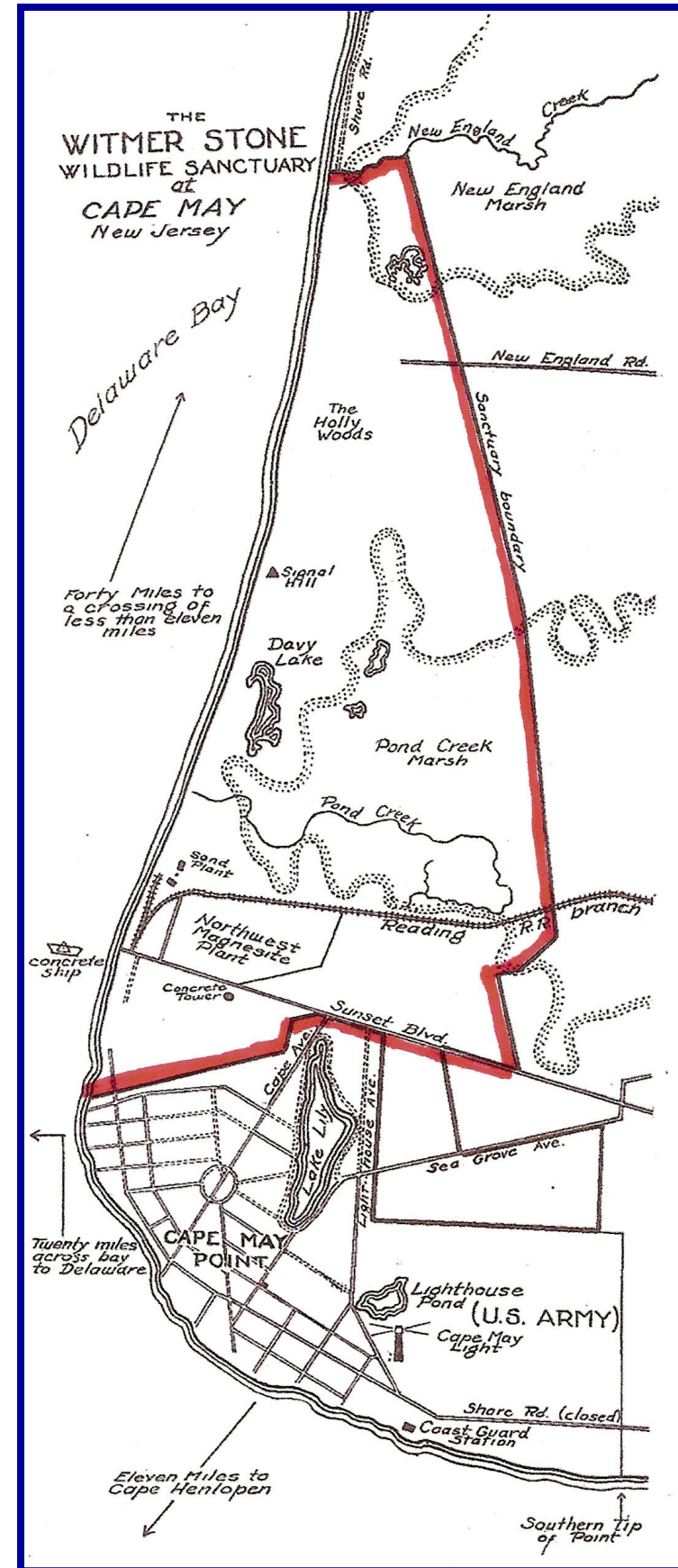


Slaughter In Cape May

Cape May Point State Park



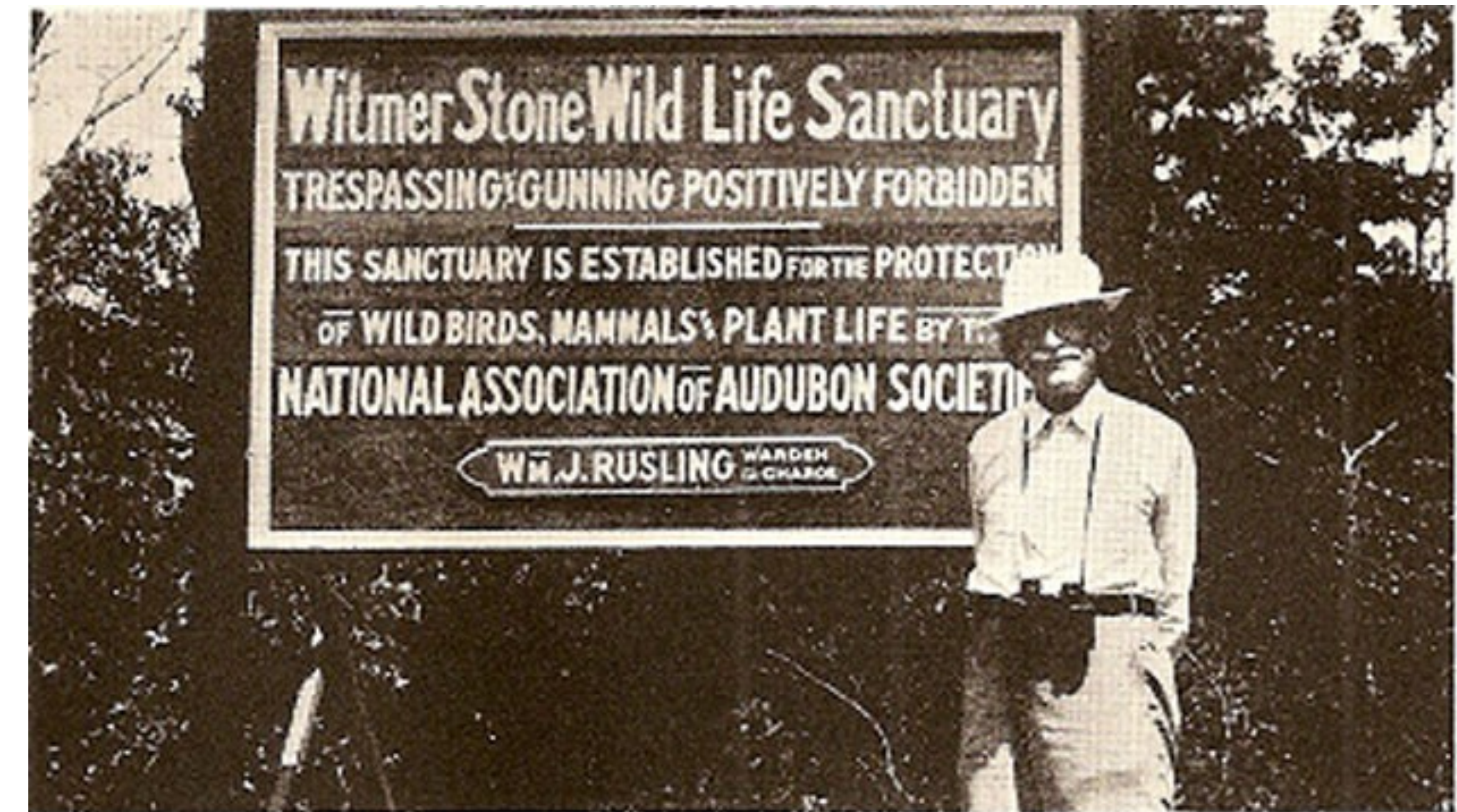
Look around you. On this spot, prior to 1935, migrating birds were slaughtered annually.

Migration—the tip of New Jersey is shaped like a giant funnel. Fall migrants journey south along the coast. When the wind is strong from the northwest, it forces birds into this funnel. Faced with the 15-mile crossing of the bay, birds round the curve of Cape May and begin to work back north in search of food and

Habitat—Cape May Point was an inviting wooded area that was directly under the flight path used by migrants. With its generous cover and food bearing plants it was a natural sanctuary and large numbers of birds concentrated in this area.

Slaughter—Hunters noticed the movement of migrating birds, and knew that Sunset Boulevard and the area near the bay was a good location to hunt successfully. Before laws were passed protecting migratory birds, it was not uncommon for thousands of birds to be killed in a single day, in many cases

Sanctuary — In 1935, The National Association of Audubon Societies leased 25 acres of land where the hawks were being slaughtered. They posted “no hunting” signs, and hired a warden to protect all wildlife by strictly enforcing the existing laws. This was the original Witmer Stone Wild Life Sanctuary named in honor of the distinguished ornithologist who spent 50 years studying the Birds of Cape May. This sanctuary quickly grew to nearly 1,000 acres, and successfully stopped the shooting of hawks at Cape May Point.



State of New Jersey
Department of Parks & Forestry



National Park Service
U. S. Department of Interior



This sign was made possible by the
Delaware Valley Ornithological Club.