

**Cape Cod Bird Club Field Trips – Coordinator, Mary Jo Foti
Fall 2026**

**All are welcome on these free club walks
Please email the trip leader if you plan to attend
PLEASE - check the website for updates or cancellations to the calendar!**

September

Bells Neck Conservation Area – Harwich

Tuesday, Sept 1 – 8am

Meet at Bells Neck Road at the landing of the West Reservoir with parking in the nearby fenced-in lot. Take advantage of low tide conditions on the East Reservoir, enjoy the marsh overlook at the footbridge and scan the car bridge for raptors, waterfowl, and a possible bittern or rail. Expect about 2 miles of walking on varied terrain, sometimes narrow dirt trails with a slightly steep hill leading to the footbridge. Leader: MJ Foti, maryjo1226@yahoo.com

Peterson Farm, Falmouth

Wednesday, Sept 9 – 8am

Meet at Peterson Farm where we will scan thickets looking for flycatchers, vireos, warblers and possibly bobolink. From the intersection of Palmer Ave and Jones Rd, continue south on Palmer Ave., which turns into Locust St. Follow Locust St., which turns into Woods Hole Rd. Follow Woods Hole Rd for about .5 mile, turning right onto McCallum Dr. - stay right and follow Town of Falmouth Conservation signs to parking. Leader: Val Freysinger mannyneppy@gmail.com

Sandy Neck Beach, West Barnstable

Tuesday, Sept 15 – 8am

Head towards Sandy Neck Beach directly off Rt.6A and park in the main lot near the public facilities. We'll be looking for migrating shorebirds, terns, gulls and perhaps other pelagic species. Once we're finished with the beach the marsh trail awaits. Expect at least 2-3 miles of walking in soft sand with steep elevation in some spots. *Waterproof footwear/sturdy hiking shoes recommended.* (low tide 9:09am) Leader: Peter Crosson. capecodbirder@gmail.com

Chapin Beach, Dennis

Saturday, Sept 19 – 8am

From Route 6A, turn onto New Boston Rd across from Dennis Public Market. Drive .2 mi, then slight right onto Beach Street. At the 3-way intersection, take Taunton Ave to Dr. Botero Rd which leads to the parking area. We'll walk along this popular yet secluded beach with nice views of Sandy Neck Lighthouse and Grays Beach. Expect to see shorebirds, terns and gulls gathering in numbers with the falling tide. Forster's Terns occur regularly at this location. *Waterproof footwear/beach sandals recommended on this rocky beach.* (high tide 6:14am) Leader: MJ Foti, maryjo1226@yahoo.com

Please note destination change from the newsletter in the following walk:

South Cape Beach State Park, Mashpee

Sunday, Sept 27 – 8am

At the Mashpee rotary, exit onto Great Neck Rd which becomes Great Oak Rd at split (Red Brook Rd goes to the right and Great Oak Rd goes to the left); go left to stay on Great Oak Rd; turn left onto McGregor's Rd - the parking lot is at the end of the road. Here's a link to a map of the area: <https://www.mass.gov/locations/south-cape-beach-state-park>. The park is jointly managed by Mass Dept. of Conservation and Recreation and the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. It offers a mix of open shoreline, dune vegetation and marsh and supports a wide range of species. Migrating shorebirds, wading birds and lingering summer nesting species, as well as migrating song birds are often seen in late September. Leader: Val Freysinger mannyneppy@gmail.com

October

High Head – N. Truro

Thursday, October 1 – 8am

Meet at High Head Bike Trail parking lot. Bear left when you reach Cliff Rd to stay on High Head Rd, a dirt pathway that leads to parking for the bike trail. We'll be looking and listening for rails, bobwhites and American Bittern skulking through the marsh as well as searching overhead for raptors and scanning the thickets for passerines. Walk begins on the paved bike trail but may also include hard pack dirt trails of mixed elevation. Leader: MJ Foti maryjo1226@yahoo.com

First Encounter Beach – Eastham

Friday, October 2 – 8am

From Rt. 6, follow Samoset Rd. to the farthest parking area where we'll walk along the marsh trail bordered by the Herring River to observe shorebirds, herons, egrets, gulls and terns gathering in numbers to forage on the outgoing tide. We'll also encounter other species including a variety of passerines and raptors. *Beach sandals/waterproof footwear recommended.* (low tide 10:22am)
Leader: Marilyn Tillinghast marilyntillinghast@gmail.com

Crane Wildlife Management Area - East Falmouth

Sunday, October 11 – 8am

Meet at the parking lot of Otis Model Aero Club Flying Field. As you drive north on Nathan Ellis Highway, the entrance to Crane will be on your right next to Allietta Softball Field. You can count on productive raptor activity while this unique grassland habitat is also host to a rich variety of species, including Eastern Meadowlark, Grasshopper Sparrow, American Kestrel and possibly Blue Grosbeak. Hard pack trails can give way to more rock-strewn narrow paths - between 1.5 and 3 miles of walking.
Leader: Ross Sormani rsormani@yahoo.com

Sandy Neck, West Barnstable

Saturday, October 24 – 7am

Please note earlier start time! Take Sandy Neck Rd directly off Rt.6A and drive directly down to the main lot. We're hoping to have a big migration day of scoters and other seaducks traveling south. We should see at least some birds on the move, and depending on wind and weather, there could be a large flight of birds. We'll start by scoping from the beach near the parking lot. As the morning progresses, we'll venture farther out onto the beach and head back along the marsh trail. Expect at least 2-3 miles of walking in soft sand and dirt trails. *Waterproof footwear/sturdy hiking boots recommended.*
Leader: MJ Foti maryjo1226@yahoo.com (co-sponsored with South Shore Bird Club)
Leader: Dan O'Brien danielkobrien107@gmail.com

Robert F. Smith Cold Brook Preserve – Harwich

Sunday, October 25 – 8am

From Rt. 39 in Harwich, take Bank Street to #203 - the Harbormaster's Workshop. Cold Brook Preserve underwent a major ecological restoration project completed in fall 2024 with newly restored and *easily navigable* trails throughout 66 acres of wetland and surrounding woodland. The intricate pond and trail system provides ideal habitat for a variety of passerines, hawks and waterfowl, in addition to otters and other mammals. Leader: Ed Banks 68edbanks@gmail.com

November

Harwich-Brewster Community Gardens

Sunday, November 1 – 8am

Please note: Daylight Savings Time! Meet at the Harwich Community Gardens on Sisson Road just north of the Star Market on Route 28. This has traditionally been a nice spot for fall migration with some unlikely surprises in past years including Ash-throated Flycatcher and Grasshopper Sparrow. If time permits, we can head directly north to Brewster Community Gardens just opposite the Eddy Bay Trail. This requires little walking on hard pack dirt and is *easily navigable*.
Leader: Jeff Bryant five_loons@yahoo.com

Scusset Beach State Reservation – Sagamore**Tuesday, November 3 – 8am**

Take Scusset Beach Road to the main entrance. Parking is .25 miles beyond the entrance kiosk at the fishing pier. We'll spend the morning exploring the thickets on the wooded trails for fall migrants, walking the bike path along the canal where wintering waterfowl should just be coming in and exploring the campground area. We'll finish up at the beach and scope the jetty at the mouth of the canal. Expect two miles of walking on mixed terrain – dirt trails, paved bike trail and beach.

Leader: MJ Foti maryjo1226@yahoo.com (co-sponsored with Brookline Bird Club)

Leader: John Edmondson johnhedmondson@gmail.com

Fort Hill and Hemenway Landing – Eastham**Tuesday, November 10 – 8am**

From Route 6E, turn on Governor Prentice Rd. and park in the first lot on the left just past Captain Penniman House. We'll walk the loop trail towards Hemenway Landing where there should be some nice migrant activity. We can also scan the marsh for incoming shorebirds, herons, egrets and hopefully a bittern or rail with the rising tide. Expect 2 miles of walking hard pack trails with mixed elevation and along the marsh at the water's edge. Waterproof hiking shoes/footwear recommended.

Leader: Sharon MacDonald sjbmacdonald@gmail.com

Doane Rock and Nauset Bay East, Eastham**Tuesday, November 17 – 8am**

The walk begins in the parking area beyond Doane Rock which allows us two hours to explore this area of rich, mixed habitat. We'll begin on the wooded trails leading to Nauset Bay East, then stop on the wooden bridge spanning the marsh to observe shorebirds, coastal waterbirds, gulls and terns that gather in impressive numbers during fall migration. Expect to walk about 3 miles of paved and dirt trails.

Leader: Jeff Bryant five_loons@yahoo.com

Bells Neck Conservation Area – Harwich**Sunday, November 22 – 8am**

Meet at Bells Neck Road at the landing of the West Reservoir with parking in the nearby fenced-in lot. Take advantage of low tide conditions on the East Reservoir, enjoy the marsh overlook at the footbridge and scan the car bridge for raptors, waterfowl, and a possible bittern or rail. Expect about 2 miles of walking on varied terrain, sometimes narrow dirt trails with a slightly steep hill leading to the footbridge.

Leader: Sharon MacDonald sjbmacdonald@gmail.com

December**Harwich-Brewster Ponds****Thursday, December 3 – 8am**

From Route 124 (Pleasant Lake Ave.) turn on Headwaters Drive. The Cape Cod Rail Trail parking lot is about a half mile down on your left. A short walk on paved bike trail will bring you to our first stop, Hinckleys Pond. We'll then head to nearby Long Pond Beach in Harwich to view from our first of three vantage points. We'll finish up at Seymour Pond which includes a 10-minute walk each way along the bike trail. These mid-cape ponds host a variety of waterfowl including Greater and Lesser Scaup, Mergansers, Bufflehead and American Coot as well as the less common Barrow's Goldeneye.

Leader: MJ Foti maryjo1226@yahoo.com

Coast Guard Beach/Salt Pond Visitor Center – Eastham**Wednesday, December 9 – 8am**

Follow Route 6 to Eastham and turn right at Salt Pond Visitor Center onto Nauset Rd. This will become Doane Rd. which you'll follow to Ocean View Drive. Turn right and park in the lot by Nauset Coast Guard Station. You'll be walking south along the beach and return along the inside of the inlet. Expect to walk about 2 miles in soft sand. The second leg of the trip is a stop at Salt Pond Visitor Center for further exploring. There are open bathrooms available year-round.

Leader: Jeff Bryant five_loons@yahoo.com

Corporation Beach - Scargo Lake, Dennis**Saturday, December 19 – 8:00am**

Meet at Corporation Beach off Route 6A in South Dennis where you can observe a variety of overwintering waterfowl, grebes, loons, alcids and the occasional Harlequin Duck directly from the parking area. Our observations will be primarily stationary and *very accessible* for all levels of mobility. Bring a scope if you have one.

Leader: Jeff Bryant five_loons@yahoo.com

West Barnstable Conservation Area - Barnstable**Sunday, December 27 – 8am**

From exit 65 on Route 6, follow signs for 149S - a right turn after exiting the rotary. When you reach Marston Mills Rotary, head west on Race Lane (towards the airport hangar) for 1.2 miles. Turn right onto Crooked Cartway and follow the road until it opens onto a large, dirt parking area. This maze of old dirt roads traverses over 1,100 acres of pine-oak woodlands, interspersed with occasional brushy clearings and a broad power-line cut providing excellent birding throughout the year. Expect up to two miles of walking primarily wider and more *easily navigable* "cartway" trails.

Leader: MJ Foti maryjo1226@yahoo.com

New Year's Day with Ed Banks – Mid-Cape**Friday, January 1, 2027**

Meet in the Stop & Shop parking lot at Patriot Square on Route 134 in South Dennis and join us for our annual New Year's Day outing. Get your 2026 checklist off to a great start! Click off your yard birds in the morning and join us at noon. We will bird the mid-Cape and perhaps some other hotspots. Party hats optional! Leader: Ed Banks. 68edbanks@gmail.com (508-769-6762). ***Noon - 4:00pm***

2026 Cape Cod Waterfowl Survey, Saturday-Sunday, December 5th and 6th

Last year, 26 teams covered 332 ponds with a total of 31 waterfowl species observed. Many thanks to all of the volunteers who contributed to another successful survey. We're hoping to cover 345 ponds this year and continue to contribute to this survey's success.
MJ Foti

- Please visit your local land trusts to find out more about conservation initiatives happening within your towns. Many organizations offer guided walks and host events throughout the year, including, but not limited to:
 - HCT (Harwich Conservation Trust)
 - DCLT (Dennis Conservation Land Trust)
- Mass Audubon is an excellent resource for a wide variety of nature events and programs throughout their Sanctuaries and Wildlife Conservation Areas. They have generously allowed CCBC to run walks at Ashumet Holly and Long Pasture Wildlife Sanctuaries. Many thanks. Stay informed and up-to-date on what's happening in your conservation community:
<https://www.massaudubon.org>
- For additional information on bird clubs throughout Massachusetts, including links to each of their websites, please visit: <https://massbird.org>.

Bird Observer is a New England-based bimonthly journal for birders of all skill levels. They are a nonprofit organization supported by subscribers, and staffed by **volunteers**. They publish original articles on birding locations throughout New England, avian populations and natural history, regional rarities, book reviews and field notes, bird sightings, photographs and artwork.

New England Shorebird Guide, a photographic guide freely available on the *Bird Observer* website, now covers 37 species of shorebirds that occur in New England, northeastern United States and eastern Canada. The guide is designed primarily as a visual aid on your smart phone that can be used in the field;

it can also be installed on your tablet or computer. Access the guide using this link:
<https://www.birdobserver.org/Better-Birding/New-England-Shorebird-Guide>.

New England Shorebird Guide content was created by Soheil Zendehe. Marsha Salett of *Bird Observer* was the editor. Eric Swanzey, web manager for *Bird Observer* and other Massachusetts birding sites, created the website/app.

User help as well as instructions for installing the guide icon on your iPhone or Android phone can be accessed from within the app. Thanks to Jay Dia, Eric Mueller and Paul Bain for providing help instructions for Android phones. The photos in the guide were contributed by many generous photographers.
