

RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE CAPE MAY COUNTY LIST

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Over a quarter century has elapsed since publication of Witmer Stone's "Bird Studies at Old Cape May". The changes that have taken place in Cape May County since 1937 have been many. Foremost, of course, are the increasing number of real estate developments, especially on the barrier islands. As these islands become more densely populated, the marshes are being whittled away for housing developments, marinas, and roads. Much of the original marsh area that remains is subject to ditching, drainage, and wholesale spraying for mosquitoes. Suitable habitats for many water and marsh birds have been reduced accordingly. The development of inland housing communities is a relatively recent phenomenon in Cape May County, but it is logical to expect that these will spring up at an accelerated rate in the years ahead. Industrial progress also takes its toll, but this blight on nature is not yet widespread.

There is another side to the coin, and it is a brighter one. Hawk shooting, which was decreasing but still extensive in the late thirties, is now virtually a thing of the past. There has been increasing awareness on the part of conservationists of the necessity of saving as much as possible of the nature areas that remain. The heron sanctuary at Stone Harbor has won national acclaim. Within the last year the Federal Government has turned over to the state the former coast guard property at Cape May Point. This is the first bit of property acquired by the state whose plan for a sanctuary here under the Green Acres program envisages a much larger tract including most of the area between Cape May Point and Cape May.

There can be little doubt that Cape May has enjoyed a "birding boom" of proportions unforeseen by Witmer Stone. The area is visited each fall by an increasingly large number of individuals and organized groups. The accessibility of Cape May County to the major metropolitan centers of the East has improved tremendously the last few years and continues to improve. The Garden State Parkway speeds visitors down from the north and terminates within three miles of Cape May Point. As recently as 1964 the driving time (but not cost) from Philadelphia was reduced with the opening of the Atlantic City Expressway. And, of course, commencement of ferry operations between Lewes and Cape May increases accessibility from the south.

The tabulation which follows is by no means an attempt to update Witmer Stone's book. It is a summation, pure and simple, of species additions to the Cape May County list since publication of "Birds Studies at Old Cape May". The Cattle Egret is, of course, now relatively common, and in the case of accidentals or strays from the west, there may be additional observations other than those listed unless stated otherwise.

The Annotated List:

- EARED GREBE**, *Colymbus caspicus*. One observed at Stone Harbor on February 14, 1954 (Ray J. Brooke, Jr.).
- WESTERN GREBE**, *Aechmorphismus occidentalis*. One observed at Stone Harbor on February 4, 1954 (V. A. Debes et al.).
- GREAT CORMORANT**, *Phalacrocorax carbo*. First observed at Cape May Point on September 28, 1954 (J. Cadbury).
- CATTLE EGRET**, *Bubulcus ibis*. First observed on May 25, 1952, near Higbee's Beach (J. Baird, R. Bates, B. Murray, and R. Smart). The first nest was found at Stingaree Point, near Wildwood, on July 4, 1958 (R. S. Fowler).
- BAIKAL TEAL**, *Anas formosa*. One present at Lily Lake, Cape May Point, in late February and early March, 1961 (E. A. Choate et al.). Very possibly an escaped bird.
- EUROPEAN WIDGEON**, *Mareca penelope*. There are now several records for Cape May County, all from Lily Lake, Cape May Point. The first report was of two birds seen on November 8, 1959 (W. Bailey, E. Choate).
- BARROW'S GOLDENEYE**, *Glaucionetta islandica*. It would seem well to include here a report of a bird seen in the waters off Cape May Point in December, 1934, by Richard Pough. This is the only report of this species in southern New Jersey and one of the very few for the state. This record was apparently inadvertently omitted by Witmer Stone.
- BLACK VULTURE**, *Coragyps atratus*. One observed at Cape May Point on June 7, 1954 (B. Murray et al.). There have been one or two subsequent reports.
- SWALLOW-TAILED KITE**, *Elanoides forficatus*. One observed on September 1, 1946, at Cape May Point (J. D'Arcy Northwood). This is the only report.
- BLACK OYSTERCATCHER**, *Haematopus bachmani*. A bird observed on Nummy's Island, near Stone Harbor, on August 29, 1951 (E. Choate, J. C. Seegars, and E. L. Altemus). This is the only state record for this bird.
- EUROPEAN WOODCOCK**, *Scolopax rusticola*. One was seen at Goshen on January 2, 1956, and for several days thereafter (D. Coman). Appropriate credit should also be given to Dale Coman's dog who repeatedly flushed the bird.
- RUFFE**, *Philomachus pugnax*. The first report was of one bird in the marshes near Cape May Harbor on August 24, 1948 (E. Choate, E. Poole). There have been subsequent reports.
- LONG-TAILED JAEGER**, *Stercorarius longicaudus*. One was observed at Cape May Point on September 28, 1941 (J. Cadbury et al.). Another was approached to within ten feet as it rested on the beach at Cape May Point on October 18-19, 1947 (D. Fables, Jr., E. Kramer, J. D'Arcy Northwood).
- GLAUCOUS GULL**, *Larus hyperboreus*. One observed on April 1, 1961, at Lily Lake, Cape May Point (A. Brady). There have been other reports.

ICELAND GULL, *Larus leucopterus*. Observed at Schellenger's Landing on December 27, 1959 (D. and H. Cutler, J. Sawyer). There have been subsequent reports.

BLACK-HEADED GULL, *Larus ridibundus*. Unrecorded in New Jersey until after Witmer Stone's time, there have now been at least two records for Cape May County, the first being in Cape May Harbor on January 2, 1956 (H. Cutler).

LITTLE GULL, *Larus minutus*. Observed at Hereford Inlet on December 24, 1954 (D. Cutler, E. Reimann). There has been at least one subsequent report.

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE, *Rissa tridactyla*. One was observed at Wildwood on December 22, 1957 (E. Reimann). Another was observed in the Inland Waterway between Wildwood and Stone Harbor on December 27, 1959 (J. Cadbury et al.).

NODDY TERN, *Anous stolidus*. One was observed at Stone Harbor in September, 1960, following the passage of Hurricane Donna (K. Wright).

BLACK-BACKED THREE-TOED WOODPECKER, *Picoides arcticus*. Two males were present at Cape May Point on October 5-6, 1963, and were seen by many observers.

KISKADEE FLYCATCHER, *Pitangus sulphuratus*. One observed at Cape May Court House on December 26, 1962 (M. Stauffer, H. Kreuger, S. Thomas). The thought has been expressed that this might have been a ship-borne bird from Bermuda, where the species has been introduced.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER, *Muscivora forficata*. One seen near Cold Spring on September 2, 1941 (D. Fables, Jr.) and another observed between Cape May and Cape May Point on October 21, 1961 (A. Greer, J. Meritt, W. Russell).

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE, *Parus atricapillus*. Reported at Cape May Point on December 22, 1957 (A. Brady).

BEWICK'S WREN, *Thryomanes bewicki*. One banded and photographed at Cape May Point on October 13, 1962 (R. Benedict).

WHEATEAR, *Oenanthe oenanthe*. A bird present at Cape May Point for a number of days in October, 1951, was seen by many observers.

CERULEAN WARBLER, *Dendroica cerulea*. Observed on May 6-7, 1962, at Cape May Point (E. Choate et al.).

BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER, *Dendroica nigrescens*. Observed at Cape May Point on September 30, 1961 (H. Armistead et al.).

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE, *Icterus bullocki*. On December 18, 1953, one appeared at a feeding station in Cape May Court House (S. Thomas). The bird subsequently appeared at other feeding stations and was seen by a number of observers.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD, *Euphagus cyanocephalus*. Four birds were seen at Green Creek on December 27, 1959 (R. Haines, S. Harty, G. Reynard). There have been subsequent reports.

WESTERN Tanager, *Piranga ludoviciana*. One observed at Cape May Point on December 4, 1954 (C. E. Price et al.).

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK, *Pheucticus melanocephalus*. One observed at Cape May Court House on December 26, 1960 (J. Cadbury et al.). There has been at least one subsequent report.

PAINTED BUNTING, *Passerina ciris*. An adult male observed at Cape May Point on May 4-5, 1958, was the first state record (R. S. Fowler et al.).

HOUSE FINCH, *Carpodacus mexicanus*. Three were observed at Cape May Point on October 17, 1964 (R. Sehl).

PINE GROSBEAK, *Pinicola enucleator*. Five were seen at Cape May Point on October 17, 1939 (D. Fables, Jr., L. Holland). There have been at least two subsequent reports.

LARK BUNTING, *Calamospiza melanocorys*. A female was observed at Cape May Point on September 16, 1956 (R. Grant, Q. Kramer, I. Black, D. Kunkle et al.).

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW, *Spizella pallida*. There have been a number of September and October reports for this species since 1953.

GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW, *Zonotrichia atricapilla*. One was observed at Cape May Point on October 7, 1962 (J. Cadbury et al.).

Omitted from the above list, temporarily at least, is the report of the Great Snipe (*Capella media*) seen at Lily Lake, Cape May Point, in the fall of 1963. This record would be a "first" for the North American continent. Supporting evidence in connection with this record is now being studied by the A.O.U. Acceptance Committee. Mute Swans (*Cygnus olor*) have not as yet been recorded in a natural state in Cape May County. Those present at Lily Lake were, like the Black Swans, purchased and liberated there.

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