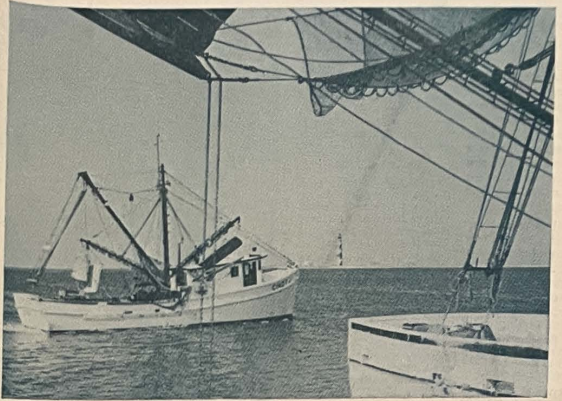


An early morning sunrise is caught by the camera as the sun's first rays outline the Cape Lookout Lighthouse and paint a pattern on the calm of the Atlantic Ocean.

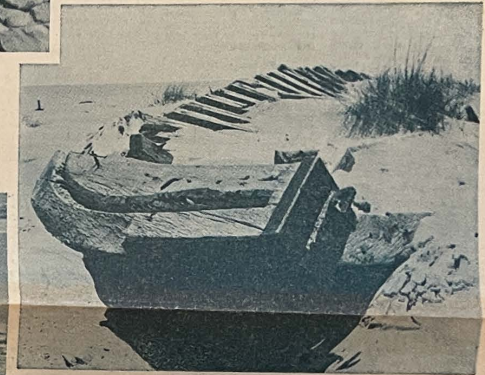


Fishing boats and shrimp trawlers often use the safe harbor at Cape Lookout.



Shell collectors always find outings on the beach strand at the Cape re-warding.

Staff Photos and Text  
by Roy Hardee



As winds shift along the 20 miles of sandy beach countless old shipwrecks are uncovered and recovered, many showing the workmanship of the old-time shipbuilders.

## Cape Lookout

### Wilderness Area a National Park

CAPE LOOKOUT — Remote, windswept, and filled with mystery and history dating back to the arrival of the first English colonists, this island paradise is one of the few remaining coastal wilderness areas on the east coast.

Reachable only by boat or plane, Cape Lookout has not really been touched by the hand of man.

Twenty miles of sandy beach, lashed by a rolling surf that's pushed by brisk offshore winds from the blue Atlantic, the area abounds with nature's beauty in the rough.

Very little has changed here since the first English and Spanish explorers visited in the 15th and early 16th centuries. Some maps dating back to 1585 show the outline of the Cape area.

Ever since those early sailors found fresh water, wild game and bountiful fishing here, the Cape has maintained a strong magical attraction which grips nearly all who first step onto its sandy floor.

It's an outdoorsman's delight, a shell collector's dream and filled with countless old shipwrecks for old and young alike to explore. There is unexcelled fishing the year round. One can get away from the fast pace of a jet age world.

Birdwatchers travel many miles to watch the sea bird population and artists find inspiration in the stillness.

Towering above the long narrow strip of the outer banks is Cape Lookout Lighthouse. Its thin beam of light has guided innumerable ships in fog and storms, warning them of the deadly offshore shoals.

The first lighthouse was placed in service here in 1812 and the area has been the setting for many a heroic rescue by life saving crews of the Coast Guard.

During World War I, the Cape's natural harbor provided protected anchorage for convoy rendezvous. In World War II, big .155 mm. Long Tom rifles guarded this isolated strip of the North Carolina coast and often battled with raiding German submarines.

The guns were scrapped several years ago and today only the heavy metal base and concrete bunkers remain.

Blackbeard the pirate, who made himself at home in coastal Carolina, marooned 17 men on the Cape in 1718, while Spanish privateers used the harbor here as a base for attacking Beaufort in 1747.

Now Cape Lookout, Shackleford Banks and Portsmouth Island have been designated as the nation's newest National Seashore Park, primarily because of their wilderness state. There are around 25,000 acres within the three islands, including 9,857 acres of land and 14,601 acres of marsh and water.

A regular passenger ferry — the Diamond City — leaves Harkers Island during the summer months for the Cape, landing at Sally and Les Moore's Sports Marina. There limited accommodations, plus snacks and fishing supplies, are available.

Some visitors come just to watch the sunsets, which have been described as among the most beautiful on the coast, while others journey over just for the quietness and uniqueness to be found here.

Time may have bypassed the Cape over the years, but man is preparing to descend upon the coastal haven when it becomes the gateway to the new Seashore Park.

When this happens, time and man will have caught up with Cape Lookout.



Cape Lookout Lighthouse is the first prominent landmark to be spotted by most people en route, to the Cape.



Some of the best coastal fishing can be found in the surf, offshore and within the protected waters of the Cape's Hook.



Sunset at the Cape is reflected across the still waters between the Coast Guard docks and the Cape Lookout marina.