

Cape Cod National Seashore Activity Guide

July and August 2024

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Cape Cod National Seashore



Visitors participate in the Beach Apparatus Drill at Old Harbor Life-Saving Station. Programs take place Thursdays at 5 pm.

NPS/KEKOA ROSEHILL

Visitor Center Information

Salt Pond Visitor Center,
50 Nauset Road, off Route 6, Eastham, 508-255-3421
Open daily 9 am to 5 pm

Salt Pond Visitor Center offers expansive views of Salt Pond, Nauset Marsh, and the Atlantic, as well as an extensive museum. The Nauset Marsh and Buttonbush walking trails, and the Nauset Bicycle Trail are nearby.

Both visitor centers have staff to assist with trip planning, restrooms, exhibits, an award-winning orientation film (open captions audio description, and assistive listening devices available), and large print and Braille versions of some park publications. The America's National Parks stores are open daily, with apparel, books, field guides, and a variety of seashore-related items for sale. Many ranger-guided programs occur at or depart from the visitor centers. Ask about Junior Ranger and B.A.R.K. Ranger programs.

Province Lands Visitor Center,
171 Race Point Road, off Route 6, Provincetown, 508-487-1256
Open daily 9 am to 5 pm

The outdoor observation decks at the Province Lands Visitor Center offer sweeping views of dunes and ocean. Whales may be spotted offshore. Race Point Beach, the Province Lands Bicycle Trail, and the Beech Forest walking trail are nearby.

Happy 63rd Birthday to Cape Cod National Seashore! Cape Cod National Seashore was created on August 7, 1961 by President John F. Kennedy. President Kennedy recognized the importance of safeguarding natural and cultural landscapes. He believed that every American had a responsibility to serve the greater good of the nation; that together we leave a legacy for future generations to build upon. President Kennedy left behind a legacy of conservation, signing into legislation sixteen national park units.



Orleans, Eastham, and Wellfleet Area Programs

Sundays	Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays	Saturdays
11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 2 pm Terrace Talk 4:30-7:30 pm Nauset Light Tour *TBD Ranger's Choice! (Time varies daily)	9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) * 11 am Mystery of the Penniman Photos July 22 & August 19 2 pm Terrace Talk *TBD Ranger's Choice! (Time varies daily)	11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 11 am Three Sisters Lighthouse Tour 2 pm Terrace Talk 7 pm Evenings at Salt Pond *TBD Ranger's Choice! (Time varies daily)	10 am Salt Pond Paddle 11 am Captain Penniman House Tour 2 pm Terrace Talk 4:30-7:30 pm Nauset Light Tour 7 pm Beach Fire at Nauset Light Beach (Beginning July 17) *TBD Ranger's Choice! (Time varies daily)	9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) 10 am Atwood Higgins Tour (Beginning July 11) 2 pm Terrace Talk *TBD Kayak Adventures (Every other Thursday beginning July 4, timing is tide dependent) *TBD Ranger's Choice! (Time varies daily)	7:30 am Surf Casting 101 (Beginning July 12) 10 am Salt Pond Paddle 2 pm Terrace Talk *TBD Ranger's Choice! (Time varies daily)	11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 2 pm Terrace Talk *TBD Ranger's Choice! (Time varies daily)

* Indicates irregular program

Truro and Provincetown Area Programs

Sundays	Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays	Saturdays
9 am- 5 pm Highland Light Tour 10 am Dune and Bog Walk 2-4 pm Old Harbor Life-Saving Station Open House 3 pm Sharks and Seals (Truro)	9 am- 5 pm Highland Light Tour 10 am Nature Detectives 10 am Cape Cod Ninja Warrior 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum 2 pm Explore the Seashore 2-4 pm Old Harbor Life-Saving Station Open House	9 am- 5 pm Highland Light Tour 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum 2 pm Explore the Seashore 2-4 pm Old Harbor Life-Saving Station Open House	9 am Big View Hiking 9 am- 5 pm Highland Light Tour 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum 2 pm Explore the Seashore 4 pm Art in the Dunes Hike	9 am- 5 pm Highland Light Tour 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum 5 pm Beach Apparatus Drill * August 8 Whale Week! 11 am	9 am- 5 pm Highland Light Tour 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum 2-4 pm Old Harbor Life-Saving Station Open House 3 pm Beech Forest Beauty TBD Kayak the Outer Cape (tide-dependent) TBD Snails and Crabs: Tidal Forays on the Cape Tip (timing is tide-dependent)	9 am- 5 pm Highland Light Tour 10 am Dune and Bog Walk 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum 2-4 pm Old Harbor Life-Saving Station Open House 3 pm Sharks and Seals (Truro) * 6 pm Full Moon Campfire July 20 & August 17

* Indicates irregular program

Program especially for youngsters

Accessible, with assistance

✓ Drinking water, sunscreen, closed-toe shoes, and bug spray recommended. More challenging walk due to distance or terrain.

Programs and Activities Orleans, Eastham, and Wellfleet Area Programs

Atwood Higgins Tour – *Beginning July 11, Thursdays, 10 am, 1 hour.* Explore layers of history at this Wellfleet site, including the seashore’s oldest building. Reservations required and accepted no more than one week in advance. Call 508-255-3421, ext. 0 to register.

Beach Fire at Nauset Light Beach – *Beginning July 17, Wednesdays, 7 pm, 1 hour.* Gather ‘round the fire for stories, games, and songs and anything else the rangers decide for this informal – yet informative- experience. Bring a beach chair or towel, bug spray, and flashlight. Meet the ranger in the Nauset Light Beach parking lot, Eastham.

Captain Penniman House Tour – *Wednesdays, 11 am, 1 hour.* Tour this 1868 home of a successful whaling captain and learn about his family’s hardships, adventures, and lifestyle. Meet at the Penniman House, Fort Hill, Eastham.

Discover Nauset Marsh – *Sunday, Tuesdays, & Saturdays, 11 am, 2 hours.* Walk through Cape Cod’s geologic past on this Nauset Marsh Trail hike. Explore how the Cape has been shaped by nature and people, and what may be in store for its future. Meet at the Salt Pond Visitor Center. ✓

Evenings at Salt Pond – *Tuesdays, 7 pm, 1 hour.* Enjoy music and performance events outdoors on the shores of Salt Pond and history and nature presentations in the indoor auditorium. Bench and lawn seating available for outdoor programs. Bring bug spray. Doors open at 6:30 pm. Sponsored by Friends of the Cape Cod National Seashore.

- July 2 - Crab Grass Blue Grass Band - outdoor amphitheater
- July 9 - Jackson Gillman - Whales, Octopi & Sharks, Oh My! – indoor auditorium
- July 16 - Anna May - outdoor amphitheater
- July 23 - Neal Nichols Jr. - Geography gameshow - indoor auditorium
- July 30 - Cape Cod Chamber Music - outdoor amphitheater
- August 6 - Movie: “Rescuing Our Oceans through Recycled Art” - indoor auditorium
- August 13 - Kim Moberg - outdoor amphitheater

Kayak Adventures – *July 4, 18, August 1, 15, 29, 3 hours, up to 3 miles. Start time is tide dependent.* Discover the Outer Cape’s diverse aquatic ecosystems and rich human history on the Nauset Marsh. Meet at the Salt Pond Visitor Center. All equipment provided. Reservations are required and may be made up to one week in advance by calling Salt Pond Visitor Center at (508) 255-3421, ext. 9. Experienced kayakers only, minimum age 16. ✓

Mystery of the Penniman Photos – *July 22 & August 19, 11 am, 1 hour.* Join us to uncover the stories of the “dry-plate” photo collection of Bessie Penniman, Captain Edward Penniman’s daughter. This one-hour presentation will be held at the Salt Pond Visitor Center classroom.

Programs and Activities Truro and Provincetown Area Programs

Art in the Dunes Hike – *Wednesdays, 4 pm, 2-3 hours, 2.5 miles in loose sand.* On this long hike into the Province Lands dunes, view firsthand the quality of light, natural environment, and isolation that have long attracted artists and writers to Provincetown. You may have the opportunity to meet an artist-in-residence at a dune shack. Reservations required and accepted no more than one week in advance. Call 508-487-1256 to register. ✓

Beach Apparatus Drill – *Thursdays, 5 pm, 1 hour.* “Open the boat room doors!” Return to the days of wrecks and rescues off the Graveyard of the Atlantic. Old Harbor Life-Saving Station at Race Point Beach in Provincetown is the setting for this reenactment of a 1902 rescue drill that includes firing a projectile out of a cannon-like gun and bringing a shipwreck “victim” to shore.

Beech Forest Beauty – *Fridays, 3 pm, 1 hour.* Join a ranger to hear what hidden gems await this fall in the dune ponds and cranberry bogs of this old growth forest and adjacent dune scape. Reservations are required and may be made up to one week in advance by calling Province Lands Visitor Center at 508-487-1256.

Big View Hiking – *Wednesdays, 9 am, 2-3 hours, 4-6 miles.* Join us for an energetic, cardiovascular hike to some of the most majestic ocean and bay views in the national seashore. Call 508-487-1256 for location details. ✓

Cape Cod Ninja Warrior – *Mondays, 10 am, 1-2 hours.* In the spirit of the popular television show “American Ninja Warrior,” tackle our Race Point Beach family-friendly, low-lying, obstacle course in the sand. Run, jump, carry, and problem solve to best your time. Compare your athletic abilities to those of the U.S. Life-Saving Service, predecessor to the Coast Guard.

Dune and Bog Walk – *Saturdays & Sundays, 10 am, 1-2 hours, 1-2 miles in loose sand.* Head out from the Province Lands Visitor Center to explore an enchanting landscape of sand dunes and wild cranberry bogs. Meet at the Province Lands Visitor Center. ✓

Explore the Seashore – *Mondays, Tuesdays, & Wednesdays, 2 pm, 2 hours, 2-3 miles in loose sand.* Get off the beaten path to explore the wild habitats, fascinating nature, and captivating history of the Outer Cape. Slog through sand and traipse up and down dunes in this immersive experience. Call 508-487-1256 for locations.

Full Moon Campfire – *Saturdays, July 20 & August 17, 6 pm, 1 hour.* Enjoy sunset on the beach and an evening of folklore and games around the campfire. Bring a beach chair or towel to sit on. Meet the rangers on the beach in front of the bathhouse at Herring Cove Beach in Provincetown. Accessible with assistance; please notify Province Lands Visitor Center in advance.

Highland House Museum – *Mondays through Saturdays, 10 am-4:30 pm.* This former 1907 hotel now serves as a museum, providing fascinating insight into the culture and history of the Outer Cape. \$8 for adults. \$7 for seniors, students,

Nauset Light Tour – *Sundays & Wednesdays, 4:30-7:30 pm, drop in.* Climb the tower for great views and history. Admission is free, donations accepted. Located at Nauset Light Beach, Eastham. Operated by Nauset Light Preservation Society: www.nausetlight.org

Ranger’s Choice! – *Daily beginning July 18, time varies.* Are you ready for an adventure that’s as free as the ocean breeze? Embark on free ranger-led adventures at Cape Cod National Seashore! From scenic hikes and kayak trips to family fun and ocean education, there’s excitement for all. Discover, learn, and play—where the land meets the sea! Visit the park’s web calendar (www.nps.gov/caco), NPS mobile app, or call the Salt Pond Visitor Center for specific “Ranger Choice” program information, 508-255-3421, ext. 0.

Salt Pond Paddle – *Wednesdays & Fridays, 10 am, 2.5 hours, 1 mile.* Explore the nature of marshes and kettle ponds on this easy canoe paddle. Minimum age is 6. All equipment provided. Reservations required and accepted no more than one week in advance. Call 508-255-3421, ext. 0 to register. ✓

Sharks and Seals: Cape Cod’s Dynamic Duo Walk (Eastham) – *Mondays & Thursdays, 9:30 am, 1 hour, up to 1 mile in loose sand.* Examine the relationship between sharks and seals and their roles in a healthy marine environment. Reservations required and accepted no more than one week in advance. Call 508-255-3421, ext. 0 to register. ✓

Surf Casting: 101 – *Beginning July 12, Fridays, 7:30 am, 1 hour.* Surf fishing is a traditional Outer Cape activity. The rich ocean waters have provided sustenance for people over thousands of years. Today, surf fishing is a popular recreational activity, often passed down through generations. Join us on a beach to learn about the origins of surf fishing and an introductory surfcasting lesson. Minimum age 12. All equipment provided. Reservations required and accepted no more than one week in advance. Call 508-255-3421, ext. 0 to register.

Terrace Talk – *Daily, 2 pm, 30 minutes.* Explore the stories behind seashore scenery during these short talks on the terrace of Salt Pond Visitor Center. Subjects vary by scheduled rangers.

Three Sisters Lighthouses Tour – *Tuesdays, 11 am, 1 hour.* Explore the history of these 19th-century lighthouses that once lit the way for mariners off the Nauset shores. Meet at the Three Sisters Lighthouse parking lot – space is limited – on the north side of Cable Road, Eastham.

and children ages 6-17. Free for children 5 and under. 6 Highland Light Road, Truro. Operated by the Truro Historical Society. www.trurohistoricalsociety.org/highlandhouse/

Highland Light Tours – *Daily, 9 am to 5 pm, last tour at 4:30 pm, open until 8 pm on select dates.* The original Highland (Cape Cod) Light was constructed in 1797, making it the first lighthouse on Cape Cod. The current 1857 tower recently underwent a major rehabilitation. Adult: \$8, Student: \$5, Senior: \$7, Military: \$7. Located at 27 Highland Light Road, Truro. Operated by Eastern National. www.highlandlighthouse.org.

Kayak the Outer Cape – *Fridays, tide-dependent, up to 3 hours, 3 miles.* For a different perspective on the seashore, join us or bring your own kayak and paddle with us in a meandering marsh or a dune-sided lake. Previous kayaking experience required; minimum age 12. Reservations are required and may be made up to 3 days in advance by calling Province Lands Visitor Center at (508) 487-1256. ✓

Nature Detectives – *Mondays, 10 am, 2 hours, 1 mile.* Join rangers for hands-on educational activities along the Beech Forest Trail. Whether exploring animal adaptations or doing nature art, you’ll be having fun together! Reservations are required and may be made up to one week in advance by calling Province Lands Visitor Center at 508-487-1256.

Old Harbor Life-Saving Station Open House – *Fridays-Tuesdays 2-4 pm, drop in.* Built in 1898, Old Harbor is the last intact life-saving station of the original 13 on Cape Cod. A visit feels like stepping into a turn-of-the-century, working station while the crew is out on patrol. Race Point Beach, Provincetown. Beach fees may apply.

Sharks and Seals: Cape Cod’s Dynamic Duo Walk (Truro) – *Saturdays & Sundays, 3 pm, 1 hour, up to 1 mile in loose sand.* Join a ranger to examine the relationship between sharks and seals and the roles they play in the balance of a healthy marine environment. Bring binoculars if you have them for seal viewing. Meet at Head of the Meadow Beach, Truro. ✓

Snails and Crabs: Tidal Forays on the Cape Tip – *Fridays, tide dependent, 1-2 hours.* Ever wondered what lives beneath the sand in Cape Cod’s tidal flats? Join a Ranger to hunt for all sorts of mollusks, crustaceans, and marine critters. Reservations are required and may be made up to one week in advance by calling Province Lands Visitor Center at (508) 487-1256.

Whale Week! *Thursday, August 8, 11 am, 1 hour.* Join Center for Coastal Studies Education Coordinator Jesse Mechling to learn about the whales that call Cape Cod waters home, and the conservation research that the Center is conducting. Start with a presentation in Province Lands Visitor Center, then spend time on the back deck trying to spot whales.