

Assateague Island National Seashore

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National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Volunteers in Parks

Volunteers assist National Park Service staff in a variety of areas. The dedication of volunteers insures that we will be able to complete our mission of protecting the resources while providing high quality, nature-based recreational opportunities.

Campground Host - If you are a camper and have a month or more of time to share, you may be interested in this program. Hosts help out in the campground office, give out information to campers and work with our law enforcement rangers. Hookups are available for those with trailers and RVs. Tenting hosts are also needed!

Pony Patrol - The Pony Patrol volunteers play an active role in protecting wildlife. Visitors often try to feed and pet the famous Assateague wild horses. Pony Patrol volunteers interrupt harmful interactions with visitors and educate the public. It is desirable to be in good physical condition as these duties are performed on two and three wheel bicycles. Good people skills are a must! Training takes place in May or June. Participants must live locally or near enough to participate on a weekly basis. A minimum commitment of 2 months is expected. Housing is not available.

Visitor Center Volunteer - If you are a people person and would like to remain indoors, consider working in either the Assateague Island Visitor Center (Maryland) or the Toms Cove Visitor Center (Virginia). You will help visitors find their way around the island, suggest educational and recreational ways for them to get the most out of their visit, answer camping questions, and much more. Participants must be willing to handle money, credit cards and work a cash register. A time commitment of one day a week for a minimum of 3 summer months is required. Housing is not available.

Park Roving - Locals who have or would like to acquire extensive knowledge of the park may find this type of position just the thing. The areas include, rove the beach, Old Ferry Landing or the three one half mile nature trails while answering questions about the park and its resources. Roving also takes place at the visitor center assisting hesitant explorers handle a horseshoe crab or listen for the sound of the ocean in a seashell. This is a long-term assignment due to extensive training requirements. Housing is not available.

Education and Interpretation - Local volunteers with backgrounds in education or natural sciences may wish to become involved in programming for students or the general public. Education volunteers will participate in a two week training and spend 40 hours assisting at the visitor center desk before assisting at programs. Volunteers who wish to present education or public programs may work out a program plan with

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the Assistant Chief of Interpretation prior to their first presentation. The comprehensive training requirements for this position make long-term commitment necessary. Housing is not available.

Children's Crafts - Do you have experience or a desire to work with children? During the busy summer months you can make a special Assateague memory for visiting families by presenting educational craft programs in our visitor center. A minimum of one day a week for two months is required. Housing is not available.

Office Assistance - Are you the kind of person who likes to work behind the scenes? If you have skills with computer, word processing, filing, or inventory and are willing to commit on a regular but flexible schedule, our administration office would welcome your skills.

Maintenance - If you like to work outside, you could be of invaluable assistance doing general routine maintenance in the campgrounds putting up sand fencing, or clearing nature trails. Depending on the time of year, housing may be available.

Student Internships - College students who wish to gain course credit or experience may be interested in spending 12 weeks immersing themselves in environmental education, interpretation, or resource management. Contact the park volunteer coordinator for more information.

Short Term Projects - Each year in September the park sponsors a beach cleanup. From time to time the park also advertises short projects of just a few hours duration. These may range from grass planting to painting. Projects of this type are infrequent. They are advertised locally. Housing is not provided.

Volunteer Vacations - Many people visiting the island would like to spend their vacation donating a week or two of their time. This sentiment is greatly appreciated by staff here in the park. Assateague Island unfortunately is unable to sponsor these types of assignments. Most of our positions either require extensive training for long term commitments or are the rare short term project of just a few hours duration. There are National Parks offering assignments like this. Get in touch with the volunteer coordinators in parks you are interested in donating time and experience to. Let them know the type of work you are willing or have the background to do and you may find yourself painting, cleaning, building, planting and more along side grateful park employees.

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Those interested in becoming a volunteer at Assateague Island National Seashore should fill out an application or send an email or letter. Be sure to make a detailed description of your qualifications in the areas for which you apply. The VIP coordinator or a department supervisor will review your application. If your particular talents and skills appear to be ones the park needs, you will be contacted for an interview. We sometimes find that a match cannot be made between applicants' abilities or time commitments and our own park needs at the time. You will be notified during or shortly after the interview if you have been selected for a volunteer position at which time the details and other conditions, duties and responsibilities will be conveyed.

Assateague Island National Seashore staff is honored by the commitment and dedication of the many individuals who wish to donate experience and time to the National Park Service. We thank you for your generosity of spirit and devotion.

For more information contact:
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