



July 2012

zoom **in on america**

By the U.S. Missions of Austria and Poland

Volume IV. Issue 7.

AMERICAN BEACHES



On the Atlantic coast (Photo: BozenaPilat)

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ZOOM IN ON AMERICA

A HAYSTACK IN ... AN OCEAN?

Haystack Rock sits in the water off Cannon Beach, a wide sand beach on the Pacific shore in Oregon. Resembling a stack of hay that rises from the ocean, Haystack Rock is 72 meters (235 feet) tall. The beach itself was named for a cannon washed ashore from the U.S. Navy schooner Shark which was wrecked while trying to leave the Columbia River in 1846.

The first person to record his reaction to the beauty of this site was William Clark who, together with Meriwether Lewis and their Indian guide, Sacagawea, explored the American West at the turn of the 19th century. The party spent the winter of 1805 in Fort Clatsop, 20 miles north of Cannon Beach, Clark saw the beach on January 8, 1806 from the top of a nearby mountain. He wrote in his diary:

... from this point I beheld the grandest and most pleasing prospects which my eyes ever surveyed, in my front a boundless Ocean; ... a most romantic appearance.

Haystack Rock is a popular tourist attraction and, more importantly, it is the habitat for sea birds like the Tufted puffin, Pigeon guillemot, Black oystercatcher, Pelagic cormorant and others, as well as animals such as starfish, sea anemone, crabs, chitons, limpets, and sea slugs.

At low tide, i.e. between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. the rock is accessible by foot. However, as the rock has protected Marine Garden status, climbing above the mean high tide is not allowed as it might disturb nesting birds. Collecting plants or animals is also strictly forbidden.

Smaller rock formations to the south of Haystack Rock, known as "The Needles", complete the majestic landscape of Cannon Beach.

Even in the high season (May through September) the water temperature is too low for swimming. This does not discourage thousands of tourists who are drawn to the place for its natural beauty. Picnicking, kite-flying and bird-watching are favorite pastimes for families, while photographers wait from dawn to dusk to capture a unique glimpse of Haystack Rock with just the right light. Some nature lovers who walk to the rock at low tide are so enchanted by the place that they don't get back before high tide and get stranded on the rock. The U. S. Coast Guard takes them back to shore.

To entice more tourists to visit Clatsop County, the local community organizes events such as the Annual Sand Castle Contest, summer music concerts, which are held in the downtown City Park, book sales, and Independence Day parades.



Haystack Rock , Oregon Photo AP Images

750 MILES OF COASTLINE

While the water temperatures on the north Pacific coast of Oregon vary between 8 and 14°C (47-58° F), the temperatures of the Hawaiian Oahu Island are twice as high - 24 to 27° C (76-81° F). Oahu is the island where one of the most famous beaches in the world, **Waikiki Beach**, is located. The beach is part of the town of Waikiki, near Honolulu. Warm climate and sometimes powerful waves attract sunbathers and surfers. The latter have half of the two-mile stretch of the beach marked for them. The beach skyline, studded with high-rise buildings, most of them resort hotels, gives the beach a unique urban character. Some hotels: the Moana Surfrider Hotel and the Royal Hawaiian Hotel were built in the early 20th century.

Waikiki Beach only occupies 2 out of the 750 miles of Hawaiian coastline. The remaining 748 miles offer the greatest imaginable variety of beaches. The main islands of the archipelago are Niihau, Kauai, Oahu, Molokai, Lanai, Kahoolawe, Maui, and the island of Hawaii. Hawaii is the state with the fourth longest shoreline after Alaska, Florida and California.

Does the sand color have any influence on tourists' decisions about which beach to pick? White, yellow, black, green, red? They are all there. There are beach parks for families with plenty of activities for kids, se-

cluded romantic bays for newly-weds, popular shorelines for those who like people watching and sunbathing, beaches for sport lovers who want to engage in surf competitions, swimming, catamaran riding, kayaking, sailing, windsurfing, outdoor performances, hula dancing or outrigger canoeing and off-the-beaten-paths untouched by development for loners and nature lovers.

Many people believe that Hawaii has some of the best beaches in the world. All the beaches are public. Even though many have access from land, there are some that are accessible only by helicopter or watercraft. While it would be difficult to assess the number of beaches in Hawaii, 400 of them have names.

Some of the most beautiful beaches include **Lanikai Beach** in Oahu, considered by many to be the best swimming beach in Hawaii, with a clean, wide beach protected by a reef, sparkling turquoise waters and swaying coconut palms, **Hanalei Bay Beach** on the island of Kauai with waterfalls and emerald mountain peaks in the background, **Hanauma Bay** in Oahu, a nearly circular bay, which is one of the most popular areas for snorkeling and swimming, **Ke'e Beach Park** in Kauai famous for spectacular sunsets, and **Kapalua Bay Beach** in Maui with abundant golden sand and swaying palms.



Waikiki Beach (Photo AP Images)

HOOKED BY CAPE COD

The easternmost part of the state of Massachusetts in Northeastern United States is a cape named **Cape Cod** for the schools of codfish that live in the bay and the waters of the Atlantic. The cape has the characteristic shape of a hook and it serves as a shield protecting the shores of Cape Cod Bay against powerful ocean waves.

South of the cape are two islands: Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Cape Cod is 105 kilometers long (65 miles) and from 1.6 to 32 kilometers wide (1-20 miles). More than 220,000 inhabitants live mostly in Provincetown at the top of the Cape and in the towns of Hyannis and Chatham.

Cape Cod Canal, one of the widest artificial waterways in the world (an average width of 164 meters,) was constructed in 1914 and practically cut off the Cape from mainland Massachusetts making it accessible only via bridges. The canal was devised to shorten the sea route between Boston and New York City and let ships avoid the dangerous Cape Cod shoals.

The main attraction of Cape Cod are its beaches. With 900 kilometers (almost 560 miles) of coastline and numerous public and private beaches Cape Cod is a popular destination for beachgoers not only during the summer months but the mild and beautiful

season of the Indian Summer in early Fall. The Nantucket Music Festival that takes place in August in East Falmouth lures music lovers while those who are fans of outdoor activities can go walking, boating, kayaking, go-karting and golfing.

Historically, the area was home to the Wampanoag tribe of Native Americans. It was they who helped the Pilgrims survive the winter of 1620 at their New Plymouth Colony.



This is a June 1998 NASA handout photo showing Cape Cod, the island of Martha's Vineyard, left, and the island of Nantucket, left-bottom, in a view from space. U.S. Census figures for Massachusetts released Wednesday, March 21, 2001, showed that growth on Cape Cod and the two islands outpaced areas in the rest of the state, and Nantucket was the fastest growing county. (AP Photo/NASA)



Animal care specialist Greg Bruehler swims alongside the baby gray whale, J.J., observing her behavior on her sixth day of treatment at the marine life park (Photo AP Images)

OTHER GREAT BEACHES



The beach in Santa Barbara (Photo: Bozena Pilat)



The beach at Hanauma Bay, Hawaii (Photo: AP Images)



Surfers ride a wave at Waimea Beach on the North Shore of Oahu, Hawaii (Photo: AP Images)

ACTIVITY PAGE

EXERCISE 1: VOCABULARY STUDY

Match idiomatic expressions 1-8 with their definitions a-h.

1. Sun belt
2. Nothing new under the sun
3. Everything under the sun
4. Make hay while the sun shines
5. Place in the sun
6. On the sunny side of
7. Sunny-side up
8. Sunny side

Definitions:

- a. At an age less than ...
- b. The southern and southwestern United States
- c. Take advantage of favorable circumstances
- d. A dominant or favorable position or situation
- e. The pleasant or cheerful aspect of something
- f. Fried so that the yolk remains intact and uppermost
- g. Everything has been seen before
- h. Including just about everything, whether appropriate or not

EXERCISE 2: SPEAKING

Work with another student. Decide which photo (from the ones below) each of you should take and describe it to your partner. Then talk about your favorite pastimes while at the seaside.

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Exercise 3: Reading Comprehension

Scan read the text on p. 3 and say which beach of the ones mentioned in the article will be the best choice for:

1. a person who likes the proximity of a town, with shops, restaurants and high-rise buildings
2. a person who wants to learn snorkeling
3. a photographer who specializes in photographing sunsets
4. a painter who wants to paint the sea against a dramatic background of mountains enveloped in mist
5. a surfer