

## WILDLIFE

## VIII

There are two very significant features in regard to the wildlife found in West Cape May. The first is the phenomena of the avian migration that takes place every year. The second is the presence of the southern gray treefrog (*Hyla chrysoscelis*).

West Cape May is part of an international eco-system. The combination of ocean, fresh and saltwater wetlands, and the Borough's geographic location on the Atlantic flyway make it one of the most important migratory stopovers in the world for butterflies, dragonflies, birds of prey, shorebirds, songbirds and water fowl, as well as an important breeding area for rare and common birds. It is considered by Federal, State and private organizations to be one of the foremost avian viewing areas in North America. Estimates conclude that approximately 60,000 raptors and 1,000,000 seabirds migrate through the Borough each year. Although various species are present in and around West Cape May throughout the year, the most spectacular display of species is during the late summer/fall migration.

In addition to the bird migration, West Cape May wetlands serve as critical habitat and breeding ground for the southern gray treefrog. This species is of particular importance as it is listed as endangered by the State of New Jersey. Several surveys for this frog have been performed in and around West Cape May. Specifically, surveys were performed in 1991 by Zappalorti and Dowdell, 2001 by Clay Sutton and 2002 by Herpetological Associates, Inc. (Zappalorti and McCort). All three (3) surveys confirm the presence of the southern gray treefrog in West Cape May.

The most recent survey performed by Herpetological Associates, Inc. concludes "that the central corridor wetlands serve as a stronghold for the southern gray treefrog in Cape May County and possibly all of southern New Jersey". A copy of that study entitled "Southern Gray Treefrog (*Hyla chrysoscelis*) Surveys in the Borough of West Cape May, Cape May County, New Jersey" and dated 9/6/02 can be reviewed at the Borough offices. The central corridor wetlands will be further discussed in the wetland section of this report.

Figure VII-1, West Cape May Endangered Species Habitat, Figure VII-2, West Cape May Southern Gray Treefrog Habitat and Figure VII -3, West Cape May Wetlands, presented in Section VII, Vegetation, illustrate the generalized locations of wetlands, forests, and grasslands.

A list of threatened and endangered species that value various habitats within the Borough of West Cape May are presented in Table VIII-1. Bird Species that utilize Cape Island and West Cape May are listed in Table VIII-2.

**Table VIII-1. List of Threatened and Endangered Species that Value Critical Emergent Wetland, Forested Wetland, Forest, and Grassland Habitats within the Borough of West Cape May. Habitats Valued by NJDEP's Landscape Project (v.2a).**

**Emergent Wetlands**

Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*) Foraging Habitat  
Black-Crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) Foraging Habitat  
Colonial Waterbird Foraging Habitat  
Southern Gray Treefrog (*Hyla chrysoscelis*)  
Eastern Tiger Salamander (*Ambystoma t. tigrinum*)  
Herptile Species of Special Concern  
Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*)  
Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) Foraging Habitat  
Migratory Raptor Concentration Site  
Tern Species Foraging Habitat

**Forested Wetland Species**

Southern Gray Treefrog (*Hyla chrysoscelis*)  
Herptile Species of Special Concern  
Migratory Raptor Concentration Site

**Forest Species**

Southern Gray Treefrog (*Hyla chrysoscelis*)  
Herptile Species of Special Concern  
Migratory Raptor Concentration Site

**Grassland**

Herptile Species of Special Concern  
Migratory Raptor Concentration Site

**Table VIII-2. Bird Species that Utilize Cape Island and West Cape May as Recorded by the New Jersey Audubon Society (1980-Present).**

*Each Bird is identified as a migrant (M), a breeder (B), and/or a resident (R).*

*At the end of this table is a list of other species that are found on Cape Island and in West Cape May.*

**Loons to Cormorants**

<u>M</u>	Red-throated Loon
<u>M</u>	Common Loon
<u>M B</u>	Pied-billed Grebe
<u>M</u>	Horned Grebe
<u>M</u>	Red-necked Grebe
<u>M</u>	Cory's Shearwater
<u>M</u>	Sooty Shearwater
<u>M</u>	Audubon's Shearwater
<u>M</u>	Wilson's Storm-Petrel
<u>M</u>	American White Pelican
<u>M</u>	Brown Pelican
<u>M</u>	Northern Gannet
<u>M</u>	Great Cormorant
<u>M</u>	Double-crested Cormorant

**Bitterns to Ibises**

<u>M</u>	American Bittern
<u>M B</u>	Least Bittern
<u>M</u>	Great Blue Heron
<u>M</u>	Great Egret
<u>M</u>	Little Blue Heron
<u>M</u>	Tricolored Heron
<u>M</u>	Cattle Egret
<u>M B</u>	Green Heron
<u>M</u>	Black-crowned Night-Heron
<u>M</u>	Yellow-crowned Night-Heron
<u>M</u>	White Ibis
<u>M</u>	Glossy Ibis

**Waterfowl**

<u>M</u>	Tundra Swan
<u>R B</u>	Mute Swan
<u>M</u>	Snow Goose
<u>M</u>	Brant
<u>M</u>	Canada Goose
<u>M B</u>	Wood Duck
<u>M</u>	Green-winged Teal
<u>M B</u>	American Black Duck
<u>R B</u>	Mallard
<u>M</u>	Northern Pintail
<u>M B</u>	Blue-winged Teal
<u>M</u>	Northern Shoveler
<u>M B</u>	Gadwell

<u>M</u>	Eurasian Wigeon
<u>M</u>	Common Loon
<u>M</u>	American Wigeon
<u>M</u>	Canvasback
<u>M</u>	Redhead
<u>M</u>	Ring-necked Duck
<u>M</u>	Greater Scaup
<u>M</u>	Lesser Scaup
<u>M</u>	Common Eider
<u>M</u>	King Eider
<u>M</u>	Harlequin Duck
<u>M</u>	Oldsquaw
<u>M</u>	Black Scoter
<u>M</u>	Surf Scoter
<u>M</u>	White-winged Scoter
<u>M</u>	Common Goldeneye
<u>M</u>	Bufflehead
<u>M</u>	Hooded Merganser
<u>M</u>	Common Merganser
<u>M</u>	Red-breasted Merganser
<u>M</u>	Lesser Black-backed Gull
<u>M</u>	Glaucous Gull
<u>M</u>	Great Black-backed Gull
<u>M</u>	Black-legged Kittiwake
<u>M</u>	Gull-billed Tern
<u>M</u>	Caspian Tern
<u>M</u>	Sandwich Tern
<u>M</u>	Royal Tern
<u>M</u>	Roseate Tern
<u>M</u>	Artic Tern
<u>M</u>	Common Tern
<u>M</u>	Common Loon
<u>M</u>	Forster's Tern
<u>M B</u>	Least Tern
<u>M</u>	Black Tern
<u>M</u>	Black Skimmer
<u>M</u>	Dovekie
<u>M</u>	Razorbill

***Pigeons to Woodpeckers***

R B Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)  
M White-winged Dove  
R B Mourning Dove  
M B Black-billed Cuckoo  
M B Yellow-billed Cuckoo  
R B Barn Owl  
M Eastern Screech-Owl  
R B Great Horned Owl  
M Snowy Owl  
M Barred Owl  
M Long-eared Owl  
M Short-eared Owl  
M Northern Saw-whet Owl  
M Common Nighthawk  
M B Chuck-will's-widow  
M Whip-poor-will  
M B Chimney Swift  
M B Ruby-throated Hummingbird  
M Belted Kingfisher  
M Red-headed Woodpecker  
R B Red-bellied Woodpecker  
M Yellow-bellied Sapsucker  
R B Downy Woodpecker  
R B Hairy Woodpecker  
B Northern Flicker

***Flycatchers and Swallows***

M Oliver-sided Flycatcher  
B Eastern Wood-Pewee  
M Yellow-bellied Flycatcher  
M Acadian Flycatcher  
M Alder Flycatcher  
M B Willow Flycatcher  
M Least Flycatcher  
M Eastern Phoebe  
M B Great Crested Flycatcher  
M Western Kingbird  
M B Eastern Kingbird  
M Scissor-tailed Flycatcher  
M Horned Lark  
M B Purple Martin  
M B Tree Swallow  
M B No. Rough-winged Swallow  
M Bank Swallow  
M Cliff Swallow  
M B Barn Swallow

***Jays to Wrens***

R B Blue Jay  
R B American Crow  
M B Fish Crow  
R B Carolina Chickadee  
R B Tufted Titmouse

M Red-Breasted Nuthatch  
M White-breasted Nuthatch  
M Brown Creeper  
R B Carolina Wren  
M B House Wren  
M Winter Wren  
M Sedge Wren  
M B Marsh Wren

***Diurnal Raptors***

M Black Vulture  
M Turkey Vulture  
M Osprey  
M Swallow-tailed Kite  
M Mississippi Kite  
M Bald Eagle  
M Northern Harrier  
M Sharp-skinned Hawk  
M Cooper's Hawk  
M Northern Goshawk  
M B Red-shouldered Hawk  
M Broad-winged Hawk  
M Swainson's Hawk  
M Red-tailed Hawk  
M Rough-legged Hawk  
M Golden Eagle  
M American Kestrel  
M Merlin  
M Peregrine Falcon

***Grouse to Cranes***

M Ringed-necked Pheasant  
M Ruffed Grouse  
M B Northern Bobwhite  
M Clapper Rail  
M King Rail  
M Virginia Rail  
M B Sora  
M B Purple Gallinule  
M B Common Moorhen  
M American Coot  
M Sandhill Crane

***Shorebirds***

M Black-bellied Plover  
M American Golden-Plover  
M Semipalmated Plover  
M B Piping Plover  
M B Killdeer  
M American Oystercatcher  
M Black-necked Stilt  
M American Avocet  
M Greater Yellowlegs  
M Lesser Yellowlegs

M Solitary Sandpiper  
M B Willet  
M Spotted Sandpiper  
M Upland Sandpiper  
M Whimbrel  
M Hudsonian Godwit  
M Marbled Godwit  
M Ruddy Turnstone  
M Red Knot  
M Sanderling  
M Semipalmated Sandpiper  
M Western Sandpiper  
M Least Sandpiper  
M White-rumped Sandpiper  
M Pectoral Sandpiper  
M Baird's Sandpiper  
M Purple Sandpiper  
M Dunlin  
M Stilt Sandpiper  
M Buff-breasted Sandpiper  
M Ruff  
M Short-billed Dowitcher  
M Long-billed Dowitcher  
M Common Snipe  
M B American Woodcock  
M Wilson's Phalarope  
M Red-necked Phalarope  
M Red Phalarope

***Jaegers to Alcids***

M Pomarine Jaeger  
M Parasitic Jaeger  
M Laughing Gull  
M Little Gull  
M Black-headed Gull  
M Bonaparte's Gull  
M Ring-billed Gull  
M Herring Gull  
M Iceland Gull

***Kinglets to Starlings***

M Golden-crowned Kinglet  
M Ruby-crowned Kinglet  
M B Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
M Eastern Bluebird  
M Veery  
M Gray-cheeked Thrush  
M Bicknell's Thrush  
M Swainson's Thrush  
M Hermit Thrush  
M Wood Thrush  
M B American Robin  
M B Gray Catbird  
R B Northern Mockingbird

M B Brown Thrasher  
M American Pipit  
M B Cedar Waxwing  
M Northern Shrike  
M Loggerhead Shrike  
M B European Starling

***Vireos and Warblers***

M B White-eyed Vireo  
M Blue-headed Vireo  
M Yellow-throated Vireo  
M Warbling Vireo  
M Philadelphia Vireo  
M B Red-eyed Vireo  
M Blue-winged Warbler  
M Golden-winged Warbler  
M Tennessee Warbler  
M Orange-crowned Warbler  
M Nashville Warbler  
M Northern Parula  
M B Yellow Warbler  
M Chestnut-sided Warbler  
M Magnolia Warbler  
M Black-throated Blue Warbler  
M Yellow-rumped Warbler  
M Black-throated Green Warbler  
M Blackburnian Warbler  
M Yellow-throated Warbler  
M B Pine Warbler  
M B Prairie Warbler  
M Palm Warbler  
M Bay-breasted Warbler  
M Blackpoll Warbler  
M Cerulean Warbler  
M Black-and-white Warbler  
M American Redstart  
M B Prothonotary Warbler  
M Worm-eating Warbler  
M Ovenbird  
M Northern Waterthrush  
M Louisiana Waterthrush  
M Kentucky Warbler  
M Connecticut Warbler  
M Mourning Warbler  
M B Common Yellowthroat  
M Hooded Warbler  
M Wilson's Warbler  
M Canada Warbler  
M B Yellow-breasted Chat  
M B Swainsons Warbler

**Tanagers to Sparrows**

- M Summer Tanager  
M B Scarlet Tanager  
R B Northern Cardinal  
M Rose-breasted Grosbeak  
M B Blue Grosbeak  
M B Indigo Bunting  
M Dickcissel  
M B Eastern Towhee  
M American Tree Sparrow  
M B Chipping Sparrow  
M Clay-colored Sparrow  
M B Field Sparrow  
M Vesper Sparrow  
M Lark Sparrow  
M Savannah Sparrow  
M Grasshopper Sparrow  
M Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow  
M Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow  
M Seaside Sparrow  
M Fox Sparrow  
R B Song Sparrow  
M Lincoln's Sparrow  
M Swamp Sparrow  
M White-throated Sparrow  
M White-crowned Sparrow  
M Dark-eye Junco  
M Lapland Longspur  
M Snow bunting

**Blackbirds to Old World Sparrows**

- M Bobolink  
M B Red-winged Blackbird  
M Eastern Meadowlark  
M Yellow-headed Blackbird  
M Rusty Blackbird  
M Brewer's Blackbird  
M B Boat-tailed Grackle  
M B Common Grackle  
M B Brown-headed Cowbird  
M B Orchard Oriole  
M Baltimore Oriole  
M Purple Finch  
M Red Crossbill  
R B House Finch  
M Common Redpoll  
M Pine Siskin  
M B American Goldfinch  
M Evening Grosbeak  
R B House Sparrow

**Rarities**

This is a list of species (the total number of records in Parentheses) that have been adequately documented fewer than 10 times since 1980. Observers who encounter any of these species should document the record with careful notes, sketches, and photographs. Please make every effort to contact the Cape May Bird Observatory (609-884-2736) and other birders as soon as possible.

1. Eared Grebe (13)
2. Northern Fulmar (5)
3. Black-capped Petrel (1)
4. Manx Shearwater (5)
5. White-faced Storm-Petrel (1)
6. Leach's Storm-Petrel (2)
7. Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (1)
8. Brown Booby (3)
9. Anhinga (4)
10. Magnificent Frigatebird (3)
11. White-faced Ibis (4)
12. Wood Stork (8)
13. Fulvous Whistling-Duck (7)
14. Greater White-fronted Goose (6)
15. Eurasian Kestrel (2)
16. Yellow Rail (12)
17. Long-billed Curlew (1 since 1900)
18. Long-billed Jaeger (5)
19. Franklin's Gull (12)
20. Sabine's Gull (6)
21. Bridled Tern (6)
22. Sooty Tern (15)
23. Whiskered Tern (1)
24. Common Murre (7)
25. Thick-billed Murre (8)
26. Atlantic Puffin (8)
27. Black-backed Woodpecker (1)
28. Pileated Woodpecker (7+)
29. Ash-throated Flycatcher (9)
30. Fork-tailed Flycatcher (7)
31. Violet-green Swallow (1)
32. Cave Swallow (6)
33. Common Raven (3 since 1940)
34. Rock Wren (1)
35. Bewick's Wren (2)
36. Northern Wheatear (6)
37. Mountain Bluebird (1)
38. Bell's Vireo (2)
39. Black-throated Gray Warbler (7)
40. Swainson's Warbler (5)

41. Western Tanager (14)
42. Painted Bunting (7)
43. Spotted Towhee (1)

***Amphibians***

1. Bull frog
2. Green frog
3. Grey frog
4. Leopard frog
5. Wood frog
6. Spring peeper
7. Fowler's toad
8. Cricket Frog

***Reptiles***

1. Painted turtle
2. Snapping turtle
3. Northern water snake
4. Ribbon snake

***Mammals (found in wooded and urban areas)***

1. Deer
2. Eastern mole
3. Grey Squirrel
4. House mouse
5. Least shrew
6. Little brown bat
7. Long tail weasel
8. Meadow vole
9. Norway rat
10. Opossum
11. Rabbit
12. Raccoon
13. Red bat
14. Red fox
15. Short tail shrew
16. Skunk
17. White-footed mouse