

Cape Cod National Seashore Activity Guide

August 2021

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



For complete information about Cape Cod National Seashore, including COVID-19 related operational changes, pick up the *Trip Planner*, available at seashore visitor centers.



Happy 60th Birthday to Cape Cod National Seashore! Cape Cod National Seashore was created on August 7, 1961 by President John F. Kennedy. Join us on August 7 at 6 pm to celebrate with an encore presentation of “Saddle-Up!” family circus show! Meet at the outdoor stage at Salt Pond Visitor Center. Aerials, juggling, live music. Free!



Visitor casts into the surf during a surf casting program at Coast Guard Beach.

NPS/KEKOA ROSEHILL

Visitor Center Information

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

This visitor center offers expansive views of Salt Pond, Nauset Marsh, and the Atlantic, and has an outstanding museum. The Nauset Marsh Trail, Buttonbush Trail, and Nauset Bicycle Trail are nearby.


Both visitor centers are accessible and offer staff to assist with trip-planning, exhibits, brochures and maps, a park store, and restrooms. For those not fully vaccinated, masks are required inside buildings and outdoors where 6' of social distance cannot be maintained.

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

Outdoor observation decks offer sweeping views of the ocean and the surrounding dune landscape. The Province Lands Bicycle Trail, Race Point Beach, and the Beech Forest Trail are nearby.


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
1 10 am Salt Pond Canoe 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 10 am Cape Cod Ninja* 2-4 pm Old Harbor*	2 9 am Big View Hike* 9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) 11 am-noon Three Sisters Lighthouses 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 2 pm Marconi Story 2-4 pm Old Harbor*	3 8:30-10:30 am Plein Air 10 am Sharks and Seals (Truro)* 10:30 am Atwood Higgins Homestead 1 pm Doane Walk 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 7 pm Evenings at Salt Pond: Sarah Swain and the Oh Boys	4 9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) 10 am Salt Pond Canoe 10 am Kayak the Cape* 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 2 pm Fish, Snails, and Horseshoe Crab Tails 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 4 pm Art in the Dunes*	5 7:30 am Surfcasting 10 am Ways of Colonization 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 10:30 am Atwood Higgins Homestead 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 3 pm Celebrate Cape Cod*	6 9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) 10 am Salt Pond Canoe 10 am-noon Family Fun* 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 11 am Captain Penniman 2 pm Whales and Whaling 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 2-4 pm Old Harbor*	7 10 am Sharks and Seals (Truro)* 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 2 pm Henry Beston 2-4 pm Old Harbor* 6 pm “Saddle Up!” Family Circus Show	
8 10 am Salt Pond Canoe 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 10 am Cape Cod Ninja* 1 pm Kayak Adventures 2-4 pm Old Harbor*	9 9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) 9 am Big View Hike* 11 am-noon Three Sisters Lighthouses 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 2 pm Whales and Whaling 2 pm Plants Along Trail 2-4 pm Old Harbor*	10 8:30-10:30 am Plein Air 10 am Sharks and Seals (Truro)* 10:30 am Atwood Higgins Homestead 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 3 pm Critter Tales 7 pm Evenings at Salt Pond: Jason Spooner	11 9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 10 am Salt Pond Canoe 10 am Kayak the Cape* 11 am Captain Penniman House 1:30 pm Kayak Adventures 2 pm Stories of the Seashore*	12 7:30 am Surfcasting 10 am Ways of Colonization 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 10:30 am Atwood Higgins Homestead 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 1 pm Eastham B&A	13 9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 10 am Salt Pond Canoe 10 am-noon Family Fun* 11 am Captain Penniman House 1 pm Doane Walk 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 2-4 pm Old Harbor*	14 10 am Sharks and Seals (Truro)* 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 2-4 pm Old Harbor* 3 pm Critter Tales	
15 10 am Salt Pond Canoe 10 am Cape Cod Ninja* 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 2 pm Cape Cod Kids 2-4 pm Old Harbor*	16 9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) 9 am Big View Hike* 11 am-noon Three Sisters Lighthouses 1 pm Doane Walk 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 2-4 pm Old Harbor*	17 8:30-10:30 am Plein Air 10 am Sharks and Seals (Truro)* 10:30 am Atwood Higgins Homestead 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 3 pm Critter Tales 7 pm Evenings at Salt Pond: Family concert- Zoe Lewis and the Souvenirs	18 9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 10 am Salt Pond Canoe 10 am Kayak the Cape* 11 am Captain Penniman House 1 pm Fish, Snails, and Horseshoe Crab Tails 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 4 pm Art in the Dunes*	19 7:30 am Surfcasting 10 am Ways of Colonization 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 10:30 am Atwood Higgins Homestead 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 3 pm Celebrate Cape Cod*	20 9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 10 am Salt Pond Canoe 10 am-noon Family Fun* 11 am Captain Penniman House 1 pm Doane Walk 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 2-4 pm Old Harbor*	21 10 am Sharks and Seals (Truro)* 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 2-4 pm Old Harbor* 2 pm Marconi Story	
22 10 am Salt Pond Canoe 10 am Cape Cod Ninja* 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 2 pm Henry Beston 2-4 pm Old Harbor*	23 9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) 9 am Big View Hike* 11 am-noon Three Sisters Lighthouses 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 2 pm Whales and Whaling 2-4 pm Old Harbor* 7 pm Full Moon Campfire*	24 8:30-10:30 am Plein Air 10 am Sharks and Seals (Truro)* 10:30 am Atwood Higgins Homestead 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 1 pm Calling All Adventurers 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 3 pm Critter Tales 7 pm Evenings at Salt Pond: CrabGrass	25 9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 10 am Salt Pond Canoe 10 am Kayak the Cape* 11 am Captain Penniman House 1 pm Kayak Adventures 2 pm Stories of the Seashore*	26 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 10:30 am Atwood Higgins Homestead 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 1 pm Eastham B&A 1:30 pm Kayak Adventures	27 9:30 am Sharks and Seals (Eastham) 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 10 am Salt Pond Canoe 10 am-noon Family Fun* 11 am Captain Penniman House 2 pm Stories of the Seashore* 2-4 pm Old Harbor* 3 pm Critter Tales	28 10 am Sharks and Seals (Truro)* 10 am-4:30 pm Highland House Museum* 11 am Discover Nauset Marsh 1:30 pm Kayak Adventures 2-4 pm Old Harbor*	
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* Text with an asterick indicates a Truro/Provincetown program !! In the event of heavy rain, lightning, or excessive heat and humidity, outdoor programs may be canceled or modified. Check in with the respective visitor center.							

 Activities especially suited for families with children.

 National Park Service *Healthy Parks Healthy People* programs featuring parks as cornerstones of mental, physical, and spiritual health.

 Long pants, appropriate footwear, hats, sunscreen, bug spray, and water are recommended for outdoor activities. For dune walks in loose, coarse sand, we recommend closed-toe shoes, such as sneakers.

 Activities that are accessible with minor assistance. Contact park staff if you have questions about accessibility.



 This is a challenging hike. Wear closed-toe shoes; bring water, sunscreen, and bug spray. Expect to move at a brisk pace over difficult terrain and loose, coarse sand.

Programs and Activities Orleans, Eastham, and Wellfleet Area Programs


For those not fully vaccinated, masks are required inside buildings and outdoors where 6' of social distance can't be maintained.



Atwood-Higgins Homestead Tour – Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30 am, 1 hour. Originally constructed in the 18th century, visit the oldest intact structure in the park and the “layers” of history at this site. 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. 

Bike Safety Day – Friday, August 6, 10 am to noon. Join us for our annual bike safety day on Friday, August 6 at Salt Pond Visitor Center, from 10 am to noon. This event promotes safety to help reduce bike accidents, the leading cause of injuries in the seashore. Bike safety checks, helmet fittings, educational displays (see our Jell-O brain!), and maybe a helmet giveaway.



Cape Cod Kids – Sundays, August 1 and 15 at 2 pm, 30 minutes. During this hands-on family program a ranger will share exciting nature stories and help you create a craft to take home. 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.  


Captain Penniman House Tour – Wednesdays and Fridays, 11 am, 1 hour. Structures are closed, grounds only. Captain Penniman was one of the most successful whaling captains in New England. Join us to learn about his family's hardships, adventures, and lifestyle. 70 Fort Hill Road, Eastham.

Critter Tales – August 10, 14, 17, 24, and 27 at 3 pm, 30 minutes. Through stories and activities, a ranger will take families on an imaginative journey to explore and connect with critters that call Cape Cod “home.” 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. 


Discover Nauset Marsh Walk – Every Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday at 11 am, 1 hour, up to 1 mile. Nauset Marsh is home to a fascinating array of plants, animals, and complex ecosystems, and contains a rich past of prehistoric and historic human history. Join a ranger for a leisurely stroll around the marsh. Meet at the Salt Pond Visitor Center.  

“Doane’t” You Wanna’ Walk to the Beach? – August 3, 13, 16, 20, and 30, 1 pm, 1 hour, 1.5 miles. Doane Rock is the largest glacial rock on Cape Cod. Join a ranger for a leisurely stroll from Doane Rock to Coast Guard Beach, exploring cultural and natural history stories along the way. Meet at the Doane Rock picnic area, Eastham.  

Eastham – Before and After 1651 – Thursdays August 12 and 26, 1 pm, 1 hour. Eastham's rich natural resources have influenced people for thousands of years. Join a ranger and a guide from the Eastham Historical Society to explore Eastham's history over time. 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.  

Evenings at Salt Pond – Tuesdays, 7 pm, 1 hour. Free. End your day the perfect way, with free music, performance events, and presentations at the outdoor amphitheater on the shores of Salt Pond or in the indoor auditorium. For outdoor programs, bench and lawn seating are available, picnicking is welcome, and bug spray is suggested. Indoor programs are held in the air-cooled auditorium, and doors open at 6:30 pm. Programs are free and sponsored by Friends of the Cape Cod National Seashore. **For those not fully vaccinated, masks are required inside buildings and outdoors where 6' of social distance can't be maintained.** Salt Pond Visitor Center, 50 Nauset Road, Eastham. 

- August 3: Concert—Sarah Swain and the Oh Boys, roots, rockabilly, soul (outdoors)
- August 10: Concert—Jason Spooner, Americana, folks, blues, jazz (outdoors)
- August 17: Family concert—Zoe Lewis and the Souvenirs [ranger hat] (outdoors)
- August 24: Concert—CrabGrass, bluegrass (indoors)
- August 31: Presentation—Jung-Ho Pak and Michael Albaugh present: Music and Nature, a Beautiful Marriage; video, but no live music (outdoors)




Fish, Snails, & Horseshoe Crab Tails – 2 hours, 1 mile. During this family program we'll discover the wonderful life that thrives in the tidal flats. Wear water shoes, prepare to wade, and bring nets and buckets if you have them. 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. 


- Great Island, Wellfleet – August 4 at 2 pm & August 18 at 1 pm
- Salt Pond, Eastham – August 29 at 2pm

Kayak Adventures Up to 3 hours, up to 3 miles. Paddle with a ranger to explore the diverse aquatic ecosystems and rich human history of the seashore. 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, 16

Programs and Activities Truro and Provincetown Area Programs

Art in the Dunes Hike – Wednesdays August 4 and 18, 4 pm, 2½ to 3 hours, 2½ miles in loose sand. On this long hike into the Province Lands dunes, view the natural qualities that have long attracted artists and writers. Reservations required and accepted no more than one week in advance by calling Province Lands Visitor Center at (508) 487-1256. 

Big View Hiking – Mondays, 9 am, 2 hours, 3-4 miles. Join us for an energetic, cardiovascular hike to some of the most majestic ocean and bay views in the national seashore. Reservations are required and may be made up to one week in advance by calling the Province Lands Visitor Center at (508) 487-1256.   

Cape Cod Ninja Warrior – Sundays, 10 am, 1 hour. 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. Reservations required and accepted no more than one week in advance by calling Province Lands Visitor Center at (508) 487-1256. 

Celebrate Cape Cod – Thursdays, August 5 and 19, 3 pm, 1½ to 2 hours, up to 2 miles. Discover the fascinating nature and captivating history that makes Cape Cod magical. Topics and locations vary. Reservations required and accepted no more than one week in advance by calling Province Lands Visitor Center at (508) 487-1256.

Family Fun– Fridays, 10 am to noon. Join rangers for hands-on educational activities, crafts, and very short hikes. Whether exploring the tidal flats, the beach, or a pond, we'll have fun! Locations vary weekly. Reservations are required and may be made up to one week in advance by calling the Province Lands Visitor Center at (508) 487-1256. 


Full Moon Campfire – Monday, August 23, 7 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 large bathhouse, just south of the beach entrance at Herring Cove Beach in Provincetown. Call Province Lands Visitor Center in advance if accessibility assistance is needed, (508) 487-1256.

Highland House Museum – \$8 for adults; \$7 for seniors and students ages 6-17; free for children under 5. Operated by Truro Historical Society. Open Wednesday through Saturday, 10 am to 4:30 pm. 6 Highland Light Road, North Truro, 508-487-3397.

years old minimum.

- Great Island, Wellfleet: August 11, 26 and 28 at 1:30 pm
- Nauset Marsh, Eastham: August 8 at 1 pm
- Pleasant Bay, Orleans: August 25 at 1 pm


Marconi Story – Connecting America to Europe – Tuesday, August 2 and Saturday, August 21, 2 pm, 45 minutes. Four, 220-foot tall towers once stood on the Wellfleet bluffs. Transatlantic wireless history was made from here in 1903, revolutionizing and forever changing communication. Join a ranger at the Marconi Station Site in Wellfleet for a talk to hear the story of how one man “talked” across the ocean. 


Henry Beston and The Outermost House Talk – Saturday, August 7 and Sunday, August 22, 2 pm, 1 hour. Join a ranger to experience how the captivating landscape of Cape Cod can cause a person to seek solitude but embrace a lifestyle as they survived and thrived in “The Outermost House” of Nauset Beach. Meet at the Salt Pond Visitor Center. 

Plants Along The Trail – Healers & Invaders – Monday, August 9 and Tuesday, August 31, 2 pm, 1 hour. Join a ranger for an adventure into the world of Cape Cod's green kingdom. Talk followed by a short walk. Meet at the Salt Pond Visitor Center.



Plein Air Painting with Eastham Painter's Guild – Tuesdays, 8:30 - 10:30 am. Location varies. Throughout the summer, look for members of the Eastham Painter's Guild at different seashore locales capturing the many dimensions of this beautiful place.

- August 3: Pilgrim Heights, Truro
- August 10: Penniman House, Eastham
- August 17: Fort Hill, Eastham
- August 24: Province Lands Visitor Center, Provincetown
- August 31: Hemenway Landing, Eastham


Salt Pond Canoe – Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10 am, 1.5 hours, 1 mile. A ranger will share the nature of marshes and kettle ponds on this easy paddling trip via canoe. Minimum age is 6 years old. 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. 


Sharks and Seals: Cape Cod's Dynamic Duo Walk (Eastham) – Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 9:30 am, 1 hour, up to 1 mile in loose sand. Join a ranger at Coast Guard Beach to examine the relationship between sharks and seals and the roles they play in the balance of a healthy marine environment. 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. 


Surf Casting: Going Deep – Thursdays, August 5, 12, and 19, 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 are required and may be made up to one week in advance by calling Salt Pond Visitor Center at (508) 255-3421, ext. 9.

Terrace Talk – Daily, 2 pm, 20-30 minutes. Cape Cod National Seashore is home to diverse wildlife and rich history. Join a ranger at the Salt Pond Visitor Center to hear stories of the people, plants, and animals of the seashore.  

The Ways of Colonization – Thursdays August 5, 12, and 19 at 10 am, 1.5 hour. Join our Cultural Interpreter, a citizen of the Wampanoag Tribe of Aquinnah, for a stroll through the history of colonization and how it impacted the indigenous people and environment of Cape Cod and the Islands. Meet at the Doane Rock picnic area, Eastham.

Three Sisters Lighthouses Tour – Mondays, 11 am, 1 hour. These 19th-century lighthouses once provided a beacon for sailors off the shore of Nauset Light Beach. Explore their history and importance. Meet at the Three Sisters Lighthouse parking lot – space is limited – on the north side of Cable Road. 

Whales and Whaling– August 6, 9, and 23, 2 pm, 1 hour. Whales have mystified and amazed people for thousands of years. They were also harvested for their oils and body parts that had utilitarian purposes. Join a ranger to explore the human-whale interrelationship. Meet at the Penniman House parking lot, 70 Fort Hill Road, Eastham. 

Kayak the Outer Cape – Wednesdays, up to 3 hours, 3 miles. Discover the seashore's diverse watery worlds on a kayak trip with a ranger through a meandering marsh, captivating kettle pond, or dune-sided lake in Truro or Provincetown. Locations and times vary. All equipment provided. Previous kayaking experience required. Minimum age is 12. Reservations required and accepted no more than one week in advance by calling Province Lands Visitor Center at (508) 487-1256. 

- August 4: Long Point 10 am
- August 11: East Harbor 10 am
- August 18: Long Point 10 am
- August 25: East Harbor 10 am

Old Harbor Life-Saving Station Open House – Drop-in program, Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays from 2 to 4 pm. 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.

Ranger on Deck – Daily at 10 am, 11 am, 20-30 mins. Join a ranger to look for whales, birds, and historic buildings from the outdoor deck; or to explore new topics of the ranger's choice. Meet at the Province Lands Visitor Center.  

Sharks and Seals: Cape Cod's Dynamic Duo Walk (Truro) – Tuesdays and Saturdays, 10 am, 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 a pair of binoculars for seal viewing. Meet at Head of the Meadow Beach, Truro.

Stories of the Seashore – Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 2 pm, up to 2 hours, 1-2 miles in loose sand. Location varies. Explore the enchanting dune landscape of unusual plants and wild cranberry bogs, while learning about the Province Lands' unique place in American history. Wear closed-toe shoes appropriate for walking in sand. Locations vary, so call the visitor center at 508-487-1256 to find out the meeting point.