



Cape May Bird Observatory's Northwood Center Reopens to The Public

Key facility enhancements completed in time for spring migration.

Bernardsville, NJ (June 3rd, 2026)- New Jersey Audubon is pleased to announce completion of the renovation of Cape May Bird Observatory's Northwood Center and reopening to the public. The Northwood Center, located at 701 East Lake Drive in Cape May Point, has undergone significant upgrades that have strengthened our capacity to connect with thousands of visitors and residents through comprehensive enhancements. Since 1976, the New Jersey Audubon's Cape May Bird Observatory (CMBO) has been a worldwide leader in bird and monarch butterfly research.

Fifty years ago, the Northwood Center at Cape May Point was a residential home adjacent to Lily Lake, and a prime spot for migratory birds. The home had been owned by John D'arcy Northwood, a conservationist and prominent member of the birding community. His front parlor served as the office for a young Pete Dunne, New Jersey Audubon's first hawkwatch counter, who rose to his own prominence in the birding community. In 1990, the Lily Lake residence was bequeathed to New Jersey Audubon upon the death of John's wife, Anne Northwood, to become the Cape May Bird Observatory Northwood Center. Four years later, Pete became CMBO's director, guiding its mission for two decades.

"Since 1976, the Cape May Bird Observatory's Northwood Center has been engaging tens of thousands of visitors each year. Thanks to the generous outpouring of support for these renovations, we have reached a new level of accessibility, comfort, and functionality, allowing us to inspire and empower even more people to care for nature over the next 50 years," said Brett Ewald, Director of Cape May Bird Observatory

The renovations include electrical, plumbing, HVAC, windows, siding, and a new public restroom. Outside the addition is an accessibility ramp that blends into nature and provides wildlife viewing, along with handicapped parking making the center more accessible to all. A new back deck allows better access to the Ryan DeWitt Trail, with its diversity of colorful birds. The new library, named after Pete Dunne, was made possible by Rich and Anita Kauffeld, and includes a full selection of Pete's books as a prominent part of its permanent collection.

“The Northwood Center is the beating heart of the Cape May Bird Observatory. Our community has long called for investment in this special place. We received a large bequest that allowed us to design the renovation. As we shared our vision and progress, our most committed donors stepped up to invest in the space and honor those who built the organization,” said Alex Ireland, President and CEO of New Jersey Audubon.

For half a century CMBO has conducted bird research, conservation, environmental education, and recreational birding Inspiring and empowering people to care for nature throughout New Jersey and beyond.

About New Jersey Audubon:

New Jersey Audubon is a privately supported, not-for profit, statewide membership organization. Founded in 1897, and one of the oldest independent conservation organizations, New Jersey Audubon Inspires and empowers people to care for nature throughout New Jersey and beyond. We protect New Jersey's wildlife and plants, especially those species at risk by promoting the preservation of New Jersey's valuable natural habitats. Learn more at www.njaudubon.org.

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