



Visitor Programs and Events

Winter 2015

Sandy Hook, New Jersey

Find Your Park

"Armchair to armchair experience" is the term often used to describe the full range of planning, visiting and savoring a visit to a park or historic site. Perhaps you can recall deciding on a destination, searching the internet, making the trip, and then enjoying the photographs, souvenirs and experience afterwards.

As we continue the celebration of the Centennial of the NPS and the focus of *Find Your Park*, winter is a perfect time to explore local indoor historic sites and to plan your warm weather excursions and travel.

There are twenty-two unique NPS sites in the greater NYC harbor area of which Gateway is the largest in acreage. Here is a link to the National Parks of New York Harbor (NPNH) <http://www.nps.gov/npnh/index.htm> And here is a link to a map of the NPNH <http://www.nps.gov/npnh/planyourvisit/maps.htm> How many of these sites have you visited?

Winter is a good time to explore some of the great indoor sites in the area. You can learn about immigration history by visiting Ellis Island <http://www.nps.gov/ellis/index.htm> and the Lower Eastside Tenement Museum <https://tenement.org/>. If you're in the Wall Street area, check out Federal Hall, <http://www.nps.gov/feha/index.htm> St. Paul's Chapel, <https://www.trinitywallstreet.org/about/stpaulschapel> where Washington's pew is displayed and then go to African Burial Ground <http://www.nps.gov/afbg/index.htm>.

A bit further out you can visit Sagamore Hill, in Oyster Bay, Long Island, <http://www.nps.gov/sahi/index.htm> recently reopened and glowing after being under renovation for more than two years. This shingle-style gilded-age home was the only permanent residence that Theodore Roosevelt owned and its furnishings are 90% original to the family.



Officers Row Sunset, by Michael J. Paternoster, is the First Prize winner in our 2015 Photo Contest Find Your Park.

In New Jersey the Thomas Edison National Historical Park, in West Orange, NJ, <http://www.nps.gov/edis/index.htm> presents the home and laboratory of America's most famous inventor.

There will be many days this winter when planning your warm weather trips will provide much pleasure. The ease of exploring and discovery via the internet provides a great way to put together trips built around a theme and/or a geographic area. The area you choose may also present a theme to explore. Boston, for example, provides a wonderful array of Revolutionary War sites,

<http://www.nps.gov/bost/index.htm> as does Philadelphia <http://www.nps.gov/inde/index.htm>. And if colonial history is your interest then a trip to Williamsburg, VA <http://www.visitwilliamsburg.com/> may be in order. But, as they say, the possibilities are endless. But whatever your theme, interest and geographic area may be, go explore *and Find Your Park*.

There are activities at Gateway for you to enjoy during these winter months. Check out the Guide to see what's available. Perhaps you wish to join us for the traditional holiday walk on New Year's Day, for example.

Getting out on your own on sunny days can give you some bracing exercise and that breath of fresh air that you need, as long as you are properly dressed. Remember that it can be at least ten degrees colder near the shore and the wind across Jamaica Bay or off the ocean can be incredibly fierce.

But when the weather is really bad, and you're in your armchair savoring memories of warm weather, don't forget to plan for next season-- Spring is not that far away. Have a safe and wonderful holiday season. --C. Markis

Change of Hours for Visitor Centers Beginning November 15

To best address visitor needs while effectively utilizing our staff resources, we are modifying the hours of operation of our Visitor Centers from November 15 through March 5

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge:

Wednesday through Sunday,
10 AM to 4 PM

Ryan Visitor Center

Wednesday through Sunday,
10 AM to 4 PM

Sandy Hook Lighthouse Keepers

Quarters: Sunday through Saturday,
10 AM to 4 PM

We will resume 7-day operation, from 9AM to 5PM on March 6, 2016

The Lighthouse and Keepers Quarters are open. No other Visitor Site is open at Sandy Hook.

Please note the change in hours for the Visitor Center and Lighthouse Tours from Nov. 15- March 6, 2016

Sandy Hook Lighthouse & Keepers Quarters/Visitor Center

Daily, 10 AM - 4 PM
The 1883 Keepers Quarters has exhibits on New Jersey Lighthouses. Tours are first-come first-served starting at 1 PM, with the last tour at 3:30 PM. You must be at least 48 inches tall to climb the tower. A video in the adjacent barn is always available.

Programs

December

Sandy Hook Fall Migrants and Waterfowl

Monmouth County Audubon Society
Spermaceti Cove Parking Lot
(between Lot D and Lot E)
Saturday, December 5
10 AM – 12 PM
Walk along the bayside and ocean to look for late fall migrants and arriving waterfowl. Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring binoculars. ♥ 2 miles

Christmas Holly Walk Centennial Program

Parking Lot E
Saturday, December 19
2 PM – 3:30 PM
Enjoy the winter scenery and learn about the “holly” of Christmas with a ranger-guided walk around Sandy Hook’s 64-acre maritime Holly Forest. ♥ 1 mile

The ♥ symbol denotes a hike or walk of moderate activity. Come enjoy nature and the park as you get some exercise.

Do you receive email notifications of Gateway’s programs and events? Please send a message to Charles.Markis@nps.gov, with ‘program guide’ in the subject line and we will add you.

January

New Year’s Day Beach Walk

Building 18, Fort Hancock
Friday, January 1
11 AM – 3 PM
Which came first, the New Year’s Day hangover or the American Littoral Society walk? Which is the better way to start a new year? Greet the new year with a winter stroll on the beach and warm up at Littoral Society Headquarters with hot cocoa and hot dogs. Potluck dessert, contributions are welcome! Free, to reserve call (732) 291-0055. ♥ 2 miles

Battery Gunnison/New Peck Restoration

Saturday, January 9
12 PM - 6 PM
The Army Ground Forces Association is a volunteer group in WWII era uniform performing restoration projects and interpreting Battery Gunnison/New Peck. Visitors are invited to stop by to chat and learn more about restoration of Battery Gunnison/New Peck, and the historic time period of January 1943 at Fort Hancock.

Winter Twilight Exploration

Lighthouse Keepers Quarters
Sunday, January 24
4:30 PM – 6 PM
Enjoy the Hook from dusk to dark with this exploration of Sandy Hook’s trails and beaches. BYO flashlight! ♥ 1 mile

February

Holly Forest Walk

Meet at Sandy Hook Visitor Center
Sunday, February 7
2 PM – 3:30 PM
Experience the unique charm of this 64-acre maritime holly forest on a ranger-led winter walk. ♥ 1 mile

Wintering Waterfowl & Seals

Monmouth County Audubon Society
Spermaceti Cove Parking Lot (between Lot D and Lot E)
Saturday, February 13
10 AM – 12 PM
Take a walk along the bayside and ocean to look for wintering waterfowl and seals. Wear lots of layers, comfortable walking shoes and bring binoculars. ♥ 2 miles.

Battery Gunnison/New Peck Restoration

Saturday, February 20
12 PM - 6 PM
The Army Ground Forces Association is a volunteer group in WWII era uniform performing restoration projects and interpreting Battery Gunnison/New Peck. Visitors are invited to stop by to chat and learn more about restoration of Battery Gunnison/New Peck, and the historic time period of February 1943 at Fort Hancock.

Winter Night Prowl

Parking Lot E
Saturday, February 20
6 PM – 7:30 PM
Bring a flashlight on this after-dark sensory walk through Sandy Hook’s 64-acre maritime holly forest. ♥ 1 mile.

Winter Seal and Waterfowl Walk

Building 18, Fort Hancock
Saturday, February 27
11 AM – 1 PM
Bring your binoculars and join the American Littoral Society (ALS) on a trek throughout Sandy Hook to observe the seals and waterfowl that overwinter in New Jersey. Afterwards, return to ALS Headquarters and warm up with snacks and toasty beverages. Cost is \$5 per person, and reservations are required. Call (732) 291-0055 to reserve. ♥ 1 mile

Searching for Seals in the Surf Centennial Program

Lighthouse Keepers Quarters
Sunday, February 28
10 AM – 12 PM
Hike out to the Sandy Hook bayside with a park ranger to search for seal activity during their annual migration; and learn about marine mammals that dwell in the waters of Sandy Hook at different times of the year. Reservations required, please call (732) 872-5970. ♥ 1 mile.