

The Junior Ranger Pledge:

As a Junior Park Ranger, I promise to help protect Dry Tortugas National Park, my community, and the Earth by being an active and responsible steward of the environment.

I will not touch coral and I will not stand on seagrass.

I will not feed wildlife, pick plants, or disturb any living thing.

I will not harm any historic structures, ruins, or places.

I will continue to explore nature safely and be a good example to others.

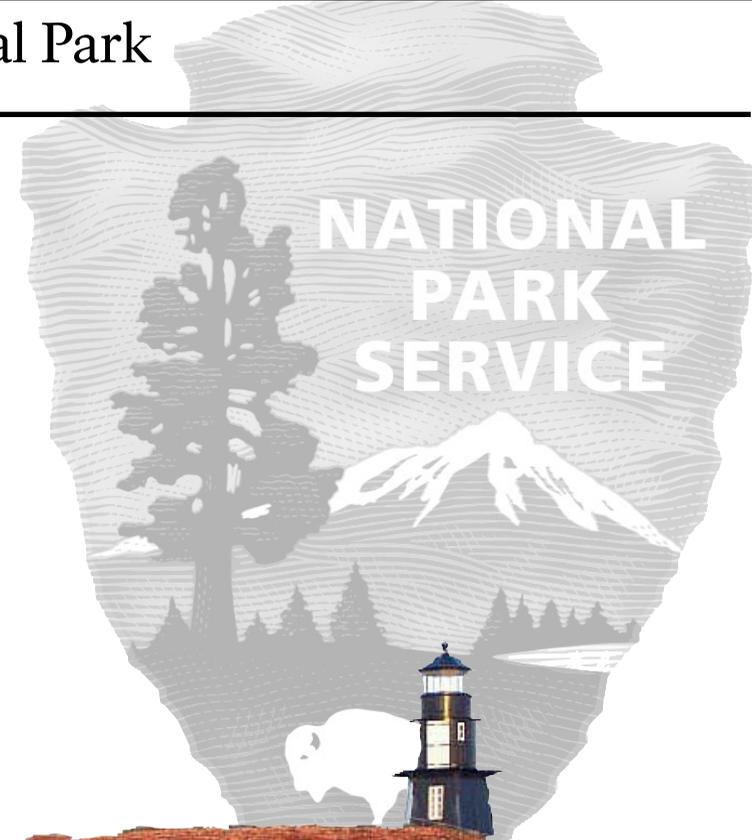
I will help to teach others about the importance of Dry Tortugas National Park.



Signature

Dry Tortugas National Park

Junior Ranger Handbook



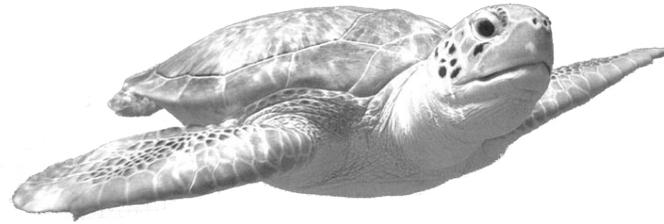
Welcome to the Park!

Have you wondered where the name "Dry Tortugas" came from? These islands were first discovered in 1513 by Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon, just 20 years after Christopher Columbus discovered the Americas. Ponce de Leon was so impressed with the abundant wildlife in the area, that he named these islands "Las Tortugas" (Spanish for "the turtles"). There were large sea turtles everywhere! Years later, "Dry" was added to the name to warn people that fresh drinking water was scarce on these islands.

A Special Place

Dry Tortugas National Park is special for many reasons. The 100-square-mile park contains:

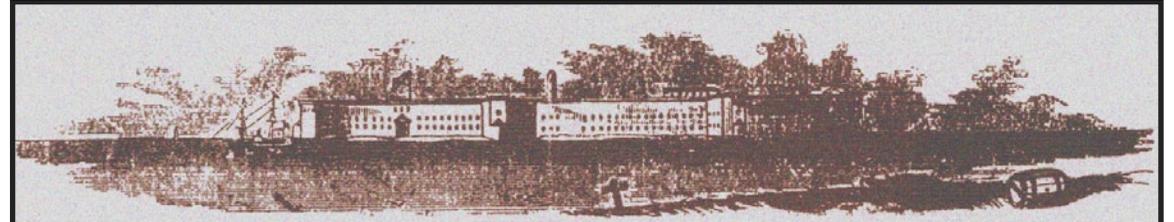
- A pristine subtropical ecosystem, including an intact coral reef community
- Fort Jefferson—one of the largest coastal forts ever built
- Important populations of fish and wildlife, including loggerhead and green sea turtles, sooty terns, frigate birds, and many others
- More than 200 historic shipwrecks
- An important resting spot for migrating birds
- Two historic lighthouses



How to Become a Junior Ranger

It's simple and fun! As you explore the park, fill out this handbook. When finished, bring it to the Bookstore.

A Letter Home



Fort Jefferson, Tortugas, Fla.,

November 1, 1864

Dear Family:

I am working in the bakery at Fort Jefferson. A prisoner recently complained that our bread is a mixture of _____, _____, _____ and _____. There are nearly 2,000 people living on this remote island. Importing enough fresh fruit and vegetables for so many people is very difficult. Many of us have painful bleeding gums caused by _____.

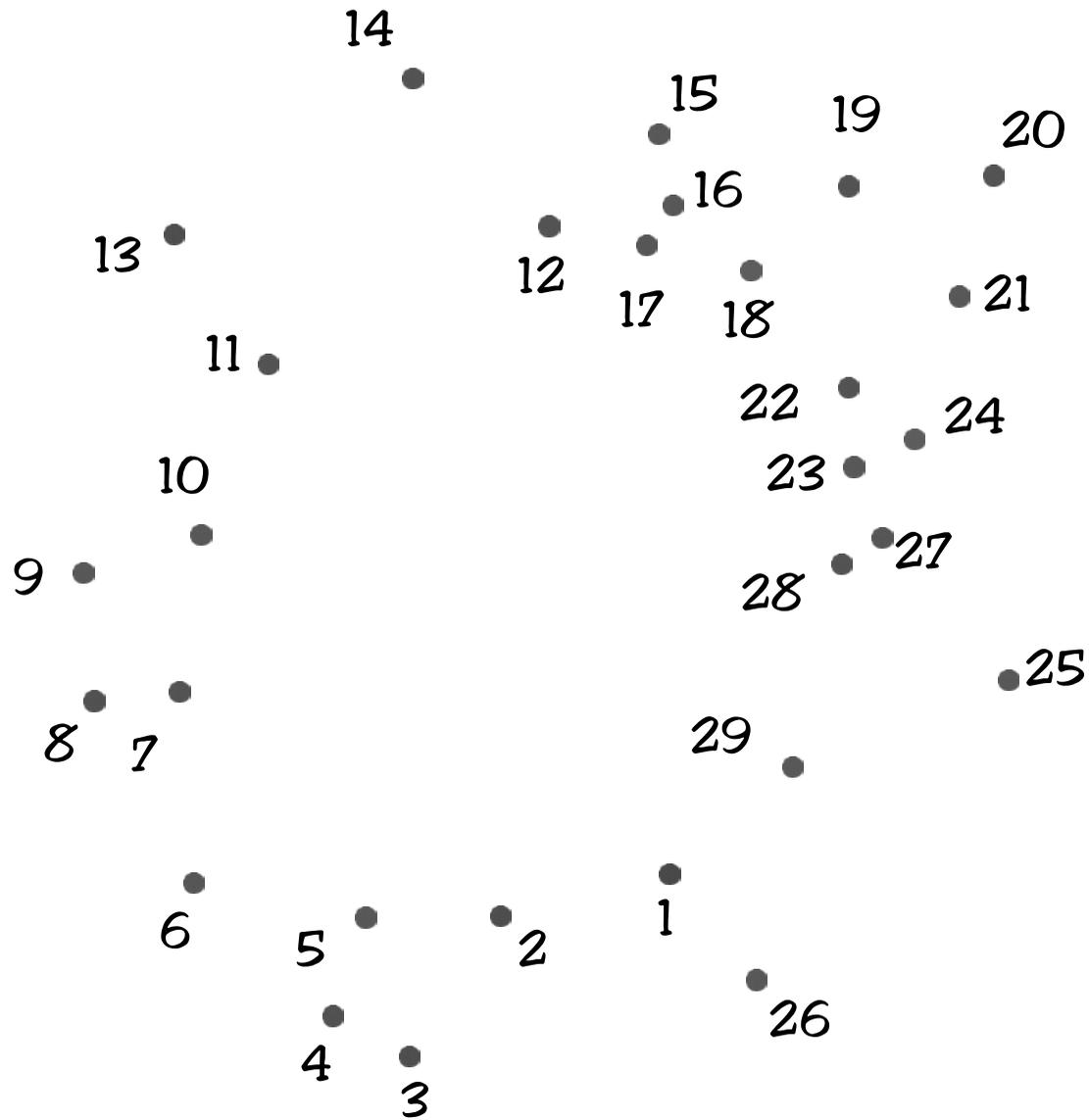
Getting enough drinking water is another serious problem. The fort has _____ cisterns that can hold _____ gallons of water. Unfortunately many of these cisterns _____ allowing sea water to _____ in. Most of our drinking water is now ruined.

The fort is surrounded by beautiful water and coral reefs. Fishing and swimming are our favorite hobbies. Coral is made of tiny living animals called polyps. We are very careful not to touch or stand on coral because it is very _____.

Signed,

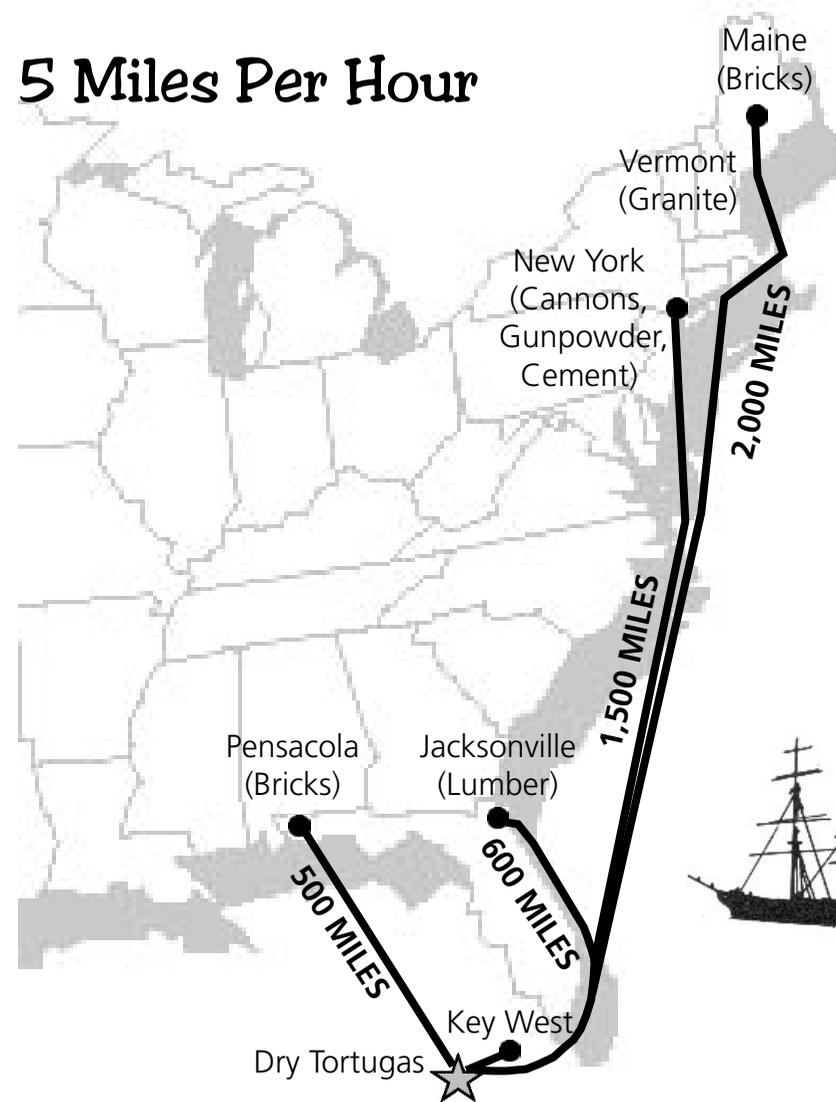
Who Am I?

Connect the dots to find out.



Hint: As an adult, I weigh 300-500 pounds

5 Miles Per Hour



In the 1860s, the average speed of a sailing ship was 5 mph. Since roads and railways were very limited, supplies had to be shipped by boat over long distances.

To build Fort Jefferson, it took about 4 days for a shipment of bricks to arrive from Pensacola!



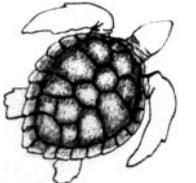
How many days did it take to ship a cannon from New York?

How many days did it take to ship bricks from Maine?

How long did it take YOU to travel here today?

Scavenger Hunt Bingo

Dry Tortugas National Park is home to many different plants, animals, and important historic things. Circle each item below that you find. Find five items in a line (up, down, across, or diagonally) to score a BINGO!

Bakery	 Coral	 Crab	Dr. Mudd's Cell	 Frigate Bird
 Conch	TREE Can you name it?	Upside-down Jellyfish	Shot Furnace	 Snapper
Seagrass	Bush Key	 Turtle	Cannon	Barracks
 Shark	Chapel	 Musket	Barracuda	 Pelican
 Gull	 Lighthouse	Sea Star	Anemone	Gunpowder Magazine

Busy Crossroads



The Dry Tortugas are located at a busy crossroads. Like an underwater highway, the Gulf Stream carries warm water, ships, and marine life by the Tortugas.

- Mark the Gulf Stream on your map by drawing a line from the Yucatan (in Mexico) to the Bahamas

Large ships pass the Tortugas everyday.

- Draw the shipping lanes from New York to the southern tip of Florida. Next, connect the southern tip of Florida with New Orleans

The Tortugas are a welcome sight for migrating birds.

- Connect North America with winter nesting areas in South America

Is YOUR home on this map?