



2026

# *EcoTravel*

*Overnight Natural History Tours and Day Trips*

## *Cape May: Fall Migration*

October 15 – 18, 2026



# New Jersey October 2026 4 Days

## Overview

Cape May is, without a doubt, one of the top ten birding spots in the country. Southbound migrants often make landfall on the southern tip of New Jersey, stopping at Cape May to rest before they head farther south. Warblers and other songbirds are the stars of the Cape May show, but shorebirds and herons are also abundant. **Peregrine Falcons, Royal Terns, and Little Blue Herons** are just a few of the birds you might see. If the birding isn't enough, the town of Cape May, with its many blocks of Victorian houses and hotels, is a few minutes walk from the beach. Travelers stay in a clean, modern motel and are located close enough to town to enjoy the historic atmosphere. There's something for everyone!

We'll visit Higbee Beach, the traditional first stop for migrating songbirds and visiting birders. This wildlife management area has the last stand of dune forest in New Jersey. Fronting Delaware Bay, Higbee welcomes more than a million hungry, tired migrants on their way north and south. Traditionally, birders stand on "the dike" (actually a pile of dredge spoil) and platforms at sunrise to watch the birds come in.

We'll also explore the Cape May Hawkwatch, where official hawkwatchers keep a tally sheet. On a weekend day in the fall, it can be elbow to elbow! Migrating **Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, and Red-tailed hawks, Merlins, Peregrine Falcons, Northern Harriers, Bald Eagles, Golden Eagles, and American Goshawks** pass by on their way south.

On the way home we'll stop at Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge to search through large flocks of migrating shorebirds for anything rare and unexpected. With luck, we may stumble upon some **Hudsonian Godwits** roosting, or even an early **Snow Goose**.

These are just some of the amazing birding spots we'll visit, and of course, we'll keep our eyes and ears open for any rarities that may be showing up. One of the best parts of fall migration is that each day is different, and you never know what to expect!



## Itinerary

*Although there is a designated itinerary for the trip, the order of activities will vary depending on the weather and group interest.*

### Day 1

**D**

The van will make pickups in Connecticut along the shoreline. On the way to Cape May, we'll stop at known migrant traps to eat lunch and explore these prime fueling stops for migrant songbirds. A stop at Avalon Sea Watch to see the arrival of migrating sea birds is possible. Arrival in Cape May is in the late afternoon, with some rest time before dinner.

Night: Cape May.

### Days 2 – 3

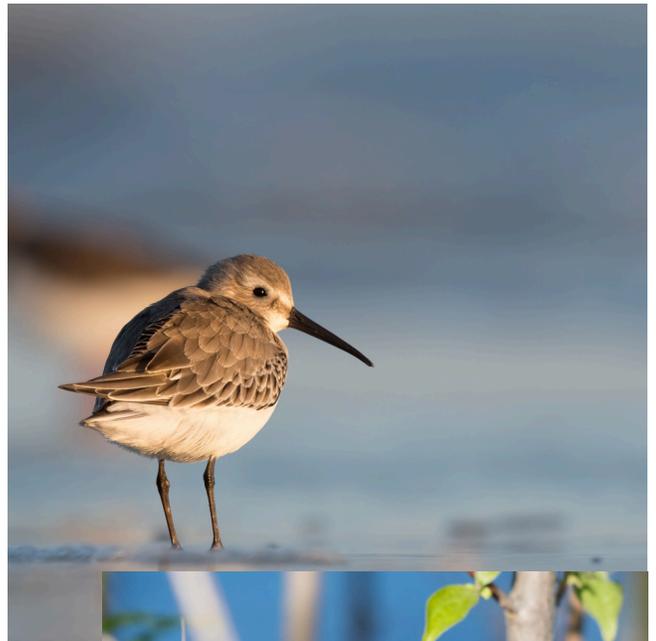
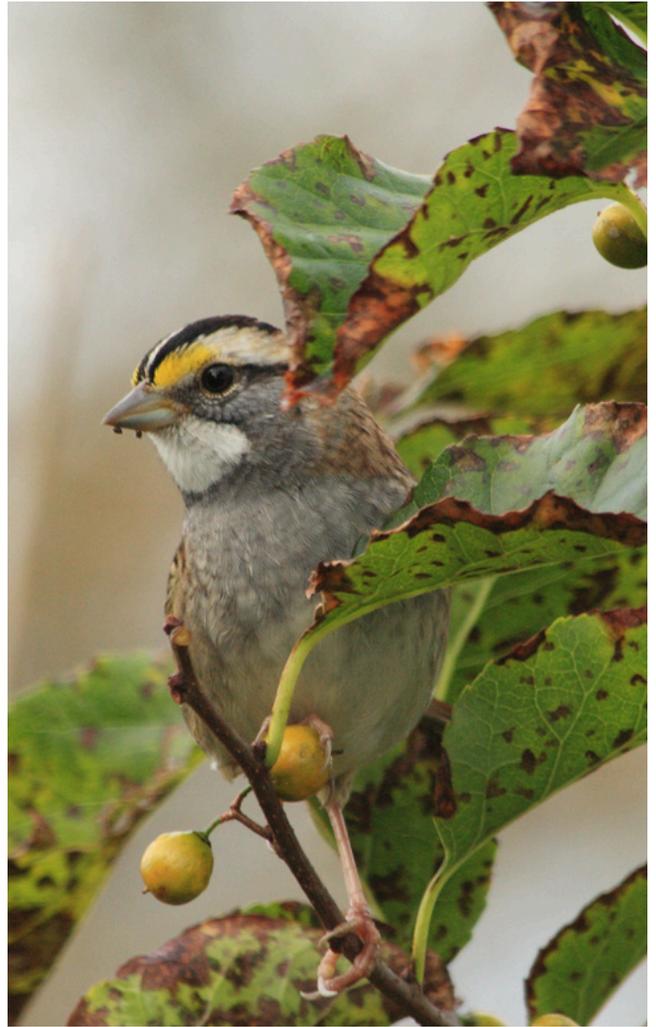
Before breakfast, we'll visit the famous Higbee Dike for the morning flight of arriving nocturnal migrants. We'll return to the hotel to get breakfast at one of the local eateries before heading back out into the field. Exploration and birdwatching will be along the famed birding areas of Cape May, including Higbee Beach, South Cape May Meadows, and lunch at the Cape May Hawk Watch platform. Afterwards, the group will visit sites along the Delaware Bay shore looking for shorebirds and some South Jersey resident species. We'll return to downtown Cape May for an early dinner. The daily itinerary is flexible to accommodate reported rarities we might like to pursue. Depending on group interests, a long walk on the beach for more shorebirds and offshore specialties may be an option.

Nights: Cape May.

### Day 4

**B**

Breakfast will be at a local favorite eatery. Morning birding will venture through Cape May with possible stops to the north at Stone Harbor marshes and Edward B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, where we can expect excellent numbers of fall migrants. Lunch will be at a birding spot or picnic area, followed by the return to Connecticut. Exact return time depends on birds, weather, and traffic, but it will probably be early evening.



## General Information

Tour Cost: \$1,698.

**Members: \$1,398.**

The above cost is based upon a minimum number of four paying participants traveling together. If there are fewer participants, there will be a small group supplement. Per person Tour Cost is based on two people sharing a room.

Single Room Supplement: \$425.

All rates are calculated at the time of publication and are subject to change due to conditions out of our control (i.e. hotel rates). All passengers will be notified if changes in pricing occur.

### *Tour Includes:*

Accommodations are based on double occupancy, one or two beds. Meals are included as outlined in the itinerary section (B=Breakfast/L=Lunch/D=Dinner). Additional charges for meals may apply if needs are out of the standard offerings. Entrance fees to national parks and sightseeing as specified in the itinerary.

### *Not Included:*

Taxes; costs of obtaining passports and visas; airfare; baggage fees; personal expenses such as room service, beverages, laundry, gratuities for the local guide and housekeeping; personal communications; airport taxes; tax increases or new taxes charged for services that were not taxed at the time the booking was made; excess mileage carried out at the request of the passenger; sightseeing or meals not specified in the itinerary; personal insurance coverage (strongly recommended); and transfers to and from your home airport.



**Matt Bell** is a graduate of the Ohio State University with BS degrees in both earth sciences and evolution/ ecology. He started birding in May 2013 and became more seriously involved after a trip to Costa Rica. Since then, he helped revive The Ornithology Club at Ohio State and assisted as a volunteer guide for The Biggest Week in American Birding and the Yellow Rails and Rice Festival. He absolutely loves participating in citizen science, tour guiding, chasing rare birds in his free time, and meeting fellow birders from around the globe. Most of all, Matt enjoys sharing his passion for birds and conservation with others and never shies away at taking the time to help beginners start their explorations of the avian world. Matt is the EcoTravel travel specialist and leads day trips and overnight tours.



## General Terms & Conditions

### Reservations

Early reservations with deposit are essential to guarantee your booking. A **\$500 deposit**, per person, applicable to final payment, is required to reserve space on this trip. Reservations made within 120 days of departure require full payment along with the formal Registration Forms. Final payment for programs is due 120 days prior to departure. Payments can be made by personal check, money order, certified check, or a cashier's check.

### Rates and Fares

Prices are accurate as available at the time of publication. Prices do not include airfare unless otherwise stated. The Connecticut Audubon Society (CAS) reserves the right to alter quoted prices to reflect changes in airline fares, land service, or currency exchange rates. In the event that the number of participants is below the minimum required for the quoted price, a small group surcharge may be added.

### Cancellation and Insurance

At the time the EcoTravel Office receives written notice that you must cancel your trip, the following cancellation fees will apply: Prior to 120 days from departure, your payments will be refunded minus **\$250 per person**. At 120 days and less, no refund is granted. NOTE: In addition to cancellation fees, airline tickets and deposits required to guarantee hotel rooms may be nonrefundable. The purchase of a general travel insurance plan covering baggage, accident/life, and trip cancellation is highly recommended. Give us a call and we can put you in touch with those providers. CAS reserve the right, if registration is insufficient or other reasons out of our control, to cancel, postpone, or offer the trip with a small group supplement. In the event that CAS cancels or postpones, those with reservations will be notified as soon as possible and a credit of payments will be held on file. The Connecticut Audubon Society is not responsible for the refund or credit of additional expenses incurred in preparation for a trip. Any "delay" or "postponing" of departure by tour participants is considered a cancellation and cancellation parameters will be apply relative to the 120-day window. There are no exceptions.

### Responsibility

Payment of deposit represents and acceptance of the following terms and conditions by the purchaser: The Connecticut Audubon Society, its affiliates, and all cooperating airlines and agencies act only in the capacity of agents in all matters of transportation and tour operations, and their liability is limited to the terms of the airline tickets and land accommodation contracts. They are not responsible for any delays, inconveniences, accidents, expense, or mishap of any kind whatsoever resulting entirely or in part from the negligence of others or from causes beyond their control. They can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, riot, war, pandemic, quarantine, or other causes. All such losses or expenses must be borne by the passengers, as the tour rate provides for arrangements only as describe in the tour brochure. The right is reserved to change tour leaders, substitute hotels, of similar category, and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by unforeseen circumstances. Baggage is at the owner's risk entirely. No refund can be made for unused hotel rooms, meals, and sightseeing tours unless arrangements are made at time of booking. The right is reserved to decline any person as a tour member for any reason which affects the operation of the tour or the rights, welfare, or enjoyment of the other tour members. Any refund of the recoverable land tour services in the limit of The Connecticut Audubon Society and its affiliates' liability.

### To make a Reservation:

Send the above stated deposit to hold your reservation. Nonmembers, please add \$45 (single) or \$58 (family) for your annual membership and to take advantage of the member discount.

Send your name(s), address, phone number, email address, name of the trip, your deposit, and membership fee (if applicable) to:

**The Connecticut Audubon Society EcoTravel**

**PO Box 903**

**Essex, CT 06426**

(860) 767-0660

[ecotravel@ctaudubon.org](mailto:ecotravel@ctaudubon.org)

[www.ctaudubon.org/ecotravel-home](http://www.ctaudubon.org/ecotravel-home)

