

# Cape Cod Field Schools

*Discover the real nature  
of Cape Cod!*



Mass Audubon

2026

## CAPE COD FIELD SCHOOLS

Explore the beautiful coastal setting of Cape Cod and learn about its rich natural history while gaining new skills. The beaches, dunes, woods, and wetlands of Cape Cod are our classroom. Field Schools offer active, outdoor experiences taught by professional scientists, naturalists, and educators.

Mass Audubon has been offering Cape Cod Field Schools to adults since 1986. Won't you join us?

### Coastal Birding for Beginners

May 8-10

3-days: Friday-Sunday

Spring on the Outer Cape buzzes with bird life—from warblers and hawks heading north to shorebirds feeding along the flats. Spend a full weekend exploring beaches, salt marshes, forests, and fields as you sharpen your birding skills: finding birds in different habitats, identifying common species by sight and song, and understanding the traits that help them thrive along the coast.

You'll get hands-on with birdwatching tools, learn where and when to look for birds on Cape Cod, and experience a bird banding demonstration with Certified Master Bander James Junda. You'll also spend time with Lorna Gibson, author of *Birds Up Close*, as she shares the fascinating mechanics of how birds work.

Members \$415, nonmembers \$475



Bluets © Audrey Preer

### Cape Cod Herbal Immersion

May 23-24

2-days: Saturday-Sunday

Immerse yourself in the plants of Cape Cod. Wander through dunes, fields, forests, and wetlands as we explore the medicinal properties of the region's trees, shrubs, and wildflowers. With baskets in hand, we'll begin along the shore, harvesting beach rose petals to craft teas, infused honey, and small-batch elixirs.

Along the way, you'll practice ethical harvesting techniques, learn how plant chemistry influences effective remedies, and deepen your understanding of reciprocal relationships with the natural world. Arrive ready to engage your senses—smell, touch, taste, and observe—and leave with a bounty of herbal creations to enjoy and share with your community.

Members \$375, nonmember \$430

Whimbrel © Joseph Savasta



### Hatching Diamondback Terrapins

September 5-6

2-days: Saturday-Sunday

Witness one of Cape Cod's most remarkable natural events as tiny Diamondback Terrapins emerge from their sandy nests and make their first journey toward the marsh. Learn about the biology of this charismatic species and hear insights drawn from more than 30 years of conservation research at Wellfleet Bay.

In the field, monitor for signs of hatching, and work alongside conservation scientists to weigh and measure hatchlings, document nesting success, and even wade into the water to search for and assist with adult turtle tagging. It's an unparalleled opportunity to participate directly in hands-on wildlife conservation.

Extend your adventure by staying at the Wellfleet Bay Campground, where you'll be surrounded by the very habitats these terrapins call home. To make a reservation, visit [massaudubon.org/wellfleetcamping](http://massaudubon.org/wellfleetcamping)

Members \$375, nonmembers \$430

Diamondback Terrapin © Leah Desrochers



Mass Audubon members enjoy discounted prices. Join today at [massaudubon.org/membership](http://massaudubon.org/membership)

Register online by visiting [massaudubon.org/capecodfieldschools](http://massaudubon.org/capecodfieldschools)

**Whales & Seals:  
Science, Sightings & Shorelines  
September 18-20**

3-days: Friday–Sunday

Cape Cod's rich waters support majestic baleen whales, swift dolphins, and thriving populations of gray and harbor seals—offering exceptional opportunities to observe marine mammals in their natural environment. Immerse yourself in their world as you uncover remarkable diving adaptations, feeding strategies, communication, and breeding behaviors.

Explore harbors and beaches to observe seals hauled out along the shore, take an offshore whale watch, and connect with marine mammal conservation scientists from the Center for Coastal Studies to learn about current efforts and how you can support healthy seas.

Members \$500, nonmembers \$575

**Birding the Fall Migration  
September 25–27**

3-days: Friday–Sunday

As summer turns to fall, the Cape hosts an exciting mix of resident birds, southbound migrants, and early winter arrivals. Over one immersive weekend, you'll explore barrier beaches, salt marshes, tidal flats, and woodlands in search of shorebirds, raptors, songbirds, seabirds, and ducks.

You'll also head out on a Provincetown whale watch to scan the open water for pelagic species and experience an unforgettable bird banding demonstration, offering a rare chance to see birds up close. Along the way, you'll learn practical tips for species identification and delve into breeding biology, foraging ecology, and migration.

Members \$500, nonmembers \$575



Humpback Whale © Jennifer Childs

**Hidden Cape Cod:  
A Fall Hiking Weekend  
October 17-18**

2-days: Saturday–Sunday

Explore the Outer Cape at a quiet, beautiful time of year on extended hikes through pine woods, kettle ponds, remote beaches, and dramatic dunes. Discover hidden corners of Cape Cod as you pause for birds, wildlife, expansive coastal views, and the rich natural and cultural history that shapes this landscape.

You'll discover lesser-known corners of the Cape Cod National Seashore and local conservation lands while learning how conservation supports biodiversity on the Cape. Expect steady walking on varied terrain—well-worn trails, soft sand, and a few hills and dunes—averaging about 5 miles per day as you experience the Cape in a way few visitors ever do.

Members \$350, nonmembers \$400

Long-tailed Ducks © Carolyn Edwards



**Coastal Waterfowl & Seabirds of  
Cape Cod**

**November 20-22**

3-days: Friday–Sunday

As temperatures drop on Cape Cod, quiet beaches, star-filled nights, and the arrival of thousands of ducks and seabirds define the season. Strong winds can even push pelagic species close to shore, offering rare opportunities for up-close viewing.

Search serene stretches of quiet beaches, sheltered harbors, Cape Cod Bay, and ice-free ponds for species like Long-tailed Ducks, Northern Gannets, and a variety of scoters, mergansers, eiders, and alcids. You'll learn to tell dabbling from diving ducks, compare loons and cormorants, and spot cold weather specialties by shape, behavior, and habitat. Along the way, you'll learn how conservation actions support waterfowl populations and how you can help locally.

Members \$375, nonmembers \$430

**SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULES**

**3-DAY COURSES**

**Day 1**

3:30 pm Arrival and Introduction

7:00–9:00 pm Evening Activity

**Days 2, 3**

8:00 am–4:00 pm Field Trips/  
Workshops

**2-DAY COURSES**

**Day 1**

10:00 am Arrival and Introduction

11:00 am–4:00 pm Field Trips/  
Workshops

7:00–9:00 pm Evening Activity

**Day 2**

8:00 am–4:00 pm Field Trips/  
Workshops



# REGISTRATION & INFORMATION

## LOCATION

Cape Cod Field Schools are based out of the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary. Located on the "forearm" of Cape Cod in South Wellfleet, Wellfleet Bay offers outstanding opportunities for exploration of the natural world. Our 1100-acre sanctuary features five miles of trails through eight different natural communities representing the diversity of Cape Cod.

Field Schools take advantage of the sanctuary's grounds, as well as many areas on the Outer Cape, including beaches, marsh, woods, and ponds of the Cape Cod National Seashore; the islands off Chatham; and the surrounding ocean and coastal waters.

## COURSE LEADERS

Field School guides are skilled and professional Mass Audubon educators and naturalists certified in community CPR and watercraft safety. Visit our website for a listing of staff on individual courses.

## WHAT ELSE YOU NEED TO KNOW

Courses are for adults ages 18 and over. Ages 15 to 17 are welcome to attend, but only with prior approval. They must be accompanied by an adult guardian registered for the same course.

Courses are taught primarily outdoors and most require moderate physical activity. We do make accommodations for severe weather. Participants are responsible for their own meals and may need to arrange their own transportation to field trip locations, although carpooling may be available. Housing is not provided; however, we can supply a list of local motels upon request.

You will receive an email with detailed information 2-3 weeks before the start of the field school.

A Certificate of Attendance is offered for those seeking professional development credit for courses.

## FEES & CANCELLATION POLICY

Please refer to individual course listings on our website for complete details. Either full payment or a \$150 nonrefundable deposit is required at the time of registration.

Cancellations must be received in writing (via email or regular mail) at least 30 days before the course start date to receive a refund, minus the \$150 nonrefundable deposit per registrant. Cancellations received fewer than 30 days before the start date may result in forfeiture of the entire course fee. If we are able to fill your spot with another registrant, your balance will be refunded, less the \$150 nonrefundable deposit. We reserve the right to cancel any course, in which case all registrants will receive a full refund.

## HOW TO REGISTER

Registration is accepted via telephone or online via our website. Please do not fax or email credit card information. Call 508-349-2615, or register online at [massaudubon.org/capecodfieldschools](https://massaudubon.org/capecodfieldschools)



Register online by visiting [massaudubon.org/capecodfieldschools](https://massaudubon.org/capecodfieldschools)