



*Take A Kid Birding®*  
*Young Birder's How-to Guide: Spring in Cape May*



**Sample Spring Itinerary for Young Birders**

- ✓ Be sure to check the postings on “View from the Cape” for recent sightings information.
- ✓ Please refer to the *Cape May Birding and Butterflying Map* for detailed directions. We have included a highlighted “spring hotspots” version with this itinerary for your convenience; the letters below correspond to the hotspots on the map.
- ✓ To learn more about the expected timing of migrants in Cape May we recommend *The Birds of Cape May* by David Sibley. To order a copy call either CMBO nature store; Northwood Center 609.884.2736 or Center for Research & Education 609.861.0700

**MARCH**

**Morning: Cape Island (all land south of the canal)**

Early-season migrants such as Piping Plovers, Osprey, Purple Martins and Tree Swallows often first appear in Cape May Point. Waterfowl might be present on the various ponds and lakes (e.g. Lily Lake in Cape May Point and Bunker Pond Cape May State Park—near the Hawk Watch platform). Red-throated Loons, scoters and other waterbirds are staging in the mouth of Delaware Bay so be sure to stop and scan from the jetties in Cape May Point and from Sunset Beach/Concrete Ship.

**Afternoon: Ocean Drive & vicinity**

Search for waterfowl and wading birds on Ocean Drive (Q) between Cape May and Wildwood Crest, and search for songbirds, shorebirds and ocean birds at the Two Mile Beach Unit of Cape May NWR (S). Horned Grebes, Common Loons and waterfowl are often at Sunset Lake (T) in Wildwood Crest. Head north to Nummy’s Island (O) and the Stone Harbor vicinity, which can hold early shorebird and wading bird migrants.

**Evening: Delaware Bayshore**

Waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors are often at Reed’s Beach (G). The “ibis pond” along Reed’s Beach Road often contains quite a few ducks and wading birds. Bald Eagles nest at Beaver Swamp WMA (D), and Short-eared Owls should still be present at Jake’s Landing (C).

**APRIL**

**Morning: Belleplaine State Forest (B)**

Early returning breeding songbirds such as Pine Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Prothonotary Warbler, and Black-and-white Warbler, among others, will be evident here. More will trickle in as the month progresses.

### Afternoon: Cape Island (all land south of the canal)

A walk around Higbee Beach WMA or Cape May Point State Park could be productive, as migrant songbirds and raptors are on the move. A little time spent at Sunset Beach/Concrete Ship could produce quite a few local waterbirds, maybe even some passing by as they migrate.

### Evening: Ocean Drive & vicinity

An evening at Nummy's Island (O) is almost always productive this time of year. Tricolored Herons, Little Blue Herons, and Yellow-crowned Night Herons, will arrive during April, and shorebird numbers will increase as well.

## MAY

### Morning: Belleplaine State Forest (B) OR Cape Island (all land south of the canal)

Migrants may abound on Cape Island if there were favorable conditions (SW winds) the night before. Higbee Beach WMA and The Beanery/Rea Farm often hold quite a few migrants and can therefore be very productive. Parasitic Jaegers and several species of terns may be visible in "the rips" by sea watching from Cape May Point. Likewise, most of Belleplaine's breeding birds will be on territory by early-May, and migrant songbirds are also very possible here.

### Afternoon: Delaware Bayshore

Shorebird numbers along the bayshore beaches will increase through May at places such as Reed's Beach, Cook's Beach and Norbury's Landing (G). Large numbers of egrets and Glossy Ibis can also be found at Reed's Beach, Jake's Landing (C) and Beaver Swamp WMA (D).

### Evening: Ocean Drive & vicinity

Once again, you can't go wrong at a place like Nummy's Island (O) in the evening. Whimbrel, one of our largest shorebirds (and our only curlew), should be present in numbers through the first half of the month. Various species of wading birds should also entertain, and shorebirds will be plentiful, especially at high tide.

Be sure to view the local tide chart, one can be found on BirdCapeMay.org under "View from the Cape" (<http://www.birdcapemay.org/blog/>)

Good birding and good luck!

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