

Fire Island National Seashore

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Electronic Newsletter

What's Happening in the Park

July/August
2007

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Superintendent
Mike Reynolds

Fire Island National Seashore provides opportunities to enjoy and learn more through its recreational and educational programs this summer.

Fire Island Lighthouse:
21st Annual Barefoot Black Tie Dinner Dance fundraiser on
August 4, 2007

Message from the Superintendent:

The Fire Island National Seashore general management planning team met in late June with a small but diverse group of stakeholders to conduct a **Foundation for Planning** workshop. As we've mentioned before, the size of the group had to be limited, but there will be ample opportunities for broader input as we distribute the summary report and the draft documents generated from this Foundation workshop. Later in the summer and fall, I would like to start scheduling meetings with interested groups to be assured that broad concerns and interests are captured at this critical initial stage in park planning.

The Foundation Workshop group was treated to a presentation about a shining example in the management of a complex park which includes--like FINS--many local communities and private properties, and multiple layers of jurisdictions and bureaucracies within its boundaries. "Building Private/Public Partnerships: Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area," was presented by Woody Smeck, superintendent of Santa Monica Mountains NRA, and Steve Hess, president of Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation (one of 150 homeowner associations affiliated with the park).

On Day 2, the group had the opportunity to be inspired by a thought-provoking presentation from Julia Washburn, an interpretive planner from the Conservation Study Institute and co-chair of the National Park Service Education Council. The relationship between stories and place, the role stories play in reinforcing a sense of place and in inspiring a desire to care for special places--with examples from other national parks around the country--helped set the stage for a discussion of the stories and meanings at Fire Island.

Later this summer we expect to generate a summary report which captures the Foundation Workshop discussions of park purpose and significance, fundamental resources and values, primary interpretive themes, and visions for the future.

In the meantime, I encourage you to get out into your local national park and experience it for yourself.

[Temporary Access to Barrett Beach from Patchogue this July and August](#)

Patchogue to Barrett Beach Ferry Schedule July 21 and 22, 2007 August 18 and 19, 2007

- Ferry leaves Watch Hill Ferry Terminal in Patchogue at 9:15 a.m.
- *Free parking. Fares: 14/adult; 9/child No Pets allowed on Barrett Beach through August 6, 2007.*
- Snack bar open with limited fare.
- Lifeguards on the ocean beach from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Ferry leaves Barrett Beach at 3:30 p.m., arrives back at Patchogue by 4 p.m.

Guided Canoe Tour into the Saltmarsh at Watch Hill

- **Friday, Saturday & Sunday at 11 a.m.**
July 1 through September 3
Sign-up required after 10 a.m. on day of tour.

More [Watch Hill Summer Programs](#)

[Special Programs at William Floyd Estate](#)

- **The Park's Collections**
July 22, August 5, August 10
1 p.m.
- **Cradle to Grave: Life of John G. Floyd, Jr.**
July 28, August 25
10 a.m.
- **Colonial Uses of Wood**
July 29
10 a.m.
- **Old Mastic House: Architectural Study**
August 11
10 a.m.
- **Documents in Stone**
August 12
10 a.m.
- **Three Centuries of Floyd Furniture**
August 26
10 a.m.

Support our park partners as they host both old and new programs this summer. The Fire Island Lighthouse Preservation Society is hosting its annual Barefoot Black Tie Dinner Dance on Saturday, August 4, 2007.

FINS, Davis Park Ferry Company and Fire Island Concessions, LLC, are providing one more special weekend of service at Barrett Beach this summer. Ferry transportation is provided to Barrett Beach from the Watch Hill Ferry Terminal in Patchogue on August 18 & 19. Our interpretation staff at the William Floyd Estate and at our island-based facilities is conducting a number of special programs this summer. Fire Island National Seashore's annual photo contest entries will be displayed at Sailors Haven Visitor Center again this year, so start capturing those memories and share your stories in pictures.

Current natural resource issues in the park include a decision regarding the proposed use of the controversial **4-Poster Tickicide System** to control ticks on deer. Fire Island National Seashore's mosquito monitoring and surveillance is in its eighth year in 2007. You can learn more about both of these programs in the articles below.

Piping plover nesting activity has expanded this year, which is good news for the threatened and endangered (T & E) birds. This is not such welcomed news by pet owners who traditionally bring their dog to the beach. In order to protect our resources, FINS has restrictions on where you can take your pet, how long the leash can be, and how you deal with pet waste. With expanded plover nesting, additional areas have become off-limits this summer for dogs and kites, which may harm or disturb the birds, as well as other wildlife.

Essential driving on the beach, which is already reduced to a bare minimum during the summer months, has been further restricted by the presence of plover nests in 2007. This has caused more traffic to be diverted into many Fire Island communities until chicks fledge. The exception to this rule is for *bona fide* emergencies, which we unfortunately experienced late Sunday evening, July 15, when emergency vehicles had to respond to a fire in Ocean Beach. Several buildings were destroyed, but we were all relieved to learn that there were few injuries and there was no loss of life.

Many of you may be aware that I have been working in the National Park Service's Washington Office this summer on the **NPS Centennial Initiative**. My detail has involved the evaluation of proposals submitted from parks around the country for approval as partnership-funded projects. You can learn more about this program at www.nps.gov/2016/.

We have submitted a proposal for a community partnership program to install wayside exhibits in the Fire Island communities. The exhibits will include orientation to Fire Island National Seashore, and a panel designed by each community.

Reservations required for all William Floyd Estate special programs: 631-399-2030 on Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sailors Haven [Summer Programs](#)

Wilderness Visitor Center [Summer Programs](#)

Photo Contest at Sailors Haven Visitor Center
August 12 through Labor Day

Fire Island National Seashore Videos are available on-line:

- Orientation to Fire Island National Seashore (13 minutes)
- Fire Island Lighthouse (11 minutes)

Support Your Park

Fire Island Lighthouse Preservation Society



Barefoot Black Tie Fundraiser on August 4



Volunteer!

We appreciate your support and input as you help us shape the future of Fire Island National Seashore. Thank You!

Mike Reynolds

• **Mosquitoes**



As the air and water temperatures rise, so does mosquito development and the possible risk of transmission of West Nile Virus from infected mosquitoes. By the end of July 2007, no evidence of WNV-infected mosquitoes had been detected on Fire Island.

One indicator of the likely presence of WNV is finding dead birds—notably crows, jays and raptors—which may have succumbed to the virus.

While most mosquito bites can be highly irritating—especially when the insects are encountered *en masse*—generally only certain species of mosquitoes which feed on both birds and humans can carry and transmit any disease. The risk of infection is relatively low. West Nile Virus is spread by various mosquito species which have had a blood meal on an infected bird. After an incubation period (roughly 10 days), infected mosquitoes can transmit West Nile Virus to humans and/or other animals. Disease symptoms do not develop in everyone who is bitten by an infected mosquito. The elderly and people who are fighting illnesses are more at risk to develop WNV symptoms and possibly encephalitis. A person who contracts WNV is apparently not contagious to other humans.

The disease first appeared in this country in the New York City area in 1999, and has spread across the nation rapidly. There were 177 WNV-related fatalities across the country in 2006.

The National Park Service works closely with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Suffolk County Department of Health Service, Suffolk County Vector Control, and local Fire Island and Long Island municipalities to determine the best course of action to protect resources, residents, visitors and employees of the Seashore. When threats to human health (such as the presence of West Nile Virus) occur, actions to protect the public may include control methods such as closing parts of the park or applying larvicide or spraying insecticides on public lands. On private land within some Fire Island communities, Suffolk County Vector Control currently conducts a spraying program. The public is notified 24 hours in advance of any pesticide application. Information on the date and exact location of any spraying can be found on the Suffolk County web site at www.co.suffolk.ny.us/vector or by calling 631-852- 4939.



Kids: Become a Junior Ranger

Check Latest Press Releases



Suffolk County Department of Health provides a Dead Bird Hotline at 631-853-8405 for residents to report any suspicious dead birds.

Links to Fire Island National Seashore's Mosquito Action Plan and the park's current Mosquito Surveillance and Management Protocol is available on the web at www.nps.gov/fiis/planyourvisit/avoid-mosquitoes.htm . For more information about Suffolk County's mosquito management plan, see www.suffolkmosquitocontrolplan.org.

What You Can Do To Protect Yourself from Mosquitoes

- **Deer and Ticks**

Deer are not known to transmit Lyme disease or other tick-borne illnesses, but deer do play a role in the distribution of ticks. At least three species of ticks are regularly found on Fire Island. The National Park Service has been studying both deer and tick populations for a number of years to improve resource management.



The recent deer controversy regards decisions related to the use of the **4-Poster Tickicide System** to control ticks on deer. In August 2006, then Governor Pataki authorized the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to test the device on Shelter Island and parts of Fire Island. One test site on Fire Island has been selected for Robert Moses State Park, which is outside the boundaries of Fire Island National Seashore.

Within the boundaries of the park, the National Park Service has the authority to manage both wildlife and pests, even on private properties. We also have an obligation to protect human health and safety.

We recognize that deer ticks, which can be dispersed by deer and other mammals, pose a threat in transmitting Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses. We are also concerned about less obvious and long-term threats from the application of pesticides into our environment.

The National Park Service uses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program for the coordinated reduction of risks from the presence of pests, as well as the risks from the means used to manage the pests.

Before implementing any plant and animal population management actions, the National Park Service must follow established planning procedures, including provisions for public review and comment. Absent this process, the NPS can only sanction the use of the 4-

Poster procedure on private lands. The Village of Saltaire and the Town of Islip have requested permission for the installation of a test applicator in Saltaire and Atlantique.

Use of the 4-Poster device is problematic for Fire Island National Seashore from a number of standpoints:

- EPA recommends that the use of the pesticide permethrin be restricted within 100 yards of where children may be playing unsupervised.
- Artificial feeding (baiting) is necessary to attract deer to the applicators. *We have been striving to educate people about NOT feeding the deer.*
- Deer baiting may have an impact on the park's existing deer immunocontraceptive study.
- There are concerns about the possible impacts on other wildlife and feral animals.

The NPS is not a participant in the 4-Poster project at this time, but is expecting to authorize by letter the use of this device on private and town lands within the park boundary. The park is obligated to address the issue because deer as wildlife are under NPS federal jurisdictional authority. The state's study does not meet NPS requirements, but the park recognizes the need to help the communities attempt to look at viable options regarding the public health issues they face.

What You Can Do To Protect Yourself from Ticks

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