



## *History & Nature*

Norwood pottery, the earliest known pottery in North America, helped archaeologists identify the park's oldest site, placing the earliest human activity 2,500 to 3,500 years before the Spanish arrived. These Native Americans hunted, fished, collected clams and oysters, and lived in relatively permanent settlements due to the abundant resources of the coast and forests.

In the mid-1800s and late 1900s, fishermen established seine yards at Bald Point. These usually primitive campsites included racks to hang, dry and repair nets. Evidence of the 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century turpentine industry is seen on larger pine trees cut with "cat face" scars.

The park hosts more than 360 species of plants and 230 animal species. Seasonal wildflowers, including the endangered Godfrey's Blazing Star, may be seen blooming throughout the park. Bald eagles, osprey and migrating falcons are common sights in season. Deer, bear, raccoon, opossums, bobcats, foxes, birds, reptiles and amphibians inhabit the woods, while monarch butterflies pause here on their autumn flight to Mexico.

Tidal marshes, flat terrain of needle rush and sawgrass along the northwestern part of Bald Point provide breeding grounds for horseshoe crabs. The marshes are a valuable nursery for marine life and rich feeding ground for land and sea birds. Alligators also find the marsh a rich source of food.

The park participates in national monitoring programs for shore birds and sea turtles. In 2000, Bald Point had its first organized sea turtle survey. Twenty-two sea turtle crawls were documented and marked.