

Park

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great numbers. "We have one of the most fall bird migrations in the country, and it draws people from all over the world - not just from the U.S., but we have a lot of European visitors also," Pellegrine said.

Walking through the park practically anytime of year, birders can be seen exploring the grounds with cameras and binoculars, hoping to spot a rare species, which is plausible given the hundreds of various birds that visit each year. Bird blinds and observation decks have been built around the park for birders to use, as well as the 2.5 miles of trails through the park.

Pellegrine said around 10 years ago, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) began replenishing the surrounding beaches, channeled the marsh area, created two large ponds near the sand dunes and initiated a phragmites control program to preserve the park's wildlife habitats and renowned bird migration.

"Technically, we're a state natural area, but we're far from a pristine habitat. Roughly half the park was a military base, where there was a lot of clearing and filling, while much of the other half of the park was a dairy farm," he said.

He said the federal government gave the military base to the State Park Service following the massive 1962 storm that pulverized and washed away portions of the island.

"The federal government proclaimed Cape May and Cape May Point a disaster area, and at that time they felt the land wasn't going to be here much longer any-



Above left, a family of Canada geese swim across one of the ponds along the Cape May Point State Park nature trails. Above right, a white heron sits among reeds in the state park. The park attracts many kinds of waterfowl and other avian species.



Cain Chamberlin/Cape May Star and Wave

way," Pellegrine said. "We're very fortunate to still be here given the close proximity to the ocean. We haven't had any severe erosion since 1993."

Aside from the immense help given by USACE, Pellegrine said the state park is always looking for volunteers to help rid the property of invasive, non-native vines and plants like porcelain berry, European clematis and Japanese honey suckle. He said these plants smother and kill the native plant life, destroying the habitats of tree frogs, owls, bats and songbirds. He said in the last 12 years, around 3,000 trees have been planted in the park, but many die due to these invasive vines. Pellegrine said because so few people volunteer, they are forced to use artificial maintenance to control the non-native plants. "It's not all back-breaking

work to remove the vines by hand - a lot of it is pretty tedious. We can give everyone a job to help with, no matter what age or physical condition," he said.

Pellegrine said having a dedicated staff, respectful visitors and a strong team of volunteers are crucial to the survival of the state park. He said as long as the staff and volunteers continue to maintain and care for the park, the visitors will keep returning day after day.

"Because of the fall bird migration and a lot of the other activities we have here, our tourist season is very long. We're busy from about April to mid-November," he said.

Pellegrine said other park attractions include the famous Cape May Lighthouse, which is run by the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts

and Humanities (MAC), acts as sort of a beacon for the state park, standing 157-feet above the main parking lot. Everyday, visitors climb the 199 steps to observe the panoramic view of the peninsula. Pellegrine noted that the park also has two World War II attractions for the history buffs. The first is the World War II Fire Control Tower 23, which is New Jersey's last remaining WWII tower, and the is the other WWII gun emplacement on the beachfront.

MAC gives historical tours of the both the lighthouse and the watchtower, while the state park hosts numerous educational programs and tours for people of all ages, including birding and nature walks, animal shows and youth workshops.

"The people that do come for the educational activities

are really pleased with their experience," he said. "Our hands-on, live animal programs on Saturdays are really well attended. Most of the time it's just standing room only in the Visitors Center with people wanting to touch the turtles, snakes and frogs."

Pellegrine has been a speaker at numerous schools, and church groups around South Jersey, bringing animals with him and educating children about the state park and New Jersey wildlife. He said these seminars have always been free, but starting the next school year, the park service will charge \$50 to have a naturalist visit a school. Pellegrine still feels it would be cheaper than the transportation costs to bring the children to the state park.

Now that summer has arrived and school is out, the Cape May Point State Park

staff has put together a long lineup of activities, tours and seminars for youth and adults. The park is open daily to visitors from sunrise to sundown. For more information, call the state park at 884-2159.

Summer 2013 Schedule of Events at Cape May Point State Park

Fridays in July and August: 8 a.m. - Advanced Birding (Visitor Center); 9 a.m. - Beginners Bird Walk (Visitor Center); 1 p.m. - Delaware Bay Safari at Sunset Beach

Saturdays: 8 a.m. - Advanced Birding (Visitor Center); 9 a.m. - Beginners Bird Walk (Visitor Center); 11 a.m. - Kids & Critters Live Animal Show (Museum Classroom); 2 p.m. - Nature Walk

Sundays starting June 16: 9 a.m. - Beginners Bird Walk (Visitor Center); 11 a.m. - Plover Walk (Visitor Center May 26 - Aug. 11); 1 p.m. - Pond Life Animal Show (Museum Classroom); 2 p.m. - Nature Walk.

July 4 and Labor Day: 9 a.m. - Nature Walk (Visitor Center); 11 a.m. - Kids & Critters Live Animal Show (Museum Classroom).

July 13: 1-4 p.m. - Snapper Day - meet live snapping turtles.

July 31: 1 p.m. - Nellie's Birthday Party - help celebrate Nellie the turtle's birthday.

Aug. 24: 3-6 p.m. - Pledge to Fledge - explore the world of birding in this international event.

Fridays, July 5 through Aug. 9: Minnows Preschool Workshops - Nature walks, stories and crafts - registration necessary.

CMPD

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trians in crosswalks, and they face a two-point violation if they do not. However, pedestrians are required to use painted crosswalks and signals where they are available. Pedestrians should follow the signals, or enter the crosswalk only when it is safe to do so. Jaywalking is a citable offense.

Connelly said with regard to bicycles, riding against traffic is one of the biggest problems they face.

"People are in the habit of looking one way as they enter traffic. Some people think it's safer if they are riding and can see the traffic coming,

but when a driver pulls out of a driveway or side street, they are looking often looking left to see what is coming into their lane and don't see a bike rider traveling on the wrong side of the road," he said. "Most accidents happen when they are riding on the wrong side of the road and people don't see them."

Connelly said bike riders who are on the proper side of the road also have to take care.

"There's always a concern with motorists opening doors without looking to see if anyone coming," he said. "Drivers need to be observant of bikes."

Connelly said some cyclists

don't follow signs, but New Jersey law says they are supposed to obey signs and follow the rules of the road like everyone else.

Bicyclists should ride on the right with traffic, obey all signs and signals, and use hand signals. Cyclists are advised to have a horn or bell on your bike and a white light in front and a red light in back when riding at night.

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This is the End R 4:10, 7:00 (9:15)
() Fri & Sat Only

Kelly

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has been a dream of his for the past decade.

"After so many years in, you start to think about how you can make a larger impact and what better place to make an impact than where it all begins here at Training Center Cape May," Prestidge said. "I just hope to continue the legacy and carry on the good work Captain Kelly has done."

Prestidge is a graduate of the Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn., where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. He has spent the majority of his career afloat as a permanent cutterman, serving on five separate cutters and commanded three of them.

For both captains, the ceremony was an even more significant occasion because the change of command occurred



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Above, Capt. Bill Kelly leads a review of shipmates during his change of command ceremony. Kelly leaves Cape May after three years to take an assignment in Arlington, Va.

between two close friends.

"We've sailed together and we've known each other for some time. We're fellow cutters," Prestidge said.

Prior to the ceremony, Rear Admiral Buschman presented the Training Center with a Unit Commendation

Award. Kelly said this is only the fourth time in 65 years the Coast Guard base has earned the prestigious honor. Kelly said he looks forward to returning to the Training Center in the future as one of the 40,000 who visit the base annually.

TIDES JUNE 2013 Eastern Standard Time

	High	Low		
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
12	11:18	11:18	5:06	4:49
13	11:59	11:56	5:42	5:31
14		12:42	6:20	6:19
15	12:37	1:29	7:00	7:12
16	1:24	2:21	7:45	8:12
17	2:18	3:17	8:35	9:16
18	3:19	4:14	9:29	10:20
19	4:23	5:12	10:25	11:22

Moon Phases

New Moon, June 8
First Quarter, June 16
Full Moon, June 23
Last Quarter, June 30
Apogee, June 9
Perigee, June 23

Cape May Star & Wave

(ISSN 519-020), Volume 159 Number 24. Published weekly by Sample Media, Inc., 112 E. 8th St., Ocean City, N.J. 08226. Subscription price in Cape May County \$22; East of the Mississippi \$25; West of the Mississippi \$29. Periodicals Postage at Pleasantville, N.J. and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to the Cape May Star and Wave, 600 Park Ave., #28, West Cape May, N.J. 08204.

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