



2024

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Cape
Henlopen
State Park
Bike Loop**
Delaware



Cape Henlopen State Park Bike Loop

Delaware

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Cape Henlopen State Park, on Delaware's Atlantic coastline, is one of the state's must-see destinations. William Penn (founder of Pennsylvania) once owned much of the land that's now the park, but in 1682, through local resident Edmund Warner, he gave the community free rein to use it for recreation and fishing. After his death, it remained open for public use, officially becoming a state park in 1964.

A trail loop through the state park offers 3.3 miles of paved riding with views of maritime forest, sand dunes, and other picturesque natural settings. In the spring, the Cape is also a stopping point for thousands of migrating birds, and horseshoe crabs lay their eggs on the bayside beaches, providing a food source for the birds. The trail is relatively level, except for two steep sections: one on the

approach to the Fort Miles Historic Area on the southeast section of the loop, and the other just west of the campground.

Begin your Cape Henlopen State Park Bike Loop adventure at the Seaside Nature Center, where you'll find parking, restrooms, and displays on the area's fascinating wildlife. Heading east from the nature center, you'll cross a park road in 0.5 mile and see a sign for the bathhouse. Here, you'll have access to a coastal swimming beach, a food concession, and restrooms.

In another 0.5 mile, you'll enter the Fort Miles Historic Area and see the remnants of a military base hastily constructed in the early days of World War II to help protect the East Coast from the potential invasion of German forces. The grounds include an orientation building, several barracks, and a fire-control tower that would have located enemy ships and coordinated attacks against them. That history is recounted in a re-furbished gun battery that now serves as a museum.

Just west of the Fort Miles parking lot, you'll cross Dune Road and see the observation tower, where visitors can climb a spiral staircase for panoramic views of Delaware's Cape Region. Rounding out the bottom of the loop, you'll travel through a pleasantly wooded section and, in 0.6 mile, reach the historical Fire Control Tower 12. Continuing the route north, you'll largely parallel Engineer Road up to Cape Henlopen Drive, the entrance road to the park, which you can follow east back to the nature center.

If you have more time to explore the park, there are a handful of un-paved nature trails to enjoy ([Seaside Nature Trail](#), [Pinelands Nature Trail](#) and [Walking Dunes Trail](#)), along with two rail-trails: The Junction & Breakwater Trail sits on the western edge of the park, connecting the towns of Lewes and Rehoboth Beach, while the growing [Georgetown-Lewes Trail](#) begins in the park along Cape Henlopen Drive and extends nearly 9 miles southwest toward its eventual end in Georgetown.



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States: Delaware

Counties: Sussex

Length: 3.3miles

Trail end points: Cape Henlopen Dr. and Dune Rd. to Fort Miles Historic Area

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Concrete

Trail category: Greenway/Non-RT

Trail activities: Bike, Inline

Skating, Wheelchair Accessible, Walking

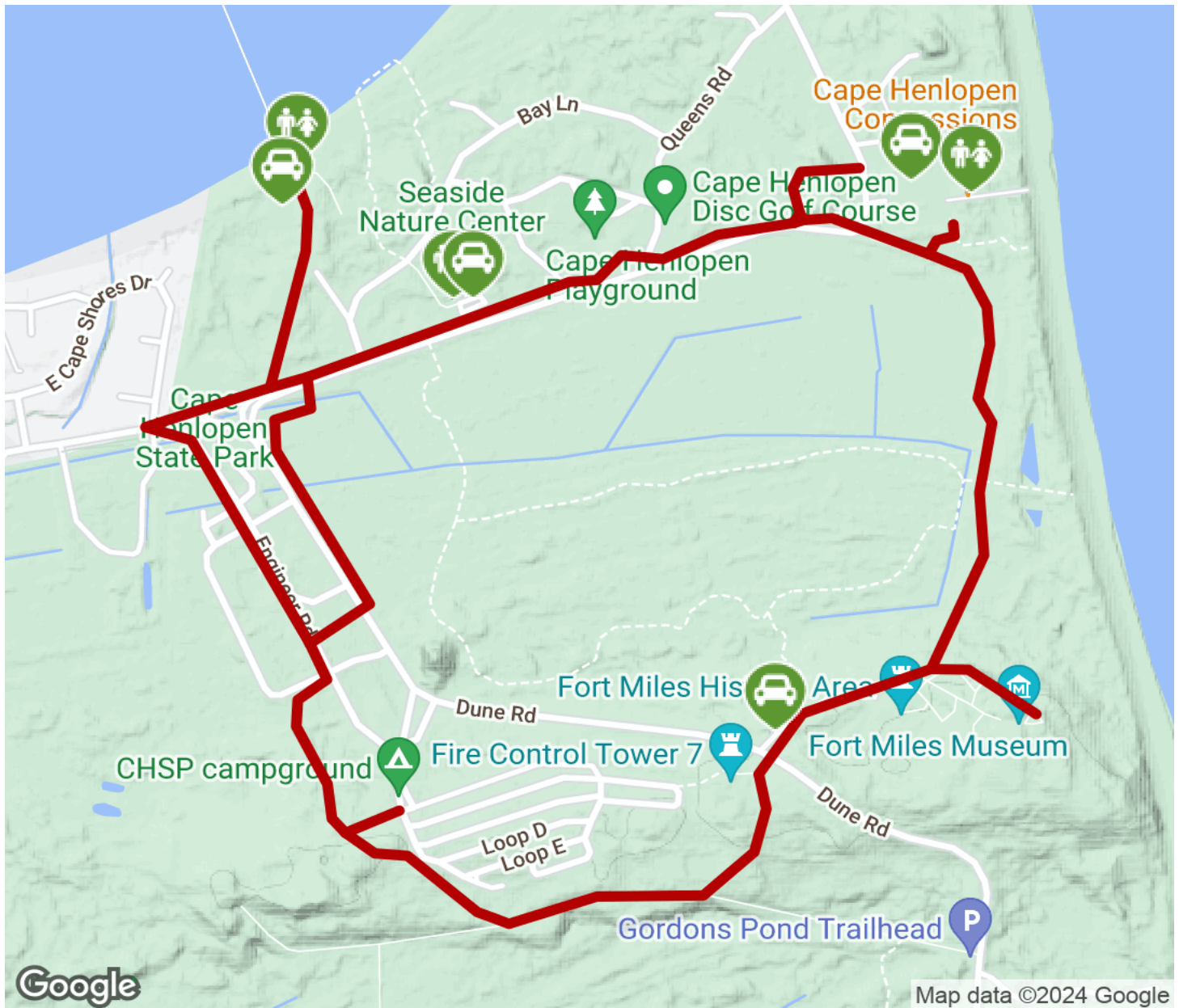
Parking & Trail Access

Parking areas are located within Cape Henlopen State Park in Lewes. To access Cape Henlopen State Park from downtown Lewes, Delaware, follow Savannah Road and signs for the Lewes Terminal that provides ferry trips to Cape May, New Jersey. Turn right on Cape Henlopen Drive and follow it to the park entrance. There is a \$10 park entry fee for automobiles (in-state drivers pay \$5). Parking is available at the McBride Bathhouse (Cape Henlopen Dr. and Post Road), Seaside Nature Center (15099 Cape Henlopen Dr.), Fort Miles Historic Area (Dune Road just south of Cape Henlopen Dr), by Campgrounds or Great Dune.



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- Trailhead
- Restroom
- Parking
- Water Fountain
- Tunnel