

Cape May, Delaware and Jamaica Bay August 29 – September 7, 2013



Participants:

Mattias Ullman, mattias.ullman@telia.com

Tommy Holmgren, tommyholmgren72@gmail.com

Jonas Rosquist, jonas.rosquist@hotmail.se



From left: Jonas Rosquist, Mattias Ullman and Tommy Holmgren

General

Each of us paid around 1310 USD for the flights and a car for 9 days (Chevrolet Impala, including GPS and free mileage). The Nätresor AB travel agency in Malmo helped us book flights and car. This was convenient of course, but it would probably have been a little bit cheaper organizing these things by ourselves. We flew with SAS, Copenhagen–Newark and Newark–Copenhagen. If you'll start birding at Jamaica Bay, JFK Airport is closer but the flight hours to Newark suited us better. We also recommend hiring an "electronic toll pass" as there's plenty of roads with a toll fee. This was used on around 20 occasions, costing around 0.50 – 2 USD each time. Instead of stopping at each toll gate, you just drive along and then pay the total sum to the car rental agency a few days after the car is returned.

The trip was deliberately put early in the season, partly because waders were one of our main priorities. Still, we were lucky to get two days with plenty of wood warblers in Cape May, due to cold winds from northwest.

The first day and a half was spent around Jamaica bay. Very soon we understood that the area wasn't really the same since Hurricane Sandy (late October 2012). For instance, the best "lagoon" for waders had been destroyed and water levels were changed after the hurricane. Still, the area is definitely worth a visit. All three of us are keen photographers and the hides around Jamaica Bay provided good opportunities for photography.

The last six days of the trip were spent around Cape May, including Brigantine and the Delaware Bay.

By far the best place to watch the "return migration" of wood warblers in Cape May is at the Dike, Higbee. The Audubon Society officially counts the migration here for more than three months every autumn. On our first morning at the Dike, Higbee we met the very friendly "official counter" Sam. Since it was still early in the season, and quite warm with temperatures around 27-29° Celsius (and very humid!) there was very little migration activity and Sam's official counting only lasted two hours on these days. Sam and other birdwatchers eagerly awaited the cold front with cold, dry winds from the northwest that would occur three days later. "You guys should be here on that day!" was their kind message.

Near Cape May Point, the "Hawk watch" is the other site where the Audubon Society counts day migration, mainly raptors. We visited this site twice, but since the sun was extremely strong and raptors very few (still very early in the season for these species) we didn't stay too long.

On a good morning after a cold front with cold winds from northwest, more than 10,000 wood warblers (and similar) can be counted flying north at the Dike, Higbee. Exactly what these birds are doing is debated. Obviously they have blown out over the Atlantic and/or the Delaware Bay at night and find themselves over open water at dawn.

On the evening of September 3 a cold front moves towards east over Pennsylvania and northwesterly winds blow over New Jersey. Cold fronts usually don't occur this early in the season and about 20 birders gathered at the Dike in the morning. In the first two hours around 50,000 "night migrator" (mostly wood warblers) were heading north. Sam's official count of American Redstart (by far the most numerous warbler) was 1,020, but he only counts the warblers that pass closely by. The unidentified warblers that moved north about 500m east from us were not counted by him.

That morning Sam recorded 22 different species of wood warblers! An amazing day!

Accommodation

The first two nights we stayed in Brooklyn at a place called Honeys Bed & Breakfast. We paid 155 USD per night here, including a small breakfast. From here it was a 30-minute drive to Jamaica Bay. In Cape May we stayed in Wildwood Crest, at a place called Astronaut Motel. We paid approximately 95 USD each night for one room (private shower, toilet, boiler, TV and two beds). This was a very good price, mainly due to the fact that the landlord was kind enough to put an extra cot between the two beds at no extra charge. From here it was a 15-minute drive to the Dike in the morning.

Map Audubon:

<http://www.njaudubon.org/Portals/10/Centers/CMBO/PDF/2012%20County%20Bird%20Map.pdf>

Sites:

The Dike, Higbee

You stand on a high dike (or a small hill) watching passerines (wood warblers) migrating north in the morning after a night of heavy migration. Be here early as the migration usually just goes on for an hour or two! Mornings after a cold night with winds from northwest are usually best. Usually there are also a few small pools with freshwater attracting some waders. We saw at least 8 species of wader here, more confiding and easier to photograph than the ones on the shores. Generally we were a little bit too early in the season for passerine migration, but we were lucky enough to encounter a really good day anyway, with more than 20 species of wood warbler.



The Dike, Higbee

The Fields (Higbee)

The best place to find passerines/warblers in the trees. Some birders start here directly at dawn, when there is usually a steady movement (towards north) of warblers. Some birders go here after the Dike, when the warblers are more settled/less active. Morning is best!

Cape May Point (near the Lighthouse)

Usually the best place to watch raptor migration. We were here early in the season and didn't spend much time here. Just beside the "hawk watch" there is also a small lake with some roosting waders, ducks and gulls. If you want to meet other birdwatchers (and similar) this is probably the best place at midday as several people just sat here "waiting" and socialising.

Cape May State park (near the Lighthouse)

Quite a small and narrow group of trees and bushes which is good for warblers. Usually you will find more birds in the morning but it can be good in midday or afternoon here as well.

South Cape May Meadows ("The Meadows")

Wetland area with lots of stints and other waders, ducks and herons. You are walking on a small clay road around the pools and the walk takes about one hour but you can easily spend half a day here as well. For best light in the best "wader pool" be here in the afternoon. The beach just south of is good for skimmers and gulls.



South Cape May Meadows ("The Meadows")

Nummy's Island

Wetland area close to Stone Harbor. Nummy's Island is mostly birded from the road (and the traffic is reasonably calm here). This place is best at high tide as many shorebirds gather here. Very good area for herons and rails. The area is very large. It's usually a bit tricky to come close to waders here. Many herons and waders are flying around in the area, especially when water levels are rising.



Nummy's Island

Stone Harbor

Birding (and bathing!?) along the shore. This place is crowded with tourists at weekends and birds are probably scarcer. Good place for Willet, Piping Plover and stints. The walk to the southern end is quite long. It's a beautiful walk but sometimes quite empty with birds as they are further in the narrow bay (where area is restricted). If wind is calm, there's lots of biting mosquitos in the evening – be sure to bring insect spray!



Stone Harbor

Cape Henlopen

We paid around 50 USD for a one-way-boat trip from Cape May – Lewes (including the car). The park is just five minutes from the ferry terminal. The nuthatch is easy to find! The area is also ok for warblers, flycatchers etc. The park wasn't officially open when we arrived in the morning but a nice guy let us in anyway. If the park should be closed, it's probably possible to see the nuthatch outside the fenced area as well.



Brown-headed Nuthatch, Cape Henlopen

Bombay Hook

Large wetland area south of the bay. Avocet is numerous here and it's probably the best place for Stilt Sandpiper. Reminiscent of Brigantine in several ways, for instance the one-way clay road does a loop back to the entrance and you also have to pay a small fee here. For most "ponds" here, the light is best before noon. The area is absolutely crowded with waders and herons! A small part of the loop runs through forest where two short stops produced some warblers and woodpeckers.



American Avocet, Bombay Hook

Brigantine (Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge)

Huge Wetland area about 75 minute drive north of Cape May. Most of the wetland area is inaccessible, but there is also a clay road, about 8 km long, going through the area in a long loop passing some of the best pools and ponds. You have to pay a small entrance fee (around 5 USD) and it's definitely worth the money! One of the ponds along the northern side of the square clay road is much drier than the rest and usually attracts a few other wader species than the other ponds. Best light here is in the morning. A one-hour visit along this dry field (pond) produced Baird's, White-rumped, Pectoral and 4 Buff-breasted sandpipers! All bird-watching is done from the clay road so usually it is not the best place for photography.

The western part of the road loop partly runs through forest with plenty of warblers, woodpeckers etc. For wader freaks this is the best site in New Jersey, especially considering the diversity. Wilson's Phalarope is annual in early fall here but we didn't see any. It was very warm and calm winds when we were here. During midday, there are no mosquitos but loads of "green kamikaze flies" instead. These giant flies bites your skin at the same second as it lands. Blood is literally pouring from your legs! Be sure to use strong insect spray! (Anyone going there in late September/October probably won't need this though.)



Brigantine

Jamaica Bay

Not as good as it used to be before Hurricane Sandy, but still a very good area, especially for shorebirds. The western side of the Refuge is best in the morning and this is the best place for skimmers, gulls and herons. East of the Refuge there is a smaller pond which gives closer views on some waders. East of the Refuge there are also a few hides area providing excellent opportunities for photography (waders, herons, warblers, etc.).



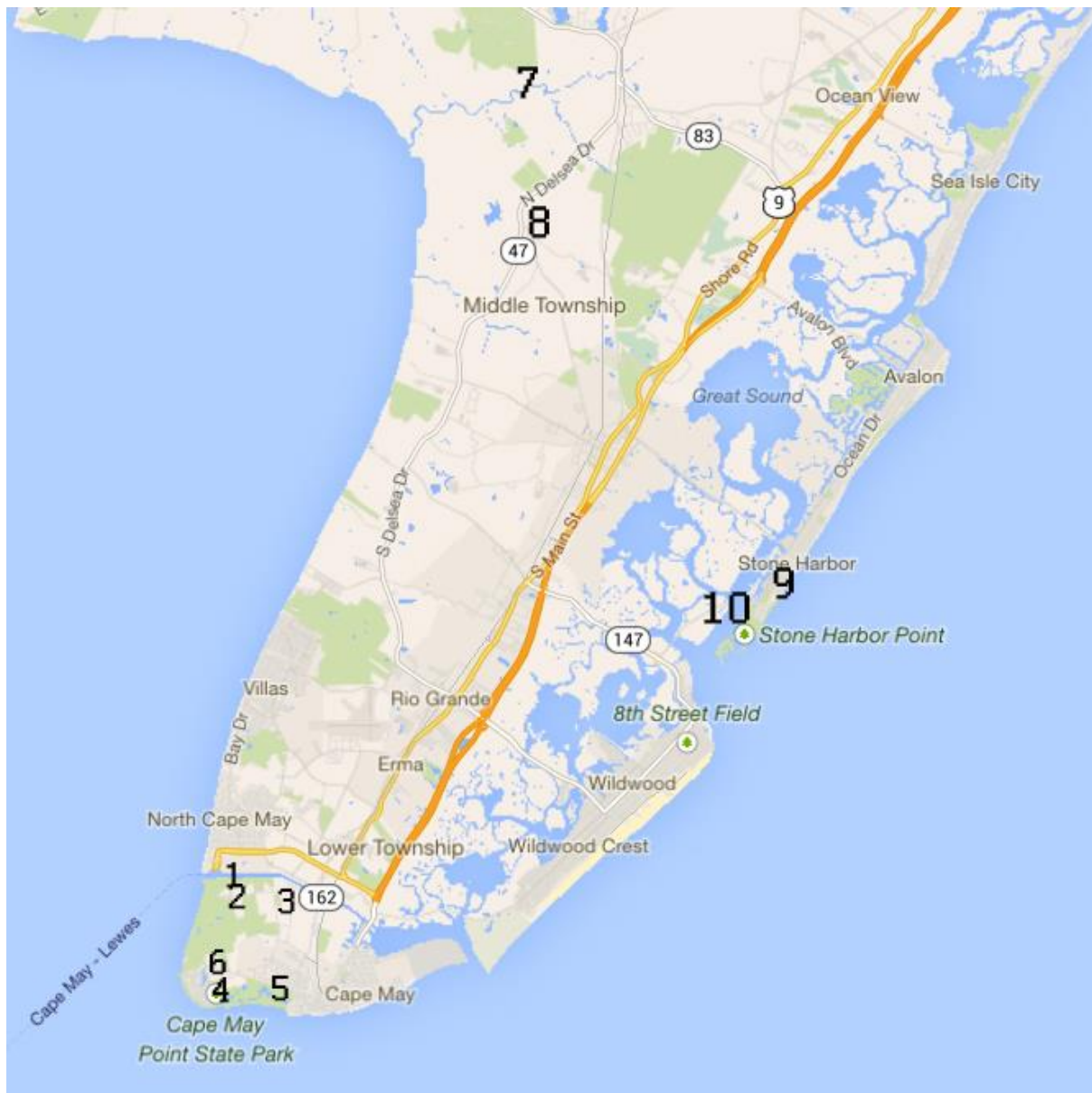
Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

Sandy Hook

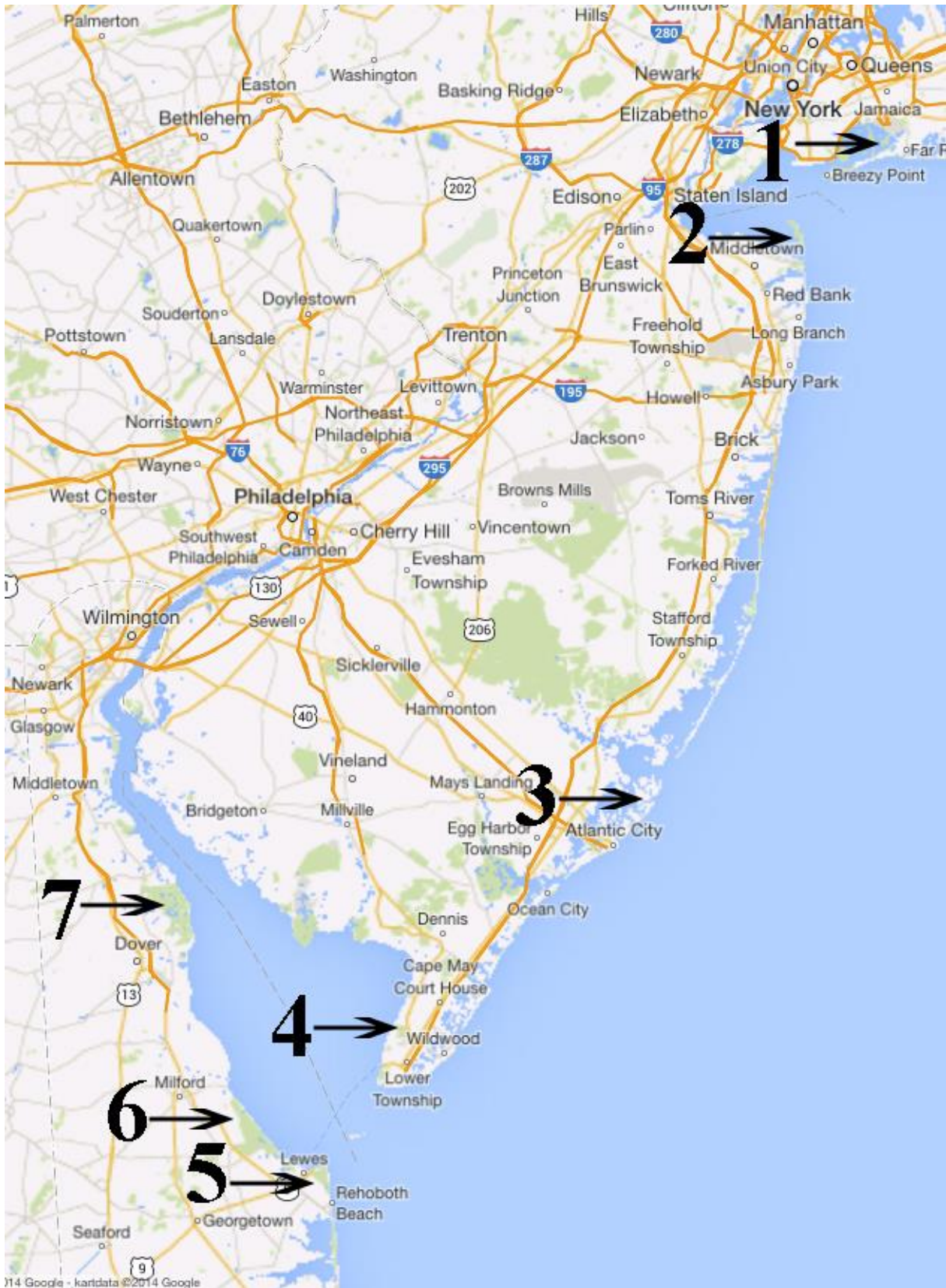
Good site for Killdeer and Piping Plover (Baird's Sandpiper is annual here, but we didn't see any). The walk from the car park goes through loose sand all the way out to the tip and is about 20 minutes long. Watch out for Poison Ivy!



Sandy Hook



- 1 The Dike, Higbee
- 2 The Fields (Higbee)
- 3 Hidden Valley
- 4 The Hawk Watch (State Park and Lighthouse)
- 5 The Meadows (South Cape May Meadows)
- 6 Lily Lake
- 7 Jake's landing
- 8 Cape May Bird Observatory, Goshen
- 9 Stone Harbor
- 10 Nummy's Island



1 – Jamaica Bay

4 – Cape May

7 – Bombay Hook

2 – Sandy Hook

5 – Cape Henlopen

3 – Brigantine

6 – Prime Hook

Itinerary

Thursday August 29th

We arrived at Newark airport on the afternoon and our first tick was American Robin, which was hopping on a lawn just outside the airport. When we had got our car – a Chevrolet Malibu – we headed for Brooklyn, where we stayed the first two nights. Our GPS was probably not 100% up to date and traffic was heavy so we missed the turn-off that we had planned. So instead of driving south to New York City, we managed to drive straight into the lion's heart – Manhattan! After a lot of cursing from Mattias and several hours later we arrived at Westminster Road in Brooklyn and our bed-and-breakfast.

Friday August 30th

We started the day early by driving to Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, a 30-minute trip. Jamaica Bay offered a lot of wetland birds in particular, but also some passerines. The Wildlife Refuge had been partly destroyed by Hurricane Sandy at the end of October 2012 but we had lots of herons and skimmers and also most of the shorebirds that we had expected. We visited both side of the refuge. The east pond was best for waders but the west pond gave us some really good close-ups of fishing skimmers. We left Jamaica Bay at 6.40 pm and went for some food in Brooklyn.

Saturday August 31th

We left our Bed-and-breakfast in Brooklyn and had a half-day of birding in Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. At 12.00 pm we headed for Sandy Hook – a two-hours-trip (about 110 kilometers). At Sandy Hook we had some good afternoon birding, there in particular terns, gulls and waders where observed. The target-species Piping Plover provided good views. Afterwards we headed for Wildwood Crest, Cape May. We arrived at Astronaut Motel, the place there we should stay the rest of our time, in late evening.

Sunday September 1st

We started the morning at Higbee, The Dike and spent a couple of hours here. Next stop was Hidden Valley, some kilometers from the Dike and after that we visited Cape May Bird Observatory at Lily Lake. Our next stop was the Hawkwatch at Cape May Lighthouse, and we had a little chat with Tom (the official migration counter) and his crew. We ended the day with some good birding at Cape May South Meadows.

Monday September 2nd

This morning we started at Higbee, The Dike. Now we met Sam for the first time. Sam was the official migration counter this season and he helped us identifying some passerines in flight. The mourning was quite calm but one Western Kingbird came in from north and this species is rare and barely annual. The rest of the day was spent in Stone Harbor and Nummy's Island on the east side of the peninsula. These two localities are good for wetland birds so we had good views of herons, gulls and shorebirds.

Tuesday September 3rd

This day was devoted to a visit to Brigantine. Brigantine is a huge wetland just north of Atlantic City. The locality provided good numbers of several birds but the photo options were not the best. It was often quite a distance to the birds and telescopes are a must. We drove the loop which is about 8 kilometers long. Among the loop there is bend on the road, called "dogleg". This is a good place for Baird's Sandpiper and Buff-breasted Sandpiper. We saw both, one Baird's and 4 Buffys. The Baird's Sandpiper is rare in Cape May and it attracted a half-dozen of birders, some of them doing "a Big Year". In the afternoon we decided to visit Jake's Landing, where we heard the trip's only Virginia Rail. Thereafter we visited the feeders at Cape May Bird Observatory in Goshen. We had good views of about a half dozen of the fast flying Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. This place is maybe the best in Cape May to photograph this stunning bird.

Wednesday September 4th

This morning we had great expectations on. The weather forecast for this morning had said that there would be a change in wind direction to colder northwesterly winds. This was a golden opportunity for migrating warblers at The Dike. Therefore we set the alarm to go up early and we reached The Dike at 6 am. This morning there was a dozen of birders on the hill when the show begun. It was quite spectacular to see this night migrators flying over us in a dense stream. The two first hours were best, then it decreased. After this we spent some hours at The Fields, looking for day-roosting passerines.

Next stop was Cape May State Park and the Hawkwatch and the day was ended at South Cape May Meadows. South Cape May Meadows is a very good late afternoon/evening site, especially for waders, but we also saw a few warblers and buntings and 3 distant nightjars at late evening.

Thursday September 5th

Mattias and Jonas went out this morning as Tommy "decided" to take a rest! Higbee and The Fields in the morning provided decent numbers of warblers/passerines, as did the State Park. The afternoon and evening where spent at Stone Harbor and this time we found a nice gathering of feeding Western Sandpipers mixed with Sanderlings.

Friday September 6th

This was the Delaware day. Three localities were planned: Cape Henelopen, Bombay Hook and Prime Hook. We took the first ferry from Cape May to Lewes on the other side of Delaware Bay. Our first stop was Cape Henelopen, and Brown-headed Nuthatch was the target species. We soon realized that it was an easy target. Already at the first stop in the Park we got contact with a group of this cool nuthatch. At the same place we also had our only Chipping Sparrows on the trip. Thereafter we had a 90-minute drive to Bombay Hook. Along the way we had some good sightings of Black Vulture and also both juveniles and adults of Bald Eagle.

On place at Bombay Hook we first enjoyed the nice group of approx. 700 American Avocets. Other birds at the pools were good numbers of Herons and waders; about 200 Greater Yellowlegs, 300 Semipalmated Plover and 2,000 Semipalmated Sandpipers and 3 Hudsonian Godwits flew past. Other good birds was Pied-billed Grebe, Pectoral Sandpiper, Sora, Least Bittern and the only Snow Goose on our trip. After the pools we stopped shortly in the following wooded area and after some playback we got contact with both Hairy Woodpecker and Red-Bellied Woodpecker. Among raptors we had good views of Bald Eagles.

The late afternoon and evening was spent at Prime Hook but this locality didn't really meet our expectations and no new bird was added to the travel list here.

We took the last ferry home from Lewes at 8pm and a nice end of the day was 4 Common Nighthawks, which came in from north and on characteristic deep wingbeats and flew straight over our heads when we had supper on the ferry terminal.

Saturday September 7th

Our last day was dedicated to Brigantine and a final try to see Marbled and Hudsonian Godwit. We started to look through the waders and about 70 Long-billed Dowitchers were feeding together at our first stop. In the middle of the pool 4 waders attached our attention. And after a round-drive we could confirm that the group consisted of two Marbled and two Hudsonian...JACKPOT!

Species list

1. **Common Loon (Great Northern Diver)** – *Gavia immer*
1 flying east The Dike, Higbee 4.9.
2. **Pied-billed Grebe** – *Podilymbus podiceps*
1 Bombay Hook 6.9, 2 Prime Hook 6.9.
3. **Brown Pelican** – *Pelecanus occidentalis*
1 Nummy’s Island 2.9.
4. **Northern Gannet** – *Morus bassanus*
1 Stone Harbor 5.9.
5. **Double-crested Cormorant** – *Phalacrocorax auritus*
Common and recorded every day. Totally over 1000 birds recorded. Highest number: 400 Brigantine 3.9.
6. **American Bittern** – *Botaurus lentiginosus*
1 flushed Nummy’s Island 2.9, 1 flying by South Cape May Meadows 4.9.
7. **Least Bittern** – *Ixobrychus exilis*
1 juvenile seen well at Bombay Hook 6.9.
8. **Great Blue Heron** – *Ardea herodias*
Rather common and recorded every day.
Highest number: 22 Bombay Hook 6.9.
9. **Great Egret** – *Egretta alba*
Common and recorded every day. Highest number: 270 Prime Hook 6.9.
10. **Snowy Egret** – *Egretta thula*
Common and recorded every day. Highest number: 300 Prime Hook 6.9.
11. **Little Blue Heron** – *Egretta caerulea*
2 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 1 Jamaica Bay 31.8, 1 Lighthouse pond, Cape May point 1.9, 4 Nummy’s Island 2.9, 2 South Cape May Meadows 4.9.
12. **Tricolored Heron** – *Egretta tricolor*
Seen in small numbers almost every day. A total of 26. Highest number: 15 Nummy’s Island 2.9.
13. **Cattle Egret** – *Bubulcus ibis*
1 in a garden at Goshen was the only observation 3.9.



Tricolored Heron

14. **Green Heron** – *Butorides virescens*
2 Jamaica Bay 31.8, 1 Bombay Hook 3.9, 5 South Cape May Meadows 4.9.
15. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** – *Nycticorax nycticorax*
12 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 1 Sandy Hook 31.8, 12 Nummy’s Island 2.9, 1 Jake’s Landing road 3.9, 1 Lighthouse pond, Cape May point 5.9, 4 Brigantine 7.9.
16. **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** – *Nyctanassa violaceus*
3 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 4 Nummy’s Island 2.9.
17. **Glossy Ibis** – *Plegadis falcinellus*
Quite common and recorded almost every day. Totally approx. 200 birds recorded. Highest number: 50 Brigantine 3.9.
18. **Mute Swan** – *Cygnus olor*
Common and recorded almost every day.
Totally 150 birds recorded.
19. **Snow Goose** – *Anser caerulescens*
1 summering Bombay Hook 6.9.
20. **Canada Goose** – *Branta canadensis*
Common and recorded almost every day.
Totally 300 birds recorded.
21. **Black Brant** – *Branta bernicla hrota*
1 summering Brigantine 3.9.
22. **Wood Duck** – *Aix sponsa*
12 Brigantine 3.9, 1 Lighthouse pond, Cape May point 4-5.9, 56 Bombay Hook, 2 Brigantine 7.9.
23. **Mallard** – *Anas platyrhynchos*
Common and recorded every day.
24. **American Black Duck** – *Anas rubripes*
Common in Jamaica Bay. Recorded almost every other day in small numbers.
25. **Gadwall** – *Anas strepera*
7 Jamaica Bay 30.9, 2 Lighthouse pond, Cape May point 1.9.
26. **Northern Pintail** – *Anas acuta*
1 Brigantine 3.9.



Yellow-crowned Night-Heron

27. **Northern Shoveler** – *Anas clypeata*
3 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 1 Lighthouse pond, Cape May point 1.9.
28. **Blue-winged Teal** – *Anas discors*
Quite common and recorded almost every day. Totally over 100 birds recorded. Highest number: 45 Brigantine 3.9.
29. **Green-winged Teal** – *Anas carolinensis*
Quite common and recorded almost every day. Totally over 200 birds recorded. Highest number: 130 Brigantine 3.9.
30. **Lesser Scaup** – *Aythya affinis*
2 early or summering females were recorded in Brigantine 3.9.
31. **Black Vulture** – *Coragyps atratus*
6 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 4.9, 4 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 5.9, 15 Delaware 6.9, 1 along the route 7.9.



32. **Turkey Vulture** – *Cathartes aura*
Common and recorded almost every day. Totally 243 birds recorded. Highest number: 70 Delaware 6.9.
33. **Osprey** – *Pandion haliaetus*
Common and recorded every day. Totally 268 birds recorded. Highest number: 50 Nummy's Island 2.9.
34. **Cooper's Hawk** – *Accipiter cooperii*
Seen in small number almost every day. Totally 11 birds recorded.
35. **Sharp-shinned Hawk** – *Accipiter striatus*
4 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 4.9, 1 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 4 Bombay Hook 6.9, 1 Brigantine 7.9.
36. **Northern Harrier** – *Circus cyaneus hudsonicus*
Seen in small number almost every day. Totally 20 birds recorded and mostly 1st year birds.

37. **Broad-winged Hawk** – *Buteo platypterus*
2 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 4.9, 1 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 5.9.
38. **Red-tailed Hawk** – *Buteo jamaicensis*
1 outside Newark airport 29.8, 1 Jamaica Bay 31.8, 4 Hidden Valley 1.9, 4 Jake's Landing road 3.9, 2 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 4.9.
39. **Bald Eagle** – *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*
Totally 25 birds recorded. 2 Nummy's Island 2.9, 1 Jake's Landing road 3.9, 2 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 4.9, 1 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 1 Cape May 5.9, 1 Stone Harbor 5.9, 3 Cape Henlopen State Park 6.9, 13 Bombay Hook 6.9, 1 Prime Hook 6.9.
40. **American Kestrel** – *Falco femoralis*
1 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 2 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 4.9, 2 Cape May 5.9.
41. **Merlin** – *Falco columbarius*
3 1cy Jamaica Bay 30.8, 1 Nummy's Island 2.9, 2 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 2 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 4.9, 1 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 1 Prime Hook 6.9, 1 Brigantine 7.9.
42. **Peregrine Falcon** – *Falco peregrinus*
3 1cy Jamaica Bay 30.8, 3 Jamaica Bay 31.8, 1 Sandy Hook 31.8, 1 South Cape May Meadows 1.9, 1 1cy Nummy's Island 2.9, 1 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 1 1cy Prime Hook 6.9.
43. **Clapper Rail** – *Rallus longirostris*
20 Nummy's Island 2.9, 10 Jake's Landing road 3.9.
44. **Virginia Rail** – *Rallus limicola*
1 heard Jake's Landing road 3.9. Answered directly on playback. We didn't manage to see it even if it was very close.
45. **Sora** – *Porzana carolina*
2 Brigantine 6.9.
46. **Black-bellied Plover** – *Pluvialis squatarola*
Common and recorded almost every day. Totally over 800 birds recorded. Highest number: approx. 500 Brigantine 7.9.
47. **American Golden-Plover** – *Pluvialis dominica*
5 Sandy Hook 31.8, 2 Brigantine 3.9, 13 (1 1cy) Bombay Hook 6.9.
48. **Killdeer** – *Charadrius vociferus*
10 Sandy Hook 31.8, 2 The Dike, Higbee 4-5.9, 1 South Cape May Meadows 4.9.

49. **Piping Plover** – *Charadrius melodus*
20 Sandy Hook 31.8, 7 Stone Harbor 2.9, 8 Stone Harbor 5.9.



Piping Plover

50. **Semipalmated Plover** – *Charadrius semipalmatus*
Common and recorded almost every day. Highest number: approx. 300 Bombay Hook 6.9.



Semipalmated Plover, 1 cy

51. **American Oystercatcher** – *Haematopus palliatus*
Common and recorded almost every day. Totally over 200 birds recorded. Highest number 110 Stone Harbor 5.9.
52. **American Avocet** – *Recurvirostra americana*
700 Brigantine 6.9.
53. **Greater Yellowlegs** – *Tringa melanoleuca*
Common and recorded almost every day. Totally over 400 birds recorded. Highest number: 200 Bombay Hook 6.9.

54. **Lesser Yellowlegs** – *Tringa flavipes*
Common but less numerous than Greater Yellowlegs. Recorded every day. Totally 168 birds recorded. Highest number: 120 Bombay Hook 6.9.
55. **Solitary Sandpiper** – *Tringa solitaria*
1 Bombay Hook 30.8, 3 Lighthouse pond, Cape May point 1.9.
56. **Spotted Sandpiper** – *Actitis macularia*
2 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 3 (2 1cy) Jamaica Bay 31.8, 1 Lighthouse pond, Cape May point 1.9, 2 1cy Lighthouse pond, Cape May point 2.9, 1 Nummy's Island 2.9, 2 Brigantine 3.9, 1 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 2 Brigantine 7.9.
57. **Willet** – *Catoptrophus semipalmatus*
1 Stone Harbor 2.9, 10 Nummy's Island 2.9, 30 Brigantine 3.9.
58. **Marbled Godwit** – *Limosa fedoa*
2 Brigantine 7.9.
59. **Hudsonian Godwit** – *Limosa haemastica*
3 Bombay Hook 6.9, 2 Brigantine 7.9.
60. **Whimbrel** – *Numenius phaeopus hudsonicus*
2 Nummy's Island 2.9, 1 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 1 Stone Harbor 5.9, 4 Brigantine 7.9.
61. **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** – *Tryngites subruficollis*
4 Brigantine 3.9.
62. **Ruddy Turnstone** – *Arenaria interpres*
2 Stone Harbor 2.9, 5 Nummy's Island 2.9, 1 Stone Harbor 5.9.
63. **Red Knot** – *Calidris canutus*
1 Sandy Hook 31.8, 35 Stone Harbor 2.9, 150 Nummy's Island 2.9, 24 Stone Harbor 5.9.
64. **Sanderling** – *Calidris alba*
Common along the shores. Highest number approx. 1000 Stone Harbor 5.9.
65. **Dunlin** – *Calidris alpina*
1 Brigantine 3.9, 1 Stone Harbor 5.9, 4 Bombay Hook 6.9.
66. **Pectoral Sandpiper** – *Calidris melanotos*
5 South Cape May Meadows 1.9, 1 Nummy's Island 2.9, 1 1cy Brigantine 3.9, 15 Bombay Hook 6.9, 1 Prime Hook 6.9.
67. **Baird's Sandpiper** – *Calidris bairdii*
1 1cy Brigantine 3.9.

68. **White-rumped Sandpiper** – *Calidris fuscicollis*
6 ad Jamaica Bay 30.8, 3 ad South Cape May Meadows 1.9, 12 ad Brigantine 3.9, 4 ad Bombay Hook 6.9.
69. **Semipalmated Sandpiper** – *Calidris pusilla*
Without discussion the most common bird on the trip. Recorded all day. A total of nearly 10 000 birds. Highest number: approx. 4000 Brigantine 3.9.
70. **Western Sandpiper** – *Calidris mauri*
1 1cy Sandy Hook 31.8, 210 Stone Harbor 5.9.
71. **Least Sandpiper** – *Calidris minutilla*
Very Common. Recorded all days. Totally approx. 300 birds recorded. Highest number: approx. 50 birds on several locations as Jamaica Bay, South Cape May Meadows and Bombay Hook.



Least Sandpiper, 1 cy



White-rumped Sandpiper, ad



Semipalmated Sandpiper, 1 cy



Western Sandpiper, 1 cy

72. **Stilt Sandpiper** – *Micropalama himantopus*
1 1cy Sandy Hook 31.8, 5 1cy Brigantine 3.9.



Stilt Sandpiper, 1 cy

73. **Long-billed Dowitcher** – *Limnodromus scolopaceus*
2 Nummy's Island 2.9, 70 Brigantine 3.9. We left many Dowitchers unidentified.
74. **Short-billed Dowitcher** – *Limnodromus griseus*
Common and most seen Dowitcher. Recorded all days and mostly 1cy birds. Highest number: 39 1cy and 1 ad Jamaica Bay 30.8.
75. **Wilson's Snipe** – *Gallinago delicata*
2 Jamaica Bay 30.8.
76. **Laughing Gull** – *Larus atricilla*
Very common and recorded every day.
77. **Ring-billed Gull** – *Larus delawarensis*
Common along the road Newark-Brooklyn and in Jamaica Bay area. In Cape May area we saw a lot fewer birds. Recorded almost every day.
78. **American Herring Gull** – *Larus smithsonianus*
Common and recorded every day.
79. **Great Black-backed Gull** – *Larus marinus*
Common and recorded every day.
80. **Caspian Tern** – *Hydroprogne caspia*
2 Stone Harbor 2.9, 1 Nummy's Island 2.9, 15 Brigantine 3.9, 7 South Cape May Meadows 4.9, 35 Stone Harbor 5.9, 40 Bombay Hook 6.9, 3 Brigantine 7.9.
81. **Gull-billed Tern** – *Gelochelidon nilotica*
2 ad and 1 1cy Brigantine 3.9.

82. **Royal Tern** – *Sterna maxima*
Common along the coasts. Totally 162 birds recorded. Highest number: approx. 70 Stone Harbor 5.9.
83. **Common Tern** – *Sterna hirundo*
Rather common along the costs. Totally approx. 140 birds recorded. Highest number approx.50 Sandy Hook 31.8.
84. **Forster's Tern** – *Sterna forsteri*
Very common and recorded every day. Highest number: approx. 500 Brigantine 7.9.
85. **Least Tern** – *Sternula antillarum*
Very small numbers at this time of year. 1 Stone Harbor 2.9, 1 Nummy's Island 2.9, 1 Brigantine 3.9.
86. **Black Skimmer** – *Rynchops niger*
16 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 12 Jamaica Bay 31.8, approx.200 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 1.9, approx.100 South Cape May Meadows 1.9, 1 Stone Harbor 2.9, 30 Brigantine 3.9, 4 Stone Harbor 5.9, approx.50 Prime Hook 6.9.



Black Skimmer

87. **Feral Pigeon** – *Columba livia*
Common. Recorded every day.
88. **Mourning Dove** – *Zenaida macroura*
Common. Recorded every day with between 15-50 birds/day.
89. **Great Horned Owl** – *Bubo virginianus*
1 day roosting in a tree South Cape May Meadows 1.9 . Great find by Tommy.

90. **Common Nighthawk** – *Chordeiles minor*
1 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 3 South Cape May Meadows 4.9, 4 Lewes (Ferry terminal in Delaware) heading south 6.9.
91. **Chimney Swift** – *Chaetura pelagica*
Probably overlooked. 1 Brooklyn 29.8, 2 Sandy Hook 31.8, 2 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 1.9, 1 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 2 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 25 Brigantine 7.9.
92. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** – *Archilochus colubris*
Quite common. 1 Jamaica Bay 31.8, 2 South Cape May Meadows, 1.9, 4 The Dike, Higbee 2.9, 3 Brigantine 3.9, 5 Cape May Bird Observatory (Goshen) 3.9, 1 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 5 Cape May Point State Park/ Cape May Point Hawk Watch 4.9, 1 South Cape May Meadows 4.9, 5 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 2 Higbee Fields 5.9, 4 Cape May Point State Park/ Cape May Point Hawk Watch 5.9, 2 Cape Henlopen State Park 6.9, 2 Bombay Hook 6.9, 2 Prime Hook 6.9.



Ruby-throated Hummingbird

93. **Belted Kingfisher** – *Ceryle alcyon*
1 Sandy Hook 31.8, 1 Lily lake 1.9, 1 Brigantine 3.9, 1 South Cape May Meadows 4.9, 1 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 2 Prime Hook 6.9, 1 Brigantine 7.9.
94. **Red-bellied Woodpecker** – *Melanerpes carolinus*
4 Bombay Hook 6.9.
95. **Downy Woodpecker** – *Picoides pubescens*
1 Hidden Valley 1.9, 3 The Dike, Higbee 2.9, 1 Brigantine 3.9, 2 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 2 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 2 Bombay Hook 6.9, 2 Prime Hook 6.9, 1 Brigantine 7.9.
96. **Hairy Woodpecker** – *Picoides villosus*
1 Bombay Hook 6.9.
97. **Northern Flicker** – *Colaptes auratus*
2 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 1 Jamaica Bay 31.8, 2 The Dike, Higbee 5.9.
98. **Eastern Wood-Pewee** – *Contopus virens*
1 Higbee Fields 4.9, 2 Cape Henlopen State Park 6.9, 4 Bombay Hook 6.9, 1 Prime Hook 6.9.
99. **Willow/Alder flycatcher** – *Empidonax traillii/Empidonax alnorum*
2 Jamaica Bay 30.8.

100. **Least Flycatcher** – *Empidonax minimus*
1 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 1 Cape May Point State Park 4.9.
101. **Eastern Phoebe** – *Sayornis phoebe*
3 Brigantine 3.9.
102. **Great-crested Flycatcher** – *Myiarchus crinitus*
1 The Dike, Higbee 2.9, 1 Brigantine 3.9, 1 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 2 Higbee Fields 4.9.
103. **Western Kingbird** – *Tyrannus verticalis*
1 heading south The Dike, Higbee 2.9. Not annual so this was a good find by Sam.
104. **Eastern Kingbird** – *Tyrannus tyrannus*
3 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 1.9, 6 The Dike, Higbee 2.9, 8 Brigantine 3.9, 2 Goshen 3.9, 40 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 8 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 1 Prime Hook 6.9, 2 Brigantine 7.9.
105. **White-eyed Vireo** – *Vireo griseus*
1 Higbee Fields 5.9, 1 Bombay Hook 6.9, 1 Prime Hook 6.9.
106. **Red-eyed Vireo** – *Vireo olivaceus*
15 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 1 Higbee Fields 4.9, 1 Cape May Point State Park 4.9, 6 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 1 Cape May Point State Park 5.9, 1 Cape Henlopen State Park 6.9, 8 Bombay Hook 6.9.
107. **Blue Jay** – *Cyanocitta cristata*
1 The Dike, Higbee 2.9, 20 Brigantine 3.9, 4 Goshen 3.9, 1 Cape May Point State Park 4.9, 1 Cape May Point State Park 5.9, 20 Brigantine 7.9.
108. **American Crow** – *Corvus brachyrhynchos*
Common. Daily numbers varied between 5-40.
109. **Fish Crow** – *Corvus ossifragus*
Probably overlooked. 20 Cape May Point Hawk Watch/ South Cape May Meadows 1.9, 5 Brigantine 3.9, approx. 10 birds under the day 4.9, approx. 10 birds under the day 5.9. We thought that the call is the best and fastest way to identify the crows.
110. **Common Raven** – *Corvus corax*
1 along the road between Cape May-Newark 7.9.
111. **Barn Swallow** – *Hirundo rustica*
Common. Records almost every day. Totally over 500 birds recorded. Highest number: 150 Jake's Landing road 3.9.
112. **Cliff Swallow** – *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*
1 The dike, Higbee 1.9.

113. **Bank Swallow** – *Riparia riparia*
2 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 5.9.
114. **Tree Swallow** – *Tachycineta bicolor*
We didn't see any in Jamaica Bay but probably overlooked. We left most of the swallows unidentified. In Cape May area very common with several hundred per day. Highest number: approx. 2500 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 1.9 .
115. **Purple Martin** – *Progne subis*
50 Cape May 1.9, 1 The Dike, Higbee 2.9, 2 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 2 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 10 Cape May Point Hawk Watch 5.9, 2 Cape Henlopen State Park 6.9.
116. **Carolina Chickadee** – *Parus carolinensis*
Fairly common. Recorded almost every day. Totally 38 birds recorded.
117. **Tufted Titmouse** – *Baeolophus bicolor*
2 Hidden Valley 1.9, 1 Brigantine 3.9, 3 Cape Henlopen State Park 6.9, 5 Bombay Hook 6.9, 5 Brigantine 7.9.
118. **Brown-headed Nuthatch** – *Sitta pusilla*
12 Cape Henlopen State Park 6.9.
119. **Marsh Wren** – *Cistothorus palustris*
1 Brigantine 3.9, 1 Jake's Landing road 3.9, 1 Brigantine 7.9.
120. **Carolina Wren** – *Thryothorus ludovicianus*
In Jamaica Bay we didn't see any. Common in Cape May area with totally over 50 birds recorded.
121. **House Wren** – *Troglodytes aedon*
2 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 2 Jamaica Bay 31.8, 1 Goshen 3.9, 2 Cape May Point State Park 4.9, 2 Cape May Point State Park 5.9.
122. **Blue-grey Gnatcatcher** – *Ptilioptila caerulea*
5 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 2 Cape May Point State Park 4.9, 5 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 1 Cape May Point State Park 5.9, 4 Bombay Hook 6.9, 4 Prime Hook 6.9.
123. **Eastern Bluebird** – *Sialia sialis*
2 Brigantine 3.9.
124. **Veery** – *Catharus fuscescens*
2 Higbee Fields 4.9, 2 Higbee Fields 5.9, 2 Brigantine 6.9.
125. **American Robin** – *Turdus migratorius*
Common in Jamaica Bay area with highest number: 50 30.8. In Cape May area we only saw some single birds. All birds were in heavy moult – not beautiful at all!



Marsh Wren

126. **Grey Catbird** – *Dumetella carolensis*
Common and recorded every day. Several days with over 20 birds recorded.
127. **Northern Mockingbird** – *Mimus polyglottos*
Common and recorded every day. Several days with 15 birds recorded.
128. **Brown Thrasher** – *Toxostoma rufum*
3 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 1 The Dike, Higbee 2.9, 1 Nummy's Island 2.9, 1 Brigantine 3.9, 2 Higbee Fields 5.9, 1 Bombay Hook 6.9, 2 Brigantine 7.9.
129. **Cedar Waxwing** – *Bombycilla cedrorum*
Common and recorded almost every day. Totally approx. 850 birds were recorded. Highest number: 560 migrating at The Dike, Higbee 5.9.
130. **European Starling** – *Sturnus vulgaris*
Very common and recorded every day. Several days with over 300 birds recorded.
131. **Tennessee Warbler** – *Vermivora peregrine*
2 in flight The Dike, Higbee 5.9.
132. **Blue-winged Warbler** – *Vermivora pinus*
1 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 2 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 1 Higbee Fields 5.9.
133. **Northern Parula** – *Parula Americana*
12 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 3 Higbee Fields 4.9, 2 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 3 Higbee Fields 5.9.
134. **Yellow Warbler** – *Dendroica petechia*
4 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 2 Jamaica Bay 31.8, 1 The Dike, Higbee 1.9, 5 Brigantine 3.9, 7 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 5 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 2 Prime Hook 6.9.
135. **Chestnut-sided Warbler** – *Dendroica pensylvanica*
2 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 3 Cape May Point State Park 4.9, 2 The Dike, Higbee 4.9.
136. **Magnolia Warbler** – *Dendroica magnolia*
1 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 1 Cape May Point State Park 4.9, 1 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 1 Cape May Point State Park 5.9, 1 Cape Henlopen State Park 6.9, 2 Bombay Hook 6.9.
137. **Blackburnian Warbler** – *Dendroica fusca*
2 in flight The Dike, Higbee 4.9.
138. **Cape May Warbler** – *Dendroica tigrina*
2 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 2 Cape May Point State Park 4.9.
139. **Black-throated Blue Warbler** – *Dendroica caerulescens*
8 in flight The Dike, Higbee 4.9.

140. **Black-throated Green Warbler** – *Dendroica virens*

1 The dike, Higbee 4.9, 1 Higbee Fields 5.9.

141. **Yellow-rumped Warbler** – *Dendroica coronata*

3 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 1 Jamaica Bay 31.8.



Top left; Cape May Warbler, top right; Black-and-white Warbler, middle left; Common Yellowthroat, middle right; Magnolia Warbler, down left; Ovenbird, down right; Yellow Warbler

142. **Palm Warbler** – *Dendroica palmarum*
2 South Cape May Meadows 4.9.
143. **Pine Warbler** – *Dendroica pinus*
1 Cape May Point State Park 4.9, 1 Cape May Point State Park 5.9.
144. **Prairie Warbler** – *Dendroica discolor*
5 Cape May Point State Park 4.9, 2 Higbee Fields 5.9, 2 Cape May Point State Park 5.9.
145. **Blackpoll Warbler** – *Dendroica striata*
1 The Dike, Higbee 4.9.
146. **American Redstart** – *Setophaga ruticilla*
Without doubt the most common wood-warbler. Totally approx. 1225 birds recorded.
Highest number: 1011 The Dike, Higbee 4.9.
147. **Black-and-white Warbler** – *Mniotilta varia*
1 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 1 Brigantine 3.9, 8 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 2 Higbee Fields 4.9, 8 Cape May Point State Park 4.9, 4 The Dike, Higbee 5.9, 1 Cape Henlopen State Park 6.9, 1 Bombay Hook 6.9.
148. **Worm-eating Warbler** – *Helmitheros vermivorus*
1 Higbee Fields 4.9, 1 Cape May Point State Park 4.9.
149. **Common Yellowthroat** – *Geothlypis trichas*
Rather common. Almost seen every day. Totally 54 birds recorded. Interestingly, this is the most common warbler “in the bushes”, but obviously their migration differs somewhat from other warblers as they are not seen in flight at the Dike, Higbee.
150. **Louisiana Waterthrush** – *Seiurus motacilla*
1 Jamaica Bay 30.9.



Louisiana Waterthrush



Northern Waterthrush

151. **Northern Waterthrush** – *Seiurus noveboracensis*
Fairly common and recorded almost every day. Totally 41 birds recorded. Highest number: 10
The Dike, Higbee 4.9.
152. **Ovenbird** – *Seiurus aurocapilla*
1 Cape May Point State Park 4.9, 2 Higbee Fields 5.9, 1 Bombay Hook 6.9.

153. **Canada Warbler** – *Wilsonia canadensis*
1 Higbee Fields 5.9.
154. **Scarlet Tanager** – *Piranga olivacea*
2 The Dike, Higbee 3.9, 4 The Dike, Higbee 5.9
155. **Blue Grosbeak** – *Passerina caerulea*
2 Cape May Point State Park 3.9, 2 Cape Henlopen State Park 6.9, 2 Bombay Hook 6.9, 2 Prime Hook 6.9.
156. **Indigo Bunting** – *Passerina cyanea*
3 The Dike, Higbee 2.9, 1 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 1 Higbee Fields 5.9
157. **Northern Cardinal** – *Cardinalis cardinalis*
Common. Recorded every day with around 10 birds per day.
158. **Eastern Towhee** – *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*
1 male Jamaica Bay 31.8.
159. **Chipping Sparrow** – *Spizella passerine*
2 Cape Henlopen State Park 6.9.
160. **Field Sparrow** – *Spizella pusilla*
6 Sandy Hook 31.8, 3 South Cape May Meadows 1.9.
161. **Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow** – *Ammodramus caudacutus*
3 Nummy's Island 2.9.
162. **Seaside Sparrow** – *Ammodramus maritimus*
7 Nummy's Island 2.9, 2 Brigantine 3.9, 1 Brigantine 7.9.
163. **Savannah Sparrow** – *Passerculus sandwichensis*
1 Jamaica Bay 31.8, 2 South Cape May Meadows 4.9.
164. **Song Sparrow** – *Melospiza melodia*
5 Nummy's Island 2.9, 4 Brigantine 3.9, 3 Stone Harbor 5.9, 1 Lewes (Ferry terminal in Delaware) 6.9.
165. **Baltimore Oriole** – *Icterus galbula*
1 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 1 Jamaica Bay 31.8, 1 Sandy Hook 31.8, 15 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 2 Higbee Fields 4.9, 2 Cape May Point State Park 4.9, 2 South Cape May Meadows 4.9, 15 The Dike Higbee 5.9.
166. **Bobolink** – *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*
70 The Dike, Higbee 2.9, 25 The Dike, Higbee 4.9, 13 South Cape May Meadows 4.9, 25 The Dike 5.9, 1 Cape May Point State Park 5.9, 30 Bombay Hook 6.9, 5 Brigantine 7.9.

167. **Red-winged Blackbird** – *Agelaius phoeniceus*
Common. Recorded every day. Daily numbers varied between 10-100 birds.
168. **Common Grackle** – *Quiscalus quiscula*
Common. Recorded every day. Daily numbers varied between 10-40 birds.
169. **Boat-tailed Grackle** – *Quiscalus major*
5 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 3 Nummy's Island 2.9, 5 Brigantine 3.9, 6 Brigantine 7.9
170. **House Sparrow** – *Passer domesticus*
Common. Recorded every day. Daily numbers varied between 5-30 birds.
171. **American Goldfinch** – *Carduelis tristis*
Fairly common. Recorded almost every day. Totally 41 birds recorded.



American Goldfinch

172. **House Finch** – *Carpodacus mexicanus*
7 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 1 Jamaica Bay 31.8, 1 Sandy Hook 31.8, 1 Brigantine 3.9, 3 Cape May Point State Park 4.9, 2 Cape May Point State Park 5.9, 2 Cape Henlopen State Park 6.9, 2 Bombay Hook 6.9

Mammals

1. **White-tailed Deer** – *Odocoileus virginianus*
6 Brigantine 7.9
2. **Musk Rat** – *Ondatra zibethicus*
2 Jamaica Bay 30.1, 1 South Cape May Meadows 1.9, 1 South Cape May Meadows 4.9, 3
Bombay Hook 3.9.
3. **Eastern Cottontail** – *Sylvilagus floridanus*
1 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 4 1.9, 1 Goshen 3.8, 1 South Cape May Meadows 4.9, 10 6.9.
4. **Common Bottlenose Dolphin** – *Tursiops truncatus*
Approx. 50 Stone Harbor 2.9, approx. 10 Stone Harbor 5.9.
5. **Eastern Gray Squirrel** – *Sciurus carolinensis*
3 Jamaica Bay 30.8, 4 Brigantine 3.9, 5 4.9, 5 5.9.
6. **Eastern Chipmunk** – *Tamias striatus*
2 Brigantine 3.9.

Snakes

1. **Rough Green Snake** – *Opheodrys aestivus aestivus*
1 Higbee Fields 4.9.



More pictures from our trip can be found here:

Jonas homepage: http://www.pbase.com/grefven/usa_130829130907

Tommys homepage: http://www.pbase.com/njutaren/usa_130829130907