

# OBX Park News

*Wright Brothers* NATIONAL MEMORIAL | *Cape Hatteras* NATIONAL SEASHORE | *Fort Raleigh* NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

*Fall 2023*  
NEWSLETTER

Sea Turtle Scoop 2023 | Ocean Safety In The Outer Banks |  
Pathways To Your National Parks | Coastal Warning Tower Returns  
To Hatteras Weather Bureau Station



2023

Did you know that biologists at Cape Hatteras National Seashore carefully track, learn from, and protect hundreds of sea turtle nests each summer?

Check out our sea turtle stats below (as of September 21, 2023) to learn more about the 2023 nesting season.



Sea turtle species:  
Loggerhead, Green,  
Leatherback (rare), and  
Kemp's ridley (rare)



NUMBER OF NESTS:

376

NUMBER OF EGGS LAID:

36,620

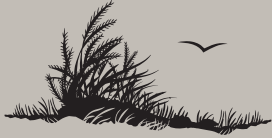
NEST ADOPTIONS:

280

71 LEATHERBACK HATCHLINGS!

A Leatherback sea turtle laid 93 eggs on Ocracoke Island in June. After 70 days of incubation, and following excavation, park biologists reported that 71 hatchlings emerged and started their journey to the ocean on August 29.

FUNDS RAISED \$28,687



## OUTER BANKS

FOREVER

Outer Banks Forever is the official nonprofit partner of our Outer Banks national parks, helping you protect and enhance these special places. Established in 2019, Outer Banks Forever has helped support projects like the mobility-friendly Oregon Inlet Kayak Launch, programs like Adopt a Pony and Adopt a Sea Turtle Nest, virtual experiences that help keep visitors connected to our parks year-round, and more. To learn more please visit [www.OBXForever.org](http://www.OBXForever.org)

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## Ocean Safety In The Outer Banks

Our Outer Banks are known world-wide for their pristine beaches, rich history, and vibrant culture. Cape Hatteras National Seashore in particular is a top destination for surfers, kite boarders, and ocean enthusiasts of all kinds.

Throughout the year, we work with our national park staff and our community to make sure that all of us keep safety top of mind while enjoying the beach and our time in the ocean.

Since we launched in 2019, we've been a part of the Love the Beach, Respect the Ocean campaign, helping to promote beach and ocean safety. This year, we were able to take our passion for keeping the Seashore safe to the next level by partnering with Big Wave Risk Assessment Group (BWRAG) to bring their Surf Safety Summit to the East Coast for the first time ever.

*Over the course of two days, 60 surfers and water sports athletes participated in an intensive safety and survival workshop hosted by Outer Surf in Nags Head.*



The goal of the summit was to equip more people with the knowledge and skills that could save a life. Experts from BWRAG as well as locals Jesse Fernandez, Brett Barley, Bri Young, and Will Skudin shared their stories of how they discovered their passion for surfing and how keeping safety top of mind is critical to enjoying their favorite sport.

The summit was not only informative but also inspiring to all involved – helping them feel more connected to each other and to the special environment we have here that allows them to do what they love. By working together, we can show our love and respect for our beaches and ocean and look out for one another.



## Pathways To Your National Parks

Since last October, we've been working with the National Park Service and our local community to create a new experience at Cape Hatteras National Seashore: The Cape Hatteras Lighthouse Pathway.

Running parallel along Lighthouse Road off NC Highway 12 and leading to the grounds of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse and the Old Lighthouse Beach Access, the new 1.25-mile-long pathway will offer park visitors a safer way to access the beach, the current lighthouse site, and points in between.

Traveling alongside Lighthouse Road safely separated from traffic, park visitors will have a chance to experience and learn about the ecology and wildlife that is unique to the Outer Banks.

As the ocean comes into view, there will be an opportunity to stop at a new educational plaza at Old Lighthouse Beach where park visitors will have a chance to rest and learn about the history of surfing and water sports that made Hatteras Island a premier water sports destination on the East Coast.

Continuing to the lighthouse, travelers will move alongside the path the lighthouse itself took on its historic 2,900-foot journey to safety back in 1999, with opportunities to stop along the route to learn why moving the lighthouse was necessary and, more importantly, how such an incredible feat of engineering succeeded.



In January, we attended a walk-through of the pathway site with colleagues from Cape Hatteras National Seashore and a representative of the National Park Service's Denver Service Center and reviewed the technical drawings for the pathway, which were 65% complete. Following the initial walk-through, we worked together with the Seashore and the Denver Service Center on final adjustments to the pathway's design.

The following month, the Seashore hosted a public comment period for the proposed pathway and its environmental assessment, the report that looks at how constructing the path will affect the natural environment around it. In May, the National Park Service fully approved the project's environmental assessment.

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*To date, supporters like you have helped us raise \$360,000 for the project!*

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This summer, the Seashore posted the construction contract for the pathway for bidding, and a contract was awarded in September. Currently, staff at the Seashore are working on the new educational signs that will be installed along the pathway. Construction of the pathway is anticipated to begin in the coming months, and it is expected to be open for public use by summer 2024.

We are so grateful for all the generous support we have received for this project and our mission to protect and enhance our Outer Banks national parks!



*Thank you to the following donors who contributed \$1,000 or more to make this project possible!*

## DIAMOND SHOALS SPONSORS \$25,000+



**The Bray Family**

### OLD LIGHTHOUSE BEACH SPONSORS \$5,000+



**Anderegg Family Foundation**

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*In memory of Paul and Maryann Johnson*

## FOREVER FOUNDER SPONSORS \$1,000-\$2,499

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## Coastal Warning Tower *Returns* To Hatteras Weather Bureau Station

This June, Cape Hatteras National Seashore completed its exterior renovations of the historic U.S. Weather Bureau Station in Hatteras Village with the installation of a new coastal warning tower.

Originally constructed in 1901, the U.S. Weather Bureau Station in Hatteras Village was the home of a Weather Bureau employee for 44 years before it was decommissioned at that location in 1946. During that time, and for decades after, a coastal warning tower stood adjacent to the building that displayed weather flags informing community members and mariners of ocean and weather conditions.

Unfortunately, the last coastal warning tower to stand on the grounds of the U.S. Weather Bureau Station collapsed in the 1999 after sustaining damage from Hurricane Dennis. A replacement tower was not installed until June, the result of a partnership between us and our friends at the National Park Service, the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, and the Hatteras Village Civic Association.

In January 2021, members of the Hatteras Village Civic Association wrote a letter to David Hallac, Superintendent of our Outer Banks national parks, stating their support of the coastal warning tower restoration project.

Following the reception of that letter, the Seashore approached us about assisting with the project. As the

official philanthropic partner of our Outer Banks national parks, we work to protect and enhance our three national parks by securing funding for projects that help our parks fulfill their mission. We were awarded a Tourism Impact Grant of \$35,000 from the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau to fund the restoration of the tower in November 2022.

To celebrate the completion of the project, a weather flag raising ceremony was held on the grounds of the station on Monday, July 10. We joined more than 70 Hatteras Village residents and visitors for the event, which included speakers from the National Park Service, the National Weather Service, the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, and Hatteras Village community members. D.L. Gray, a Hatteras Village resident whose late father, Damon Gray, Sr., was the last person to raise the weather flags at the station, raised the first weather flag on the newly restored tower, the white rectangular flag signifying fair weather.

“I think the coastal warning tower adds to the character, uniqueness, and history of Hatteras Village,” said Laurie Parker, a Hatteras Village resident and English teacher at Cape Hatteras Secondary School. “Our small fishing village has always been dependent on the weather, particularly the winds, for our livelihoods and safety. The coastal warning tower represents our ongoing reliance on Mother Nature.”



**OUTER BANKS**

FOREVER

P.O. Box 1635,  
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*Fall 2023*

NEWSLETTER



*Save the Date:*

**GIVING  
TUESDAY**

**IS NOVEMBER 28TH!**

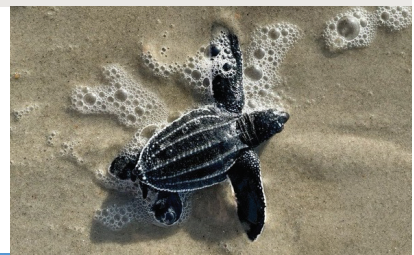
Join us for this global day of giving and give back to our Outer Banks national parks- or get a head start and scan the QR code to make your gift today!



SCAN ME

*Here's what's inside:*

**Sea Turtle  
Scoop 2023**



**Ocean Safety  
In The OBX**



**Coastal Warning  
Tower Returns To  
Hatteras Weather  
Bureau Station**



*Plus:* PATHWAYS TO YOUR NATIONAL PARKS UPDATE