Jakes Branch County Park
Jakes Branch County Park is a place where education and recreation combine to provide visitors with a unique experience. Our facility offers opportunities for both active and passive recreation.

Active Recreation
- Soccer Fields
- Baseball & Softball Fields
- Tennis Courts
- Basketball Courts
- Multi-Use Field
- Tot Lot (2-5 yrs)
- Playground (5-12 yrs)
- Open Play Field
- Pickle Ball
- Play Trail

Passive Recreation
- Hiking/Walking Trails
- Picnic Area with charcoal grills and tables
- Nature Center with five-story Observation Deck

Jakes Branch Nature Center
The nature center provides natural education through:
- exhibits about the history, wildlife, and ecology of the Pinelands...
- live reptiles and amphibians...
- programs, activities and presentations for all ages.

History
The first known people to inhabit this area were the Leni Lenape Indians. Artifacts from a large Lenape village were found along the Toms River just north of the park. In 1761 a colonial settler named Jacob Jacobs built his saw mill on a tributary of the Toms River. Originally called Jacob’s Branch, the tributary’s name was shortened over time to Jakes Branch. Today, the park’s namesake stream flows along the northern property boundary.

In 1914, the New York Tribune ran a headline in their newspaper announcing: “Subscribe to the New York Tribune and secure a lot at Beautiful Beachwood.” Most of the park’s property is unsold land from this promotion. It was given to Beachwood Borough in 1917 by the head of the Tribune’s promotions department, Mr. Bertram C. Mayo. In the early 1950’s, the Garden State Parkway was constructed, separating this area from the rest of Beachwood.

Ocean County purchased the property from Beachwood in 2000. Originally planned as Ocean County’s third public golf course, environmental restrictions shaped Jakes Branch County Park into the facility you see today. In order to protect the sensitive ecology of the park, only 40 of the 400 acres were developed. The result is Ocean County’s first park to offer both active and passive recreation at a single location.

Group Programs
We provide environmental programs to Ocean County groups including schools, scouts, clubs, churches, and civic organizations free of charge. Outreach programs are available for groups who may not have transportation to our facility. All groups planning to visit our park must make arrangements in advance. Please contact the nature center to receive a copy of our Group Education Brochure or schedule a program.