



# Sandy Hook Visitor Programs

## Spring 2010

### 2010 Lighthouse Art Exhibit Schedule

**April** : Photography from the New Jersey Lighthouse Society's Annual Photography Contest. The New Jersey Lighthouse Society will exhibit their entries from their 2010 lighthouse photography contest.  
**May**: Robert Grunke and Vicky Culver. Explore the splendor of Monmouth County in this edgy exhibit.

**Tune to Radio 680 AM when entering the park for general park safety and program guide information.**

## March

### Battery Gunnison Preserved

**Saturday, March 13, noon-5 p.m.**  
The Army Ground Forces Association will be working in coast artillery uniforms interpreting Battery Gunnison and its 6-inch guns. Go back in time to 1943 when the battery is being prepared for activation.

### Night Prowl

**Sandy Hook Visitor Center**  
**Saturday, March 13 at 7 p.m.**  
Explore a Sandy Hook habitat on this nighttime hike. Don't forget a flashlight!

### Harbor Lights

**Twin Lights State Historic Site**  
**Highlands, New Jersey**  
**Sunday, March 14 at 2 p.m.**  
This talk is about the lighthouses, lightships and buoys that guide ships into New York Harbor. Bring binoculars. Free, but reservations required. Call 732-872-1814.

### Sandy Hook

#### 2010 Summer Season Beach Pass

On sale beginning April 19 at the Sandy Hook Ranger Station. Available daily, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. **Note: Due to the NJDOT bridge construction and heavy summer visitation, summer beach pass holders will need to arrive before 11 AM on weekends to have access to the park.** After 11 AM on weekends, the beach parking lots will likely close to all visitors.

### Park Hours

March 1 – 31: 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
April 1 – November 1: 5 a.m. to 10 p.m.

### Sandy Hook 24 hour

**Emergency Number: 732-872-5900**

### Sandy Hook Visitor Center

Daily, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. 732-872-5970

### Fort Hancock Museum

Closed for the Spring Season.  
Will be open for Coastal Defenses Day, May 23, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

### Sandy Hook Lighthouse Tours & Keepers Quarters

Weekends in March, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
Weekends in April and May, noon to 4:30 p.m.  
Weekdays beginning in April, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
The 1884 Keepers Quarters features exhibits on New Jersey lighthouses. Lighthouse tour tours are first-come, first-served. You must be 48 inches tall to climb the tower. The nearby Keepers' Barn is always open with a video about the Lighthouse's history.

### History House

**Fort Hancock's Officers Row, Building 20**  
Weekends, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
This 1898 lieutenant's residence along "Officers Row" is furnished to the 1940s era, when Fort Hancock was at its busiest. Check out the Victory Garden, the '40s Kelvinator and Frigidaire and learn what an officer's wife needed to do with all three to help her husband advance his career with the Army.

### Sandy Hook Bird Observatory

**Fort Hancock's Officers Row, Building 20**  
Tuesdays-Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sundays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
New Jersey Audubon Society field center with a bookshop and displays.  
Call 732-872-2500 for more information.

### Battery Potter

Weekends May 1 through May 31, 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Explore Sandy Hook's oldest gun battery. View the lift gun machinery and decide for yourself whether Battery Potter was an engineering marvel or a government boondoggle.

### Nike Missile Radar Site

Parking Lot L at Horseshoe Cove  
Saturdays, April 10 & 24 and May 1 & 15, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.  
Sundays, April 18 May 23, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.  
Tour the site where radar guided supersonic Nike missiles during the Cold War.

### Food Concessions & Sea Gull's Nest Restaurant:

April: Closed.  
May: Prior to Memorial Day Weekend, Sea Gulls' Nest restaurant will be open at noon on weekends with sunshine and temperatures above 70 degrees. Last 1/2 of May, restaurant opens on nice weekdays at noon. Call: 732-872-0025.

**American Littoral Society  
Spring Equinox Shore Walk  
Guardian Park, Fort Hancock  
Saturday, March 20 at 7 p.m.**

The spring equinox is one of two days in the year when daylight and darkness equally share the 24 hours of the day. It's also a great day for an evening walk on Sandy Hook. Meet at 7 p.m. at Guardian Park. Free, but call ALS at 732-291-0055 in advance to ensure an accurate head count.

**April**

**Woodcock and Osprey Walk  
Sandy Hook Visitor Center  
Saturday, April 3, 6:30 p.m.**

See the osprey, known as "fish hawks," and search for American Woodcocks as they return from their winter migration.

**Junior Ranger Firefighter  
Fire Station Number One (across from the Sandy Hook Lighthouse)  
Wednesday, April 7  
4:00-5:15 p.m.**

Girls and boys ages 7-14. Learn hands-on how fires are extinguished here at Fort Hancock now, and how they were in the past by working with present-day National Park Service Firefighters using everything from hose carts to fire engines. Reservations are required: Call 732-872-5970.

**NJ Audubon Society:  
Thursday Morning Bird  
Walks**

**April 15, 22, 29 & May 6, 13, 20, 27.  
Meet at Guardian Park, 8 a.m.**  
Join naturalists from the Sandy Hook Bird Observatory for two hours of birding at a New Jersey's migratory hotspots. Search for flycatchers, warblers, orioles, and sparrows. Then, search bayside areas of Sandy Hook in search of waterfowl. Walk lasts 2 hours. Bring binoculars and dress in weather appropriate clothing. There is a fee for these programs and pre-registration is required; please call 732-872-2500 or email shbo@njudubon.org for more info.

**Monmouth County and NJ  
Audubon Society Bird Walk  
Sandy Hook Visitor Center  
Saturday, April 17, 10 a.m.**

Meet at the Sandy Hook Visitor Center and learn about spring birds on this walk.



**Earth Day Holly Forest Walk  
Sandy Hook Visitor Center  
Saturday, April 17, 2 p.m.**

A ranger-led walk through Sandy Hook's maritime holly forest. Explore a section of the forest that has been closed to the public since the Army days of the 1930s, and see how the Army's occupation led to the current preserved state of the forest.

**Weird Sandy Hook  
Meet at Post Theater Parking Lot  
Saturday, April 17, 7 p.m.**

Discover the places these strange but true events took place on the Hook: Find out where "Pilot Tom" the weeping whale scared the army's bravest soldiers, and why post commander Colonel Deems almost lost his job for the love of Riley the fox terrier. Visitors will get to be explosive experts at the site of the deadly army proving ground and help solve mysteries from Fort Hancock's spooky and volatile past.

**NJ Audubon Society:  
Birding for Beginners  
Meet at Parking Lot B  
Sunday, April 18, 8 a.m.**

If you are new to birding, this is the trip for you. Join a naturalist from the Sandy Hook Bird Observatory for an introduction to birding. Learn the basics of bird identification in the diverse habitats of Sandy Hook. Bring binoculars and weather-appropriate clothing. Please call the Sandy Hook Bird Observatory at 732-872-2500 to register.

**Junior Ranger Air Defenders  
Fire Station Number One (across from the Sandy Hook Lighthouse)  
Wednesday, April 21, 4 - 5:15 p.m.**  
Girls and boys ages 7 to 12. Visit Sandy Hook's Nike missile battery, then learn how to fire your own rocket at a target the Nike Missileman way. Reservations are required. The program is free, but donations to the park are always accepted. Call 732-872-5970 to register.

**25<sup>th</sup> Annual COA Spring  
Beach Sweep  
Meet at Parking Lot D  
Saturday, April 24, 9 a.m.**  
All ages are welcome to this the 25<sup>th</sup> annual sweep! Bring gloves, dress for the weather, and remember to wear closed-toed shoes. This event happens rain or shine. Visit [cleanoceanaction.org](http://cleanoceanaction.org) for more information, or call Clean Ocean Action at 732-872-0111.

**Going Bunkers  
Fort Hancock Museum  
Sunday, April 25 at 2 p.m.**  
Discover the role Sandy Hook played in New York Harbor defenses. Free, but reservations are required. Call 732-872-5970 to save your spot.

**Junior Ranger Crab Invaders  
Sandy Hook Visitor Center  
Wednesday, April 28, 4 - 5:15 p.m.**  
Girls and boys ages 7 to 12. Be a crab scientist at Horseshoe Cove, which includes catching and identifying marine invaders. Help park scientists learn the impact these creatures are having on the marine ecosystem. Register at 732-872-5970.



## May

### American Littoral Society Open House

Saturday, May 1, 10 a.m.

Come out and get a feel for the love of nature and the camaraderie that Littoral Society members and staff share. There will be plenty of activities for kids of all ages. Bring a picnic lunch, lawn chairs, blankets, etc. Please note that the rain date is 10 a.m. on Sunday, May 2 at the Littoral Society headquarters. The cost is \$5 per adult. Kids 12 and under are free. Call 732-291-0055 for more info.

### Battles of the American Revolution

Meet at Lighthouse Parking Lot  
Sunday, May 2, 2 p.m.

Join in the fun during Monmouth County's celebration "A Weekend in Old Monmouth." National Park Service rangers bring you to locations of three attacks on the lighthouse during the American Revolution.

### NJ Audubon Society: Birding for Beginners

Meet at Parking Lot B  
Sunday, May 2, 10 a.m.

If you are new to birding, this is the trip for you. Join a naturalist from the Sandy Hook Bird Observatory for a four-hour introduction to birding. Learn the basics of bird identification in the diverse habitats of Sandy Hook. Bring binoculars and weather-appropriate clothing. Call 732-872-2500 to register.

### Junior Ranger Firefighter Fire Station Number One (by the Sandy Hook Lighthouse)

Wednesday, May 5  
4:00-5:15 p.m.

Girls and boys ages 7-14. Learn hands-on how fires are extinguished here at Fort Hancock now, and how they were extinguished in the past by working with present-day National Park Service Firefighters using everything from hose carts to fire engines. Reservations are required: Call 732-872-5970 to make yours.

## May 23, 2010

### Coastal Defenses Day

Fort Hancock Parade Ground  
Sunday, May 23, noon to 4 p.m.

Volunteers from the Army Ground Forces Association in World War Two uniform bring Battery Gunnison and its 6-inch guns to life in May 1943. Participate in loading the guns. Be a gun pointer and learn to track ships. Visit the plotting room to see how the guns were aimed. Visit the magazine to learn how ammunition was stored and handled. See how soldiers lived and worked at Fort Hancock in May 1943. Tour the gun batteries built on Sandy Hook and discover how Sandy Hook's fortifications defended New York Harbor from the 1890s to the 1970s. The Roseland Amateur Radio Club will also be conducting shortwave radio broadcasts at the Sandy Hook Lighthouse.



### Ocean Fun Day!

NJ Marine Sciences Consortium  
Building 22, Fort Hancock  
Sunday, May 23, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.  
NJMSC Annual Open House with exhibits, eco and historic tours, touch tanks, crab races, kid's activities and more. Free. Call NJMSC at 732-872-1300, ext. 19 for more information.

### NOAA Open House

James J. Howard Marine Lab  
Sunday, May 23, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.  
During Ocean Fun Day check out the laboratories, aquariums and scientific work done at the James J. Howard Marine Laboratory. For more information on this open house visit <http://sh.nefsc.noaa.gov> or call 732-872-3000.

### Holly Forest Exploration

American Littoral Society  
Sandy Hook Visitors Center  
Saturday, May 8, 10 a.m.

We will hike through the restricted 64-acre maritime forest and get to see an undisturbed holly forest with some of its oldest, rarest, and largest holly trees. Waterproof footwear is recommended. \$5 per person; Kids under 12 are free. 732-291-0055

### Wild Flower Walk

Sandy Hook Visitors Center  
Saturday, May 8, 6 p.m.

Discover, identify and enjoy the beauty of spring wildflowers on this nature walk.

### Surfing Fish Clinic

American Littoral Society  
North Beach Pavilion, May 9 &  
May 15, 8 a.m.

Join ALS staff for a day of surf fishing instruction. We will cover the basics of casting, knot tying, lure and bait selection, and "reading" a beach. All ages and skill levels are welcome. Rods, reels and tackle are provided, but please bring your own if possible. Call Jeff at 732-291-0055 to register.

### Ocean Junior Ranger Coast Artillery Corps Gunner

Sandy Hook Visitors Center  
Wednesday, May 12, 4 p.m.

Girls and boys ages 7 to 12  
Learn and practice the duties of army soldiers. Load and operate a 6 inch coastal gun that protected New York Harbor during WWII. Free, but reservations are required. Call 732-872-5970.

### Night Prowl

Sandy Hook Visitors Center  
Saturday, May 15, 8 p.m. Explore a Sandy Hook habitat on this night hike. Bring your five senses and bring a flashlight.

### Junior Ranger Horseshoe Crab Scientists

Sandy Hook Visitors Center  
Wednesday, May 19, 4 p.m.

Become crab scientists and learn how to rescue horseshoe crabs in danger. Call 732-872-5970 to reserve a spot.

## World War II Harbor Defense Lantern Tour

Meet at Fort Hancock Museum  
Friday, May 21, 7:30 p.m.

This very special night tour takes a look at how Fort Hancock's big guns protected New York City during the Second World War. Walk through the Mortar Battery, Battery Potter (Advanced Harbor Entrance Control Post #1) and Battery Gunnison. Please bring a flashlight.

## Battery Gunnison Preserved Battery Gunnison

Saturday, May 22, noon to 5 p.m.  
Army Ground Forces Association volunteers in WWII uniform will be conducting living history demonstrations for visitors at Battery Gunnison, home to two of the few surviving 6-inch coast artillery guns in the country.

## Memorial Day Nike Missile Defenses Tour

Meet at Guardian Park  
Monday, May 31, 2 p.m.

Join a car caravan tour to visit the Nike missile sites on Sandy Hook. These supersonic nuclear missiles protected the NY metro area from 1950s through the 1970s. This year marks the 52<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the tragic Middletown Nike Missile explosion of May 22, 1958. Remember our Veterans!

## Ferry Services

Seastreak (1-800-BOATRIDE) provides daily ferry service year round between Manhattan (Pier 11 & East 35th Street) and Highlands, NJ. Beginning Memorial Day weekend, daily direct service to Sandy Hook from Manhattan is offered with shuttle bus service from the Fort Hancock ferry landing to North Beach, Gunnison Beach and Beach Area E.

## Pets on the Beach

March 15-Labor Day: Pets are restricted from ocean side beaches. Pets are permitted at Fort Hancock and on bay side beaches on a leash.

## Parking and Passes

Beginning on Memorial Day weekend, lifeguards are on duty from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For your safety, please swim only in guarded areas. Beach parking fees are in effect 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Memorial Day through Labor Day. There are no fees for pedestrians, bicyclists, those visiting Fort Hancock, or those participating in ranger-led programs. Call the Sandy Hook Visitor Center 732-872-5970 for more information.

## Traffic Advisory

Expect heavy weekend and holiday traffic delays due to Highlands Bridge construction. Arriving before 11 a.m. on weekends and holidays is advised. Please note traffic delays can occur in both the summer season and off-season. Visitors can call 511 or 1-866-511-6538 and say "Route 36" to hear the latest traffic information. There are new traffic patterns entering and exiting Sandy Hook, so drive with caution through the area. View the NJDOT Highlands Bridge Replacement website for more information including live traffic cameras in and around the park. <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/commuter/roads/route36highlands/>  
**GPS address for Sandy Hook:**  
128 South Hartshorne Drive  
Highlands, NJ 07732

## Lifeguards and Swimming Conditions

Before Memorial Day, Sandy Hook beaches are unguarded. Visitors should use extreme caution at all times. Strong waves, rip currents and sharp drop offs beneath the surface are all common in Sandy Hook waters. For emergencies, call the ranger station at 732-872-5900, or use an emergency call box, which are located in each of beach pavilions.

## Visit us on the Web!

National Park Service, Gateway NRA:  
[www.nps.gov/gate](http://www.nps.gov/gate)

The Sandy Hook Foundation  
Sandy Hook's official friends group:  
[www.sandyhookfoundation.org](http://www.sandyhookfoundation.org)  
732-291-7733.

## Education @ Sandy Hook

### New Jersey Marine Sciences Consortium/NJ Sea Grant

This year, National Park Rangers will be partnering with the Consortium to offer hands on program about piping plovers as part of the Consortium's Barrier Beach lesson. Contact the NJ Marine Sciences Consortium for more information on this and other curriculum-based programs. Call at 732-872-1300 or [www.njmsc.org](http://www.njmsc.org)

### Brookdale Community College Ocean Institute

Brookdale Community College offers a variety of education programs and teacher workshops. This year, National Park Rangers will be partnering with Brookdale CC to offer a hands-on program about piping plover adaptations. [www.brookdalecc.edu/staff/sandyhook/index.html](http://www.brookdalecc.edu/staff/sandyhook/index.html)

### Clean Ocean Action Student Summit, Sandy Hook

22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spring Student Summit, Parking Lot Area D  
Thursday and Friday, May 6 & 7,  
9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
COA's 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Spring Student Summit is a free seaside symposium for middle schools (grades 5 to 8) from North and Central Jersey. Schools must apply and pre-register. Call 732-872-0111 for an application.

### Other Educational Opportunities at Sandy Hook

This year National Park Service rangers will be offering a "History Loop" tour of historic Fort Hancock. While in its initial pilot stage, the program will not be specifically curriculum-based, it will offer school groups of under 40 students (between the ages of 7 and 18) the opportunity to visit the Sandy Hook Lighthouse tower, Battery Potter and History House. Teachers are invited to partner with rangers to develop curriculum-based activities for these sites during phase two of this pilot program. Contact 732-872-5970 to reserve a program.