



Wind, Waves, Storms, and Sand

Cape Lookout National Seashore is made of a long, thin stretch of barrier islands. These islands change all the time. Wind and waves move sand down beaches and across islands. This changes the shape and size of the islands.

Barrier Islands



Barrier islands also help protect the mainland from storms. When a storm hits a barrier island, it slows down. That means the storm is not as strong when it hits the mainland so it is not as dangerous for the people who live on the mainland.



Hurricane Irene (2011)

Life on Barrier Islands

Plants Only a few types of plants can live in this area. A hot sun, sandy soil, and strong winds make it hard for plants to survive. Dune grasses are the most important plants. This grass is not like grass in a backyard. This grass has very long roots which help trap sand and hold the island together.



Sea Oats

In some places in the park, the dunes grow tall enough to protect trees from the salty ocean. The largest forest in the park is on Shackleford Banks. Wildflowers and marsh grasses also grow in some parts of the park.

People The Coree (core-ee), a tribe of Native Americans, once lived in this area. They lived on Core Banks in the fall and winter. That is the best time of year to hunt and to catch large fish. They lived on the mainland the rest of the year.



Fisherman

Other people have lived in Portsmouth Village, on Shackleford Banks, and near the lighthouse. Many of these people made money by catching fish or whales. Others helped take food, clothes, and other items off of large ships and put them on small boats. These boats took the goods to people on the mainland.



Seashells



Great Egret

Animals Many animals live in the park or in the water around the park. Sea turtles and shore birds build their nests on the beach. More than one hundred wild horses live on Shackleford Banks. People also come here to go bird watching. Herons, egrets, terns, ducks, and pelicans can all be seen here. River otters, raccoons, lizards, tree frogs, fish, dolphins, whales, and seashells also live in this area.



Wild Horses



Ghost Crab



Sea Turtle Hatchling

Explore. Learn. Protect

Are you looking for something fun to do in the park? Ask a ranger for a **Junior Ranger** or **Junior Ranger Adventures** book. Find clues in the park and solve the puzzles in your book. When you finish the book, bring it back to the Visitor Center to get your award.

WebRangers is an online Junior Ranger program. You can play more than fifty free games and puzzles. Just log on to this website: www.nps.gov/webangers



For More Information

Write to:
Cape Lookout National Seashore
131 Charles Street
Harkers Island, NC 28531

Call: 252-728-2250

Go Online: www.nps.gov/calco

Exploring Cape Lookout

Visiting the Park

The Harkers Island Visitor Center is open most of the year. It is only closed on Christmas Day and New Years Day. There are two other visitor centers: the Light Station Visitor Center, near the lighthouse, and the Theodore and Annie Salter House and Visitor Center, in Portsmouth Village. These visitor centers are open in the spring, summer, and fall.

There are no roads or bridges that go to the barrier islands. The only way to get there is to ride a ferry or a private boat. *Make sure you bring all the food, water, and supplies you need with you.* There are no stores on the islands. Take all your trash with you when you leave the park. Help keep the seashore clean for the animals that live here and people that visit.

What to Bring: Bring a hat and wear sunscreen to protect yourself from sunburn. Bring plenty of bug spray to keep the mosquitoes, ticks, and biting flies away. Make sure to bring water, lunch, and snacks, too.

Pets are allowed in the park as long as they stay on a leash. This rule is for your pet's safety as well as the safety of the park wildlife.

Swimming Safety: There are no lifeguards at the beaches in this park. Never swim alone or without permission from an adult. Always stay where an adult can see you. If you get caught in a rip current, *do not panic*. Swim to the side to get out of the current before you try to swim back to the shore.

