

The Sandy Hook
Foundation



Friends of the National
Park Service at Sandy Hook

March, 2021

The Sand Paper A Newsletter from the Sandy Hook Foundation

Spring is just around the corner, yet winter didn't disappoint as thousands of visitors flocked to the ocean and bay shores of Sandy Hook for respite, outdoor recreation, fresh air, wellness, and the possibility of seeing diverse wildlife; either animals who are visiting, or those who call Sandy Hook their home.

Featuring miles of beaches, salt and freshwater marshes, hiking and biking trails, 264 acres of maritime forest, and some of the best sunsets anywhere in New Jersey, Sandy Hook is as rich in ecological diversity, as it is with opportunities to relax and explore.

The Sandy Hook Foundation's mission is to help make your visit the best it can be. We preserve and rehabilitate park resources, support public programs and services, and raise awareness about these resources. Like you, we are looking ahead to warmer sunny days and opportunities to be together safely on the Hook. If you can't make it to the park now, please consider participating in programs like **Ask a Ranger** every week on Wednesday at 3:30 pm on [Gateway's Facebook Live](#), for opportunities to interact live with a park ranger.

We hope you enjoy the first electronic edition of our newsletter, *The Sand Paper*, as we look forward to informing you about our work in support of all the Hook has to offer.

The Staff and Board of Trustees of the Sandy Hook Foundation



Photo credit: Michael Handler

Searching for Seals in the Surf

An NPS Program

Sunday, March 11, 11am – 1pm

Reservations required; please call 732-872-5970

1 mile hike with park ranger, facial covering required

Visitors to Sandy Hook are delighted when they witness seals hauled out on sand bars and rocky outcroppings as they arrive from their breeding grounds in New England and eastern Canada. These pinnipeds are most commonly Atlantic harbor seals; *Phoca vitulina*.

As recently as 2000, seals were almost never seen at Sandy Hook but now with cleaner waters, greater protections for marine mammals like the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and rebounding populations of certain fish, seal populations have increased to the point where visitors can almost expect to see seals autumn, winter, or early spring.



Get Ready to Roll on Sandy Hook's M.U.P

For those of you ready to trade in the cross-country skis for a warmer weather adventure, plan your visit to ride, walk, or run the MUP at Sandy Hook this spring. The Sandy Hook Foundation has invested in the installation of six bicycle repair stations along the seven mile paved trail. The path is shared by runners, cyclists, hikers, and skaters. Exercise equipment funded by SHF can also be found along the way. Review the [MUP map](#) before you go! This year the Foundation is planning to fund hydration stations in two locations along the route so you can refill your reusable water bottle and stay hydrated. The MUP winds its way through every ecosystem in the park, including the ancient maritime forest. To learn more about this restricted natural area, join the **Holly Forest Walk**.

Holly Forest Walk

An NPS Program

U.S. Life-Saving Station Lot at Spermaceti Cove, D Lot (North)

Sunday, March 14; 4pm – 6pm

Reservations required: please call 732-872-5970

1 mile hike with park ranger, facial covering required

Some of the oldest American Holly trees in the country can be found among Sandy Hook's nearly 300 acres of holly forest. Hike with a ranger through the restricted 64-acre maritime forest and see undisturbed forest with some of its oldest, rarest, and largest trees. Waterproof footwear is recommended.



How Does the NPS Protect and Preserve Natural Resources in the Park?

Biotechnicians! Join Gateway National Recreation Area's Chief of Resource Stewardship during a Facebook Live program explaining who the biotechnicians are and what they are responsible for in all three units of the park, Sandy Hook, Jamaica Bay, and Staten Island.

An NPS Program

Friday, March 26, 10am – 11am

[via GatewayNPS FB Live Link](#)

The Sandy Hook Foundation is the Official Friends Group of the National Park Service at Sandy Hook, a designated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

We rely on your support and every donation is meaningful. Please, consider your contribution today.

DONATE

We all love seeing the abundant wildlife on Sandy Hook but we also know that the best way to view any wildlife is from a distance. Enjoy the view!

March Means Return of the Osprey

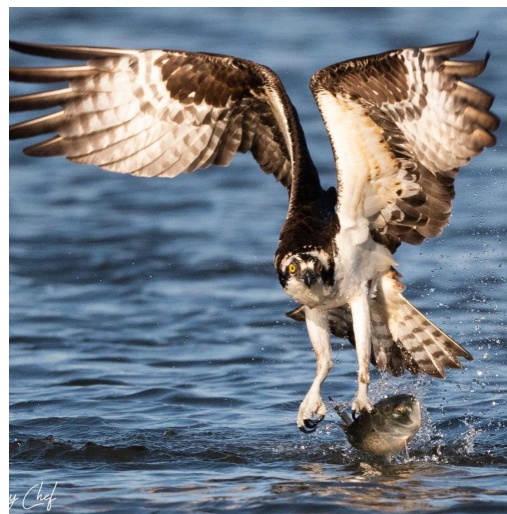


Photo credit: Michael Handler

Not much is predictable these days but the return of the ospreys to Sandy Hook the third week in March each year is a sure bet, thanks to years of preservation efforts to bring back the species from near-extinction in the 1970's. After wintering in Latin America, ospreys return to their summer nesting sites on the Hook, high above the ground on platforms, buildings, or on tall, dead trees. Usually by late April the female lays 2-3 mottled brown eggs, and by late July the young osprey fledglings can be seen practicing flapping their wings, preparing to fly. Please view the SHF's inspiring video [The Ospreys of Sandy Hook](#) or read the [NPS guide](#).

A Tribute to Caroline Huber

by Betsy Barrett, President Emeritus, Sandy Hook Foundation

Caroline Huber's diminutive stature belied a mighty, passionate, and dedicated force within—a force that sought to protect, preserve, and support the causes, family, and friends she held so dear. On Sandy Hook, Caroline's impact was far-reaching and representative of her many interests: She funded videos about endangered species to educate park visitors and schoolchildren, underwrote the eradication of acres of invasive plants, and aided the preservation of historical buildings. Caroline also loved all birds, especially the park's piping plover (she was less sanguine about foxes, the plovers' nemeses). Somehow, she was always both formidable and loveable!

Caroline's generosity also extended beyond Sandy Hook and reflected both her environmental and activist streaks. As a family founding member of South Jersey's Pinelands Preservation Alliance, she marched in protests and rallies against pipeline



From our Friends at the National Park Service

A gentle reminder to all our friends and visitors that feeding wildlife, especially deer at Sandy Hook, is against the law and will cause more harm than good.

It has been found that deer who are conditioned to being fed by humans are lured away from their natural winter habitats and will be exposed to disease because of diet changes and microorganisms.

Vehicle-killed deer near feed sites can outnumber those that would naturally succumb to winter mortality. We ask that everyone follow the law and help us keep both the deer and you from being hurt.

Thank you!

proposals, and her car's bumper stickers and purse's many buttons blared political messages that were important to her.

Truly, no day was an unproductive day during Caroline's 94 years. And because of her actions, her largesse, and her humor, her legacy of indefatigable good will endure.



L. to R. Ray Cosgrove, Betsy Barrett, Debbie Luchsinger, Caroline Huber,

Dave Luchsinger, Jane Preziosi, Pat Alcaro



New Director of Development at the Sandy Hook Foundation

The Sandy Hook Foundation welcomes Laurie Bratone as the new Director of Development, hired to help the organization increase capacity and grow its resources to the benefit of the public visiting Sandy Hook. "Sandy Hook provides unique opportunities for a variety of activities in a safe and healthy environment. I look forward to enhancing public engagement opportunities year-round, so visitors can enjoy all Sandy Hook has to offer," says Bratone. Welcome, Laurie!

Abundant Wildlife at Sandy Hook



Photo credit: Michael Handler



Photo credit: Thomas Pantaleo



Photo credit: Thomas Pantaleo

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