

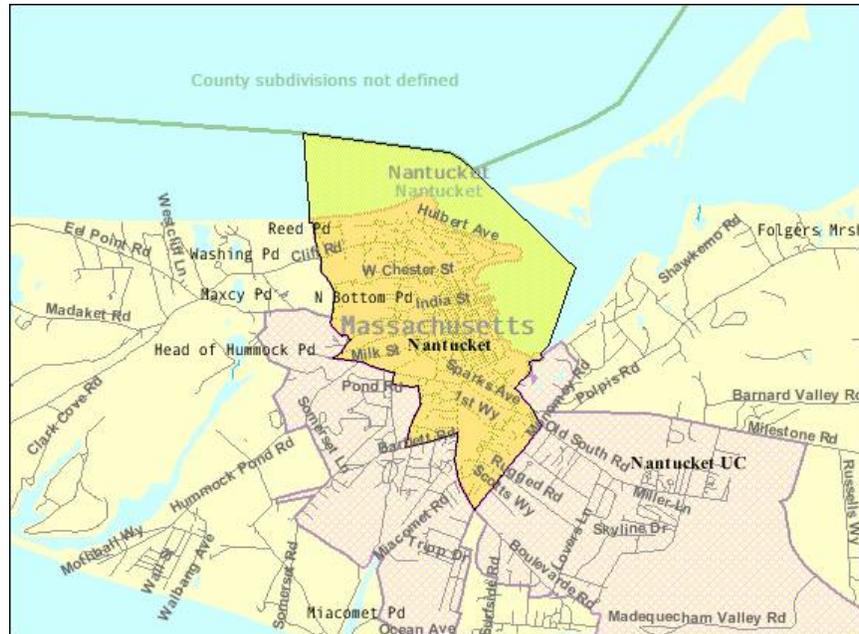
NANTUCKET, MA¹

Community Profile²

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Regional orientation

Nantucket (41.28° N, 70.01° W) is situated about 26 miles out to sea south of Cape Cod with the Atlantic Ocean and Nantucket Sound defining its borders. The island is located in Nantucket County in the state of Massachusetts. Nantucket is about 50-square miles large and the town has the same name (State of Massachusetts 2007; USGS 2008).



Map 1. Location of Nantucket CDP, MA (US Census Bureau 2000)

Historical/Background

The name 'Nantucket' derives from the Indian term variously translated as "narrow river" or "far away land" (Town of Nantucket 2007). The town was incorporated in 1671 and for more than 150 years it was at the center of the world's whaling industry. To honor the island's unique history, the U.S. Department of the Interior designated the town a National Historic Landmark in 1966. The first sperm whale was captured in 1712 and the profitable industry marked an economic boom for the island. The Nantucket South Shoal lightship was built in 1853, saving many boats from ruin on the island's sand bars and shoals. While at sea, during the idle times of spotting and catching whales, seamen spent their hours practicing nautical crafts such as scrimshaw and basketweaving. By the Civil War, the whaling industry was in decline as whales

¹ These community profiles have been created to serve as port descriptions in Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) for fisheries management actions. They also provide baseline information from which to begin research for Social Impact Assessments (SIAs). Further, they provide information relevant to general community impacts for National Standard 8 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) and information on minorities and low income populations for Executive Order (E.O.) 12898 on Environmental Justice.

² For purposes of citation please use the following template: "Community Profile of *Town, ST*. Prepared under the auspices of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Fisheries Science Center. For further information contact Lisa.L.Colburn@noaa.gov."

were over hunted and petroleum and other fuels replaced whale oil. But Nantucket slowly became a tourist and second home destination, with visitors attracted to the historic buildings and pre-Civil War homes. The cobblestones that pave many streets in Nantucket’s core district were originally used as ballast on the empty returning ships that delivered whale oil to England and the Pacific. The pineapple, a symbol of welcome and hospitality, also dates back to whaling days when sea captains brought this tropical fruit home to Nantucket and displayed it to announce that they had returned and guests were welcome (Capecod.com nd).

Demographics³

According to Census 2000 data, Nantucket had a total population of 3,830, up 24.8% from the reported population of 3,069 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990). Of this 2000 total, 50.3% were males and 49.7 % were females. The median age was 37.5 years and 83.4% of the population was 21 years or older while 15.9% was 62 or older.

The largest age category in Nantucket (Figure 1) was 30-39 years, with more males than females represented. Age categories on either side of this bracket (20-29 and 40-49) were also high compared to all the other age brackets. For all ages up to 60 years old, there were more males than females. This may indicate males working in labor-intensive trades, possibly fishing, construction, or landscaping. There was a large increase in the population from the 10-19 age bracket to the 20-29 age bracket, a possible indicator of people moving to the island to work.

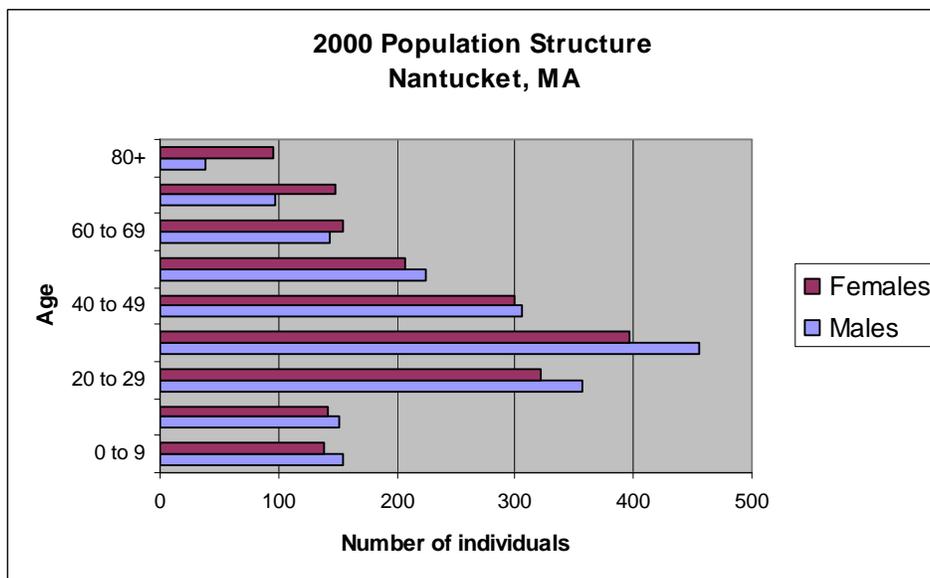


Figure 1. Nantucket’s population structure by sex in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

The majority of the population was white (84.8%), with 12.6% of residents black or African American, 0.9% Asian, 0.03% Native American, and none Pacific Islander or Hawaiian (see Figure 2). Only 1.7% of the population identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino (see Figure 3). Residents linked their backgrounds to a number of different ancestries including: English (19.7%), Irish (17.7%), Italian (7.0%), French (except Basque) (7.0%), and German (6.8%). With regard to region of birth, 47.2% were born in Massachusetts, 39.9% were born in a

³ While mid-term estimates are available for some larger communities, data from the 2000 Census are the only data universally available for the communities being profiled in the Northeast. Thus for cross-comparability we have used 2000 data even though these data may have changed significantly since 2000 for at least some communities.

different state and 8.3% were born outside of the U.S. (including 5.6% who were not United States citizens).

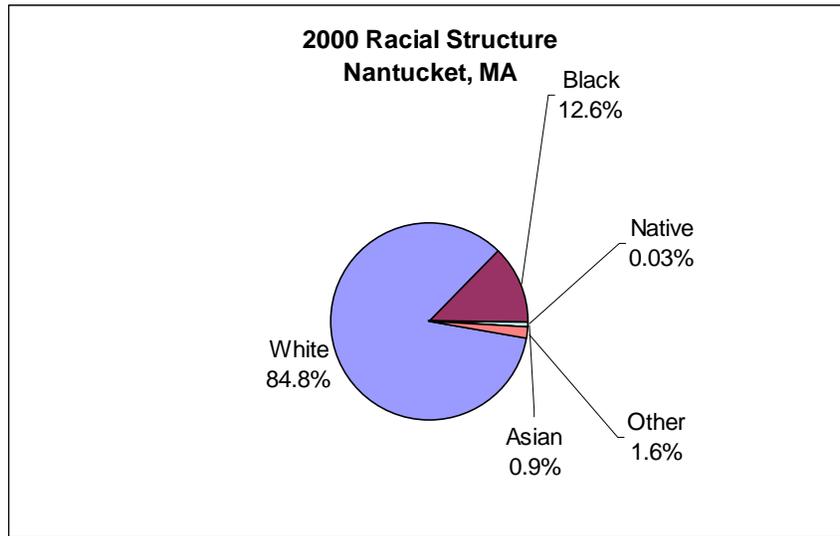


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

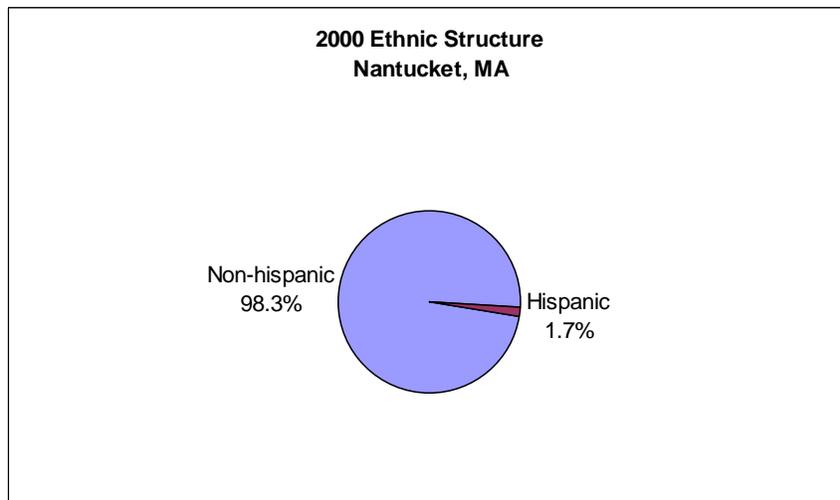


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 85.8% of the population 5 years old and higher, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 14.2% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, and including 4.8% of the population who spoke English less than 'very well' according to the 2000 Census.

Of the population 25 years and over, 86.9% were high school graduates or higher and 36.1% had a bachelor's degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, 2.5% did not reach ninth grade, 10.6% attended some high school but did not graduate, 29.7% completed high school, 14.9% had some college with no degree, 6.2% received an associate's degree, 25.0% earned their bachelor's degree, and 11.1% received either a graduate or professional degree.

Although religion percentages are not available through the U.S. Census, according to the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) in 2000, the religion with the highest number of

congregations and adherents in Nantucket County was the Catholic Church with 1 congregation and 2,000 adherents. Other prominent congregations in the county were: Episcopal Church (1 with 669 adherents), the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches (1 with 384 adherents) and the Jewish Estimate (1 with 250 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was down 18.0% from 1990 (ARDA 2000).

Issues/Processes

The island has become an exclusive summer destination, and the major industries are tourism and the construction of multi-million dollar summer homes. As that part of the economy grows, the high cost of living has driven many islanders to the mainland (Inquirer and Mirror nd). Nantucket's summer population swells to over 50,000 people⁴, placing pressure on the island's natural resources and infrastructure. The Nantucket Regional Transportation Plan is looking to develop safe, efficient transportation alternatives and strategies that will preserve the character of the island while protecting its resources (Town of Nantucket 2007a).

Over the last several years, a private company, [Cape Wind](#), has been working towards installing wind turbines on Horseshoe Shoal in Nantucket Sound as an alternative energy source for the region. Although the company states the proposed project could provide three quarters of the Cape and Islands energy needs, the project has been met with both fierce opposition and ardent support throughout the region. Among the opposition are numerous recreational and commercial fishing organizations in the region. Some promoters including [Greenpeace](#), say the turbines will help protect the environment, reduce dependency on foreign oil, and even be an aid to navigation. Opponents say the farms will hurt property values, may disrupt wildlife, impact fishermen, and create its own environmental issues.

Cultural attributes

Nantucket has a lively, seasonal arts scene. The spring Daffodil Festival is in April and the local Sandcastle and Sculpture Day is usually held in August. The local Arts Festival is in September and the Cranberry Festival is held during the cranberry season in October (Nantucket Chamber of Commerce 2007).

[The Nantucket Film Festival](#) is an annual event dating back to 1996. The event is several days long and features a variety of films including independent, studio-produced, foreign, documentary and short films in every genre. Nantucket also has an extensive bike path system, making biking a popular tourist activity and seasonal mode of transportation on the island. [The Nantucket Historical Association](#) operates the Nantucket Whaling Museum, which is dedicated to the island's rich whaling history. The museum contains artifacts related to the island's history and prehistory, a scrimshaw collection, and exhibits on whaling traditions.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Current Economy

The Nantucket economy is based upon tourism and second-home development (State of Massachusetts 2007). Nantucket has a much larger employment base during the peak summer tourism season than during the winter months, according to a 2000 report by the Nantucket Planning and Economic Development Commission. Most of the seasonal fluctuation in employment comes from retail trade and service industries. Some downward trends were noted

⁴ Profile review comment, Jonathan Betts, Nantucket Beach Foundation, c/o Venture Partners, Ltd., 1224 Mill St., East Berlin, CT 06023, August 28, 2007

in employment, which may reflect a growing difficulty among employers in finding and housing seasonal workers during the summer months (Town of Nantucket 2007b).

According to the U.S. Census 2000⁵, 71.9% (2,359 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age and over were in the labor force (see Figure 4), of which 4.6% were unemployed, 1.3% were in the Armed Forces, and 65.9% were employed.

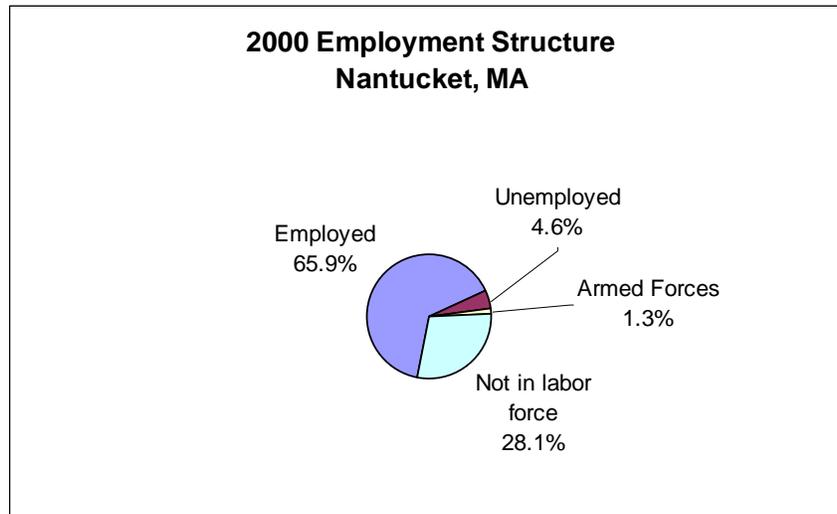


Figure 4. Employment Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 35 positions or 1.6% of all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 450 positions or 20.8% of jobs. Construction (19.2%), educational, health and social services (16.0%), arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (14.1%), and retail trade (11.9%) were the primary industries.

Median household income in Nantucket was \$52,893 (up 35.5% from \$39,031 in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and per capita income was \$29,497. For full-time year round workers, males made approximately 28.2% more per year than females.

The average family in Nantucket consisted of 2.78 persons. With respect to poverty, 1.9% of families (up from 1.9% in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and 9.1% of individuals earned below the U.S. Census poverty threshold. This threshold is \$8,794 for individuals and ranges from \$11,239-35,060 for families, depending on number of persons (2-9) (US Census Bureau 2000b). In 2000, 22.5% of all families (of any size) earned less than \$35,000 per year.

In 2000, Nantucket had a total of 3,650 housing units of which 41.8% were occupied and 79.7% were detached one unit homes. Almost 50% (43.1%) of these homes were built before 1940. Mobile homes, boats, RVs and vans accounted for 0.3% of the total housing units; 14.3% of detached units had between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was \$555,700. Of vacant housing units, 54.2% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of occupied units 43.3% were renter occupied.

⁵ Again, Census data from 2000 are used because they are universally available and offer cross-comparability among communities. Some statistics, particularly median home price, are likely to have changed significantly since 2000.

Government

The town of Nantucket has an Open Town Meeting form of government with a Board of Selectmen and Town Manager (State of Massachusetts 2007). The Board of Selectmen consists of five elected persons and meets every Wednesday. Elections are held every April, followed by the Annual Town Meeting (Town of Nantucket 2007).

Fishery Involvement in Government

Nantucket has a Shellfish Warden and Harbormaster.

Institutional

Fishing associations

There appears to be a [Nantucket Fishermen's Partnership](#), noted for its [opposition to the Nantucket Sound offshore wind project](#). No detailed information was available through secondary sources for this organization.

The Massachusetts Fisherman's Partnership focuses on issues for fishermen in different ports in Massachusetts. The Partnership responded to the need of health care for fishermen and their families by developing the Fishing Partnership Health Insurance Plan with federal and state aid. This plan has been in place since 1997 and reduces the amount of money that fishermen's families have to pay to be covered by health insurance (Hall-Arber et al. 2001).

Fishing assistance centers

Information on fishing assistance centers in Nantucket is unavailable through secondary data collection.

Other fishing related organizations

Nantucket's environment is cared for in part by the efforts of several environmental and planning organizations, including the Nantucket Planning and Economic Development Commission, [Nantucket Conservation Foundation](#) and the [Nantucket Land Council](#). In addition, the [Nantucket Land Bank](#) was founded in 1984 as the nation's first local land trust. [The Nantucket Beach Foundation, Inc.](#) is a local non-profit organization that works to protect, environmentally restore, and preserve public access to these predominantly privately owned beaches as a permanent legacy for future generations.

Physical

Being an island dependent largely on tourism, Nantucket has excellent ferry and air service from the mainland, departing daily from Falmouth and Hyannis, MA. A network of state, county and local roads connect the various towns on the island, although no fixed bus service is available. However, the Nantucket Regional Transit Authority operates a shuttle around the island and there are year-round taxis in operation. There are no rail services on the island. Nantucket is located about 60 miles from Plymouth, MA and about 100 miles from Boston, MA (MapQuest nd).

Many visitors reach the island by plane. [The Nantucket Memorial Airport](#), a Primary Commercial Service (PR) facility is located 3 miles from town, and is the second busiest passenger airport in Massachusetts. Flights can be scheduled from the nearby airports in Boston, Martha's Vineyard, and Hyannis, as well as New Bedford, Providence, and the New York City region airports. The nearest city is Dennis Port, MA on Cape Cod (27 miles), with New York about 265 miles away. Nantucket has a public hospital, with the next largest hospital located 29 miles away in Hyannis, MA (MapQuest nd).

The Nantucket Boat Basin is a large, 240-slip, full-service marina a couple blocks from downtown. The Boat Basin offers a fuel dock, accommodations, and services. Besides the Town Pier, there are several other docking areas including Straight Wharf, Old South Wharf, and Swain's Wharf as the major service areas. From these locations, sport charter trips, sailing excursions, lessons, and races depart (Nantucket Chamber of Commerce 2007). There are several fishing equipment stores on the island, providing mainly supplied for sport fishing enthusiasts.

INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES⁶

Commercial

Nantucket fishermen participate in the seasonal spring squid fishery, which takes place primarily on Horseshoe Shoals, although the landings value for squid is low according to Table 1. This area is the proposed site of the Cape Wind turbines, and the project is opposed by some local groups including the Nantucket Fishermen's Partnership (McCallion 2006).

The most significant landings by value in Nantucket is the "other" species grouping (see Table 1), followed by lobster. "Other" landings in 2006 were much higher than the average landings values for 1997-2006. The number of home ported vessels in Nantucket was variable, from a low of 12 in 1999 to 18 in 2005 (see Table 2). The number of vessels with owners living in Nantucket was identical to the number of home ported vessels in all years except for two, meaning for the most part the vessels home ported on Nantucket are owned by Nantucket residents.

⁶ In reviewing the commercial landings data several factors need to be kept in mind. 1) While both federal and state landings are included, some states provide more detailed data to NMFS than others. For example, shellfish may not be included or data may be reported only by county and not by port. 2) Some communities did not have individual port codes until more recently. Before individual port codes were assigned, landings from those ports were coded at the county level or as an aggregate of two geographically close small ports. Where landings were coded at the county level they cannot be sorted to individual ports for those earlier years, e.g., prior to 2000. 3) Where aggregated codes were used, those aggregate codes may still exist and be in use alongside the new individual codes. Here the landings which are still assigned to the aggregate port code cannot be sorted into the individual ports, so port level data are only those which used the individual port code. 4) Even when individual port codes exist, especially for small ports, landings may be coded at the county level. Here again it is impossible to disaggregate these to a port level, making the port level landings incomplete. 5) In all these cases, the per port data in this profile may under report the total level of landings to the port, though all landings are accounted for in the overall NMFS database.

Landings by Species

Table 1. Rank Value of Landings for Federally Managed Groups

Species	Rank Value of Average Landings from 1997-2006
Other ⁷	1
Lobster	2
Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass	3
Scallop	4
Largemouth Groundfish ⁸	5
Red Crab	6
Monkfish	7
Bluefish	8
Surf Clams, Ocean Quahog	9
Dogfish	10
Skate	11
Squid, Mackerel, Butterfish	12

(Note: Only rank value is provided because value information is confidential in ports with fewer than three vessels or fewer than three dealers, or where one dealer predominates in a particular species and would therefore be identifiable.)

Vessels by Year⁹

Table 2. Federal Vessel Permits Between 1997-2006

Year	# Vessels (home ported)	# Vessels (owner's city)
1997	17	17
1998	13	13
1999	12	12
2000	13	13
2001	15	15
2002	17	17
2003	15	15
2004	16	16
2005	18	17
2006	16	15

(Note: # Vessels home ported = No. of permitted vessels with location as homeport, # Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence¹⁰)

⁷ "Other" species includes any species not accounted for in a federally managed group

⁸ Largemouth groundfish: cod, winter flounder, yellowtail flounder, American plaice, sand-dab flounder, haddock, white hake, redfish, and pollock

⁹ Numbers of vessels by owner's city and homeport are as reported by the permit holder on permit application forms. These may not correspond to the port where a vessel lands or even spends the majority of its time when docked.

¹⁰ The Owner-City from the permit files is technically the address at which the owner receives mail concerning their permitted vessels, which could reflect the actual location of residence, the mailing address as distinct from residence, owner business location, or the address at which a subsidiary receives mail about the permits.

Recreational

In late spring and early fall, anglers catch bluefish and striped bass from the shore or charter boats. In the summer, the best fishing is offshore, and numerous charter boats are available for hire (The Inquirer and Mirror staff). There are over a dozen major fishing charter operations taking passengers out in the summer months.

Subsistence

Information on subsistence activity in Nantucket is either unavailable through secondary data collection or the practice does not exist.

FUTURE

The town of Nantucket and other local groups are concerned that the growing housing prices will drive people off the island, making it affordable only to the wealthy. The fishing industry may be negatively affected and also move off the island. In addition, the high cost of housing and the relatively low wages earned by teachers, fire fighters, police, and other public servants combine to make it difficult for the schools and community to hire and retain staff, which could have effects on families living on the island (Watson).

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