

Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, North Carolina

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The Cape Hatteras Lighthouse protects one of the most hazardous sections of the Atlantic Coast, because of the convergence of several currents. Hundreds of shipwrecks in this area have given it the reputation as the “*Graveyard of the Atlantic.*”

The first lighthouse was lit in October 1803 and stood 90 feet tall. In 1853 the lighthouse tower was extended another 60 feet, making it one of the tallest on the East Coast. Due to erosion, a new lighthouse was constructed in 1868 with a “floating foundation” because of high ground water. It was activated in December 1870 and got its distinctive black and white appearance in 1873. In 1999 the lighthouse was moved 2,900 feet to its current location.

The Cape Hatteras Lighthouse has appeared on a total of five stamps, more than any other lighthouse. The picture on the stamps is based on the original location of the lighthouse.

The first stamp with this lighthouse was issued on April 5, 1972, for the National Parks Centennial and depicts the Cape Hatteras National Seashore with a 2 cents denomination (Scott #1449). This issue was the first to combine four stamps in a se-tenant block that contained one overall design (Scott #1451a).



This Cape Hatteras stamp is from the first set (out of seven) of five lighthouse stamps and was issued in 1990 (Scott #2471).



These two stamps (34 cent, Scott #3593 and 37 cents, Scott #3728) are from the Greetings from America panes of 50 stamps issued in 2002. They are identical except for the denomination. They depict the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse and the Wright Brothers flying machine, both of which are symbolic of North Carolina.



This stamp (Scott #4311) is from the fourth set (out of six) of the Flags of Our Nation series issued in 2010. It depicts the Cape Hatteras lighthouse as well as the state flag and a great blue heron.