Island Beach State Park is a narrow barrier beach stretching for nearly 10 miles between the Atlantic Ocean and Barnegat Bay. This unique environment provides a variety of habitats for a multitude of maritime plants and wildlife. Barnegat Lighthouse can be seen across the inlet from the southernmost point of Island Beach. Park visitors can enjoy 3,000 acres of sandy beaches, maritime forest, tidal marshes and dunes.

**HISTORY**

Island Beach has a rich and varied history. In 1635, Charles I of England granted a parcel of land, including Island Beach, to the first Earl of Stirling. During the 18th and 19th centuries, the area was inhabited by fishermen who built shacks from driftwood and by members of the U.S. Lifesaving Service.

Steel magnate Henry C. Phipps, a partner of Andrew Carnegie, bought the land in 1926 with visions of turning it into an exclusive seaside resort. Only three large, expensive homes—the Ocean House, Bay House and Freeman House—were built before the stock market crash of 1929 brought an end to construction.

After the stock market crash, the area became the Borough of Island Beach. During World War II, the U.S. Army and Johns Hopkins University used the area for experimental work in anti-aircraft rocketry. A supersonic ramjet rocket made its first flight at Island Beach in 1945. In 1953, the State of New Jersey purchased the 2,694-acre Phipps estate and additional land for birds, fish and other wildlife. Kayak trips through the tidal marshes are conducted during the summer season.

**FEATURES AND ACTIVITIES**

- **Fishing**
  - Saltwater fishing is subject to New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife fishing regulations. Wednesday through Saturday, 5 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sunday, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. No license required. Parking fees are charged.