

# CAPE MAY MIGRATION MAGIC

## Fall Birding in Legendary Cape May, New Jersey

September 27-October 3, 2024

*A birding tour organized by Seven Ponds Nature Center and Real Birding*

South Cape May Meadows... Higbee Beach... The Beanery... Nummy Island... Stone Harbor Point... the Hawkwatch Platform... just a few of the many legendary birding spots in Cape May, New Jersey. Long considered one of the premier birding locations in North America, the south-facing Cape May peninsula acts as a natural funnel for birds migrating south in the fall. Songbirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors – all work their way south along the Atlantic coast, gathering in southern New Jersey in what can sometimes be staggering numbers. Join us on this tour as we explore the Cape May Peninsula and beyond during fall migration.



**“There is no place like Cape May.” – David Sibley**

## TOUR ITINERARY

Our daily activities will be flexible based on species we've seen to date and recent bird reports, but the following daily outline provides a preliminary plan of how we will spend our days. Our plans are subject to change based on rare bird sightings, weather conditions, and road closures.

**DAY 1 – Friday, September 27 – Arrival in Philadelphia** Plan your arrival in Philadelphia by midday. We'll meet at the airport and drive to Cape May where we'll enjoy our first dinner before settling in for the night. *Night in Cape May.*

**DAYS 2-5 – Saturday, September 28 through Tuesday, October 1 – Cape May area birding** In the Cape



May region there are plenty of world-class birding areas to keep us busy during these four days. Locations will include **Cape May Point State Park**, the **Cape May Hawk Watch Platform**, **Cape May Point Beach** and **Second Street Jetty**, **Higbee Beach Wildlife Management Area**, **Nummy Island**, and **Stone Harbor**. There are many other possibilities, including Jake's Landing, Beaver Swamp Wildlife Management Area, Cape May National Wildlife Refuge, Reed's Beach, Cook's Beach, Norbury's Landing, Villas Wildlife Management Area, Avalon Sea Watch, Two Mile Beach, Sunset Lake, and more. We will not run out of places to go birding, and in four days we will not see all that Cape May has to offer.

During one of our days in Cape May we'll enjoy birding by boat during a salt marsh safari aboard *The Osprey* with Captain Bob. This is a fun way to explore the back bays and coastal marshes of the south Jersey Cape and provides a great chance to see many birds. *Nights in Cape May.*



**DAY 6 – Wednesday, October 2 – Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge (Brigantine)** Traditionally known to birders simply as the Brig, **Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge** features over 20,000 acres of salt marshes, islands, bays, fields, and woodlands. Thousands of

waterfowl winter here and by the time we visit, Snow Geese and a variety of dabbling ducks should be present. Many lingering shorebirds should still be on hand and there is always the possibility of a rarity or vagrant species here. The Wildlife Drive auto tour is an eight-mile loop that provides access to many of the refuge's unique habitats. After a full day of birding the Brig, we'll make the 1.5-hour drive to Philadelphia for our final dinner together and then check into our hotel. *Night in Philadelphia.*

**DAY 7 – Thursday, October 3 – Departure from Philadelphia** Plan your departure for any time today. Enjoy breakfast at the hotel and take the shuttle to the airport to catch your flight home.

## TOUR LEADERS



**Caleb Putnam** is a professional ornithologist and owner of *Real Birds LLC*. A lifelong birder, Caleb has exceptional enthusiasm and passion for birds and birding. He has honed the ability to recognize most American bird species by sight and sound and developed an array of knowledge of habitat requirements and conservation issues of North American bird species. He has served on the Michigan Bird Records Committee and is a statewide expositor of eBird as well as a local eBird reviewer for an 11-county area in west lower Michigan. Caleb spent 12 years working for the National Audubon Society as the Important Bird Areas program coordinator and two years with Audubon Great Lakes and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources as the MI Birds program coordinator. He also has spent many years in environmental consulting, especially focused on wind power and green energy development. Most recently, Caleb enjoys working with Boulder Imaging who is developing high tech camera systems which utilize artificial intelligence to reduce raptor mortality at windfarms worldwide.

**Daryl Bernard** is a long-time birder and amateur naturalist who loves being outdoors and embraces every opportunity to share nature with others. He enjoys organizing trips and tours and strives to ensure that every participant has a thoroughly enjoyable experience. Daryl has organized and led numerous birding field tours throughout North America, many local birding trips in Michigan, and bird walks for Seven Ponds as well as birding festivals. Daryl is the Executive Director at Seven Ponds Nature Center in southeast Michigan, and regularly presents birding programs at Audubon clubs, garden clubs, libraries, and birding festivals.



## ACCOMMODATIONS

Lodging for this tour will be in two locations:

- Five nights in Cape May; one night in Philadelphia

## FEE and REGISTRATION INFORMATION

- Tour Fee: \$2310 per person in double occupancy from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Single supplement, pending availability: \$600
- Deposit: \$300 (due upon online registration)
- Final Payment (\$2010): due September 1, 2024
- Group size is limited to **8-10 individuals** and early registration is encouraged

## WHAT THE TOUR FEE INCLUDES:

- guide service for five full days of birding – Caleb will be with us every step of the way
- hotel accommodations for six nights
- all meals from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 7
- salt marsh safari boat trip with Captain Bob aboard *The Osprey*
- van transportation in a single large van
- all park entrance fees and highway tolls
- pre-trip information and a detailed trip report after the tour
- eBird checklist sharing (for those using eBird)

**WHAT THE TOUR FEE DOES NOT INCLUDE:**

- your airfare to and from Philadelphia
- alcoholic beverages
- laundry
- other items of a personal nature
- gratuity for birding guide services (optional)

**ONLINE REGISTRATION WILL OPEN FOR SEVEN PONDS MEMBERS ON  
TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2024 at 9:00 AM**

**ONLINE REGISTRATION WILL OPEN FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC ON  
TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2024 at 9:00 AM (if space remains)**

Registration for this tour will take place online at [www.sevenponds.org](http://www.sevenponds.org) with a \$300 deposit due at the time of registration. At the Seven Ponds home page, go to Programs then Seven Ponds Field Tours and select the Cape May Birding Field Tour registration button. You should receive an email confirmation upon successfully completing your online registration. Registered participants will be sent a registration form to complete and return.

For more information, contact Daryl Bernard at (810) 796-3200 or (989) 513-5195 (cell)  
or via e-mail at [dbernard@sevenponds.org](mailto:dbernard@sevenponds.org).

