

## Dare County <sup>[1]</sup>



Average: 4.3 (47 votes)

Dare County



<sup>[2]</sup>

### DARE COUNTY GOVERNMENT:

<https://www.darenc.com/> <sup>[2]</sup>

**COUNTY SEAT:** Manteo

**FORMED:** 1870

**FORMED FROM:** Currituck, Tyrrell, Hyde

**LAND AREA:** 383.42 square miles

**2020 POPULATION ESTIMATE:** 36,915

White: 93.8%

Black/African American: 2.8%

American Indian: 0.6%

Asian: 0.9%

Pacific Islander: 0.1%

Two or more races: 1.9%

Hispanic/Latino: 7.7% (of any race)

From *State & County QuickFacts*, US Census Bureau, 2020. <sup>[3]</sup>

**CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:** 3RD

### BIOGRAPHIES FOR



<sup>[4]</sup>

[Dare County](#) <sup>[4]</sup>



<sup>[5]</sup>

### WILDLIFE PROFILES FOR

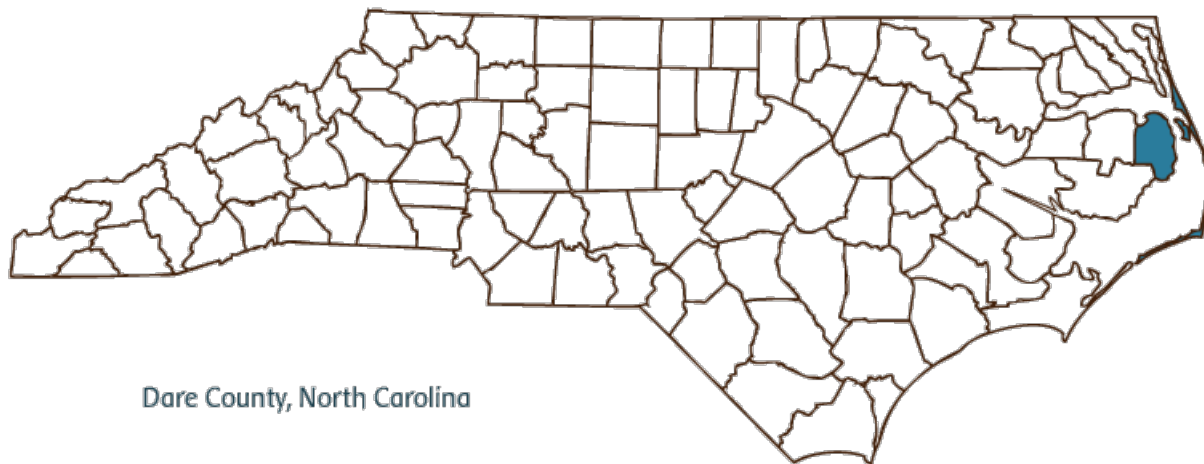
[Coastal Plain](#) <sup>[5]</sup>

### GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

**REGION:** [Coastal Plain](#) <sup>[6]</sup>

**RIVER BASIN:** [Pasquotank](#) <sup>[7]</sup>, [Map](#) <sup>[8]</sup>

**NEIGHBORING COUNTIES:** [Currituck](#) <sup>[9]</sup>, [Hyde](#) <sup>[10]</sup>, [Tyrrell](#) <sup>[11]</sup>



See also: [North Carolina Counties](#) <sup>[12]</sup> (to access links to NCpedia articles for all 100 counties); [Airplane, First Flight of](#) <sup>[13]</sup>; [Croatoan Indians](#) <sup>[14]</sup>; [Elizabeth II](#) <sup>[15]</sup>; [Fort Raleigh National Historic Site](#) <sup>[16]</sup>; [Lost Colony](#) <sup>[17]</sup>; [Roanoke Voyages](#) <sup>[18]</sup>.

by Allyson C. Criner, 2006

Dare County, located in northeastern North Carolina along the Atlantic seaboard, was formed from [Currituck](#) <sup>[9]</sup>, [Tyrrell](#) <sup>[11]</sup>, and [Hyde](#) <sup>[10]</sup> Counties in 1870. It was named in honor of [Virginia Dare](#) <sup>[20]</sup>, the first English child born in America. The county contains Roanoke Island, much of North Carolina's [Outer Banks](#) <sup>[21]</sup>, and approximately 85 miles of continuous coastline (the longest of any North Carolina county). Communities in the county include Kill Devil Hills, Kitty Hawk, Nags Head, Southern Shores, and Wanchese. The county seat, [Manteo](#) <sup>[22]</sup>, was named for a [local Indian chief](#) <sup>[23]</sup> who aided the Roanoke Island colony and was taken to England in 1584 by men in the service of [Sir Walter Raleigh](#) <sup>[24]</sup>.

Dare County was originally inhabited by Native Americans of the [Croatoan](#) <sup>[14]</sup>, or Hatteras, tribe. The first English attempts to establish a colony in the New World took place on Roanoke Island in the 1580s. The island was the site of several failed attempts by the English, the last and largest being the so-called [Lost Colony](#) <sup>[17]</sup> of 1587. English colonists eventually were able to settle the region, but the population remained small throughout the eighteenth century.

The county is the site of the first heavier-than-air flight <sup>[13]</sup>, which took place on 17 Dec. 1903. Ohio natives Orville and Wilbur Wright first flew at what is now known as Kill Devil Hills, though newspapers mistakenly reported that the flight took place at Kitty Hawk, from which Orville Wright had dispatched a telegram home. The centennial celebration in 2003 was a landmark event for Dare County and the entire state.

Nags Head gained a reputation in the nineteenth century as a resort area, and tourism has since continued to be the primary industry of the county. Oceanside towns and resort areas have attracted tourists for decades, resulting in a large seasonal population that surges from June through August. Among Dare County's natural and cultural attractions are the Cape Hatteras National Seashore, the [Wright Brothers National Memorial](#) <sup>[25]</sup>, the [Fort Raleigh National Historic Site](#) <sup>[16]</sup>, Roanoke Island Festival Park (and the reconstructed ship [Elizabeth II](#) <sup>[15]</sup>), the [Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge](#) <sup>[26]</sup>, the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, Jockey's Ridge State Park, the [North Carolina Aquarium](#) <sup>[27]</sup>, and the celebration of [Old Christmas](#) <sup>[28]</sup> in Rodanthe on 5 January. The population of Dare County in 2004 was estimated to be slightly more than 34,000.

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## Annotated history of Dare County's formation:

For an annotated history of the county's formation, with the laws affecting the county, boundary lines and changes, and other origin information, visit these references in *The Formation of the North Carolina Counties* (Corbitt, 2000), available online at North Carolina Digital Collections (note, there may be additional items of interest for the county not listed here):

County formation history: <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/the-formation-of-the-north-ca...> <sup>[29]</sup>

Index entry for the county: <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/the-formation-of-the-north-ca...> <sup>[30]</sup>

## Additional resources:

Corbitt, David Leroy. 2000. *The formation of the North Carolina counties, 1663-1943*. <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/the-formation-of-the-north-carolina-counties-1663-1943/3692099?item=4553233> <sup>[31]</sup> (accessed June 20, 2017).

Dare County Government: <https://www.darenc.com/government> <sup>[32]</sup>

Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce: <http://www.outerbankschamber.com/> <sup>[33]</sup>

DigitalNC, Dare County: <https://www.digitalnc.org/counties/dare-county/> <sup>[34]</sup>

North Carolina Digital Collections (explore by place, time period, format):<https://digital.ncdcr.gov> [35]

**Image credits:**

Rudersdorf, Amy. 2010. "NC County Maps." Government & Heritage Library, State Library of North Carolina.

**Subjects:**

Counties [36]

**From:**

Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.[37]

**Authors:**

Criner, Allyson C. [38]

**Origin - location:**

Dare County [39]

1 January 2006 | Criner, Allyson C.

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**Source URL:**<https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/dare>

**Links**

[1] <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/dare> [2] <https://www.darenc.com/> [3] <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/darecountynorthcarolina/POP010220> [4] <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/dare-county/biography> [5] <https://www.ncpedia.org/wildlife/coastal-plain> [6] <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/region/coastal-plain> [7] <https://files.nc.gov/deqee/documents/files/pasquotank.pdf> [8] <https://ncdenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/PublicInformation/index.html?appid=f82f583438e74bf29adcc76247381eee> [9] <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/currituck> [10] <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/hyde> [11] <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/tyrrell> [12] <https://www.ncpedia.org/node/156/> [13] <https://www.ncpedia.org/airplane-first-flight> [14] <https://www.ncpedia.org/croatoan-indians> [15] <https://www.ncpedia.org/elizabeth-ii> [16] <https://www.ncpedia.org/fort-raleigh-national-historic-site> [17] <https://www.ncpedia.org/lost-colony> [18] <https://www.ncpedia.org/roanoke-voyages> [19] <https://ncpedia.org/cape-hatteras-national-seashore> [20] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/dare-virginia> [21] <https://www.ncpedia.org/outer-banks> [22] <https://www.manteonc.gov/> [23] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/manteo> [24] <https://www.ncpedia.org/raleigh-sir-walter> [25] <https://www.ncpedia.org/wright-brothers-national-memorial> [26] <http://www.fws.gov/alligatorriver/> [27] <https://www.ncaquariums.com/roanoke-island> [28] <https://www.ncpedia.org/old-christmas> [29] <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/the-formation-of-the-north-carolina-counties-1663-1943/3692099?item=4553349> [30] <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/the-formation-of-the-north-carolina-counties-1663-1943/3692099?item=4553586> [31] <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/the-formation-of-the-north-carolina-counties-1663-1943/3692099?item=4553233> [32] <https://www.darenc.com/government> [33] <http://www.outerbankschamber.com/> [34] <https://www.digitalnc.org/counties/dare-county/> [35] <https://digital.ncdcr.gov> [36] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/counties> [37] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/encyclopedia-> [38] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/authors/criner-allyson-c> [39] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/coastal-25>