

## INTRODUCTION

Barnegat Lighthouse State Park, located on the northern tip of Long Beach Island along the New Jersey Atlantic coastline, is one of New Jersey's most recognized landmarks and a veteran of service to seafarers for 68 years. The park is easily accessible from the Garden State Parkway, by taking exit 63 and following Route 72 east to Long Beach Boulevard northbound.

Park visitors can picnic, sunbathe, fish, birdwatch, climb the historic lighthouse, walk the Maritime Forest Trail, visit the Interpretive Center and enjoy the seashore. Swimming, however, is not permitted. Barnegat Lighthouse is included as a maritime site on the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail Route.

## HISTORY

Barnegat Lighthouse stands on the south side of Barnegat Inlet. The inlet was named "Barendegat," or "Breakers Inlet," by early Dutch explorers because of the large cresting waves that made navigation difficult. The site of the lighthouse was considered one of the most important "change of course" points along the eastern seacoast for vessels sailing to New York from Europe. Sailors depended on Barnegat Lighthouse as a navigational aide to assist them in reaching their ports and to avoid the dangerous shoals that extended from the shore.

In 1834, the U.S. Congress appropriated \$6,000 to establish a lighthouse at Barnegat Inlet. The lighthouse was completed and placed into service in July of 1835. At only 40 feet tall with a non-blinking light, the first lighthouse at Barnegat Inlet was a miserable failure doing little to reduce the number of shipwrecks. In 1856, guided by recommendations from then Lieutenant George G. Meade of the U.S. Army Bureau of Topographical Engineers, Congress appropriated another \$60,000 to construct a "first class light" at Barnegat Inlet.

Lt. Meade drew up the plans and Lt. W. S. Reynolds supervised the construction of the new lighthouse. On the night of January 1, 1859, the majestic new Barnegat Lighthouse was lit for the first time. Its first order Fresnel lens, at 175 feet above sea level, was so powerful that it could be seen for 19 nautical miles.

New Jersey State Archives, Department of State



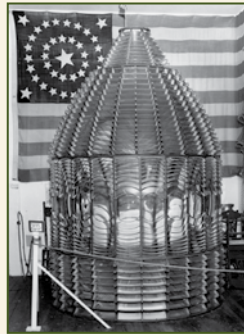
The lens was made in 1856 by Henri LePaute of Paris, France, from glass produced at the famous furnace at St. Gobian. The beehive-shaped Fresnel lens is six feet in diameter, ten feet high and is formed from over 1,000 separate glass prisms and twenty four bull's-eye lenses mounted in a brass frame. It weighs nearly five tons. Today the lens is on display in the Barnegat Light Historical Society's Museum on Central Avenue and 5th Street in Barnegat Light, New Jersey. For hours of operation, please call the museum at 609-494-8578.

Turned by a clockwork mechanism, the lens rotated once every four minutes. The speed of the rotation and the 24 individual beams of light from the 24 bull's-eye lenses gave Barnegat Lighthouse its "characteristic" of one flash every ten seconds.

At the turn of the century, due to the encroaching sea and seemingly inevitable collapse, the Lighthouse Board considered abandoning Barnegat Lighthouse and replacing it with a lightship anchored off the coast. The popularity of the lighthouse as a landmark caused the Lighthouse Board to reconsider their plan and to erect temporary measures to hold back the sea. Later, local residents raised two thousand dollars to construct permanent jetties to protect the lighthouse.

In 1926, Barnegat Lighthouse and surrounding property were transferred from the Federal government to the State of New Jersey ... to maintain this reservation for historical purposes and for the preservation of the lighthouse tower. The lighthouse was decommissioned and replaced by the Barnegat Lightship in 1927. Barnegat Lighthouse State Park opened to the public in 1957. A bust of General George G. Meade was unveiled at the dedication ceremony in honor of his distinguished service during the Civil War as the Commanding General of Federal troops at the Battle of Gettysburg and for his role at Barnegat Lighthouse.

The story of Barnegat Lighthouse is one of continuous struggle against the encroachment of the sea. Today, Barnegat Lighthouse stands as a testament to the formidable efforts of government and citizens to save it!



New Jersey State Archives, Department of State

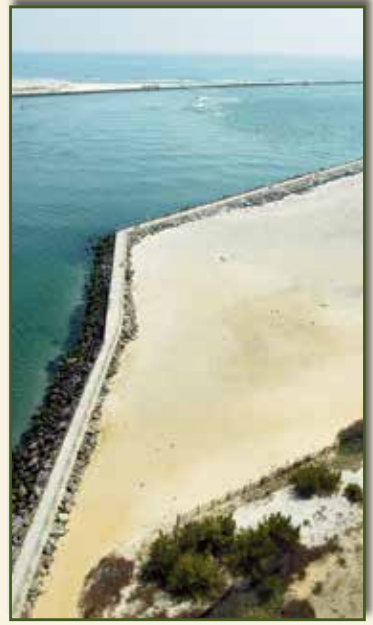
## FEATURES AND ACTIVITIES



### Lighthouse

Magnificent views of Island Beach

State Park, Barnegat Bay, Long Beach Island and the Atlantic Ocean can be seen from the watch gallery at the top of the lighthouse. Climb the 217 steps to the top of "Old Barney" and learn why it and other lighthouses were important to early navigation. The panoramic view from the top of the lighthouse can now be enjoyed by all visitors with the recent addition of four cameras that transmit live images of the view to a display in the Interpretive Center. A series of interpretive signs inside the lighthouse highlight the history of Barnegat Lighthouse and other lighthouses. For the hours of operation, please call the park office at 609-494-2016.



### Interpretive Center

The "Story of Barnegat Lighthouse" is showcased in a newly renovated Interpretive Center at Barnegat Lighthouse State Park. The Interpretive Center depicts the history of Barnegat Lighthouse from shipwreck to first class, seacoast light. Photos and text recount the vision of then Lieutenant George G. Meade, the evolution of lighthouse technology, and the specific duties of Barnegat Lighthouse keepers. A large panel entitled "Save Barnegat Light" focuses on the efforts of the local community and federal, state and local governments to protect the lighthouse from erosion and ultimate destruction. Visitors are provided with information about the changing nature of the coastline and the natural environment that surrounds the lighthouse, including Barnegat Bay, the Atlantic Ocean, and the maritime forest. For the hours of operation, please call the park office at 609-494-2016.



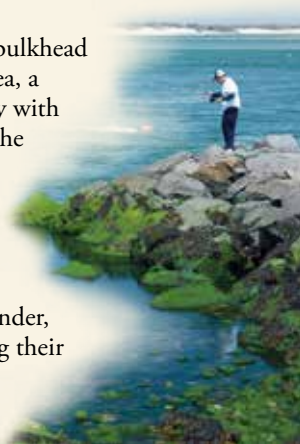
### Picnicking

Tables are located along Barnegat Inlet where visitors can picnic, fish, relax and observe the waterway. Two shelters with picnic tables also provide protection from the sun and rain. Picnickers who enjoy sunbathing and fishing can picnic on the sand along the jetty. Fires, propane stoves and cooking are prohibited.



### Fishing

In addition to the bulkhead along the picnic area, a 1,033-foot concrete walkway with handrails located on top of the south jetty provides fishing opportunities for park visitors. Anglers enjoy catching striped bass, bluefish, weakfish, summer flounder (fluke), winter flounder, and tautog (blackfish) during their appropriate seasons. Fishing is subject to New Jersey DEP Fish and Wildlife regulations.



### Nature Observation

Barnegat Lighthouse State Park is an excellent area to observe many species of birds during the spring and fall migrations. A New Jersey DEP Fish and Wildlife program provides seasonal fencing of critical nesting areas on the beach adjacent to the park. This provides protection for certain endangered beach nesting birds and opportunities for observation.

The park also is a great location for viewing wintering waterfowl such as red-breasted mergansers, common eiders and harlequin ducks. The park sponsors several waterfowl viewing programs throughout the winter. Call the park office at 609-494-2016 for the current schedule.

The Maritime Forest Trail is a 1/5-mile long, self-guided loop through one of the last remnants of maritime forest in New Jersey. The forest, which is dominated by black cherry, sassafras, eastern red cedar and American holly, is an important resting and feeding area for migratory birds on their long journey to and from their breeding sites.



### Access For People With Disabilities

Barnegat Lighthouse State Park is partially accessible for people with disabilities. On the south jetty, a 1,033-foot concrete walkway with handrails provides access. The lighthouse base and Interpretive Center also are accessible to people with disabilities. A wheel chair is available for use while in the park. Please contact the park office for further information. Text telephone (TTY) users, call the NJ Relay & CapTel Service at 711 or 1-800-852-7897 for English or 1-866-658-7714 for Spanish.



### Pets

Pets must always be on a leash no longer than six feet in length and under the control of the owner at all times. Please clean up after your pets. Pets are prohibited from the Maritime Forest Trail, the concrete walkway along the inlet and inside park facilities. Pets are prohibited from the beach area during the nesting season (April 1 through August 15).



### Keep It Clean and Green

Bring a bag or two and carry your trash out with you. Trash cans are not provided. Don't forget to recycle!

### NOT PERMITTED

Alcoholic beverages and smoking and vaping\* are NOT permitted in this park.



\*Smoking and vaping permitted only inside your personal vehicle.

To report an emergency or suspicious activity, call 1-877-WARN-DEP (1-877-927-6337) or 911.



**BARNEGAT LIGHTHOUSE STATE PARK**  
P.O. Box 167  
Barnegat Light, NJ 08006  
609-494-2016

**Directions:** Exit 63 off of the Garden State Parkway. From Route 72 East, turn left onto Long Beach Boulevard and then left onto Broadway. The park entrance is on the right.



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# Barnegat Lighthouse State Park



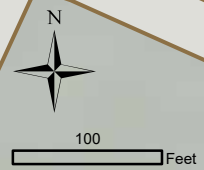
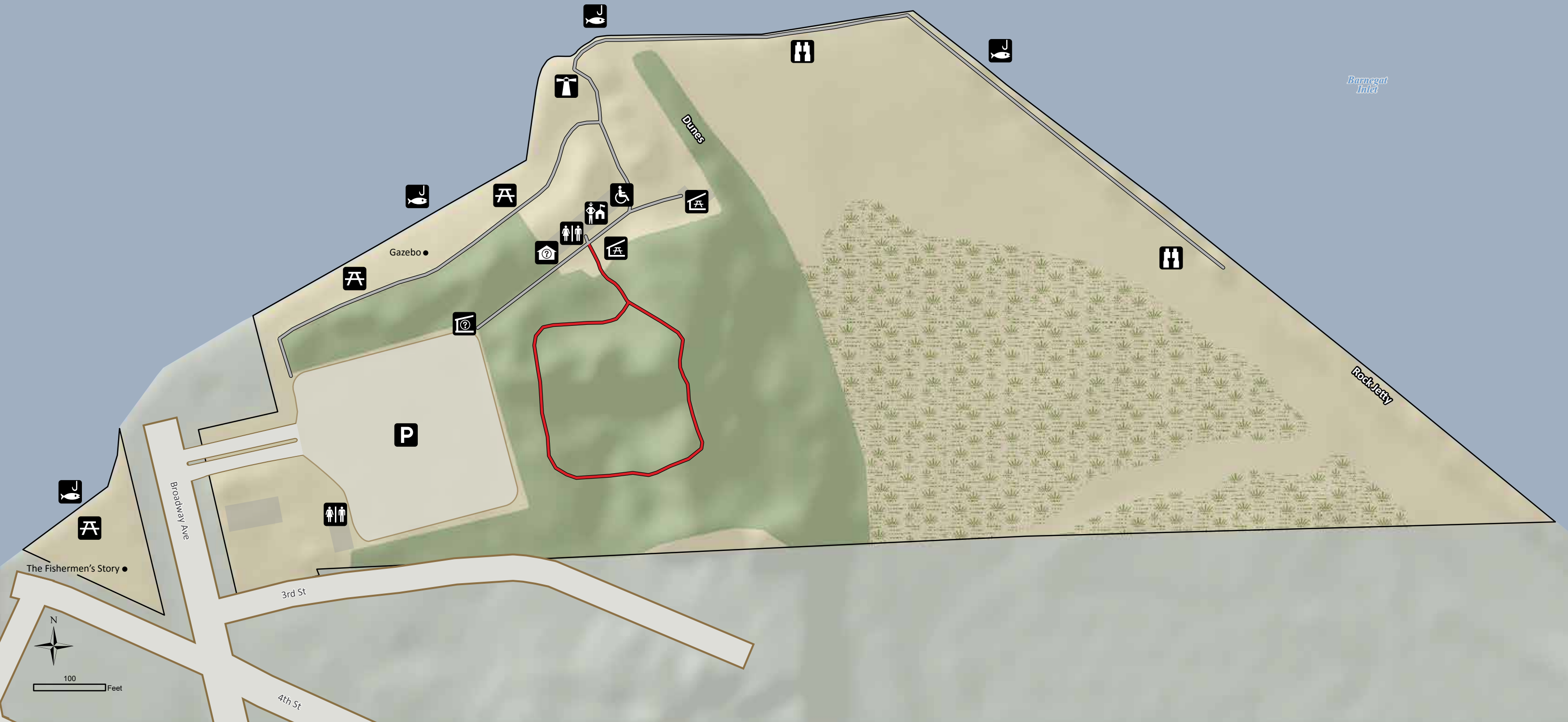
State of New Jersey  
Department of Environmental Protection  
State Park Service



4/2021 CMY



# BARNEGAT LIGHTHOUSE State Park



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|---------------------|---------|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Forest              | Water   | Maritime Forest Trail (0.2 mi) | Accessible Facility | Interpretive Center | Park Office | Picnic Shelter |
| Open Field or Grass | Wetland | Paved Path                     | Birding             | Interpretive Kiosk  | Parking Lot | Restrooms      |
|                     |         |                                | Fishing             | Lighthouse          | Picnic Area |                |