

Ethnographic Resources



Unit 5: Ethnographic Resources of Cape Cod National Seashore

It's your job! Be an Ethnographer and discover the connections people have to the Fort Hill landscape.

This unit has three activities:

1. *Match Cape Cod cultural groups to their ethnographic resources.*
2. *Consider historical quotes to find shared feelings about a Cape Cod landscape.*
3. *Design an interview questionnaire related to that landscape.*

Gather at the Fort Hill upper parking lot for this unit.

Total time: 40 minutes.

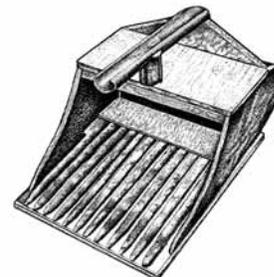
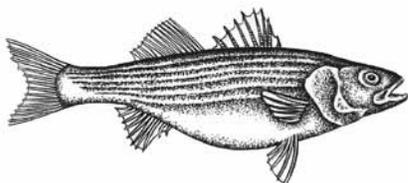
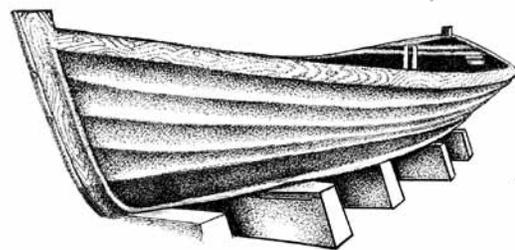
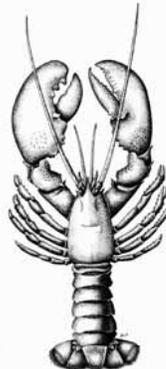
Career Profile:

What does an ethnographer do?

- Studies human culture and communities.
- Interviews people about their connection to places that hold traditional meaning to them.
- Interprets the remains of past cultures.
- Researches documents, photographs, and artifacts.
- Develops books, brochures, and exhibits for conveying the connections between people, place, and tradition.



Hope Morrill, Ethnographer and Curator,
Cape Cod National Seashore



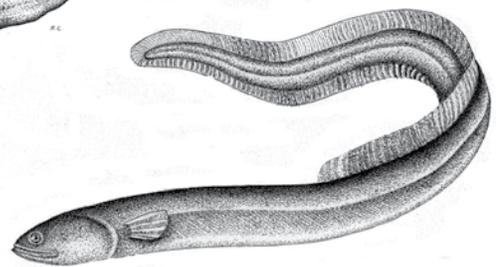
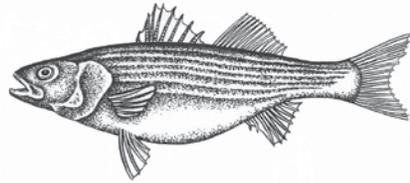
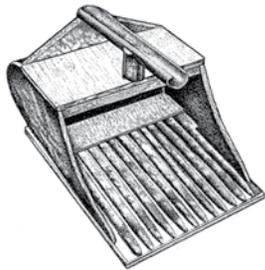
Ethnographic Resources

What is an ethnographic resource?



Ethnographic resources are sites, structures, objects, landscapes, or natural features of traditional importance to an ethnographic group. Ethnographic groups are people who for two generations or more have used or appreciated the resources of a place for work, religion, recreation, education, or other traditions that help retain their cultural identity.

At Cape Cod, examples of two such ethnographic groups are the cranberry pickers of Cape Verdean descent (shown below, left) and the surfcasters who fish along its shores (below, right).



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ACTIVITY 1—GROUPS AND RESOURCES



In the table below, use the clues to help you decide which ethnographic resources at Cape Cod National Seashore have traditional importance to each of the ethnographic groups listed. Select your answers from the resource list at the bottom of the page and enter them into the right-hand column of the table.

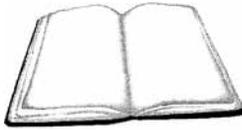
ETHNOGRAPHIC GROUP	CLUES	RESOURCE(S) USED
Wampanoag	Native Americans who hunted, fished, gathered berries, farmed	
Cape Verdean	Whalers who became farmers, berry pickers	
Portuguese	Fishermen and their families who also gardened and lived off the land	
Surf Casters	People who come to Cape Cod to fish off its shores	

CAPE COD ETHNOGRAPHIC RESOURCES

- Beach: surf fishing, beach combing, swimming
- Dunes: beach plums, blueberries, rose hips
- Salt Marsh: shellfish, fishing, building materials, waterfowl
- Forests: building materials, firewood, hunting
- Ponds: fresh water, canoeing, fishing, waterfowl
- Bogs: cranberries, iron ore
- Meadows-fields: crops, grazing animals, scenic views
- Indian Rock: blade sharpening stone, gathering place
- Nauset Light Station: lighthouse, rescue personnel



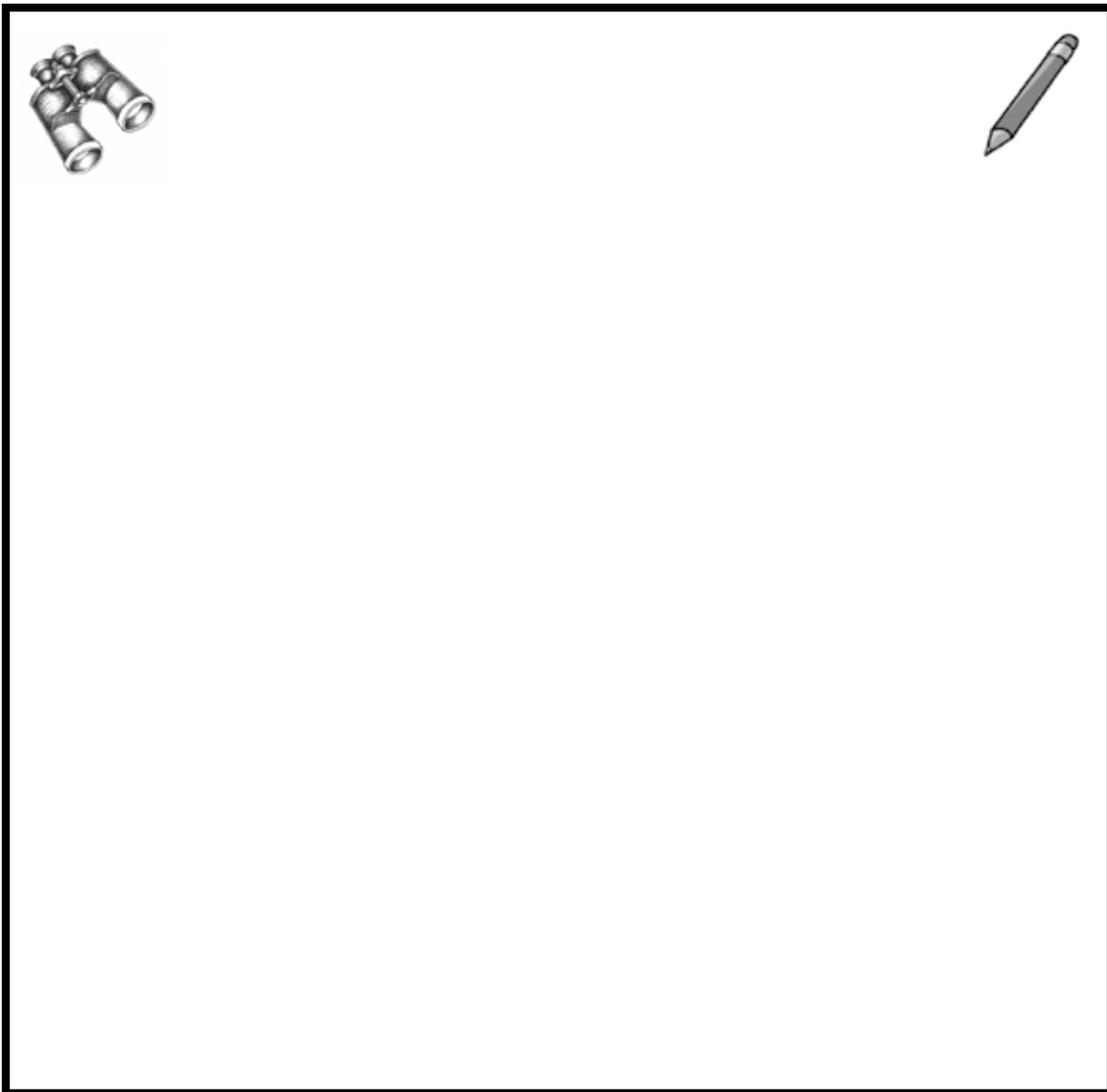
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ACTIVITY 2—COMMON CONNECTIONS

In this activity you will first sketch the landscape. Then you read several quotes about the landscape that were obtained through research and interviews to see if you can find any common feelings people have about it.

Part 1: Look out at the Fort Hill landscape. Sketch the features of the landscape that you feel are important to its character. Label ones you think should be preserved.



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What connection do *you* feel to this place? *Write your answer here.*



Part 2: Read the following quotes about the Fort Hill property. Look for clues in what these people say to help you determine what common feeling about the landscape is shared by all these people?

- Captain Penniman, late 1800's: "I have sailed the seven seas and have never seen anything more beautiful than Fort Hill."
- Irma Penniman Broun Kahn, his granddaughter, 1983: "My grandpa had the house built on an elevated terrace...so he could view the ocean and Cape Cod Bay. Trees were not allowed to grow in the field...the views were the prime reason for building the house where it stands."
- Charles Gunn, farmer and one-time property owner at Fort Hill, ca 1950, in response to his son's idea to make lots and build cottages: "This farm will never be developed!"
- Dr. Kattwinkels' comments, on the creation of Cape Cod National Seashore, 1963: "Skiff Hill [a section of Fort Hill] is taking a beating. The sooner the National Seashore acquires this beautiful spot, the better."
- Ed Sabin, Eastham resident, 2003: "This would not have looked much different [back in] 1604 when Champlain came here and mapped the area. That's the neat thing about having Cape Cod National Seashore here [to protect these sites]."

What feelings do these people share? _____



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ACTIVITY 3—DESIGN AN INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

As an ethnographer you have been asked to determine how people today feel about the Fort Hill landscape. Your findings will help decide how to take care of it. There are many different ways to take care of a site. For example, should the fields be mowed to keep them neat and low? Planted with crops like in the olden days? Periodically burned to restore nutrients to the soil? Sold off to raise money for the park? Or should the fields be left to grow over? Similarly, what should be done with the stone walls, the old buildings, the surrounding forest, and other important features of the site?

From the upper parking lot of Fort Hill, observe what visitors do at the Fort Hill site. Use your observations as clues to what questions you might ask them to find out how they feel about the landscape. Then develop a questionnaire for visitors (be sure your questions are not biased).

What do you observe visitors doing at the Fort Hill site?

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Write a list of questions you would ask people to find out how they feel about the landscape so you could then recommend how best to take care of it:

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Who would answer these questions? Why is Fort Hill an ideal case study?

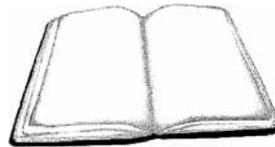


Ethnographic Resources

Explore further:



Can you think of a place that you, your family, and your friends feel strongly about? Why is it important to you? How would you feel if someone wanted to change it? How could you document your feelings?



RESOURCES:

www.nps.gov/caco Cape Cod National Seashore website. Click on History and Culture in the Park Home box, then click on Stories, then click on People and Places on Outer Cape Cod.

www.nps.gov/history National Park Service website. Type “ethnography” in the search box. When a list of ethnography sites comes up, click on Ethnography Home Page.





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Notes Page

Take your own notes, draw sketches to remind yourself of ideas you think are important.

