



2026

EcoTravel

Overnight Natural History Tours and Day Trips

Migration Chase: Delmarva Peninsula

April 15 – 19, 2026



Delmarva

April 2026

5 Days

Overview

This trip will take travelers to the Delmarva Peninsula, the piece of mainland sandwiched between the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean that comprises all of **DE**Laware, the eastern portion of **MAR**yland (including the renowned “Eastern Shore” of Chesapeake Bay), and a disconnected sliver of **VirginiA**. After visiting key natural and historic areas, you’ll come away with a good feel for the land, its regional culture, and its wild inhabitants. Renowned for its stunning natural beauty, the region is characterized by a diverse landscape of rolling farmlands, picturesque beaches, and lush wetlands, making it a haven for wildlife and a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts.

The Delmarva Peninsula boasts a rich cultural heritage, influenced by its historic ties to Native American tribes, European settlers, and African American communities. It’s home to a vibrant maritime tradition, with fishing, crabbing, and oystering playing significant roles in the local economy and culture. Additionally, the peninsula is dotted with charming small towns and coastal villages, offering visitors a chance to explore quaint shops, dine on freshly caught seafood, and immerse themselves in the region’s rich history. Whether seeking serene landscapes or a taste of coastal living, the Delmarva Peninsula provides a captivating blend of nature, history, and community.

We’ll explore varied habitats in search of birds and other wildlife as we scour the beaches, visit the vast marshland, and enjoy the first glimpses of spring. Enjoy first-hand Chesapeake foods, traditions, history, birds, and scenery. Get your fill of foods from around the bay, sip wines from Maryland vineyards, and meet Chesapeake people. Destinations will include Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge, Cape Henlopen State Park, Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, and more.



Itinerary

Day 1

D

We'll depart in the early morning from Essex with pick-ups along I-95 South. There'll be stops en route for coffee, restrooms, leg stretching, birding, and a picnic lunch.

In the afternoon, we'll visit and explore **Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge** in Delaware. The refuge is composed of 15,122 acres, approximately three-quarters of which is tidal marsh.

Bombay Hook is primarily a refuge and breeding ground for migrating birds and other wildlife. The refuge offers a 12-mile wildlife drive, five walking trails, three observation towers, wildlife photography, a variety of nature and educational programs, and interpretative displays. In past years, we've had over 100 **Bald Eagles** when visiting the refuge!

Night: Dover, Delaware.

Day 2

B

Optional pre-breakfast birding back at Bombay Hook, to hear the dawn chorus and search for newly arrived migrants. After breakfast, we'll head to **Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge** and continue our search for migrating shorebirds, including **Dunlin**.

Later in the afternoon, we'll head towards **Cape Henlopen State Park** in Lewes, which offers spring migration hotspots and easy hiking trails. Experience the park's scenic and ever-changing landscape and get a lesson in history along the three-mile-long paved trail that loops the park. With luck, we'll find some **Brown-headed Nuthatches** near the northern extent of their range.

Night: Fenwick Island, Delaware

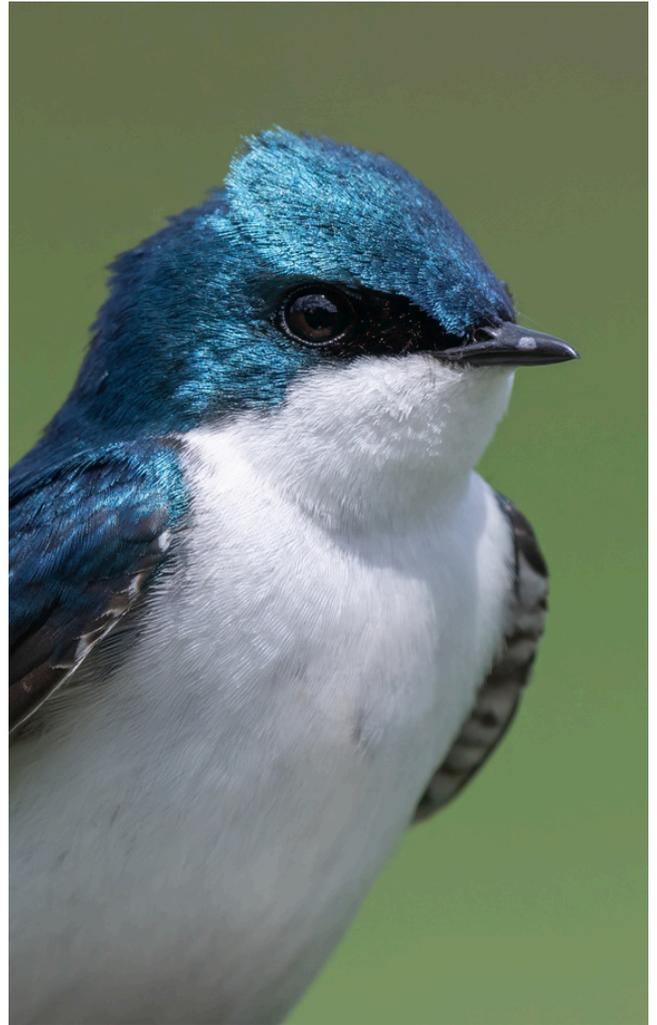
Day 3

B

After breakfast, we'll drive to **Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge** in Virginia. Located alongside Assateague Island National Seashore, Chincoteague is an important stop on the Atlantic flyway. With multiple trails to explore, we hope to spot migrating birds and the **Delmarva Fox Squirrel**, which currently occupies only 28% of its former range.

Its wild horses are well known, even to people who have never been to the island. The wild horses are actually feral animals, tough enough to survive the scorching heat, abundant mosquitoes, stormy weather, and poor quality food found on this remote, windswept barrier island. They have formed a unique wild horse society. With luck, we'll get good looks at the herd from within their fenced range. The horses are kept away from the roadside to ensure their safety and to protect everyone viewing them.

Night: Chincoteague, Virginia



Day 4

BD

We'll slowly begin making our way towards Easton, Maryland, with some birding stops before lunch for recently arrived breeders, including the stunning **Prothonotary Warbler**. If time permits, we'll head to **Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge**. Nicknamed "The Everglades of the North," Blackwater is home to the largest population of nesting Bald Eagles on the East Coast north of Florida and contains one-third of Maryland's tidal wetlands.

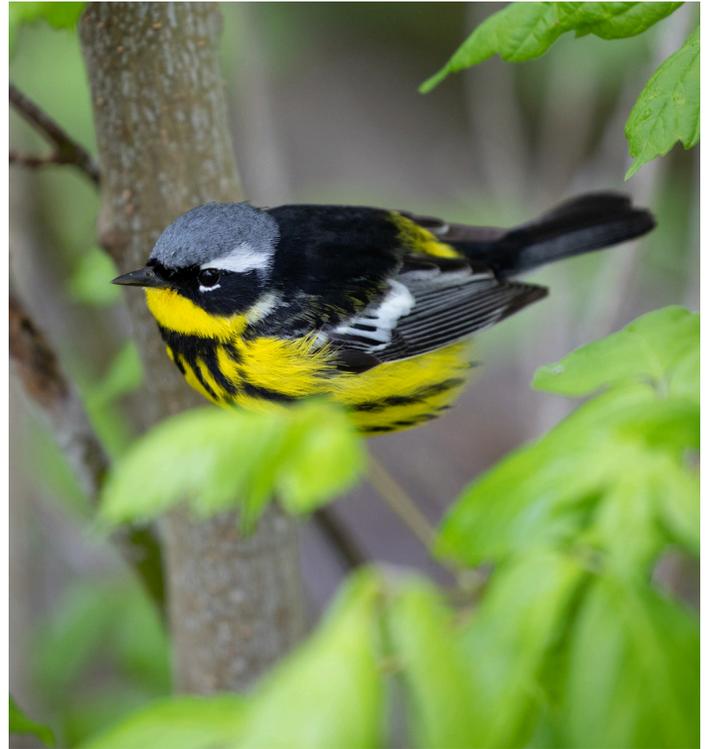
Night: Easton, Maryland

Day 5

B

After a hearty morning breakfast, we'll pack up and head north from the peninsula and back to Connecticut. An early morning start gives us a chance to stop for more nature and birdwatching opportunities along the way, as well as stops for lunch and leg stretching!

Arrival in Essex is expected to be between 4 and 6 pm.



General Information

Tour Cost: \$2,398.

Members: \$1,898.

The above cost is based upon a minimum number of five 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: \$350.

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 **\$1,000 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 **\$300 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:

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