



# National Parks of the Lowcountry

## Message from the Superintendent

Greetings!

We welcome you to the National Parks of South Carolina's Lowcountry. The communities of the greater Charleston area have a long history in the development of our nation. Our sites span America's history from the Revolutionary War through World War II. Each site highlights major events on our path to the liberties we all share today.

In the National Park Service, our job is to preserve these national treasures and to provide you, the park visitor, with a fulfilling experience. As you go through these sites where the famous and the not so famous played a role in our history, take time to learn, appreciate and understand why these sites are important. Help us to protect them and keep them available as learning laboratories for our children.

Browse through this guide and stop at our visitor centers with any questions you may have as you begin your visit to the Lowcountry. We hope you have a safe, enjoyable and memorable visit.

Sincerely,

Bob Dodson  
Superintendent



## General Information

### Our Mission

The National Park Service was founded by an act of Congress on August 25, 1916. Our mission is to preserve unimpaired, the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout the country and the world.

In the Charleston area, there are two parks: Fort Sumter National Monument (which includes the Fort Sumter Visitor Education Center at Liberty Square and Fort Moultrie) and Charles Pinckney National Historic Site. Although at first these sites might appear to have little in common, visitors soon realize that they are connected through their shared theme of the American struggle for liberty.

As history educators, the interpreters of the Visitor Services Division provide guided walks, talks, audiovisual programs and other educational activities. Written media such as brochures, exhibits and this guide are also produced.

### Ranger Programs

Interpretive talks are offered at Fort Sumter for each arriving ferry. At Fort Moultrie, ranger talks are regularly scheduled during the summer season. Ranger programs are offered on

weekends at Charles Pinckney National Historic Site. Each site hosts special events and programs throughout the year, including Living History programs, music presentations and cultural demonstrations. Schools and other groups who visit should call ahead to make reservations. Off-site programs and curriculum-based education programs are available in the greater Charleston area.

### Park Publications

Official park brochures are available for Fort Sumter, Fort Moultrie and the Charles Pinckney site. The following site bulletins are also available:

- *18 Pounder American Revolutionary War Cannon*
- *African Americans at Snee Farm*
- *Archeology at Snee Farm*
- *Battery Jasper*
- *Battery Wagner*
- *Edgar Allan Poe*
- *Flags of Fort Sumter*
- *Fort Moultrie Military Reservation, 1898-1947*
- *Harbor Entrance Control Post*
- *How Does a Cannon Work?*
- *Osceola*

### Eastern National

Each site has a bookstore operated by Eastern National, a non-profit association that offers books and interpretive items for sale. A percentage of all sales are donated to the park's interpretive program.



# Where to Go

**Fort Sumter** can be visited by private boat, or by ferry from two locations. One ferry departs from the Fort Sumter Visitor Education Center in downtown Charleston, and the other departs from Patriots Point in Mount Pleasant. Departure schedules vary with the season. The Visitor Education Center is located at 340 Concord Street, on the Cooper River at the foot of Calhoun Street. Open daily 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. except for New Year's, Thanksgiving and Christmas Days. For more information call 843-577-0242 or visit Fort Sumter on the World Wide Web: [www.nps.gov/fosu](http://www.nps.gov/fosu)

For the current ferry schedule and ticket prices call the park's concessioner, Fort Sumter Tours, Inc., at 843-881-7337 or visit them on the World Wide Web: [www.fortsumtourtours.com](http://www.fortsumtourtours.com)

**Fort Moultrie** is located at 1214 Middle Street on Sullivan's Island. From U.S. 17 in Mount Pleasant follow the signs for Sullivan's Island and Fort Moultrie. The fort is located 1.5 miles west of Ben Sawyer Boulevard on Middle Street. Fort Moultrie is open daily 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. except for New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. For more information call 843-883-3123 or visit Fort Moultrie on the World Wide Web: [www.nps.gov/fosu](http://www.nps.gov/fosu)

**Charles Pinckney National Historic Site** is located at 1254 Long Point Road, just off U.S. 17 or I-526 in Mount Pleasant. The site is open daily 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. except for New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. For more information call 843-881-5516 or visit the park on the World Wide Web: [www.nps.gov/chpi](http://www.nps.gov/chpi)

# Fort Sumter National Monument

Fort Sumter National Monument commemorates defining moments in American history within a military continuum spanning more than a century and a half. Two seacoast fortifications preserve and interpret these stories. At Fort Moultrie, the first American victory over the British Navy in 1776 galvanized the patriots' cause for independence. Less than a century later, America's most tragic conflict ignited with the first shots of the Civil War at Fort Sumter.

## Liberty Square

Seated on the water's edge, Liberty Square is a gateway to Fort Sumter. The grounds and fountain commemorate the evolution of liberty in America from the Constitutional Convention in 1787 to the Civil Rights Movement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Visitors can walk through the square and find bronze plaques containing messages from the past that trace the American quest for liberty. In this quiet setting, visitors can reflect upon the meaning of liberty as seen through the eyes of Americans from all walks of life.

## Fort Sumter Visitor Education Center

This state-of-the-art facility is the primary departure point for visitors to Fort Sumter. Before your ferry ride to the fort, take time to explore the interpretive exhibits and audiovisual programs. National Park Service rangers and volunteers are on site to answer questions to help you achieve a better understanding of the causes of the Civil War, and why it began at Fort Sumter.

## Activities

- Spend time reading the exhibits.
- Ask a park ranger any questions.
- Watch the harbor traffic.
- Enjoy the shade and breezes.
- Visit the Eastern National bookshop.
- Take the ferry to Fort Sumter.
- Kids can become a Junior Ranger.

## Fees

Ticket prices for the concession-operated ferry to Fort Sumter and entrance fees to Fort Moultrie are listed on Page 3.



The Fort Sumter Visitor Education Center at Liberty Square opened in August, 2001.

# Fort Sumter

## A Brief History

Situated at the harbor's entrance to protect Charleston from invasion by sea, construction of Fort Sumter began in 1829 as part of the Third System of American Seacoast Defense. It was first used in 1860 when Major Robert Anderson, commander of the Union troops at Fort Moultrie, moved his garrison to the more defensible Fort Sumter. The first shots of the Civil War were fired at Fort Sumter when Anderson refused to surrender the fort to the Confederacy on April 12-13, 1861. Historic resources include original brickwork, cannons and Battery Huger, a structure added to the fort in 1898 and used through World War II. Inside the battery is the Fort Sumter Museum. From the upper level of the fort you have a panoramic view of the city and harbor.



Fort Sumter in 1861



Fort Sumter today

## Regularly Scheduled Special Events

*April 12-13* -- The anniversary of the battle of Fort Sumter and the beginning of the American Civil War. Period costumed interpreters give demonstrations and talks for each arriving ferry. When possible musket firing and drills are included and period military musicians play marches and other selections. Check our Website for details: [www.nps.gov/fosu](http://www.nps.gov/fosu)

## Fees

All fees are for the concession-operated ferry service. Prices are subject to change.

- Adults: (12-61) **\$14.00**
- Seniors: (62+) **\$12.50**
- Children (6-11): **\$8.00**
- Children (5 & under): **Free**

# Fort Moultrie

## A Brief History

From the first crude palmetto log structure of the Revolutionary War to the reinforced concrete of World War II, Fort Moultrie's weapons and fortifications mirror nearly 200 years of American coastal defense. After World War II, technological advances in warfare made this seacoast defense system obsolete. In 1947, after 171 years of service, Fort Moultrie was deactivated. Today Fort Moultrie is an outdoor museum.



Fort Moultrie's outdoor museum is a timeline of American seacoast fortification. Visitors can see the evolution of the fort and cannons from 1809-1947.

## Regularly Scheduled Special Events

*June 28* -- Carolina Day, the battle of Sullivan's Island. Eighteenth century drill and musket firing demonstrations. Guest speaker talks on the battle. Program is held in the evening Park is free all day. Check our Website for details: [www.nps.gov/fosu](http://www.nps.gov/fosu)

*Last Saturday in September* -- National Public Lands Day. Volunteer to help spruce up your national public lands. Park is free all day.

## Fees

There is an entrance fee for Fort Moultrie:

- Adults (17-61): **\$3.00**
- Senior Citizens (62+): **\$1.00**
- Children (16 and under): **Free**
- Family: **\$5.00**
- Annual Family Pass: **\$20.00**
- Golden Age/Access/Eagle & National Parks Passholders: **Free**

## Activities

- Watch the 22-minute orientation film.
- Examine the exhibits.
- Visit the Eastern National bookstore.
- Enjoy a picnic near the dock.
- Kids can become a Junior Ranger.
- Discover why Fort Moultrie was built three different times at the same location.
- See the changes in artillery and coastal fortifications through several wars.
- Visit the underground rooms of the Harbor Entrance Control Post.
- Walk the beach.

# For Your Safety

As monuments to the people who fought and died for liberty, these forts are special places. Many of the resources are fragile and so are you! Please keep yourself and the fort from being injured today.

- Do not climb on any structures or hills.

- Stay on designated paths.
- Watch your step. Check for uneven or slippery surfaces. Always use handrails when climbing stairs.
- Do not enter closed areas.
- Do not remove or disturb any part of the fort structures, including bricks.
- Drink plenty of water in hot weather.
- Bring sun screen and insect repellent.
- Smoking is not permitted.
- Pets are not permitted inside the forts, other buildings, or ferry boats.

# Charles Pinckney National Historic Site

## A Brief History

Donated to the National Park Service by the Friends of Historic Snee Farm, this remnant of Charles Pinckney's coastal plantation interprets his life and times. He was a principal framer and a signer of the United States Constitution who held many political offices.



*Charles Pinckney*

Visitors can also learn the story of Gullah culture. The Gullah are descendents of African Americans who were enslaved on Lowcountry plantations.

## Activities

- Watch a 20-minute interpretive video.
- Read the many informative exhibits.
- Discover archaeology and nature on the interpretive trail.
- Enjoy the varied plant and animal life.
- Relax on the porch, enjoy the view, listen to the songbirds and the wind in the trees.
- Kids can become a Junior Ranger.
- Visit the Eastern National bookstore.

## Regularly Scheduled Special Events

*February & March* -- Gullah Heritage Series. Talks, stories, demonstrations, and musical performances highlight the history of Gullah culture. Every Saturday at 2:00 p.m.

*Week of September 17* -- Constitution Day. New U.S. citizens are sworn in at a special outdoor naturalization ceremony. 10:30 a.m.



Today the House at Snee Farm, built *circa* 1828, is the park's museum and visitor center. This house occupies the site of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Pinckney farmhouse.

## For Your Safety

- Many wild animals still live here. Always give them plenty of room.
- Beware of fire ants and other insects, briars and poison ivy.
- Never remove or disturb any living thing or artifact.
- Drink plenty of water in hot weather.

Fees: Free

*National Parks of the Lowcountry* is published by the National Park Service for the orientation and education of visitors to Fort Sumter National Monument and Charles Pinckney National Historic Site.

## Comments? Write to:

Superintendent  
Fort Sumter National Monument  
1214 Middle Street  
Sullivan's Island, SC 29482



## Volunteers In Parks

Each year Volunteers In Parks, or VIPs, give thousands of hours to the National Park Service. A vital supplement to paid staff, volunteers bring special skills, dedication and fresh approaches to our work.

If you are interested in volunteering please ask at any visitor center, call the park at 843-883-3123 or email: [fosu\\_information@nps.gov](mailto:fosu_information@nps.gov)

Volunteers with RVs should plan ahead, as our limited RV sites are usually full by January.

