

HISTORY & CULTURE



THE INVESTIGATION IS CARRIED OUT ON FOOT

The Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge was previously known as Fort John Custis. A military fort was established here during World War II, strategically located at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay to protect the naval bases in Virginia Beach and Norfolk. Today, this refuge has transformed into a tranquil sanctuary for both wildlife and visitors, although remnants of gun bunkers still exist. Guests can explore these bunkers, as well as a remarkable 120-ton, 68-foot gun barrel that was mounted on the USS Missouri during the Japanese surrender on September 2, 1945, signifying the end of World War II.

RELICS TO HABITATS

Just off the beach, Kiptopeke State Park is home to fascinating remnants from World War II: an unusual arrangement of nine sunken ships. These vessels now serve as a habitat for coral, sponges, crabs, and fish, while pelicans often nest atop them. How did these ships end up here? What makes them so special? We'll leave that intriguing mystery for YOU to explore!



THE CRAB CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

The quaint town of Crisfield, Maryland, once boasted a remarkable harvest of over 95 million tons of blue crabs annually, including processing, selling, and shipping. However, issues such as overharvesting, climate change, and water pollution have drastically reduced the yields of crabs, fish, and oysters, affecting the livelihoods of countless residents in the area.

Our visit to the J. Millard Tawes Museum in Crisfield will delve into the environmental and social history of the region, tracing back from the formation of the Chesapeake Bay millions of years ago to the experiences of the people who have lived there. We will also take a tour of the town and get a behind-the-scenes look at the Metompink packing plant.

The Chesapeake Bay watershed has been home to indigenous peoples since the last ice age. Beginning in the 1600s, European colonists from Spain, the Netherlands, and England, along with enslaved individuals from various African nations, arrived in the area. As we delve into the intricate social and economic history of the Chesapeake Bay watershed region, we will interview local residents about their professions, lives, and heritage.

STORIES OF THE PEOPLE





THE SCIENCE OF SCULPTURE

We are also excited to revisit a beloved favorite: Turner Sculpture Studios. Here, we will meet the talented artists behind the renowned bronze wildlife sculptures, observing the process from initial sketches to the completed artworks. We will also discover how the “lost wax method” of casting enables the creation of large, intricate metal masterpieces. Additionally, our cultural and historical explorations will enhance our understanding of the communities within the Chesapeake Bay watershed and their relationship with the natural environment.

REMINDER: By now, everyone should have submitted 3 of 4 payments (\$300.) The last payment of \$100 is due by Feb. 28.