

Welcome to



# Fort Abercrombie

State Historical Park

## For More Information

Kodiak District Office

1400 Abercrombie Drive

Kodiak, AK 99615

(907)486-6339

[www.alaskastateparks.org](http://www.alaskastateparks.org)

[dnr.pkskodiak@alaska.gov](mailto:dnr.pkskodiak@alaska.gov)

 "Alaska State Parks" on Facebook

## Early History

The Kodiak Archipelago has been home to the Alutiiq people for at least 7,500 years. Archaeologists break the prehistory of the Kodiak region into three traditions, each representing a distinct way of life. The Ocean Bay Tradition (7500 to 4000 BP) is characterized by a mobile hunting and gathering lifestyle. The people of the Kachemak Tradition (4000 to 1000 BP) led a settled village life with an increased emphasis on fishing. Finally, the Koniag Tradition (1000 BP to AD 1784) ranked societies with hereditary chiefs who maintained power through trade, warfare, and ceremony. Adjacent to the park, at the Monashka Bay site, a prehistoric settlement revealed artifacts from both the Kachemak and Koniag Traditions.

In 1784, Russian traders established their first permanent settlement in America at Three Saints Bay, only 100 miles southeast of the park. By 1852, the park area was identified on Russian charts as Mys Melnichnoy, or Mill Cape. After the 1867 transfer of Alaska from Russia to the United States, Miller Point continued as a placename for the area, an apparent translation from the Russian name.

Background photo: Rough waters off Miller Point  
Photo courtesy of Steve Neel



View from Miller Point  
Photo courtesy of Steve Neel

A Division of the  
Department of Natural Resources



Alaska State Parks



8-inch gun barrel at Miller Point  
Photo courtesy of Wanda Scholze



Varileaf cinquefoil (*Potentilla diversifolia*)  
Photo courtesy of Lily Lewis

## World War II

Alaska's strategic location called for the buildup of coastal defenses at the onset of World War II. In 1941, President Franklin Roosevelt signed an executive order establishing a military reservation in the vicinity of Miller Point. The observation post was manned by Battery A of the 250<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery Regiment, and equipped with a pair of eight-inch Mark VI battleship guns to defend Kodiak's naval installation. Piedmont Point housed an additional observation post, and a SCR-296 radar tower—a closely guarded secret at the time. The post was named Fort Abercrombie after Lt. Col. William R. Abercrombie, and eventually housed 150-200 men in 25 Quonset huts and tents.

Despite Japanese attacks in Dutch Harbor and occupation of Attu and Kiska islands, Fort Abercrombie never saw enemy fire and was abandoned after the end of the war. A park was established here in 1969 in recognition of its historical resources, and since then, Fort Abercrombie has become an irreplaceable asset to Kodiak and one of our finest state parks.



Distant Electrical Control shelter  
Photo courtesy of Steve Neel

## Welcome

Of all the places in Alaska, few have the wealth of wildlife, scenery and history that Fort Abercrombie State Historical Park (SHP) offers. The ruins of a World War II coastal defense installation coupled with steep, surf-pounded cliffs, deep spruce forests, and wildflower-laden meadows offer you a unique opportunity to learn about the events of World War II while enjoying the natural beauty of Kodiak Island.

Background photo: Light, mist and trees at Fort Abercrombie  
Photo courtesy of Steve Neel

## Plant Life

The northern temperate rainforest of Fort Abercrombie is dominated by Sitka spruce and a shade-tolerant understory. Shaded and lushly green, the forest is an ideal environment for the growth of many species of mosses that adorn the tree trunks and lichens that hang from branches. Along the coastal wildflower meadows, chocolate lily, wild geranium, shooting stars, rose-purple orchid, Nootka rose, and wild iris are just a sample of the unforgettable array of color, patterns, and textures that make up "the Emerald Isle."



Chocolate lily (*Fritillaria camschatcensis*)  
Photo courtesy of Kerry Howard

# Stationed Wildlife

Fort Abercrombie offers a multitude of wildlife viewing opportunities. Resident park mammals include the indigenous brown bat, short-tailed weasel, land otter, and tundra vole, as well as introduced species such as Sitka black-tailed deer, beaver, and muskrat. The famous Kodiak brown bear is occasionally seen, but the park is carefully managed to minimize bear and human conflicts. You can help by being mindful of your garbage and food at all times.

There is exceptional whale watching from Miller Point, including humpback, fin, gray, and orca whales. Other aquatic mammals, such as harbor seals, sea lions, and sea otter are also frequently seen along the coastline. Birdwatchers should also take note: over 95 bird species inhabit the park and its shores throughout the year.



A curious fox scans the landscape  
Photo courtesy of Phil Pringle



A park naturalist teaches about wildlife in the intertidal zone.  
Photo courtesy of Jack Ransom



Shooting star (*Dodecatheon frigidum*)  
Photo courtesy of Lisa Hupp

- Legend**
- Restroom
  - Parking
  - Camping
  - Walk-In Camping
  - Ranger Station
  - Information
  - Multi-Use Trail
  - Interpretive Trail
  - Picnic Site
  - Picnic Shelter
  - Scenic View
  - Beach Access
  - Trail
  - Roads
  - Park Boundary
  - Historic Structure or Foundation
  - Cliffs



## 1 Ranger Station

Fort Abercrombie SHP is home to the Kodiak State Parks Headquarters and Ranger Station, which hosts a variety of activities from tidepooling to wildflower photo scavenger hunts throughout the year. Check [www.alaskastateparks.org](http://www.alaskastateparks.org) for more information about activities at Fort Abercrombie.

## 2 Fishing

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game stocks Lake Gertrude (Abercrombie Lake) annually with rainbow trout fingerlings that can grow to 4-6 inches in a year. When local fishery enhancement projects reach a surplus, coho salmon fry may be added to the lake's stock as well, making it a haven for anglers. Check the latest fishing regulations at [www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov)

## 3 Kodiak Military History Museum

From 1941 to 1945, 150-200 soldiers manned the radar, searchlights, communications, and artillery at Fort Abercrombie to defend the northern approaches to Kodiak's harbors from Japanese attack. Artifacts from this era can be seen throughout the park, including a pair of 8-inch guns and the former Emplacement Magazine, which is now home to the Kodiak Military History Museum. The museum is open anytime for WWII Veterans or groups by appointment. Check [www.kodiak.org](http://www.kodiak.org) for the latest museum hours or call (907)486-7015 to make an appointment.

## 4 Camping

Attention campers! Fort Abercrombie has options for troops arriving by personal vehicle or marching in by foot. Five campsites are outfitted for drive-in camping in the southwest corner of the park. Another four walk-in sites are stationed near Miller Point, offering a definite strategic advantage. So take your pick, soldier. At ease!

## 5 Group Site

The group recreation area is equipped with a large fire pit, barbecue grills, and a pavilion that can be reserved for events. Horseshoe stakes, a volleyball court, and an open field offer a great way to get over your post-picnic lethargy. Contact Kodiak State Parks Headquarters for reservations.