



Field Guides Tour Report

SPRING IN CAPE MAY 2015

May 17, 2015 to May 23, 2015

Megan Crewe & Tom Johnson

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).



We had excellent luck this week with migrant warblers. On our first morning at Higbee Beach, we were amazed by this male Magnolia Warbler as it danced around our heads, sometimes coming within 4-5 feet of our faces! Photo by guide Tom Johnson.

This week-long exploration of Cape May, New Jersey was nicely timed to combine some of the best aspects of late spring migration with the peak of songbird breeding activity. We also had a nice sprinkling of some high quality rarities this year. You never know what you'll see in Cape May!

This spring, our tour managed to intersect with a good number of migrant songbirds, including gems like Bay-breasted and Blackburnian warblers. During our walks in Cape May Point and Higbee Beach, it always seemed like there was another migrant in the next tree. We even found some scarce spring visitors, like Gray-checked Thrush and Mourning Warbler.

Shorebirds are a major draw of the Delaware Bay in late May, and this year was no exception. We visited several of the bay landings, including Norbury's Landing and Kimble's Beach, where we had amazing views of a huge concentration of shorebirds. This is where horseshoe crabs swim to shore to lay their eggs in the spring, and thousands of Red Knots, Ruddy Turnstones, Semipalmated Sandpipers, and other shorebirds joined the throngs of Laughing Gulls in gobbling up the feast. While we watched crabs arriving at the water's edge, shorebirds fed at our feet. What a spectacle!

The breeding birds of Cape May always delight, and we had a great time soaking in the colorful songbirds at Belleplain State Forest. Remember the Worm-eating Warbler, Hooded Warbler, and Acadian Flycatcher in the scope? We also spent time with wetland breeders in the imperiled Atlantic salt marshes near Wildwood, where we found Saltmarsh Sparrow and Clapper Rail in addition to many terns and herons.

Rarities seemed to come out of the woodwork this week - we saw a White-faced Ibis, a bright white immature Iceland Gull, a delightful Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, and a singing male Painted Bunting, just to name some of the highlights. Wow!

Because Cape May is such a well-established seaside vacation town, there is an unending selection of lovely restaurants, and we did our best to sample them. Seafood (how about those crab cakes?), steaks, pizza, and pasta - I think the vans rode a bit lower on the drive back north to Philadelphia airport after we were done. We also enjoyed several in-the-field picnic breakfasts and lunches.

Megan and I had a wonderful time traveling with you in our backyard. Thanks for your part in making it so enjoyable, and if you are hooked on the area, definitely consider a fall trip to Cape May to catch a different flavor of this remarkable peninsula.

Good birding!

Tom Johnson

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BRANT (ATLANTIC) (*Branta bernicla hrota*) – One on our boat trip on the Osprey in the back bays behind Wildwood was a late migrant. These small geese winter in the local saltmarshes in large numbers.

CANADA GOOSE (*Branta canadensis*) – Common and widespread.

MUTE SWAN (*Cygnus olor*) – Common in the freshwater marshes around Cape May Point. [I]

GADWALL (*Anas strepera*) – A breeding pair was at the South Cape May Meadows.

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK (*Anas rubripes*) – Fairly common during our boat trip on the Osprey; we also had a few good views along the bayshore.

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – Common.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (*Anas crecca*) – Several remained in the easternmost pools of the South Cape May Meadows.

BLACK SCOTER (*Melanitta americana*) – We saw a small group of summering birds around Cape May Point.

BUFFLEHEAD (*Bucephala albeola*) – A female/ immature type appeared in the Meadows during one of our walks there - a big surprise for late May!

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER (*Mergus serrator*) – One scruffy looking female was in the back bays behind Wildwood, seen during our boat trip on the Osprey.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

WILD TURKEY (*Meleagris gallopavo*) – A few skulked along the fringes of Belleplain State Forest.

Gaviidae (Loons)

COMMON LOON (*Gavia immer*) – We saw a few at various points during the week, including from the Meadows, the hotel, and the Osprey boat trip.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – Common. Many were nesting at Heislerville during our visit there.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – Seasonally rare here. We saw one immature bird in the marshes behind Wildwood during the Osprey boat trip.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Common.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – Common.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – Uncommon, but we saw a few in the saltmarshes in Avalon and Stone Harbor. Close views at Nummy Island were particularly memorable.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – These chummy, stubby egrets were stalking insects along the fringe of a golf course along Rt. 9 north of Cape May Courthouse.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – We had some excellent views of multiple birds flying and calling around the Beanery during our hunt for the Prothonotary Warblers.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Fairly common; our best views were probably of the nesting birds at Heislerville.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – In addition to a few of these crab-eaters feeding in the marsh during the Osprey trip, we had some great views of nesting Yellow-crowns along the bayside of Avalon.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – The common dark ibis here - we saw these mostly along the bayshore, including some very nice looks at Stipson's Island.

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*) – A rarity here - one of these flew over, showing off its white-rimmed pink face, at Stipson's Island.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – Common.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – Common.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Very common as a breeder here, a welcome change to the local avifauna over the past quarter century. You're never far from an Osprey nest in Cape May County!

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

BALD EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) – During the week, we saw these behemoths several times, including some nice flybys at Kimble's Beach during our shorebird extravaganza.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) – A few whistling birds put in an appearance at Belleplain, and a flock of molting immatures (second year birds) kettled over the Beanery as well.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – We saw these stocky buteos on many of our drives around the peninsula.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

CLAPPER RAIL (*Rallus crepitans*) – We eventually had good views near Two Mile Landing along Ocean Drive in Wildwood Crest. These are the dull, grayish Atlantic birds.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus palliatus*) – Quite common in the saltmarshes, where they nest more successfully than on the beaches. We were often within earshot of their plaintive whistles.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – Our first was a flyover at Higbee Beach; we then went on to see quite a few more on the beaches along the Delaware Bayshore and some handsome breeding plumage individuals on the Osprey boat trip.

SEMPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – Quite common on the beaches and mudflats. We heard these small "ringed" plovers calling "per-wee" at many water sites.

PIPING PLOVER (*Charadrius melodus*) – Unfortunately, this species is faring quite poorly in Cape May County. We did see one of the very few nesting pairs left in the area - a nest on the beach at Avalon was being monitored around the clock by a hidden camera. We saw the male running around on the beach, and found the well-camouflaged female incubating on the nest.

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*) – Fairly common; encountered at several sites.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – We saw these at several spots along the shore - memorable were the ones running around in crazy fashion in the tidal creek at Stipson's Island.

WILLET (EASTERN) (*Tringa semipalmata semipalmata*) – This stocky, thick-billed subspecies is the breeding Willet of the marshes here on the East Coast. While the western subspecies does occur here, it is quite rare in spring and we saw none on this tour.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – Nice views in the South Cape May Meadows.

WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*) – We found a nice number of these large shorebirds in the marshes during our Osprey boat trip.

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – Common, especially in flocks of shorebirds focusing on horseshoe crab eggs along the Delaware Bayshore. We also saw them on pilings in Cape May Harbor at close range, and practiced picking out the colorful, white-headed adult males from the other plumages.

RED KNOT (*Calidris canutus*) – One of the highlights of our tour! We had amazing views of over a thousand of these fine, fine shorebirds at Kimble's Beach near high tide, mixed with other sandpipers feeding on horseshoe crab eggs. These lovely arctic breeders have been rebounding with recent improvements in crab and habitat protections in the Bay.

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – Small numbers were mixed in with the masses of shorebirds on the Delaware Bayshore.

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*) – While we saw some at the southern bayshore sites with the Red Knots and Ruddy Turnstones, the main Dunlin show was up at Heislerville, where thousands in breeding plumage jammed in to the small bits of available flats in the impoundments.

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – Common. This was the pale-legged peep with warm-colored upperparts that we saw creeping around muddy edges of mudflats at many sites.

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER (*Calidris fuscicollis*) – We picked out at least two from the throng of shorebirds at Heislerville; unfortunately, they melted back into the flock before everyone in the group saw them.

SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER (*Calidris pusilla*) – Very common - this is near the peak of their spring migration from northern South America to the Arctic. We saw them just about everywhere, from the Atlantic marshes to Kimble's Beach to Heislerville.

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus griseus*) – Very common - we saw large flocks feeding at several sites, with hundreds at especially close range at Heislerville.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – Very common - many fed on horseshoe crab eggs on the bayshore. Additionally, we saw the fringe of one of the largest nesting colonies of this species in the Atlantic marshes.

RING-BILLED GULL (*Larus delawarensis*) – Uncommon in spring/ summer. We saw a few immatures on the Cape May beaches.

HERRING GULL (*Larus argentatus*) – Common.

ICELAND GULL (*Larus glaucoideus*) – One bleached immature bird was hanging out with more standard gulls on the beach at Norbury's Landing. This species is rare in the winter months, and VERY rare in late May. An excellent sighting.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus fuscus*) – A few immatures were on the beaches at Cape May. These Old World migrants can now be found year-round in small numbers here.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus marinus*) – Common.

LEAST TERN (*Sternula antillarum*) – We saw moderate numbers of these tiny terns along the beaches in Cape May and in the back bays.

COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) – Fairly common along the beaches and in the "Rips" at Cape May Point. We also saw some nesting in small colonies from the Osprey boat trip.

FORSTER'S TERN (*Sterna forsteri*) – Common and widespread on the peninsula, both in marshes and in the ocean.

BLACK SKIMMER (*Rynchops niger*) – We saw these goofy birds on several occasions; best were the views we had from the Osprey boat of a loafing flock in the back bays near Two Mile Landing.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Common. [I]

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*) – Abundant.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus americanus*) – We heard at least 8-10 this week, and had short views of a few, including one canopy-hopping at Belleplain State Forest.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

COMMON NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles minor*) – One of these migrants was perched in just the right spot along Seagrove Ave. We had great scope views of this cryptic nightbird, and even got to meet Richard Crossley at the same time.

Apodidae (Swifts)

CHIMNEY SWIFT (*Chaetura pelagica*) – Common in towns; great views overhead near the Cape May Point lighthouse.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus colubris*) – We had good views during lunch at the Goshen CMBO feeders.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes carolinus*) – Common.

DOWNY WOODPECKER (*Picoides pubescens*) – Common.

HAIRY WOODPECKER (*Picoides villosus*) – We found several chattering at Belleplain.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – One soared over us at the entrance to the campground at Belleplain SF.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE (*Contopus virens*) – Common in the woods - great views at Belleplain.

ACADIAN FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax virescens*) – Amazing views of one singing "Peet-ZAH" at Belleplain; we heard several others as well.

EASTERN PHOEBE (*Sayornis phoebe*) – We were at Belleplain as a nest full of chicks fledged. On the way in, they were spilling out of the nest; on the way out, they'd flown out and were tail-bobbing about thirty feet away. Adorable!

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus crinitus*) – "WEEEEEP!" These handsome flycatchers called from the canopy at the Beanery and in Belleplain. We had good views at the Beanery during our first (failed) attempt to see the Prothonotary Warblers there.

EASTERN KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) – Common.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Tyrannus forficatus*) – One showed up on Cape Island during the tour. While we missed it on the first day it was seen, we managed to refind it the next day. We had excellent views of this long-tailed rarity from the south as it fed and rested in a front yard along New England Rd.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

WHITE-EYED VIREO (*Vireo griseus*) – Nice looks at these skulky, chattering vireos at Belleplain, though it took some patience.

RED-EYED VIREO (*Vireo olivaceus*) – Very common - one of the key components of the morning chorus at Belleplain.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

BLUE JAY (*Cyanocitta cristata*) – Common.

AMERICAN CROW (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) – Common.

FISH CROW (*Corvus ossifragus*) – Common - we had good views of these small crows, and got to hear their distinctive nasal calls too.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – Our best views of these brown swallows were around the Cape May hawkwatch.

PURPLE MARTIN (*Progne subis*) – We communed with these large, friendly swallows each day in Cape May Point, where there is a large, well-maintained colony.

TREE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta bicolor*) – Common.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – Common.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

CAROLINA CHICKADEE (*Poecile carolinensis*) – Nice views at several wooded locations around the peninsula. Black-capped Chickadees are quite rare here, so most of the time, Carolina is the only species present.

TUFTED TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus bicolor*) – Common in the woods - we had several encounters with curious individuals at Belleplain and on Cape Island.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta carolinensis*) – Good views of this hardwood specialist in Belleplain. This is the Eastern subspecies.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) – We didn't see very many of this typically very common species. However, we did find them along Seagrove Ave. in Cape May, along with a few other places where we simply heard the species' bubbly, chattery song.

MARSH WREN (*Cistothorus palustris*) – These skulky chatterers accompanied our marsh exploits at Stipson Island Rd. and Kimble's Beach.

CAROLINA WREN (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) – Heard frequently, but we only saw a few. A pair was tough to see in the tangles at the Beanery, but most of us managed some glimpses.

Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila caerulea*) – Common, especially at Belleplain.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH (*Catharus minimus*) – One sang its peppy, fluted song across the street from the CMBO Northwood Center.

SWAINSON'S THRUSH (*Catharus ustulatus*) – One called and sang a bit in Belleplain at the Sunset Bridge, and we had good views of its olive upperparts, spotted chest, and buffy spectacles.

WOOD THRUSH (*Hylocichla mustelina*) – Fairly common at Belleplain, where we had nice views on the ground.

AMERICAN ROBIN (*Turdus migratorius*) – Common.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

GRAY CATBIRD (*Dumetella carolinensis*) – Common, though many views were fleeting!

BROWN THRASHER (*Toxostoma rufum*) – We only saw a few, mostly flying across paths ahead of us on Cape Island.

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*) – Common - the mockingbirds in Cape May have the opportunity to interact with and hear a huge variety of species, so their vocal repertoires are unusually vast. We heard a few that were even imitating diverse flocks of shorebirds along the Delaware Bayshore!

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Common. [I]

Bombycillidae (Waxwings)

CEDAR WAXWING (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) – We had several small flocks fly over at various sites - a few perched in Cape May toward the end of the week.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

OVENBIRD (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) – Common in Belleplain, where we enjoyed scope views of this VERY loud warbler.

WORM-EATING WARBLER (*Helmitheros vermivorum*) – This dry triller challenged us to separate it from Chipping Sparrow and Pine Warbler by ear, but we did it! We also had one that sang in the open as we watched in the scope. All were at Belleplain.

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia motacilla*) – Good views in the creek at the Sunset Bridge at Belleplain.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – One that popped up and posed for us at the CMBO Northwood Center was a fairly late spring migrant.

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora cyanoptera*) – The male in the meadow at Belleplain gave us some nice views. "BEEEEE-buzzzz!"

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilta varia*) – Good views at Belleplain.

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*) – We needed to make two attempts, but we finally found the singing male at the Beanery, where we had nice views at the edge of the wet woods.

MOURNING WARBLER (*Geothlypis philadelphia*) – One sang at the CMBO Northwood Center. We had a brief flight view as it zipped across the street.

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*) – Common.

HOODED WARBLER (*Setophaga citrina*) – We heard several in the woods at Belleplain, and had some great views of a male over the road.

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – Good views at Belleplain and in Cape May.

NORTHERN PARULA (*Setophaga americana*) – One male sang daily at the corner of Seagrove and Sunset in Cape May Point.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER (*Setophaga magnolia*) – We had several migrants - the male at Higbee Beach on our first full day gave us some startlingly close views. Gorgeous!

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER (*Setophaga castanea*) – A male at Higbee Beach was a great spring find.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER (*Setophaga fusca*) – One was hanging out in a flock with the Bay-breasted Warbler at Higbee Beach. Another male sang along Seagrove Ave. and offered us some nice (though brief) views.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – Good views at Higbee Beach, the Meadows, and a few other spots on the peninsula.

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) – A male popped out in response to some pishing at the Beanery. He then sang a bit, sounding like an aggressive Yellow Warbler.

BLACKPOLL WARBLER (*Setophaga striata*) – We found several migrants (mostly by the males' high-pitched z-z-z-z-z-z songs); best views were of a male and female at Higbee Beach.

PINE WARBLER (*Setophaga pinus*) – These were the slow trillers of Belleplain. We had some nice views of a male.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER (*Setophaga dominica*) – One of the first birds we looked at near the restrooms at Belleplain! We went on to see several more of these striking warblers as well. These are the pine-loving dominica subspecies.

PRAIRIE WARBLER (*Setophaga discolor*) – We heard one singing and had brief views of a pair on the first morning at Higbee Beach. Our return trip for better views was tragically cut short by that pesky male Painted Bunting!

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (*Setophaga virens*) – Nice, though brief, views of a male along the boardwalk at CMP State Park.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*) – One was singing and calling near the CMBO Northwood Center, and a few got nice views of this black-capped male.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (*Icteria virens*) – Good treetop views of a singing bird at Higbee Beach.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

EASTERN TOWHEE (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) – We heard a few of these large, brushy forest sparrows, but didn't have much in the way of views.

CHIPPING SPARROW (*Spizella passerina*) – Common in Belleplain.

FIELD SPARROW (*Spizella pusilla*) – Nice views along the dunes at the South Cape May Meadows.

SAVANNAH SPARROW (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) – We flushed one of these short-tailed migrants from the edge of the path during a walk in Cape May.

SALTMARSH SPARROW (*Ammodramus caudacutus*) – We had good views in the Wildwood salt marshes during the Osprey boat trip.

SEASIDE SPARROW (*Ammodramus maritimus*) – These large, dark marsh sparrows sang and popped out for us at Stipson's Island and at a few other marsh locations.

SONG SPARROW (*Melospiza melodia*) – Common.

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) – One was behind the Northwood Center in Cape May Point. This was a lingering bird that should have left weeks earlier.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) – Good views of a male; great views of an eye-level female. Both were at Belleplain State Forest.

SCARLET TANAGER (*Piranga olivacea*) – Several were singing at Belleplain. We had great scope views overhead in one of the picnic areas.

NORTHERN CARDINAL (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) – Common.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – We heard the squeaky shoe call of one at Higbee Beach on the first full day.

BLUE GROSBEAK (*Passerina caerulea*) – We found these handsome birds at Higbee Beach, the Beanery, and a few other scrubby open areas during the week.

INDIGO BUNTING (*Passerina cyanea*) – Common - great views of amazingly blue singing males.

PAINTED BUNTING (*Passerina ciris*) – A singing male at Hidden Valley was a rare addition to our checklist. We had some excellent views of this stunner as it sang and fed on seeds in the open.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

BOBOLINK (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) – Two flew over us, calling "bink", at Higbee Beach on the last day.

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – Common.

COMMON GRACKLE (*Quiscalus quiscula*) – Very common.

BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus major*) – We saw several in the salt marshes, including singing males on the utility lines along Ocean Drive.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (*Molothrus ater*) – Common.

ORCHARD ORIOLE (*Icterus spurius*) – These small, slim orioles chattered from field edges all around Cape May.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus galbula*) – We kept getting fleeting glimpses of black-and-orange males. Higbee Beach, Seagrove Ave., and Belleplain all provided quick but frustrating views.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

HOUSE FINCH (*Haemorhous mexicanus*) – Common. [I]

AMERICAN GOLDFINCH (*Spinus tristis*) – Common.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Common. [I]

MAMMALS

EASTERN COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) – This is the standard bunny around Cape May.

EASTERN GRAY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus carolinensis*) – We saw these at Belleplain, Cape May Point, and along the road on a few occasions.

MUSKRAT (*Ondatra zibethica*) – Nice views along the east path of the South Cape May Meadows.

BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN (*Tursiops truncatus*) – Common close to the beaches in the ocean off Cape May and Cape May Point.

WHITE-TAILED DEER (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – We saw a few during our drives off of Cape Island.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Additional sightings:

Painted Turtle - at least a few of the "pond turtles" we saw were this species

Eastern Box Turtle - crossing the road in Cape May Point

Five-lined Skink - great views during our lunch at the CMBO Goshen Center

Totals for the tour: 147 bird taxa and 5 mammal taxa