Belleplain State Forest encompasses portions of Cape May and Cumberland Counties in the Pinelands National Reserve in southern New Jersey. This 23,000-acre forest contains the greatest variety of habitats anywhere in New Jersey, including saltwater marsh, Atlantic white cedar swamp, mixed hardwood swamp and oak-hickory forest.

**HISTORY**

Belleplain State Forest was established in 1928 for recreation, wildlife management, timber production and water conservation. In 1933, three Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps were set up in the area as a result of the Civilian Conservation Corps Reclamation Relief Act. The men of camp S-63 were housed in buildings within Belleplain State Forest. They supplied labor to the forest for over an eight-year period. During their time here they converted Meisle Cranberry Bog into Lake Nummy, a popular swimming, boating and fishing area.

The CCC also constructed the original forest headquarters (now the interpretive center), maintenance buildings, a road system, bridges and dams.

**FEATURES AND ACTIVITIES**

There are over forty miles of trails in Belleplain State Forest for hiking, biking and horseback riding. Other activities include swimming at Lake Nummy, hunting, fishing, camping and swimming. Belleplain is a well-known birding spot, especially during the spring migration.

NJ Forest Service Management - This state forest contains stands of pine, oak and Atlantic white cedar trees, reflecting differing soil conditions and intensity of wildlife than found in the Pine Barrens. Various demonstrations of reforestation and silviculture are conducted in such forest stands to improve and adapt to the forest's needs.

Swimming:

- Swimming is permitted, but lifeguards are on duty, from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day.
- The beach area in the Lake Nummy Day Use Area includes parking, changing rooms, restrooms, showers, a first-aid station, playgrounds and a concession building where food and beach supplies may be purchased. Inner tubes, rafts and other flotation devices are not permitted in the swimming area. Only U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets are allowed. Pets are prohibited on the beach. These facilities are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Boating:

- Small boats or canoes may be launched near a floating dock on Lake Nummy and from a boat launch ramp at East Creek Pond. Powered boats are limited to electric motors only. Canoes are rented at Lake Nummy during the summer months. A U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (PFD) is required for each person on board a watercraft. Boaters in vessels under 14 feet or in a canoe or kayak must wear their PFD.

Picnicking:

- Family picnic facilities are attractively placed in a shaded area near the beach. Charcoal grills, tables and restroom facilities are available. An athletic field is located nearby and is ideal for softball games, kite flying and various field sports.
- Two reservable group pavilions offer secluded settings, parking and are ADA accessible.
- Groups of 20 or more people need to reserve picnic facilities at least five days in advance. Such group use is not permitted on holidays except as authorized by the superintendent.
- For more information and to make a reservation contact the forest office.

Special Events:

- Many varied special events, such as weddings, endures, astronomy viewing, triathlons, volunteer efforts, etc., are scheduled throughout the year. Groups seeking information and permission to conduct similar gatherings must contact the Forest Superintendent for proper planning.

**BE BEAR AWARE**

Black bears are found throughout New Jersey:

- Do not approach or attract bears by making food available. Feeding bears is dangerous and illegal. Never feed from a boat! To report an aggressive bear, call 1-877-WARN-DEP (1-877-927-6337) immediately. Please report any damage or nuisance behavior to the forest office. Visit New Jersey DEP Fish and Wildlife at njfishandwildlife.com for additional information on bear safety.

- Pets must always be on a leash no longer than six feet in length and under the control of the owner at all times. Please clean up after your pets. Pets are permitted in designated pet-friendly campsites. Pets are not permitted in overnight facilities.

- Keep It Clean and Green

- Bring a bag or two and carry your trash out with you. Trash cans are not provided. Don't forget to recycle!

- **NOT PERMITTED**

- ATVs, alcoholic beverages and smoking and vaping are NOT permitted in this park.

Beach Area:

- Swimming is permitted, but lifeguards are on duty, from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day.

**STATE FOREST**

State of New Jersey
Department of Environmental Protection
State Park Service