

DVOC Slower Lower Delaware Birding & Gourmet Weekend: 29 April - 1 May 2011

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IMPORTANT: Please let me know in advance if you intend to join the trip for the whole nine yards or any part of it and whether you will be camping or motelling.

Delaware State Parks charge fees: <http://www.destateparks.com/>. We will be visiting them on at least two, possibly all three days. Note the DE Annual Pass fees and the big discounts for 62+ year olds. Take advantage. Individual entry to coastal State Parks is \$8 for out-of-staters and not transferable from park to park. Duck stamp/Golden Eagle/Golden Age passes are required for NWRs (Bombay Hook/Prime Hook).

The trip is geared for both campers and motellers.

Campers will be at Cape Henlopen State Park for the nights of April 29 and 30. There are no cabins or yurts here. Two tents are allowed per site (4 people max) which costs \$32 (\$28 DE resident) per night. I have booked and paid for two tent sites ##146/147. Others may be available. They are tent-only sites and close to where the night birds are (if they have arrived!). We usually manage a campfire, story-telling and a few 'wee refreshments' on the Saturday night, given reasonable weather. Motellers are most welcome to join us - you may park at the visitors parking lot at the entrance to the campground and walk into the lots where the campers will be; you must leave by 10pm. You'll still need a DE State Parks permit.

Motellers: You may be lucky this year with the dates - coming for the weekend you will need to book for the nights of April 29 and 30. The 'in-season' starts on May 1. The following two Lewes motels are from Paul Guris' 'Paulagics' site:

Anchorage Motel 4540 Highway 1, Rehoboth Beach, DE

1-800-472-6972; 302-645-8320

[Link to Web Site](#)

Price: about \$50-\$170, depending upon season

Blue Water Inn 407 E. Market Street, Lewes, DE

800-493-2080; 302-645-7832

[Link to Web Site](#)

Price: about \$100-\$150 (winter), check for summer rates

Comments: A bed and breakfast that's a bit more upscale.

Motel Search Sites for Lewes

[Lewes Today](#) or [Beach-Net.com](#)

The closest to Cape Henlopen State Park are by the docks in Lewes: The Beacon Motel (302-645-4888) and The Vesuvio Motel (302-645-2224). Slightly further away is the Cape Henlopen Motel (302-645-2828). Others in Lewes are Hotel Blue (302-645-4880), The Inn at Canal Square (302-644-0600), and Blue Water House (302-645-7832). Check on the internet or phone for rates - May 1 is the start of the season, so you should still get 'winter rates'. Back up Rt 1 about 5 miles is the Red Mill Inn which may well be cheaper as it's not 'beach-orientated' (302-645-9736). There are tons of chain motels on the main drag where the outlets are (Rt 1) - Sleep Inn/Heritage Inn/Hampton Inn/Comfort Inn/Econolodge/Rodeway Inn/Holiday Inn Express. All are within 10-15 minutes of the campground. It's early in the season, but it's a very popular spot, especially if the forecast is for warmth and sun, so pre-booking is advisable.

Bring boots and raingear (+brolly), binocs and scope, maps, cellphone and inter-car radio if you have them, insect repellent, sunscreen and a full tank of gas. A reserve stash of munchies and drinks is recommended.

Itinerary (Gourmet eating suggestions optional. Birding mandatory).

Friday 29 April

Gourmet Breakfast: 7.15 - 7.30am Helen's Sausage House 2m N of Smyrna on east side of Rt 13. 302-653-4200. Eat in or take to go. Plan to allow 15 min. to get to Bombay Hook HQ from Helen's.

Morning: Meet 8.00am Bombay Hook NWR HQ. 302-653-9345. Bird all morning here. Warblers in the woods, waders in the water, waterfowl in the washes ... we need 100+ species before we're allowed to go to lunch. Tide will be high at 10.30am so shorebirding should be good - bring a scope if you have one. Should be no bug problems.

Gourmet Lunch: Sambo's (crabs etc) in Leipsic. 302-674-9724. Crabs get more expensive every year, but Sambo's crabcake sandwich should not be missed.

Afternoon: Port Mahon/Little Creek WMA - not been too productive recently. I'll pre-run this and decide on the day. Ted Harvey Conservation Area (Kitts Hummock Road) is often good. We'll continue down the Delaware coast to Mispillion and visit the Dupont Nature Center. Then we'll continue south through the village of Slaughter Beach to the north end of Prime Hook NWR at Fowler's Beach. Then the wetlands on the road out to Prime Hook Beach/Shorts Beach, before hitting Broadkill Beach Road and Prime Hook NWR HQ. That's a lot of birding and we'll head to Lewes for setting up camp at Cape Henlopen State Park campground, motellers to local motels.

Gourmet Dinner: TBA. Dogfish Head Brewings and Eats (302-226-2739) in Rehoboth Beach (a popular brew pub with a great menu - have a look at <http://www.dogfish.com/restaurant/index.htm>. This may be very popular. We have alternates; Irish Eyes Pub and Restaurant or elsewhere.

Post-prandial Birding: We'll go for night birds in the CHSP campground after dusk. IF they have arrived, this is a great place for Common Nighthawk, Chuck-Will's-Widow and Whip-Poor-Will. Chance for owls too. Not always easy, but we'll try.

Saturday 30 April

Gourmet Breakfast: Will try to get the JD Filling Station to open for us an hour early as they did last year.

Morning: A choice of nearby woodlands for migrants. Prime Hook NWR to the north. Thompson's Island to the south and further south Burton Island, Fresh Pond, Holt's Landing SP, Assawoman WMA.

Gourmet Lunch: Probably a take-away lunch to eat at the Hawkwatch in Cape Henlopen State Park.

Afternoon: meeting Sue Gruver and others at the CHSP hawkwatch and stay enough time to view hawks, migrants and ocean birds and mammals. Check the Point, the Nature Center feeders and possibly walk the Henlopen marsh trail.

Gourmet dinner: TBA

Night: Accomodation as Friday night. We may try for rails at Prime Hook, weather and info permitting. Campfire, drinking (mandatory) and singsong (optional).

Sunday 1 May

Gourmet Breakfast: JDFillingStation.com or Café Azafran (7am)

Morning: Choice of heading west to Cypress Swamp / Pocomoke area (about 45 minute drive) or taking a round trip on the Lewes - Cape May Ferry (\$16 round trip 'value fare' for foot-passengers). Ferries depart Lewes 9.15am back 12.30pm; depart 10.15am back 1.30pm.

Gourmet Lunch: If Cypress Swamp area then Em-Ing's BBQ just south of Selbyville. 410-352-5711. If ferry, take lunch on board or a ferry meal (unknown quality).

Afternoon: Heading north, homeward bound. If from Selbyville, call at Redden Forest. If from Lewes, check Milford Neck area.