Fire Island

Junior Ranger Activity Booklet

Learning All About Fire Island National Seashore
Welcome to Fire Island National Seashore!

Thank you for joining our Junior Ranger program. Becoming a Junior Ranger is a great way to get to know Fire Island and many of the resources that make Fire Island National Seashore so special.

How to Become a Junior Ranger

1. Attend a guided program. Or, if you can’t go to one of the park’s scheduled programs, watch the video, “Fire Island National Seashore” at one of the visitor centers.

   Program: ________________________________
   Where: ________________________________
   Ask the ranger or volunteer to sign your booklet: ________________________________ Date: ______________

2. For ages 7-12: Complete all the activities in this booklet. For ages 5-7: Pick up activity sheets at a park visitor center.

3. Present your completed booklet to a ranger at one of the park’s visitor centers. (Check office hours to be sure the visitor center will be open and arrive at least 1/2 hour before it closes.) The ranger or volunteer at the visitor center desk will check your answers and may ask you a question or two about what you have learned.

4. Take the Fire Island National Seashore “Junior Ranger Pledge” on page 23 to earn your official Junior Ranger patch or badge.
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**Fire Island National Seashore Visitor Centers**

- **Fire Island Lighthouse**  
  631-661-4876  
  Open all year  
- **Sailors Haven**  
  631-597-6183  
  Open mid-May to mid-October  
- **Watch Hill**  
  631-597-6455  
  Open mid-May to mid-October  
- **Fire Island Wilderness**  
  631-281-3010  
  Open May to December  
- **William Floyd Estate**  
  631-399-2030  
  Open Memorial Day to late October.  

Days and times may vary by season  

Be sure to arrive at the visitor center at least 1/2 hour before it closes.
**What is a National Park?**

You have probably heard about national parks. Yellowstone is one. The Statue of Liberty is one, too. National parks are special places in America that are set aside, or preserved, for people to enjoy.

The National Park Service (NPS) takes care of all national parks. Some people working for the NPS, called rangers, use this mission to guide them in their everyday work.

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**The National Park Service Mission**

“...to promote and regulate the use of the...national parks...which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

*National Park Service Organic Act, 16 U.S.C. 1.*

1916

At [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov) you can find out more about all of our national parks. Can you guess the words that are hidden in the name of the NPS website?

```
www.nps.gov
```

Look for this symbol of the National Park Service:

Check this box when you find the NPS arrowhead at your visitor center.
Types of National Parks

The National Park Service protects many different types of places. Here are five of them. Can you unscramble their names? You may use the name bank for help.

National Military Park
UGTEGTYBSR

National Park
NTWLEYLOSOE

National Recreation Area
KLEA DMAE

National Seashore
RIEF DASILN

National Historic Trail
WSEIL DNA KARCL

National Historic Site
BRAAMAH LCINNLO CBIHTPALRE

Learn More:
You may purchase some of these books at Fire Island National Seashore Visitor Centers.
Activity 2
What’s a National Seashore?

What is a national seashore? Color the states with national seashores blue. Color the states without national seashores green. Then, finish the sentence on the next page.

Point Reyes National Seashore, California

Cape Cod National Seashore, Massachusetts

Fire Island National Seashore, New York

Padre Island National Seashore, Texas

Gulf Islands National Seashore, Florida and Mississippi
National seashores are places that are located and are protected by the National Park Service for people to enjoy.
Fire Island National Seashore is in New York State. It spreads out over a long barrier island and some small parts of Long Island. Fire Island National Seashore offers many places for people to visit. Even though all the places are different, they are still part of the same national seashore. Study this map to learn more!

Get to Know Fire Island National Seashore

1. Circle all of the Fire Island National Seashore visitor centers. How many are on this map? ______________

2. Name the visitor centers that are located:

   Farthest West

   _______________________________

   In Between

   _______________________________

   Farthest East

   _______________________________

   On Long Island

   _______________________________
Fire Island National Seashore was established in 1964. Before then, there were seventeen little communities on Fire Island. They are still there! Here is a chart of the distances between the communities, the visitor centers and other important locations. Use it to answer these questions.

### Fire Island Distances (in miles)

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<th>Saltaire</th>
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Where are you today? ____________________________

What is the closest Fire Island community? ____________________________

How many miles away is it? ____________________________

How many miles away is the next nearest visitor center? ____________________________
Activity 4

The Fire Island Lighthouse

The Fire Island Lighthouse stands at the western end of Fire Island. Lighthouses are buildings that send a strong light over the water. Each light has its own special signal or flashes. Sailors know how to use the lighthouse signal to navigate their ships at a safe distance from the shore.

The stripes on the Fire Island Lighthouse are called day marks. Each lighthouse has different day marks so boaters can tell them apart.

Complete this picture of the Fire Island Lighthouse by drawing in the tower with the correct day marks. Use the picture of the lighthouse on page 15 as a guide.

Did you know:

The Fire Island Lighthouse was built in 1858.

It is ____ feet tall.

There are ____ stair steps in the lighthouse tower.

The Fire Island light flashes once every ____ seconds.

How do I get there?

By car via the Robert Moses Causeway.

Directions

Located just east of Robert Moses State Park. Parking available at Robert Moses State Park Field 5 (Fee for parking). Walk 0.7 miles to lighthouse.
The Junior Rangers and their families are visiting Sailors Haven. Use clues from the story to trace their path along the boardwalk trail as they explore the Sunken Forest. Mark each bold location on the map with its number.

1. The Junior Rangers cross the Great South Bay on a ferry to get to Fire Island. “Welcome to Sailors Haven,” says the ranger when they arrive. “Please watch your step getting off the ferry on to the dock.”

2. Everyone follows the ranger. “Here is our visitor center. Come in to see our seashore exhibits!”

3. Next, the Junior Rangers take a walk. “We are in the Sunken Forest,” says the ranger. “Some trees here are 200 years old.”

4. The Junior Rangers walk toward the Great South Bay to a salt marsh. “Here is where many birds hunt for fish,” says the ranger.

5. The Junior Rangers walk across a boardwalk through the sand dunes. “See how the beach grass holds down the sand,” says the ranger.

6. At last, the trail ends. The Junior Rangers find a lifeguarded beach. “Hooray!” Everyone goes for a swim in the ocean.

How do I get there?
By ferry via the Sayville Ferry Service 631-589-8980

Directions
LIE (Rt.495) or Sunrise Hwy. (Rt.27) to Nicholls Rd. (Rt.97) South. Approx. 5.5 miles to third light, Montauk Hwy. (Rt. 85), make right. Go under R.R. overpass, make left at first light, Foster Ave. in Sayville. Follow green & white “Fire Island Ferry” signs to terminal.
Lots of people come to visit Watch Hill. There are so many fun things to do here! Solve this crossword puzzle and find out the recreational activities you can enjoy at Watch Hill. *If you need a hint, look in the word bank.*

**Down**

1. Boaters visiting Watch Hill can dock their boats in the __________.
2. Many people ride the _______ across the Great South Bay to get to Watch Hill.
3. It’s fun to have a barbeque in Watch Hill’s ______ area.
4. Come to swim at Watch Hill’s ________.
5. Watch Hill is a good place for wildlife ________.
6. Explore a salt marsh on a walk along Watch Hill’s boardwalk ________.

**How do I get there?**
By ferry via the Davis Park Ferry Company, Inc. 631-475-1665

**Directions**
Located on West Ave. Patchogue, NY. From LIE (Rt. 495) to 61 South (County Rd. 19) OR Sunrise Hwy. (Rt.27) to exit 52 South (County Rd.19). About 1 mile down, bear left, cross Main Street (Rt.25A). You will now be on West Ave. Cross over R.R. tracks and Division Street. Ferry terminal is on right hand side.

**Across**

7. Visitors may take a ________ trip with the rangers at Watch Hill.
8. Groups can stay overnight at the Watch Hill ________.
9. Start your ________ through the Fire Island Wilderness at Watch Hill.
10. Join ranger-lead programs at the Watch Hill ________ Center.
In between Watch Hill and the Wilderness Visitor Center, there is a special part of Fire Island National Seashore. It is called the Otis Pike Fire Island High Dune Wilderness. Why is it special? Because it is a wilderness! A wilderness area is land that is protected and kept wild and natural. Wilderness areas have no roads and no houses. People only stay in a wilderness as visitors. We can enjoy true nature on Fire Island — even so close to New York City!

What do you need to bring with you on a trip into the wilderness? Circle things you should take. Cross out what you should leave at home!
The National Park Service protects its special natural, cultural and recreational resources. What are Fire Island’s resources? Play this Bingo game to find out! Circle each resource you see on your visit today. In the empty boxes, draw and label other resources you discover. Connect four in a row to score bingo!

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<th>Ferry</th>
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<td>Manor House</td>
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<td>Wildlife</td>
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<td>Fire Island Lighthouse</td>
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<td>Cemetery</td>
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<td>Beach</td>
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Activity 9
The William Floyd Estate

William Floyd signed the Declaration of Independence. He was an important merchant and leader who lived on Long Island. Today his home, the William Floyd Estate, is part of Fire Island National Seashore.

1724
The house had only three rooms on the first floor.

1750-1760
The Floyds added two rooms on one side of the house and three rooms on the other side. They changed the hall into a dining room. There were eight rooms on the first floor. Four were bedrooms.

1792
William Floyd added three rooms. One was a big office. He turned one bedroom into a gun room, and put in two parlors. The first floor had ten rooms.

How do I get there?
By car or bus via the William Floyd Parkway.

Directions
Located at 245 Park Drive in Mastic Beach. From William Floyd Parkway, take Neighborhood Rd. (east) 2 miles to its eastern terminus; turn left on to Park Drive; go 4 blocks and turn right at entrance.
William Floyd’s father built the house in 1724. Through the years, the Floyd family made changes to the house. Here are first floor diagrams of the house, called floor plans. They are mixed up. Use the clues to put each year with its floor plan.

1857
William Floyd’s grandson John G. Floyd inherited the house. He made lots of changes, like putting on two porches and a laundry. He got rid of the big office and the small parlor.

1898
William Floyd’s great-grandson John G. Floyd Jr. put a new wing with a sitting room on the house. He wanted more room for his guests.

1976
In the 1930s, William Floyd’s second-great granddaughter Cornelia Floyd Nichols added a new modern kitchen and expanded the dining room. By 1976, the Floyds stopped changing their home. This is how we see their house today.
At Fire Island National Seashore, many people do many different jobs. They work together taking care of the seashore and helping its visitors. You may see some of them when you visit the seashore. Others work behind the scenes where you might never see them. All National Park Service (NPS) jobs are important. They all benefit both the visitors and the park.

Here’s a list of the many kinds of NPS jobs.

**Administrator**
Makes important decisions and helps keep the park running.

**Interpretation Ranger**
Welcomes visitors and teaches them about the national seashore.

**Resource Manager**
Uses science to study and protect the seashore’s plants, animals and habitats.

**Lifeguard**
Protects seashore visitors at the beach from drowning and helps in emergencies with first aid.

**Maintenance Worker**
Keeps the national seashore clean, safe and in good condition.

**Visitor and Resource Protection Ranger**
Enforces park rules, helps keep visitors safe and protects the animals and plants that live at the seashore.

**Volunteer in Parks (VIP)**
Helps with every NPS job educating visitors and protecting and preserving the national seashore.
Now that you know what kinds of jobs people do at Fire Island National Seashore, you can identify them. Each picture shows a different NPS person at work. Look at the pictures and name the kind of NPS job shown in each.
The leader of a national park is called the park superintendent. Superintendents have a challenging job! They must balance the two parts of the NPS mission (see page 4). The first part of the mission is about protecting park resources. The second part is about allowing people to enjoy those same resources, both today and in the future.

How can we use a park’s resources and protect them at the same time? Superintendents make big decisions to answer this question.

If you were the superintendent of Fire Island National Seashore, how would you solve these three problems? Check the answers you think are best. There may be more than one solution to each problem!

1. There are a lot of mosquitoes at Fire Island National Seashore and people are complaining. What do you do?

   a) Spray insecticides even though you know it will kill butterflies, fish and many other animals and insects along with mosquitoes.

   b) Help visitors understand that mosquitoes are part of the Fire Island ecosystem and many birds and fish eat them to survive.

   c) Close areas to visitors when there are a lot of mosquitoes.

   d) Put up signs warning people there are a lot of mosquitoes and suggesting other areas and times to visit.

   e) Suggest people wear insect repellent when they visit the national seashore.
2. The [Wilderness Act](#) is a law passed by Congress in 1964 that says they can preserve resources of wilderness for present and future generations to enjoy. Congress defines wilderness as areas that are natural and unchanged by people. People want you to build a paved trail through Fire Island National Seashore’s wilderness area so people using wheelchairs can visit. What do you do?

___ a) Build the trail, even though the Wilderness Act prohibits any construction in a wilderness.

___ b) Buy special wheelchairs that are made to be used on dirt trails and lend them to visitors.

___ c) Explain the Wilderness Act to people and why you can’t allow a trail to be built.

3. A lot of [deer](#) live on Fire Island National Seashore. Some people say there are too many. People living in the Fire Island communities complain that the deer cause trouble by eating garbage and garden plants. Also, some scientists say the deer are hurting the national seashore by eating away special plants that live there.

___ a) Study what effect the deer are having on the national seashore.

___ b) Have hunters shoot the deer and take them away.

___ c) If it’s found that the deer have no effect on the seashore’s special plants, leave the deer alone.

___ d) Do some research to see if there are other national parks that solved deer problems and contact them for advice on what to do.
Fire Island National Seashore is a great place to visit. You can go to the beach, dock in a marina, take a hike, go camping and explore historic places. But, wherever you go, it is important to remember to practice good safety habits. Unscramble the letters in these safety rules to learn how to enjoy Fire Island safely.

1. Always wear a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ when you are on a boat. **E L I F T K C A J E**

2. Keep your head and arms inside the _ _ _ _ _ _ . **Y E R F R**

3. Stay on the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ to avoid poison ivy and ticks. **D R O A B L A K W**

4. Use _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ to prevent sunburn. **N S U R E N E C S**

5. Take care to use _ _ _ _ _ _ repellent properly. **T S E N I C**

6. Wear _ _ _ _ _ _ to protect your feet. **E O S H S**

7. Swim when and where _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ are on duty. **I F E L U R D S G A**

Word Bank

- Ferry
- Life Jacket
- Lifeguards
- Insect
- Shoes
- Sunscreen
- Boardwalk
Junior Ranger Pledge

As a National Park Service Junior Ranger at Fire Island National Seashore:

I promise to care for the seashore by not littering, by keeping off the dunes and staying on the boardwalks.

I promise to protect wildlife by never touching, feeding or harming wild animals and plants.

I promise to learn more about Fire Island National Seashore and to share what I have learned with my family and friends and encourage them to do the same.

______________

Junior Ranger Signature

______________ ______________
Age Date

Certified by:

______________
Park Ranger or Volunteer-In-Park
Fire Island National Seashore provides a variety of opportunities to explore and enjoy an Atlantic Coast barrier island ecosystem and its history.

Fire Island National Seashore’s Junior Ranger Activity Program brings the wonder of discovering nature to our youngest visitors. Today’s young people are tomorrow’s stewards of our precious natural and cultural resources.

Thank you for helping protect and preserve Fire Island National Seashore, one of America’s special treasures.