

Cape May: Spring Migration Species List | May 12 - 18, 2026 With Naturalist Journeys



Our wonderful clients included Nancy, Rebecca, Scott, Phil, Gary & Ann, Mimi, Lois, Diana and Donna with lead guide Rick Weiman, and species lists compiled by guide James P. Smith.

Our Cape May Spring Migration tour was packed with many exciting highlights. We watched thousands of migrating shorebirds and Laughing Gulls in colorful spring breeding plumage feasting on fat-laden Horseshoe Crab eggs along the Delaware Bay shore, a remarkable heron and ibis rookery at the Ocean City welcome center, Piping Plovers on the beach at Ocean City, Hudsonian Whimbrels and American Oystercatchers during the 'back bay' cruise aboard the 'Osprey', and a whole host of breeding warblers such as spectacular Ovenbirds, Yellow-throated, Prothonotary and Worm-eating Warblers during a perfect morning in the Belleplain State Forest. An early morning visit to Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge was rich in diversity producing no less than 83 bird species including wonderful views of Gull-billed, Caspian and Forster's Terns, as well as a handsome Black Racer!

The eBird link below details almost 140 bird species observed our group during the tour. A small number of 'leader-only' and 'heard-only' observations are also included. If you're new to eBird, be sure to click "Show All Details" on the right side of the list to expand the report and reveal where and when each of the birds were seen and how many.

[Cape May: Spring Migration | May 12 - 18, 2026 | eBird Trip Report](#)

The following is a list of the birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians we were fortunate to observe during the trip.

MAMMALS: (7)

Eastern Gray Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*— seen at wide scatter of forested and suburban locations, particularly around Belleplain State Forest and Woodbine.

Eastern Chipmunk *Tamias striatus* – several seen in and around the Belleplain State Forest.

Eastern Cottontail *Sylvilagus floridanus* – frequently spotted during the tour including several that hung out in the garden of our hotel.

Common Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*—noted somewhat randomly off Beach Ave, Cape May Point and the Osprey back-bay boat tour.

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus* – a small number seen towards the end of the drive loop at Edwin B. Forsythe NWR (formerly Brig) and along the broad grass verges of the Garden State Parkway.

Eastern Coyote *Canis latrans* – great views of an inquisitive individual during the festival excursion to Stone Harbor Point.

Muskrat *Ondatra zibethicus* – nice looks at TNC South Cape May Meadows on the first full day of the trip.

Groundhog *Marmota monax* – an unfortunate road causality noted in the suburbs of West Cape May.

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (5):

Common Box Turtle *Terrapene carolina* — great looks at one crossing the track in the wooded portion of the drive loop at Edwin B. Forsythe NWR.

Diamondback Terrapin *Malaclemys terrapin* — common in saltwater habitats, particularly off Cook's Beach with tens, perhaps hundreds, loafing offshore waiting to come to the beach for 'nesting'

Painted Turtle *Chrysemys picta* — noted from the boardwalk overlooking the ponds at Cape May Point State Park

Northern Red-Bellied Turtle *Pseudemys rubriventris* — several spotted 'resting' towards the rear end of Bunker Pond at Cape May Point State Park in the early stages of the trip.

Black Racer *Coluber constrictor* — beautiful views one crossing the track at Edwin B. Forsythe NWR on the 16th.

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