

Fort Wetherill State Park

East Cove Dive Guide

Jamestown, Rhode Island

Welcome to Fort Wetherill! This is an incredibly diver-friendly site (for New England standards), and we hope you find our guide helpful! This state park comprises two coves - East and West. While this is a guide for the eastern side, we do recommend diving the western side if you are short on time, as it tends to have better visibility and is more accessible. However, the eastern side has the deepest depths at Fort Wetherill and features a rock wall that is home to many species! If you do have time at the site, we definitely recommend checking out the eastern side.

ESSENTIAL INFO

Environment	Cobble shoreline, protected cove	
Entry	Walk down to the beach for shore entry. About a 30-second walk from the carpark to the beach on a rocky downhill path. Booties are highly recommended. Wearing your tank and BCD before walking down the path may be easier than carrying that equipment and setting up at the beach. Entry into the water is wading through cobble. Rocks are covered in algae which can be slippery, take caution with larger rocks.	
		
Bottom	Sandy silt	Bottom is easily stirred which will affect visibility. Good buoyancy control and frog-kicking (instead of disruptive flutter kicks) is recommended.
Max Depth	30ft	See map for detailed depth readings
Features	Wall	Dive along the rocky wall that separates the eastern and western coves of Fort Wetherill. Various marine flora and fauna can be found along the wall. Max depth: 30ft.
	Eelgrass field	Dive through eelgrass closer to shore, and with shallower depths.
	Rocky island	Beyond the wall, there is a small island where you'll see many birds such as the Double Crested Cormorant. Take note that diving that area will involve a considerable surface swim.

FACILITIES / SAFETY

Parking	Free parking, clear signage
Features	 <p>Benches on grass patches. Useful for setting up gear and putting on BCDs.</p>
Restrooms	2 porta-potties (only available between May 1st - Oct 31st)
Nearest Emergency Room / Hospital	<p>Newport Hospital 20 Powel Ave, Newport, RI 02840 (401) 846-6400</p> <p>7.5 miles from Fort Wetherill, average 18 min drive without traffic</p>
Local Regulations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leave-No-Trace state park 2. Dive Flag mandatory

WATER CONDITIONS

Visibility	2ft - 12ft	Visibility is better when the tide is going out, we recommend checking the tide before planning your dive for the best experience.										
Winds	Diving is better when wind is coming from the North. Southern winds create worse visibility and rougher conditions.											
Tides	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Winter</th> <th style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Spring</th> <th style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Summer</th> <th style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Fall</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">High Tide: 3ft Low Tide: 0.2ft</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">High Tide: 3ft Low Tide: 0.1 to 0.4 ft</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">High Tide: 4ft Low Tide: 1ft</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">High Tide: 3ft Low Tide: -0.2 to 0.2ft</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	High Tide: 3ft Low Tide: 0.2ft	High Tide: 3ft Low Tide: 0.1 to 0.4 ft	High Tide: 4ft Low Tide: 1ft	High Tide: 3ft Low Tide: -0.2 to 0.2ft			
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<i>Data from NOAA</i>												
Average Monthly Water Temperature	Jan: 42.4°F	Feb: 39.4°F	Mar: 40.1°F	Apr: 45°F	May: 53.1°F	Jun: 62.2°F						
	Jul: 70°F	Aug: 71.1°F	Sep: 67.8°F	Oct: 62.4°F	Nov: 55.2°F	Dec: 48°F						
<i>Data from seatemperature.info</i>												
Recommended Gear	Oct - Jun	Drysuit / semi-dry / 7mm wetsuit, gloves, full cut high-top booties, hood / hooded vest										
	July - Sep	5-7mm wetsuit, hood, gloves optional										

MARINE LIFE

* This is not a definitive list, just a couple of the species you may spot at this site!

Flora & Fauna	Vertebrates	Invertebrates
Eelgrass (<i>Zostera marina</i>) 	Atlantic Black Seabass (juveniles) (<i>Centropristes striata</i>)  Photo from NOAA	Common Sea Stars (<i>Asterias rubens</i>) 
Sugar Kelp (<i>Saccharina latissima</i>)  Photo from The Wildlife Trusts	Northern Puffer Fish (<i>Sphoeroides maculatus</i>)  Photo from Barnegat Bay Partnership	Northern Cerianthids (<i>Pachycerianthus borealis</i>)  Photo from Science Photo Library
Irish Moss (<i>Chondrus crispus</i>)  Photo from iNaturalist	Yellowtail Flounder (<i>Pleuronectes ferruginea</i>) 	Lined Anemones (<i>Edwardsiella lineata</i>)  (c) Herb Segars Photo from New Jersey Scuba Diving

Sea Lettuce (*Ulva lactuca*)



Photo from Algae Barn

Atlantic Stingray

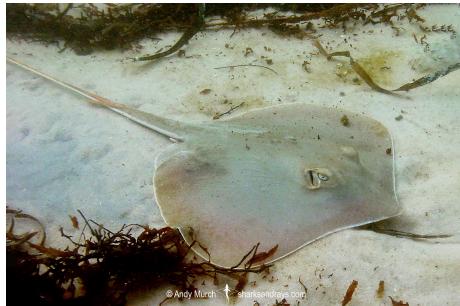


Photo from Sharks and Rays

Blue Mussels (*Mytilus edulis*)



Photo from Critter Science

Sargassum



Double Crested Cormorant
(*Phalacrocorax auritus*)



Photo from All About Birds

Common Periwinkles (*Littorina littorea*)



Photo from Guttorm Flatabø

Red Seaweed (*Sarcodiotheca gaudichaudii*)



Tropical 'orphans':
Currents from the Gulf Stream
carry juvenile tropical fish to
certain New England dive sites.
Species include - Angelfish,
Bigeyes, Cornetfish etc.

If you see an orphan, log it with
the New England Aquarium!

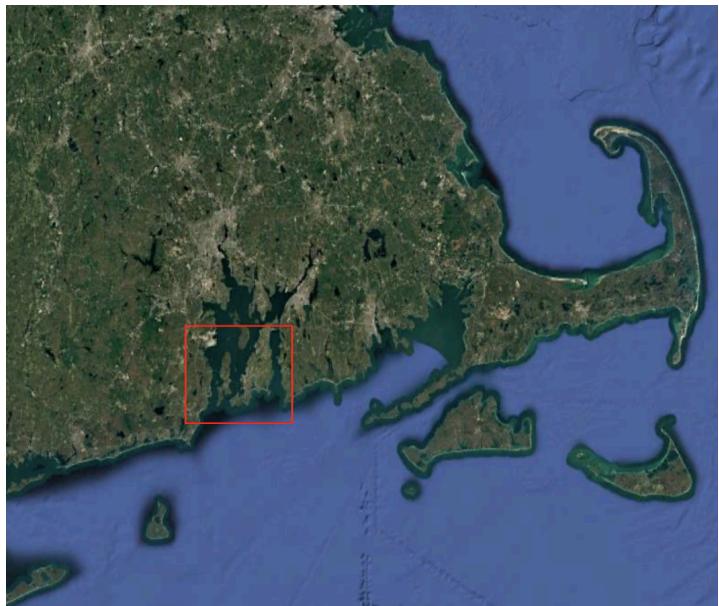


<https://www.seacoastsciencecenter.org/2021/09/29/gulf-stream-orphans/>

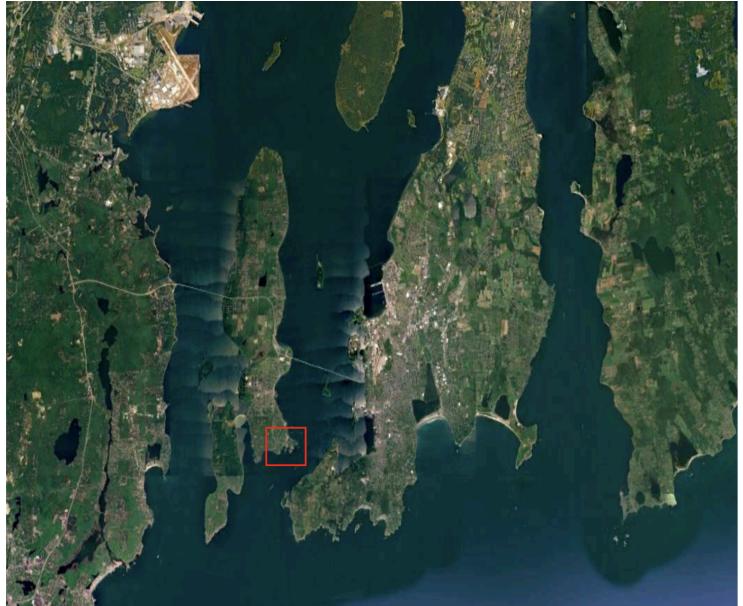
Barnacles (*Cirripedia*)



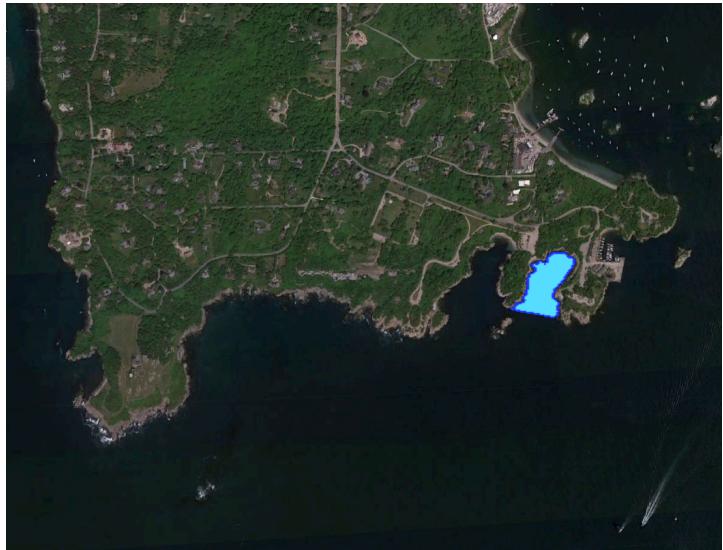
MAPS



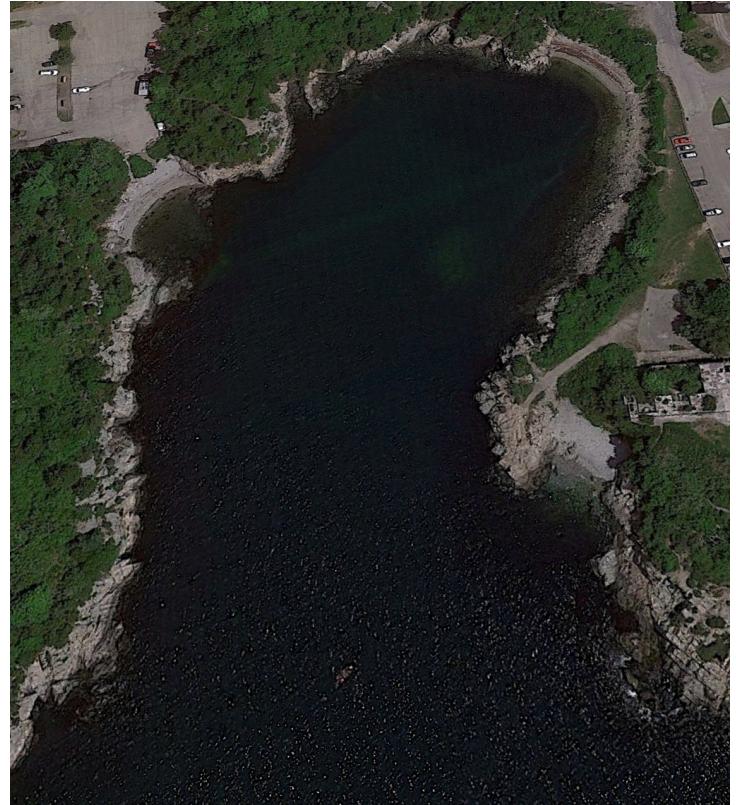
Narragansett Bay



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Eastern Cove in Fort Wetherill State Park



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