once-profitable whaling business. Nauset Light is one of five working lighthouses in the national seashore. The Atwood-Higgins House, built

about 1730, represents the typical Cape Cod dwelling. Ask at visitor centers about tours.



Old Harbor Life-Saving Station

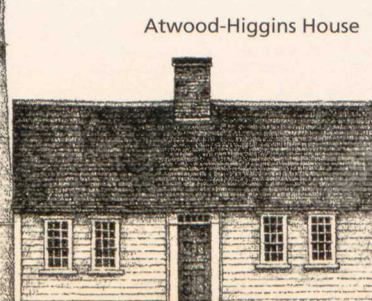


Penniman House

Nauset Light



ILLUSTRATION: NPS / RICHARD FISH
NOT DRAWN TO SCALE



Atwood-Higgins House

Recreation and Relaxation

Take time to try something different, whether it's bicycling, hiking, or just watching the ocean waves. (See *Things To See and Do on the other side of this brochure*). Get activity schedules at visitor centers or visit www.nps.gov/caco.

Swimming Seasonal lifeguard services and facilities are provided at these National Park Service beaches: Coast Guard, Nauset Light, Marconi, Head of the Meadow, Race Point, and Herring Cove. Many towns have public beaches; all charge seasonal fees. Observe water safety practices at all times.

Surfing and Windsurfing These are permitted within the national seashore in waters outside the lifeguard-protected beaches.

Walking The national seashore has 12 self-guiding trails, where you can learn about the Cape's natural and human history. Their names may entice you: Fort Hill, Red Maple Swamp, Nauset Marsh, Doane, Atlantic White Cedar Swamp, Great Island, Pamet Area, Small's Swamp, Highlands Woods Walk, Pilgrim Spring, and Beech Forest. Buttonbush Trail, near Salt Pond Visitor Center in Eastham, has accessibility features for visitors who are blind.

Bicycling, Skating, and More The seashore has three bicycle trails ranging from 1.6 to 7.3 miles long. Roller blades, skates, and skateboards are permitted. Motorized vehicles, including mopeds, are prohibited on these paved trails.

Safety Note • The speed limit on all bicycle trails is 10 mph. • Ride single file. Stay to the right, except when passing. • Helmets are required for ages 16 and under and strongly advised for all. • Yield right of way to pedestrians.

Fishing Try surf-fishing from the beaches, but stay away from swimmers. A license is required for saltwater and freshwater fishing. Town licenses for shellfishing are required. Regulations and fees vary among the towns.

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

Travel Services The national seashore has no overnight facilities. Towns within the national seashore offer a wide variety of amenities. Reservations at motels, hotels, and private campgrounds are essential in summer. For

information and reservations: Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, 508-362-3225; www.capecodchamber.org.

Camping The National Park Service does not operate a campground here. Overnight camping and parking are prohibited. Find camping at private and state-operated facilities.

More Information Cape Cod National Seashore, established in 1961, includes 44,000 acres and 40 miles of coastline from Chatham to Provincetown. Headquarters is near the Marconi Station Site in Wellfleet (no public facilities). Contact the park or visit our website:

Cape Cod National Seashore
99 Marconi Site Road
Wellfleet, MA 02667
508-255-3421

www.nps.gov/caco

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Piping plovers

NPS / DOROTHY MICHELE NOVICK

Safety and Regulations

National Park Service rangers are here to help you and enforce regulations that protect you and the national seashore. For firearms and other regulations ask at headquarters or visitor centers or check our website. Observe the following:

- Do not disturb natural or cultural features; all are protected by federal law.
- Keep trails, roadsides, and other areas clean. Use trash receptacles, or take trash with you.
- Over-sand vehicles must stay on designated sand routes. A permit is required.
- Open fires are not allowed except when authorized by permit (available at visitor centers). Permits are not required for stoves using manufactured fuels or for charcoal grills in designated

picnic areas at Doane Rock, Great Island, Pilgrim Heights, and Beech Forest, or on sandy or rocky beaches bordering tidewater.

- Pets must be leashed and attended. Pets are not permitted in public buildings or picnic areas, on lifeguard-protected beaches or self-guiding trails, in posted sensitive habitats, or on trams. Bring water and shade for your pet. Service animals are welcome.
- Public nudity is prohibited.
- Sand collapses easily. Climbing slopes or digging deep holes is hazardous.
- Swim only where there are lifeguards; obey their directions. Lifeguard-protected beaches are marked with signs. Be alert for riptides and underwater obstacles. Keep children within reach.

- Observe posted speed limits. Wear seatbelts. Report traffic accidents immediately.
- Avoid too much sun exposure. Be aware that ticks and poison ivy are prevalent.
- Do not take glass containers, inflatable rafts, rubber tubes, snorkels, or masks to any lifeguard-protected beach.
- In summer be alert for heavy traffic, bicycles, and pedestrians on narrow roads.
- Helmets are required for bicyclists age 16 and under and strongly advised for everyone.

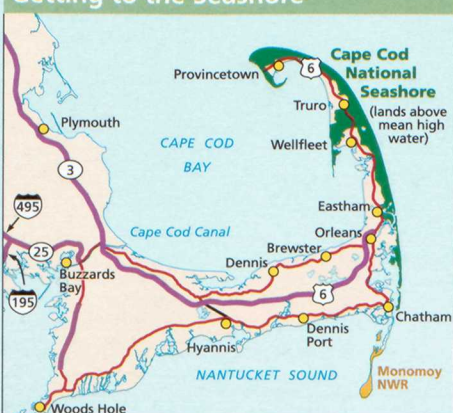
Emergencies: Contact a ranger or call 911.

Fishing at sunrise
© GREG PROBST





Getting to the Seashore



U.S. 6 is the main route to and through the national seashore. Buses run from Hyannis to Chatham and Provincetown. Public bus transportation operates year-round from Harwich to Provincetown. Airlines operate between Hyannis and Boston, Providence, and New York, and between Boston and Provincetown. There is seasonal ferry service between Boston and Provincetown.

Cape Cod National Seashore is one of over 390 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about national parks visit www.nps.gov.

