Assateague Island

A Visitor's Guide to National Park Service Activities & Events - Summer 1995

Ponies - Wild and Free

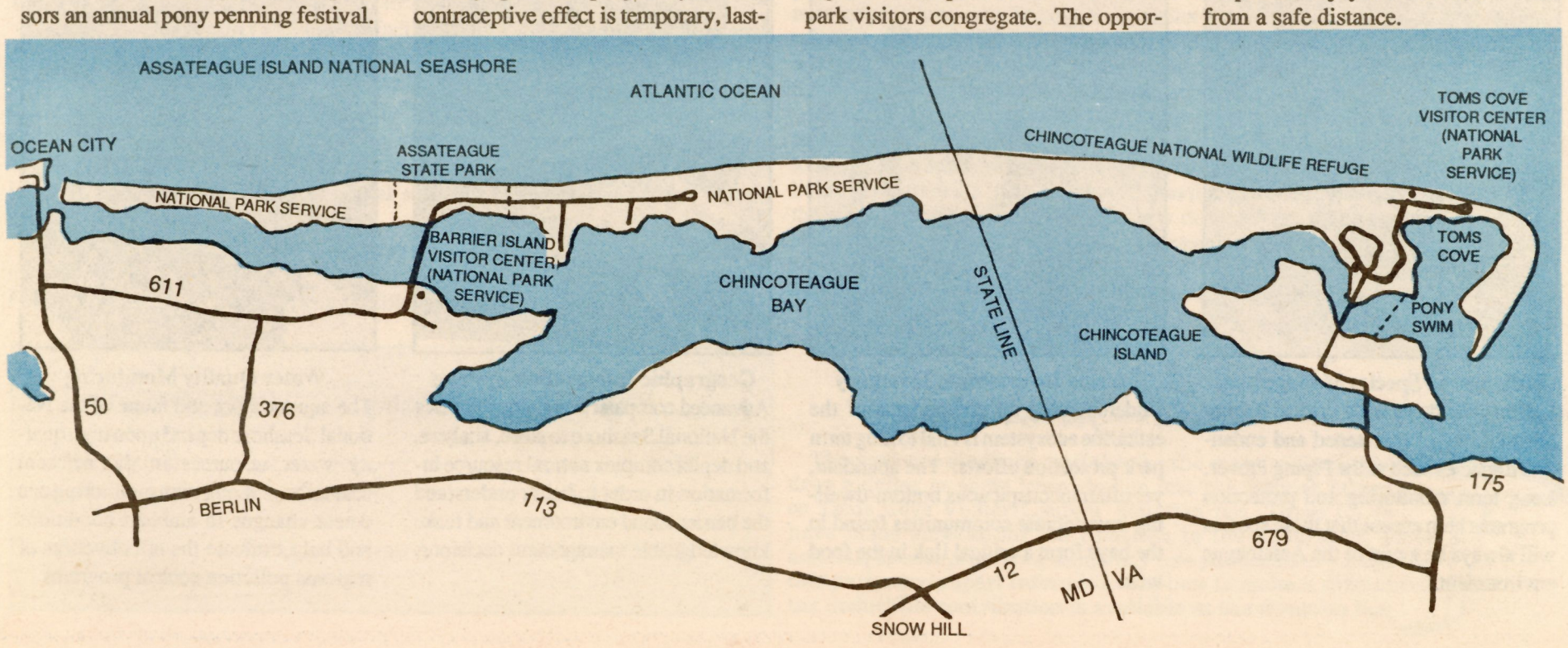
Although no one is completely sure of how they arrived, horses have been a part of the Assateague Island environment for many, many years. Despite the often told tale of shipwrecks and Spanish ponies, the most plausible explanation is that they are the wild descendants of horses placed on the island by mainland landowners to avoid fencing and taxation. Evidence of this activity dates back to the 17th century. Regardless of their origin, these sturdy, shaggy horses have proven themselves remarkably well-suited to the harsh environment of Assateague.

There are actually two herds of horses inhabiting the island, separated by a fence at the Maryland Virginia state line. The Maryland herd is owned and managed by the National Park Service, while the Virginia horses are owned by the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Department. The Fire Department is allowed to graze their herd on Assateague Island through a special use permit issued by the Fish and Wildlife Service - a federal agency which administers Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. The permit restricts the size of the herd to approximately 150 animals in order to protect the other natural resources of the Wildlife Refuge. To meet this limit, the Chincoteague VFD sponsors an annual pony penning festival. Every year on the last Wednesday of July the entire herd is rounded up and swims to Chincoteague where the years' foals are sold at auction.

In Maryland, the number of horses has grown from approximately 28 in 1968 to more than 165 at present, exceeding the desired herd size of 120 to 150 animals. With this growth has come increasing evidence that the horses may be causing harm to their island home. Long term research has shown that the horses are having a significant impact on the dune and saltmarsh habitats, their favored foraging areas. Overgrazing results in reduced plant health and reproductive capability, changes in species diversity, and diminished habitat value for other wildlife species. By establishing population limits, the Park Service is attempting to balance the health and well being of the horses with the need to protect the island's other sensitive natural resources and values.

To manage population growth on a long term basis, a unique contraceptive has been developed for use in the Maryland herd. Administered by dart guns, the non-hormonal contraceptive vaccine stimulates the horse's immune system to produce antibodies. At sufficiently high levels these antibodies block fertilization and thereby prevent pregnancy. The contraceptive effect is temporary, lasting about one year, but can be extended with an annual booster shot. During seven years of experimental field trials, the technique has proven better than 95% effective, and has exhibited no harmful side effects. Use of the contraceptive as part of a long term horse population management program began earlier this year.

Although the number of horses will be reduced over the next few years, the opportunity to observe Assateague horses should not be affected. Horses roam throughout the Seashore, including the developed areas where most park visitors congregate. The opportunity to observe horses will continue, but so too will the need to treat the horses as wildlife. Feeding horses along the roadways habituates horses to people and cars, and results in several horses dying from automobile collisions each year. And, despite their appearance, the horses are wild creatures and often respond to attempts to touch or feed them by kicking and biting. With rabies now present on the island, the consequences of being bitten by a horse include the possibility of needing rabies shots. So please, enjoy the horses, but do it from a safe distance.



Island on the Move

Old tree stumps appear in the surf as evidence of how the island has moved east to west covering anything in its path.

Assateague Island, as are all barrier islands, is always on the move. As you read this article, sand is being moved by wind and wave action. Storms accelerate this natural process and can result in dramatic changes over a relatively short period of time. The net result of these changes is a steady movement of the island from east to west. The island is literally "rolling over" itself. Assateague is also growing longer at its south end. Evidence of this movement becomes clear when one sees old tree stumps and various man made items in the surf which originally were not near the surf at all.

The dynamic nature of barrier islands has become very evident in Virginia and results in a commonly asked question: "What is happening to the beach?" The recreational beach area has become narrower and narrower over the past few years in front of the human constructed dunes by the parking lots. These artificial dunes protect parking lots, but they stop the natural movement of sand across the island. Because of the lack of "roll over," the beach erodes and becomes progressively narrow. Without a wide beach to absorb wave energy during storms, the dunes are much more prone to breaching. Efforts to maintain the dunes have proven difficult and expensive as they are destroyed again and again by storms.

You can see the direct result of all this sand movement in some of the management decisions related to the Virginia section of beach. In order to have a more sustainable and realistic approach to human use of the area, protective dunes are not being rebuilt in the new "overwash" area between parking lots three and four. This action will allow that section of the beach to widen naturally over time. Parking has been adjusted to gain more spaces in lot four to replace lost parking in lot three. The amphitheater just south of lot three was also removed in order to provide more open beach area and parking. Visitors are encouraged to park adjacent to lot four and walk to the wide overwash beach to the south.

All of this brings up the interesting question of what does the future hold. The dunes will be maintained as long as feasible in lots one and two to protect buildings and parking. However, the forces of nature will continue to work on the beach and change its position. Someday, the dunes will be lost to storms and the ocean will again overwash the area. The beach will still be there, but the parking lots and the existing facilities may not. The National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service and the town of Chincoteague have forged a partnership to develop a long term strategy that recognizes the inevitability of changing beach conditions while developing sustainable ways to provide a "world class" visitor experience to people visiting the southern end of Assateague Island. These range from mobile restrooms, bathhouses, and visitor contact facilities to investigating a first class shuttle system that could bring people from Chincoteague to points in the refuge and to the beach. We are just getting started and would like your ideas. If you have a thought, jot it down and give it to someone at the visitor center who will pass it on to the Superintendent.

Whatever happens, nature relentlessly acts upon the island and changes will continue. We must adjust to these changes, and remember:

It is precisely because of the constant change that Assateague is one of the most beautiful and scenic areas in the country.

Frequently damaged by recent storms, the Virginia amphitheater was torn down to provide more open beach space and parking.

Resource Management and You

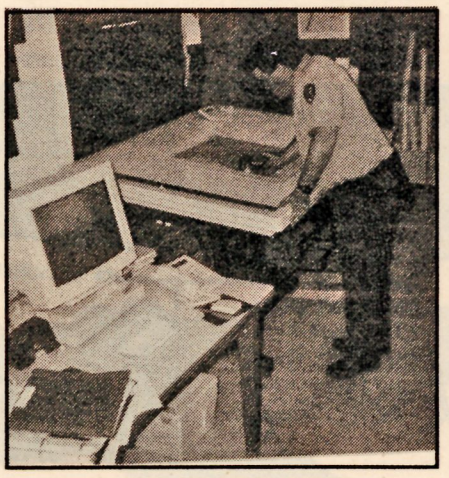
Each year, thousands of people visit the National Seashore to enjoy the natural beauty and bountiful recreational opportunities which flourish at Assateague Island and the surrounding waters. Certainly, one of the main reasons for the establishment of the park was to provide for just such use and enjoyment. Equally important, however, is the responsibility of the National Park Service to ensure that the natural resources and values which make up the barrier island environment are protected and preserved for all time.

In fulfilling this dual mission - preserving the natural environment while providing recreational opportunities - the National Seashore carries out a broad range of programs designed to understand, manage, and protect the diversity of wildlife, vegetation, geologic features, and natural processes which characterize Assateague Island. Much of this activity occurs behind the scenes, carried out by a dedicated consortium of park resource specialists, student interns, volunteers, university scientists, and contractual researchers.

Just a few highlights of the overall resource management program are pictured here. Many other activities are underway, and more planned for the future. Along with the committment of visitors to respect park resources, these programs will help assure that the health and integrity of Assateague's natural environment will be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

Endangered Species Management
Barrier islands provide critical habitat for a variety of threatened and endangered species such as the Piping Plover. Long term monitoring and protection programs help ensure that these species will always be a part of the Assateague environment.

Marine Invertebrate Inventory
Understanding all components of the estuarine ecosystem is vital to long term park protection efforts. The abundant, yet often inconspicuous bottom-dwelling invertebrate communities found in the bays form a critical link in the food web.



Geographic Information Systems
Advanced computer technology enables the National Seashore to store, analyze, and depict complex natural resource information in order to better understand the barrier island environment and make knowledgeable management decisions.

Water Quality Monitoring
The aquatic flora and fauna of the National Seashore depend upon high quality water resources in the adjacent coastal bays. Long term monitoring can detect changes in ambient conditions and help evaluate the effectiveness of regional pollution control programs.

Hazards of Assateague

The wild horses: Ponies often appear tame and gentle, but they may become aggressive quickly and can be dangerous. Each year several visitors are bitten or kicked by what appears to be "tame" ponies. Feeding ponies and any other wildlife is unhealthy for the animals, dangerous for you, and strictly prohibited. Some ponies become beggars and at least one is killed by a car each year while seeking a handout. Do not stop or park on the roadside or bike trail to view the ponies except in designated areas - enjoy them from a distance.

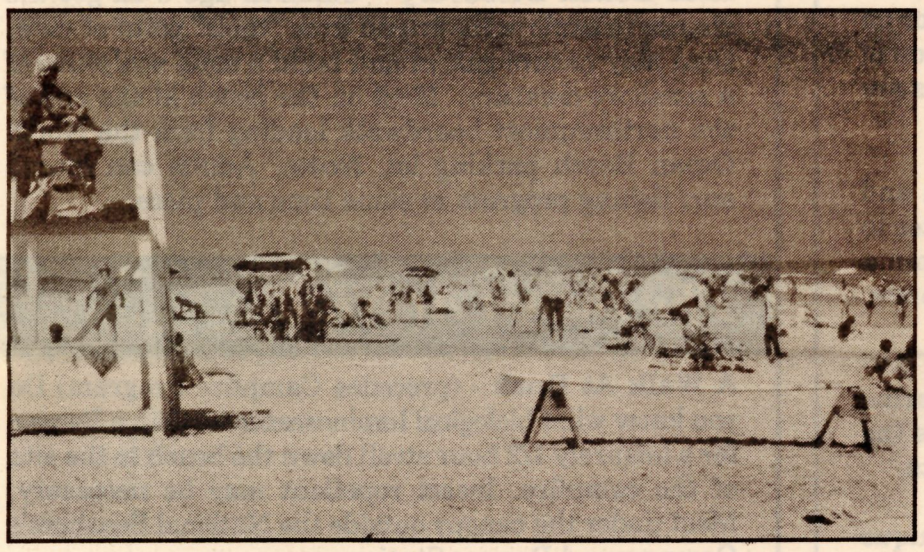
Ticks and Lyme Disease: Lyme Disease is an illness caused by bacteria transmitted to people through tick bites. In its early stages Lyme Disease may cause circular rashes, flu-like symptoms, headaches, stiff neck, and fevers. In its later stages the disease may cause arthritis in large joints, meningitis, neurological, and cardiac problems. The primary carrier, the deer tick, is found on Assateague Island. While they can be found in any natural area on the island, special care should be taken in high shrub areas and woods in the spring and fall, and in leaf litter in the spring and early summer. To learn more about Lyme Disease and how to avoid tick bites, stop by a ranger station or visitor center and pick up the brochure Ticks and Lyme Disease in the National Parks.

Rabies: For many years rabies has worked its way south along the Delmarva Peninsula and it has finally reached Assateague. Park and refuge managers cite rabies as an added reason to avoid contact with any wild animal. While mange, distemper and other wildlife diseases may commonly affect the appearance and behavior of many creatures, particularly foxes and raccoons, visitors should never approach animals with the intention of offering assistance. **Please report any human contact with sick animals to the nearest park ranger or refuge official.**

Rabies may already have crossed the bay to Assateague by way of swimming raccoons.

Surf safety: Please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with some common beach hazards by stopping at the ranger stations or visitor centers and requesting a copy of the Surf Safety Brochure. Such hazards include heavy wave/surf conditions, lightning storms, shallow water currents, and stinging marine organisms. We also recommend examining the bathhouse exhibits and reading posted regulations and information on the beach walkways.

Poison ivy: Found throughout the inner dune, shrub and forest sections of the island, poison ivy, with its shiny leaves in clusters of three, can produce an itchy red rash if you come in contact with the plant's oils. To lessen your chance of contact, stay on all trails and boardwalks. In the fall, poison ivy leaves turn a crimson red, but are still contagious. If you accidentally touch poison ivy, immediately wash your hands and the affected areas with soapy water to remove the oil. Remember: "Leaves of three - let them be!"



Lifeguards provide protection for beach users in designated areas and conduct surf rescue demonstrations. Swimmers are encouraged to pick up a copy of the surf safety brochure at the visitor centers or at the surf condition signs located near the lifeguard protected beaches.

Seashore Camping - Something for Everyone

A variety of camping is available on Assateague Island, but it is located in the Maryland section only. The National Park Service provides two campgrounds, Oceanside and Bayside, which offer drive-in pads suitable for tents, trailers and recreational vehicles. In addition, Oceanside has walk-in, tent-only sites, located 100-200 feet from centralized parking areas.

Both campgrounds have primitive facilities with outdoor chemical toilets, central locations for drinking water and outdoor rinse-off showers. Reservations can be made from May 15th through October up to eight weeks in advance of a camping date by calling 1-800-365-2267. The rest of the year the system is first come, first served. Organized group camps and backcountry camping is available for canoeists or hikers at established sites. Additional camping information is available at the national seashore's campground office or by calling a ranger at 410-641-3030.

Assateague State Park in Maryland also has a campground and it features hot shower bathhouses. There are no electric or water hookups in either park. Further state park information is available at 410-641-2120.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Maryland	Ranger Station	(410) 641-3030
	After Hours	Dail 911
Virginia	Ranger Station	(804) 336-6577
	After Hours	Dail 911

Message from the Superintendent

Welcome to one of the most dynamic parks in the national park system -- not just because we have an extremely knowledgeable and friendly staff but primarily because Assateague as a barrier island is by nature a resource in perpetual motion. It is constantly moving in reaction to currents, winds, and sea level changes.

This summer we will have the NPS submerged cultural resources team here to start to assess our underwater cultural resources. Those pieces of yellow brick, tiles, and old pieces of ships are pieces of a larger puzzle. Please leave them where you find them and let a ranger know. Thanks!

I would like to ask your help with several aspects of managing the seashore. A special effort is being mounted in the Maryland section to keep the horses wild. We have had a number of "problem" horses created by people feeding them. Several people are bit or kicked each year; horses raiding tents for food and mugging visitors with food have almost become commonplace. While feeding horses may make humans feel good, it is obviously bad for the horse! Only with you cooperation can we fix this problem!

We have another island resident that requires some tender loving care - the piping plover. This little shore bird is in danger of becoming extinct. The National Park Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and Assateague Island State Park are very concerned and are trying a variety of techniques to enhance the reproductive success of this plover. Last year Assateague was one of the prime piping plover success stories. With your help in avoiding areas designated as plover habitat, we can ensure that at least here they have a refuge.

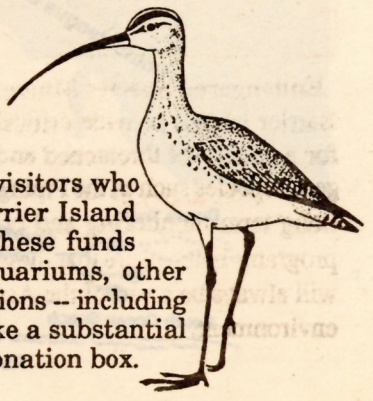
On the southern end we are trying to find a sustainable way to provide first class visitor services while recognizing mother nature holds the trump card. I would be interested in your thoughts.

The last point I would like for you to consider is your role as a steward of Assateague and our earth. We have a number of island users who are very active partners in helping us do special programs and meet special needs. We also have a number of volunteers who help in the visitor centers, assist with resource management projects, and help with maintenance. If you live nearby or visit regularly, and would like to get involved, please contact the national seashore's Education Specialist in Maryland or the District Interpreter in Virginia.

On a larger scale Americans must step forward and demonstrate the principles of sustainability. Sustainability is a concept that means living in such a way so as not to diminish our children's opportunity to enjoy the same resources and standards of living as we do. It is a complex issue that has things we can do now to help -- reducing the waste stream; assessing impacts new development will have on us; thinking about where that chemical goes we just sprayed on our lawns; how can we use solar rather than a non-renewable source; recycle; etc. It is not someone else's problem. We are responsible, so let's get involved and make a difference.

Marc A. Koenings

Thank You!!



The national seashore staff thanks the many visitors who drop a dollar or some loose change into the Barrier Island or Toms Cove Visitor Centers' donation box. These funds have made substantial contributions to the aquariums, other exhibits, special programs, and many free publications -- including this park newspaper! Information on how to make a substantial tax deductible contribution is available at the donation box.

1995 SUMMER ACTIVITIES
MARYLAND DISTRICT

National Park Service - Assateague Island National Seashore

Sunday, June 18 - Saturday, August 26, 1995

Barrier Island Visitor Center

Begin your Maryland visit here. The center features daily programs, exhibits, an aquarium, touch tank, and a Park Ranger to answer questions 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Many publications are available, including *Life of Assateague*, a guide to three nature trails. The center is the starting point for the park's one-hour driving tour by cassette tape. Also shown regularly are various nature films. For more information, call (410) 641-1441.

Aquarium critters are fed daily at 10 a.m. - Come join us!

Guided Explorations

Birds of a Feather - Join us for a 1/2 mile stroll through forest and marsh to spot the birds. We provide binoculars and a spotting scope for an upclose look. Meet in the history exhibit parking lot at the intersection of the Ferry Landing Road. Insect repellent, long pants and long sleeves are recommended.

Life of the Beach - Have you ever seen black sand on the beach and wondered where it came from? Caravan by car from the visitor center to the best beachcombing area north of the state park. We will explore a natural barrier island beach which is heavily impacted by winter storms.

Bay Explorers - This Old Ferry Landing program involves active participation with seines by the whole family! Take a close look at marine organisms that thrive in the bay. A good pair of snug wading shoes (no thongs) is a must, if you want to pull the seine or catch critter in nets.

Canoe Trip - Join a Park Ranger at the Old Ferry Landing for a unique way to explore Chincoteague Bay and the abundant marsh life. You will be briefed on basic canoe skills but it will be necessary to mix and match experienced paddlers with beginners as this trip will venture to one of the outer islands with stops along the way. PADDLERS MUST BE AGE 14 OR OLDER, and all paddlers must have strength to paddle in windy conditions. Children under 14 have the option of sitting in the middle of the canoe. All equipment is provided. Sneakers (no thongs) are required as wading will be necessary at certain stops. Stormy or extremely windy weather may force cancellation of a trip. **NOTE: Reservations must be made in person at the Barrier Island Visitor Center** and are limited to one trip per person each summer. Canoeists with reservations must arrive on time or risk forfeiture to others standing by.

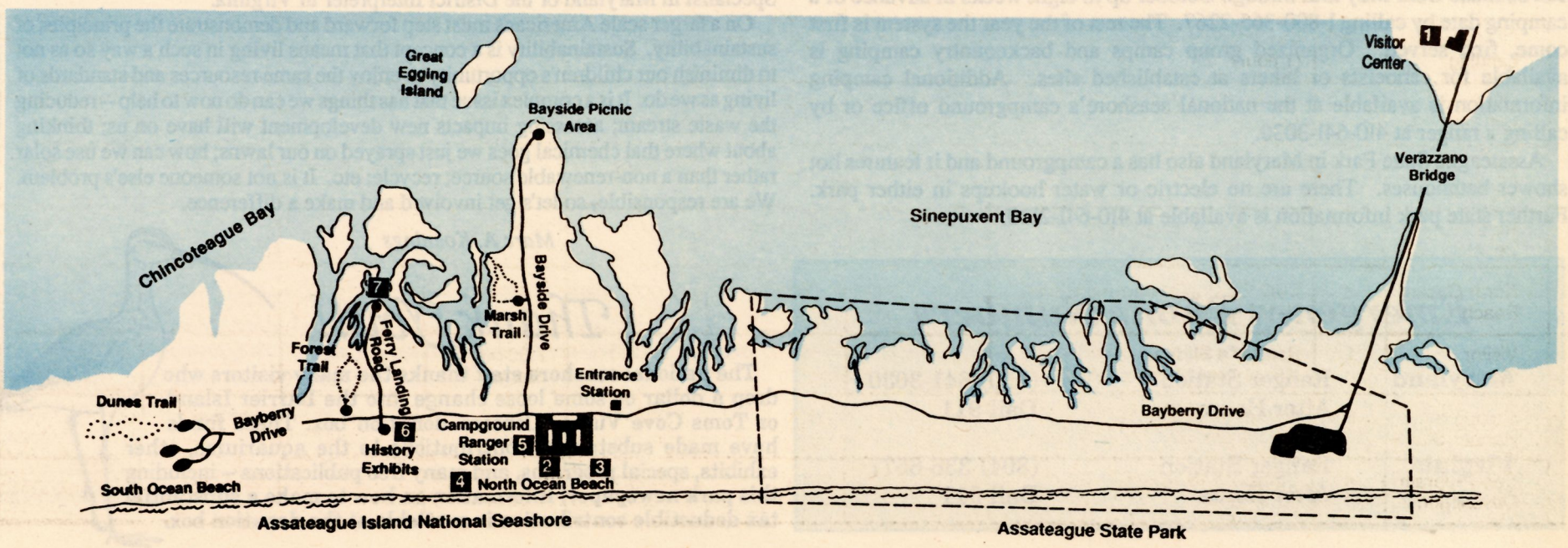
For Young Naturalists

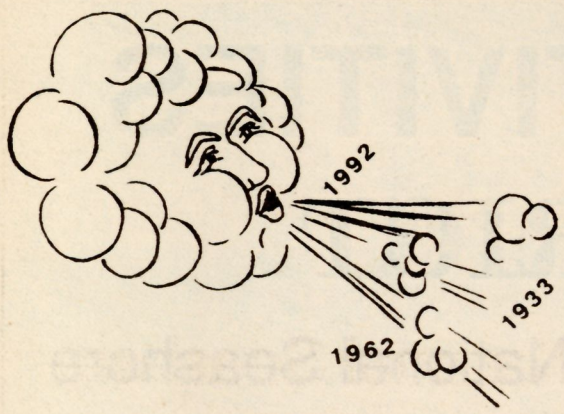
Kids Beach Discovery - Chidlren age 6-12 get the chance to explore the island from "their" point of view, then play nature games and build a sand sculpture of a seashore creature. Meet on the beach at the end of the northernmost boardwalk leading from the North Ocean Beach parking lot. **Note:** Adults can attend surf fishing program at same time and place.

The Beach At Night

A Walk At Dusk - (precedes Campfire Program) Do you know what biological luminescence is? Join a Ranger for a leisurely 1/2 hour stroll down the beach to the site of the campfire. Insect repellent may be necessary. Meet under the canopy outside the National Seashore's Campground Ranger Station.

Campfire Program - Did pirates hide out on Assateague? Where did the ponies really come from? Join two rangers for this informal exchange of fact and fiction. Beware of the occasional "tall tale"! If driving, park at the southernmost beach boardwalk in the North Ocean Beach lot and walk 200 yards south along the beach. If you are camping in Oceanside Campground of the national seashore, you can walk some distance north from one of the boardwalks that lead to the beach. Repellent may be needed.

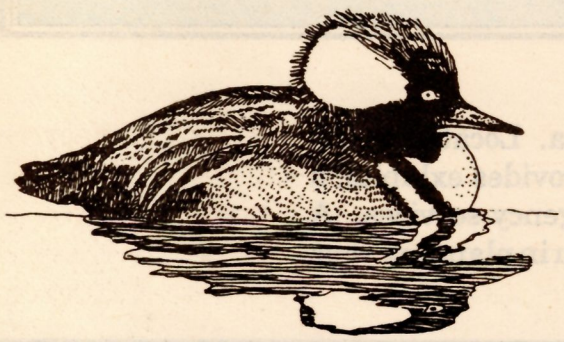




Famous Assateague Storms

What happened here in 1933, 1962, and on January 4, 1992? Join Ranger Chris Seymour in the visitor center for the answer each Thursday evening at 7:30 p.m. Slides and film footage will depict facility destruction, yet also show how important storms are in maintaining natural life zones on barrier islands.

July 5 to August 23



Recreational Demonstrations

Surf Rescue Demonstrations - Our lifeguards are professionals! Come watch them demonstrate an ocean rescue and lifesaving equipment. Meet at the designated lifeguard stand at North Ocean Beach.

Shellfishing Demonstration - Did you know that the ribbed mussel is mighty tasty steamed or sauteed in butter? But to enjoy them you must know how and when to safely forage for them. A ranger at the Old Ferry Landing will show you how to catch blue crabs, clams and ribbed mussels. Those interested in seeing where mussels live should wear sneakers (no thongs) and clothing suitable for wading.

Surf Fishing Demonstration - We provide several surf rods and bait, and demonstrate equipment and casting technique to help you learn about the basics of surf fishing. Wear clothes and shoes suitable for wading in the surf if you want to cast it "way out there"! All participants will have several chances to cast; those interested can fish awhile. No better way to learn before investing in equipment. Meet at the northeast corner of the North Ocean Beach parking lot. NOTE: Program is for ages 12 and up. Children age 6-11 can go to Kids Beach Discovery offered at the same time.

MARYLAND DISTRICT

LOCATION	MAP CODE	PROGRAM	SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
History Exhibit Parking Lot	6	**Birds of a Feather** (1-1/2 hours)			7:00 am				
Lifeguarded Beach	2	**Surf Rescue Demonstration** (30 minutes)		10:00 am			10:00 am		10:00 am
Visitor Center	1	**Aquarium Feeding** (30 minutes)	10:00 am	10:00 am	10:00 am	10:00 am	10:00 am	10:00 am	10:00 am
Visitor Center	1	**Life of the Beach** (2 hours)			10:45 am		10:45 am		
Old Ferry Landing	7	**Bay Explorers** (1 hour)		11:15 am		11:15 am		11:15 am	
Old Ferry Landing	7	**Canoe Trips** (2 hours)	10:00 am 4:00 pm	8:30 am	5:30 pm	8:30 am	8:30 am	5:30 pm	10:00 am 4:00 pm
Old Ferry Landing	7	**Shellfishing Demonstration** (1 hour)	1:30 pm		1:30 pm		1:30 pm	1:30 pm	1:30 pm
North Ocean Beach	3	**Kid's Beach Discovery** (1-1/2 hours)		1:30 pm		1:30 pm			
North Ocean Beach	3	**Surf Fishing Demonstration** (1-1/2 hours)		1:30 pm		1:30 pm			
Visitor Center	1	**Ranger's Slides** (45 minutes - begins July 5)				7:30 pm Storms			
Campground Ranger Sta.	5	**A Walk at Dusk** (30 minutes)			8:00 pm			8:00 pm	
See Program Description	4	**Campfire Program** (1 hour)			8:30 pm			8:30 pm	

1995 SUMMER ACTIVITIES
VIRGINIA DISTRICT

National Park Service - Assateague Island National Seashore

Sunday, June 18 - Saturday, August 26, 1995

Toms Cove Visitor Center

Make this your first stop each time you visit Assateague's beach area. Located at the beach adjacent to the center parking lot, this large, grey building provides exhibits, a marine aquarium, publications, permits, lost and found, and emergency services. A Ranger Naturalist is available to answer your questions and assist you in planning your stay. Open daily 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Guided Explorations

For The Birds - This leisurely stroll with a spotting scope is designed for the beginning bird watcher. Several different habitats will be observed looking for their winged visitors. Some binoculars are provided. **Advanced reservations are required** - limit 25. Meet at the Visitor Center. Distance: 1/2 mile. Time: 1-1/2 to 2 hours.

The Changing Beach - Did you know that Assateague is constantly moving? This walk focuses on barrier island ecology and the adaptations necessary to live in this changing environment. Meet at the Visitor Center. Distance: 1/2 mile. Time: 1 hour.

Nature's Nursery - The Salt Marsh - If you enjoyed that seafood dinner last night, join the marsh walk and learn about where all that good food came from. The salt marsh is teeming with unique plants and animals. This walk gives you an opportunity to get acquainted with a wetland area that is of vital importance to the marine life in the area. **Wear old shoes** and meet at the Visitor Center. Distance: 3/4 mile. Time: 1 hour.

Marine Explorers - This program involves active participation. Join us in getting our feet wet and take a close look at marine organisms from beach to bay. A good pair of snug wading shoes is a must. Meet at parking lot #4. Distance: 1 mile. Time: 1-1/2 to 2 hours.

Evening Programs

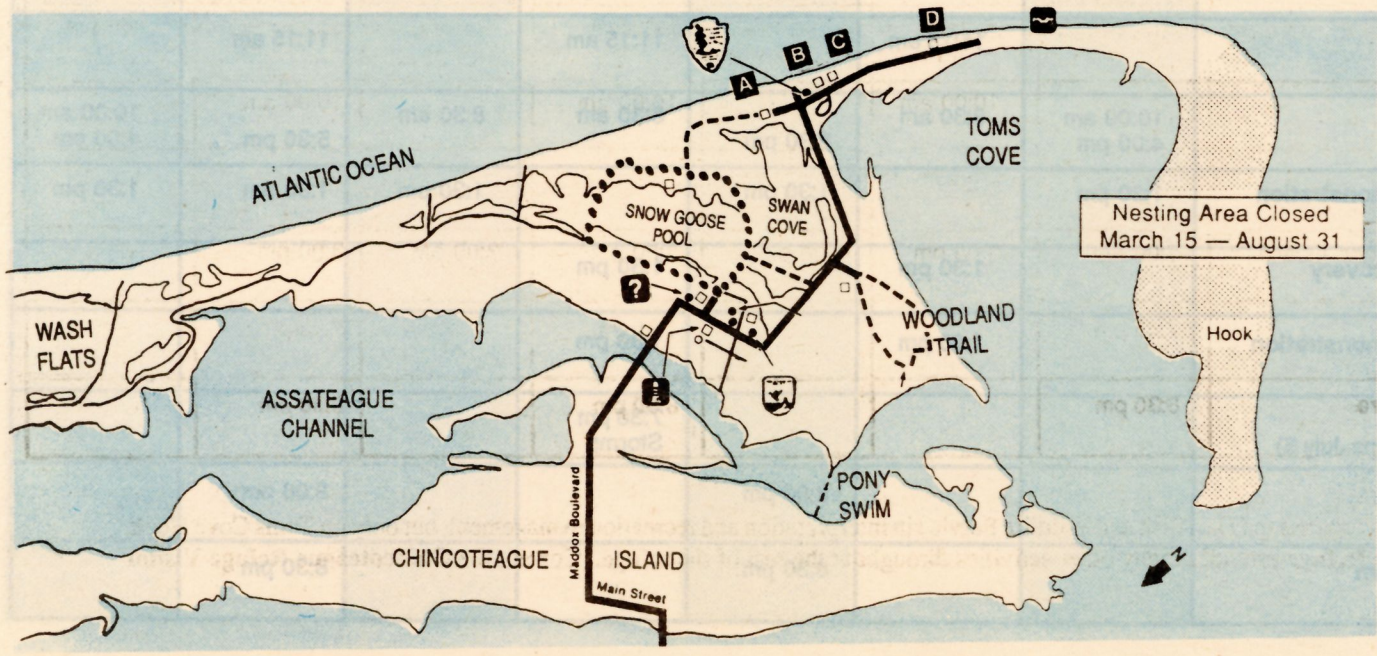
Evening Stroll - Join a naturalist for a leisurely stroll along Toms Cove or the beach. The stroll will end at the site of the campfire. Insect repellent may be necessary. Meet at parking lot #3. Distance: 1/2 mile. Time: 3/4 hour.

Beach Campfire - A campfire on the beach helps recreate a mood of days gone by on Assateague. Bring marshmallows and a roasting stick. A naturalist will lead discussions about a variety of topics on the rich natural and cultural history of the island. Meet at parking lot #3.

Nature Talks

Aquarium Talk - The marine aquarium in the Toms Cove Visitor Center contains a microcosm of life representing the underwater world of Toms Cove. Join a naturalist for this talk as the residents of the aquarium are fed. Time: 1/2 hour.

Creature Feature - Gather 'round the naturalist and today's mystery guest. Learn the life and lore of a special island inhabitant during this informal discussion. Meet at the Visitor Center. Time: 15 minutes.



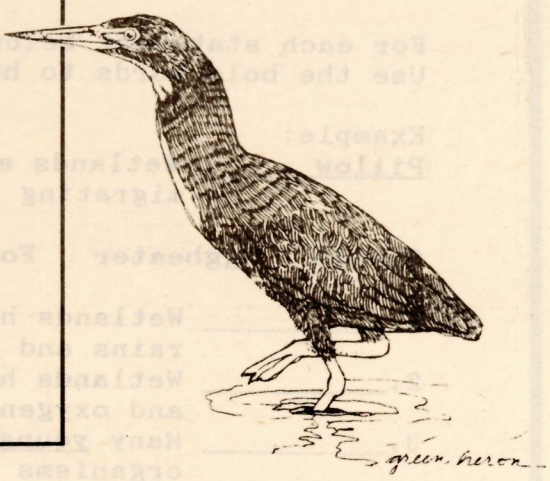
Assateague Island in Virginia

- CHINCOTEAGUE REFUGE VISITOR CENTER
- LIGHTHOUSE TRAIL/ART EXHIBIT (25 Miles) - Walking - Art Exhibit in Oil Shed on Selected Weekends
- REFUGE HEADQUARTERS
- OFF-ROAD VEHICLE AREA - Permit Required
- TOMS COVE VISITOR CENTER/DISTRICT OFFICE
- WALKING & BICYCLING - Vehicles after 3 p.m.
- WALKING & BICYCLING
- MAIN ACCESS ROAD
- PARKING

For Young Naturalists

Junior Explorers - For budding marine biologists, ages 9-11. This total "immersion" activity involves active participation, seining for fish, exploring the tidal flats and learning to "read" nature. An excellent experience for any young person with an interest in the outdoors. Register in the Toms Cove Visitor Center - limit 20. Meet at parking lot #4. Distance: 1 mile. Time: 1-1/2 hours.

Certified Seashore Ranger - Children 6-12 can receive Junior Ranger certificates by registering at the Visitor Center desk and completing certain activities. Each successful participant will bring completed forms to a daily 3:00 p.m. awards ceremony.



Recreational Demonstrations

Surf Rescue - Join the lifeguard staff for a demonstration of equipment and techniques of ocean surf rescue. Because ocean swimming can be dangerous, the staff strongly encourages your participation in this activity. Meet at the center lifeguard stand on the beach. Time: 1/2 hour.

Surf Fishing - Designed for those with limited surf fishing experience, this program includes demonstrations of equipment, bait and casting techniques. Equipment is provided; however, actual practice time depends on group size. Experienced anglers who would like to share their expertise are welcome! Meet at the Visitor Center. NOTE: Program is for ages 12 and up. Time: 2 hours.

VIRGINIA DISTRICT

LOCATION	MAP CODE	PROGRAM	SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
Visitor Center	B	**For The Birds** (1-1/2 to 2 hours)	7:30 am			7:30 am		7:30 am	
Visitor Center	B	**The Changing Beach** (1 hour)			10:00 am		10:00 am		10:00 am
Visitor Center	B	**Nature's Nursery The Salt Marsh** (1 hour)		10:00 am		10:00 am			
Lot 4	D	**Junior Explorer** (1-1/2 hours)			9:30 am				9:30 am
Lot 4	D	**Marine Explorer** (1-1/2 to 2 hours)	9:30 am				9:30 am		
Visitor Center	B	**Aquarium Talk** (30 minutes)	1:30 pm	1:30 pm	1:30 pm	1:30 pm	1:30 pm	1:30 pm	1:30 pm
Visitor Center	B	**Creature Feature** (15 minutes)				4:00 pm			4:00 pm
Protected Beach	A	**Surf Rescue** (30 minutes)		10:00 am		10:00 am		10:00 am	
Visitor Center	B	**Surf Fishing** (2 hours)		8:00 am				8:00 am	
Visitor Center	B	**Seashore Ranger Award** (15 minutes)	3:00 pm	3:00 pm	3:00 pm	3:00 pm	3:00 pm	3:00 pm	3:00 pm
Lot 3	C	**Evening Stroll** (45 minutes)	7:45 pm			7:45 pm		7:45 pm	
Lot 3	C	**Beach Campfire** (45 minutes)	8:30 pm			8:30 pm		8:30 pm	

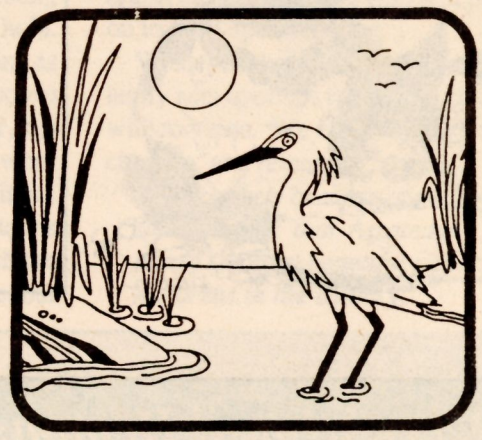
Special Note: The National Park Service assists the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in interpretation and recreation management, but only on Toms Cove Hook. The **Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge** provides many other activities throughout the rest of the refuge. Contact the **Chincoteague Refuge Visitor Center** for program details.

ASSATEAGUE ADVENTURES

WETLANDS WORD GAME

For each statement below, choose the object or item that matches. Use the bold words to help you.

Example:
Pillow _____ Wetlands are important **resting** areas for many migrating birds.



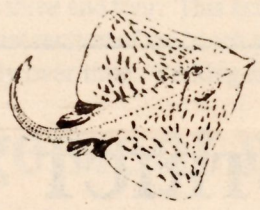
Sponge Eggbeater Food House Filter Cradle Pillow

1. _____ Wetlands help to **absorb** excess water during heavy rains and spring run-off.
2. _____ Wetlands have many plants that help to **mix** nutrients and oxygen into the water.
3. _____ Many **young** fish, insects, birds, mammals and other organisms are **born/hatch** in and around wetlands.
4. _____ Wetlands provide **shelter** for many animals so they can hide from enemies or ambush prey.
5. _____ As the wetlands absorb extra water they can **remove small, harmful materials** from the water, helping to make it clean.
6. _____ Wetlands provide **nourishment** for animals because of the many plants and animals that live there.

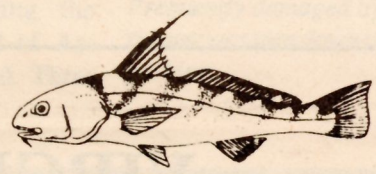
Join a naturalist on a marsh walk to learn more about wetlands! Check at the Toms Cove Visitor Center for more information.

SCRAMBLED FISH

Unscramble the letters to discover the names of some of the fish found around Assateague Island.

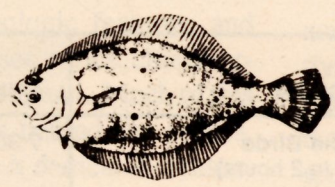


KETSA _____

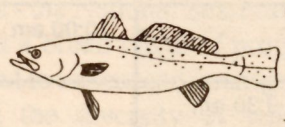


HIFGIKNS _____

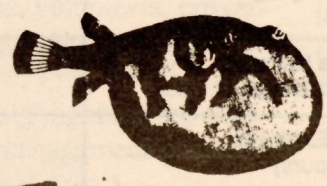
HIOSDGF _____



DULOFNRE _____



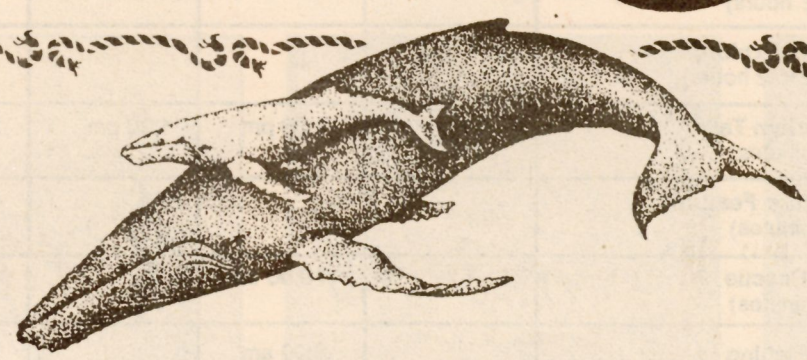
TAEROTUS _____

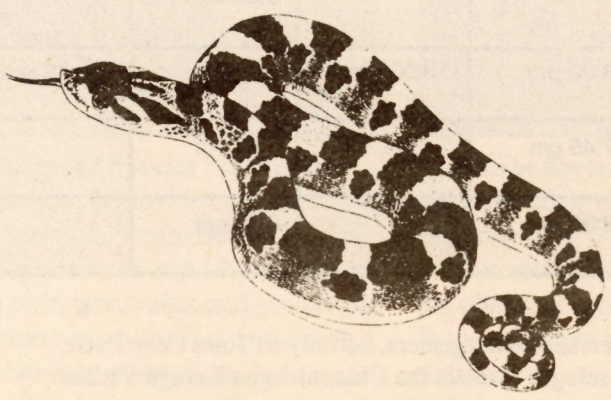


RFPEFU _____

WILY WORD WIT

Use the letters in 'ASSATEAGUE ISLAND' to spell as many words as possible. Ask for paper at the visitor center desk to record your efforts. Try to make at least 50 different words !





SEASHORE RANGER PROGRAM

FOR KIDS AGES 6-12

It's easy and fun to be a Seashore Ranger. Learn more about the seashore and earn a Seashore Ranger badge. Pick up an activity folder at the Toms Cove or Barrier Island visitor center. When you have completed activities in the folder and attended two ranger guided programs, you'll receive a Junior Ranger certificate and a badge.

Assateague Island

Seashore Ranger