

DBC Magee Marsh Trip Report 2026

Eighteen DBCers caravanned to Port Clinton, Ohio, May 7-10, for the annual warbler spectacle that occurs as many thousands of migrants arrive on the shores of Lake Erie—as well as many thousands of birders who come for the birds and to enjoy the Biggest Week in American Birding festival. The team had 131 species, including highlights like the Harris’s Sparrow, Black-billed Cuckoo, and a ridiculous 163 Trumpeter Swans! A shout out to Sherry Courtney for organizing the excursion and to DBC President Matt Crisler for his skilled leadership. Enjoy the two trip reports below.



Our group at Maumee Bay State Park on Lake Erie by Sherry Courtney

From Sherry Courtney:



Cape May Warbler by Sherry Courtney

Driving towards Toledo. It has been raining all the way. The only good thing is that we see a complete rainbow. And that was only the beginning of our 3-day DBC trip to Magee Marsh for the Biggest Week In American Birding. 18 members, 24 checklists, and 131 species later, we were tired, sad to leave, and so grateful to have had the chance to have amazingly long and close-up looks at birds we've rarely seen, with old and new friends, and an incredible leader.

The highlights included finding the Franklin’s Gull next to Caspian, Common, and Forster’s terns all standing together, prompting Matt to give us an impromptu tern ID talk. Sitting out an evening thunderstorm in our cars, only to emerge into the beautiful sunlight, fresh air, and back onto the boardwalk where we had a long, close look at the elusive Sora. Seeing a Snowy Egret. Spotting a Sandhill Crane couple, and then the emergence of 2 colts! Seeing the Black-billed Cuckoo. Really great ice cream! A few years ago, Trumpeter Swans were almost extinct. We saw over 100+ in one day!!



Sora by Sherry Courtney

From Franklin Chow:



Harris Sparrow under car by Sabrina Chow

A funny and only-at-Magee Marsh experience: We had just finished a whole day of birding at the boardwalk. Highlights were a Bay-breasted Warbler and a Harris's Sparrow. We were exhausted and ready to leave. To our surprise, we found the Harris's Sparrow was underneath our car. There was a crowd of photographers taking pictures of the sparrow. Naturally we couldn't get into our car. For almost ten minutes the Harris's Sparrow held our car hostage.

Thank you, magical boardwalk! Thank you, Matt Crisler for being our outstanding leader!



Harris Sparrow by Sabrina Chow



Black-throated Green Warbler by Helen Chow