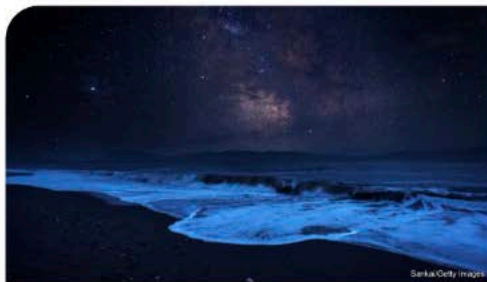


Islands

The 10 Best American Locations For Stargazing Without Equipment

Cape Lookout National Seashore



Waterfront destinations are usually busy with brightly glowing resort towns, but when you can find a destination as remote as these barrier islands in North Carolina, you might be surprised to find out just how good beaches can be for stargazing. With a Bortle Class 2 rating, it's an ideal place to see the Milky Way with the naked eye, thanks to the remote location and low-lying islands. To be recognized by [DarkSky](#), the National Seashore also went to great efforts to replace its light fixtures with approved models with timers to improve night sky quality. For events, look to the Crystal Coast Stargazers, an astronomy club that organizes the springtime [Crystal Coast Star Party](#).

Cape Lookout is about a four hour drive northeast of Wilmington, but you can also access it from the Coastal Carolina Regional Airport (EWN), which is two-and-a-half hours away, but it is only serviced by a few airlines, with most direct flights coming from Charlotte. Once you arrive, you still need to take ferries to access the islands. Beach camping is allowed on the majority of beaches in the park, and you can pitch your tent wherever you like. If you prefer a bed on the islands, the [Great Island Cabins](#) open for the season between March and November, or you can find something in the nearby town of Beaufort.