

Caven Point Area of Liberty State Park facts

- Caven Point area (“Caven Point”) of Liberty State Park is owned by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and assigned to Liberty State Park for management. The area that makes up Caven Point consists of only 15 upland acres. The rest of the property is underwater.
- Caven Point provides considerable ecological, recreational, public access value to the estuary region and Liberty State Park specifically. Caven Point is within the 1,212 acres of contiguous land and water property assigned and managed as part of Liberty State Park. LSP’s interaction with the site fulfills the Park’s mission, which is “to provide the public with access to the harbor’s resources, a sense of its history and the charge of responsibility for its continued improvement.”
- The Caven Point beach area of Liberty State Park is the largest stretch of natural beach in the Upper New York Bay and Hudson River measuring approximately one-half mile long. In fact, the beach is the longest uninterrupted beach found anywhere between the Verrazano and George Washington Bridges on the Hudson River / Upper New York Bay waterfront. This area of waterfront includes the New Jersey communities of Bayonne, Jersey City, Hoboken, Weehawken, Guttenberg, North Bergen and Edgewater as well as the New York communities of Staten Island, Brooklyn and Manhattan. All other beaches found between the bridges are considerably smaller and not designated or managed as public parkland. Parts of the natural shoreline of Caven Point are documented on maps dating back as far as 1846.
- Caven Point is accessible to the public year-round. During the months of October thru March unfettered access is provided to the nature trails, boardwalks and beach area. From April thru September access is provided by scheduled tours, programs, classes and appointments or by special use permit.
- From an ecological perspective, Caven Point consists of sandy beach, saltwater marshland, tidal pools, mud flats and upland maritime forest. The site provides critical habitat and nesting grounds for a variety of in-water, brackish and upland floral and fauna species year-round. The location of the site along the Atlantic Flyway and within the harbor estuary makes it an ideal stop for migrating birds. Park visitors have reported eyewitness accounts of notable species including, but not limited to, snowy owl, deer, northern diamondback terrapin, peregrine falcon, osprey, harbor seals, horseshoe crab, yellow-crowned night-heron, black-crowned night-heron, red knot, black skimmer, northern harrier, American oystercatcher, blue heron, horned lark, and Atlantic sturgeon.
- Currently, the LSP Nature staff uses the sandy beach and tidal areas of this site for environmental education and public interpretive programs. Programs include *Estuary Explorers*, which allows participants, wearing chest waders, to drag a seine net through the water to learn about variety of wildlife in the estuary. *The Urban Estuary For Young Scientists* program expands the interpretive offerings to include water sampling and testing and scientific research. *Save a Place for Wildlife* is a program geared for a younger audience, which utilizes the Caven Point beach and boardwalk. The program focuses on salt-marsh and beach habitats and provides students with an opportunity for hands-on exploration. Other programs include low tide walks, bird walks, volunteer beach cleanups, and stewardship activities such as dune grass planting. In 2015, there

were a total of 30 education and interpretive programs conducted by LSP's Nature Interpretive staff at Caven Point, with approximately 600 participants.

- In 2015, Liberty State Park received a NJ Trails Grants and worked with the Student Conservation Association in boardwalk repair, invasive species removal and natural resource improvements.
- The site also provides an opportunity for public recreation and eco-tourism. The site is a popular visit for bird watchers in the region. Kayakers, small-boat sailors, canoeists, fishermen, crabbers, sun bathers, dog walkers as well as wind surfers use the beach and surrounding tidal flats for recreational access. The LSP's Nature staff runs public weekly kayak eco-tour programs during the summer months. The kayak program utilizes kayaking equipment owned and maintained by Liberty State Park and provides 3-4 sessions weekly with up to 12 individuals for each session. In 2015, 29 sessions were offered with a total of 225 participants and generating approximately \$4,500 in revenue toward the park maintenance budget.
- In 2000, the site was remediated of chromium and hydrocarbons by the responsible party through a settlement agreement.
- Since the remediation of contaminants, enhancements were undertaken at the site that include a natural trail and boardwalk, Hudson River Walkway to access the site by pedestrian and bicyclist from the LSP and neighboring residential communities, vehicular access for school groups, bridges over the tidal creeks, maintenance vehicle access, tidal pond with control weir, freshwater pond, bird houses, reforestation and revegetation of trees, shrubs and plants and Phragmites (aka Common Reed) eradication. It is recommended that the applicant consult with the NJDEP Division of Land Use Regulation for any impacts to wetlands, buffer zones, transition areas, flood zones and tidelands.
- Caven Point was purchased by the NJDEP utilizing 1978 Green Acres bond funds, which restricts the use of the site for public recreation and conservation purposes in perpetuity. Any proposed use other than public recreation and conservation would be subject to the Green Acres laws and regulations and may be subject to the Ogden-Rooney Act.
- In addition, the Land and Water Conservation Fund provided funding for the acquisition of the property. LWCF rules restrict the use of the property to outdoor public recreation and conservation.