

2026

44th OLD TIME BARNEGAT BAY DECOY & GUNNING SHOW



SEPTEMBER 26 & 27

7:00 am – 5:00 pm Saturday, 7:00 am – 4:00 pm Sunday

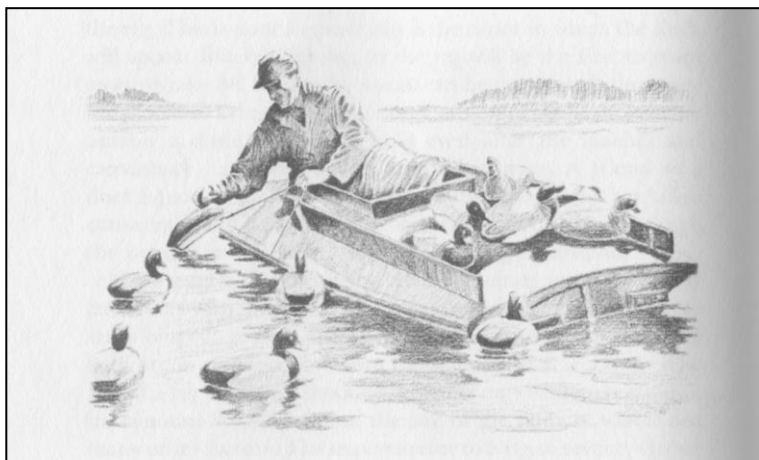
CONTEST RULES

SHOW LOCATIONS:

Tip Seaman County Park
Route 9 & Lakeside Dr., Tuckerton, NJ
Tuckerton Seaport
Route 9, Tuckerton, NJ

For Information:

Call: 609-971-3085
Email: atruhan@co.ocean.nj.us
Web: www.oceancountyparks.org
Mail: Wells Mills County Park
905 Wells Mills Rd
Waretown, NJ 08758



SPONSORED BY:

Ocean County Board of Commissioners
Robert S. Arace – Chairman of Parks & Recreation
Frank Sadeghi - Director
Jennifer Bacchione - Deputy Director
Sam Ellenbogen
Ray Gormley

Ocean County Department of Parks & Recreation
Mary Jane Bavais- Director

IN COOPERATION WITH:

Tuckerton Seaport
Pinelands Regional School District
New Jersey Waterfowlers



CODE OF CONDUCT:

All contestants are expected to conduct themselves appropriately. Any unsportsmanlike behavior and/or disparaging social media remarks pertaining to fellow contestants, judges, staff and spectators *may result in the contestant being disqualified in present or future contests.*

Birds of the Year:

Duck: 2026 - Pintail

2027-Hooded Merganser

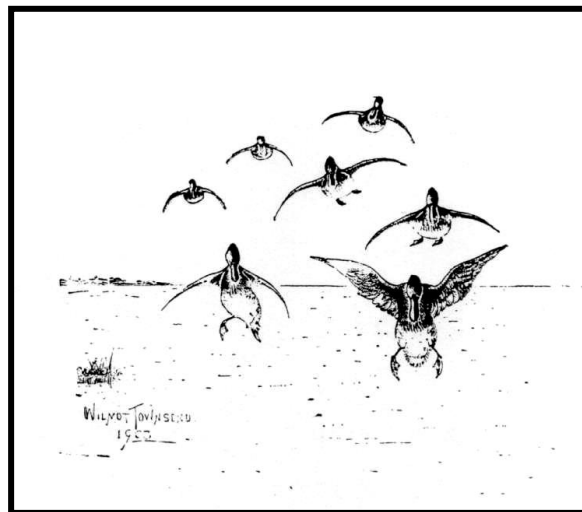
Shorebird Rig: 2026-Willet and Short-billed Dowitcher

2027- Long-billed Curlew and Golden Plover

Summary of Major Changes for the 2026 show

Rule adjustments:

STATE OF NEW JERSEY DUCK CALLING CHAMPIONSHIP- is now open to residents of ANY State.



CALLING CONTESTS- Adult

Saturday 10:00 a.m. Stage

ADULT GENERAL RULES:

1. Each caller will be allowed a maximum of 90 seconds. You will be **DISQUALIFIED** if you exceed 90 seconds. A red light will be used as a timing device. The light will remain off for 80 seconds. When the light comes on the caller will have 10 more seconds to finish his/her call.
2. The entrance fee for the State of New Jersey Duck Calling Championship Contest is \$20.
3. There will be a single, one-time fee of \$10 to enter both or either the Barnegat Bay Hunters Duck Calling Championship and/or the New Jersey Goose Calling Championship Contests.
4. Once the contest has started, you are not permitted to leave the designated isolation area. The contest will take place on the stage and you must face the audience while competing. Contestants may at no time attempt to make visual or verbal contact with the judges.
5. Registration is from 9:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. the day of the contest.
6. Communication between the audience and contestants during the contest is strictly prohibited. Violators will be disqualified immediately.

BARNEGAT BAY HUNTERS DUCK CALLING CHAMPIONSHIP-OPEN

We are looking for a calling style that a hunter would use.

1. Adult General rules above apply
2. Each contestant will be expected to make the following calls: **(A)** Hail or long distance call **(B)** Mating or lonesome duck call **(C)** Feed or chatter call **(D)** Comeback call **(E)** Overall routine
3. Prizes in the form of gift cards are as follows: First Place - \$35.00, Second Place - \$30.00, Third Place - \$25.00

STATE OF NEW JERSEY DUCK CALLING CHAMPIONSHIP- OPEN TO RESIDENTS OF ANY STATE

This contest will test a hunter's ability to call ducks for gunning in a simulated situation.

Adult general rules above apply.

1. There will be a \$20 entry fee.
2. Each contestant will be expected to make the following calls: **(A)** Hail or long distance call **(B)** Mating or lonesome duck call **(C)** Feed or chatter call **(D)** Comeback call **(E)** Overall routine.
3. This contest is now open to residents of any state
4. The winner is required to compete in the World's Championship Duck Calling Contest (WCDCC) in Stuttgart, AR on Thanksgiving weekend (unless excused by the Rules Committee) or he/she will be barred from competing in any sanctioned contests for a period of two (2) years. If you cannot attend the World's Championship Duck Calling Contest, you must notify the contest officials and Ocean County Parks & Recreation in writing 60 days prior to WCDCC so they may select a runner-up.
5. Please reference additional World's Championship Duck Calling Contest rules on the Ocean County Parks Department website <http://www.oceancountyparks.org/frmSpecialEvents>.
6. Per the WCDCC rules, the "prize package delegation will be at the discretion of the contest chair. Contest chair will have discretion over who competes in their own contest (disqualifications, suspensions, etc.)"
7. Prizes will be as follows: *First Place - \$100 and the prepaid registration fee for the World's Championship Duck Calling Contest in Stuttgart AR by the County of Ocean. Second Place - \$75, Third Place - \$50. Prizes will be in the form of gift cards. Additionally, the NJ Waterfowlers will award the *First Place Winner \$250.00 after submitting WCDCC attendance and receipt paperwork to their organization. ***First place winner must attend and compete Thanksgiving weekend at the WCDCC in Stuttgart, Arkansas.**

NEW JERSEY GOOSE CALLING CHAMPIONSHIP-OPEN TO RESIDENTS OF ANY STATE

This contest will test a hunter's ability to call geese for gunning in a simulated situation.

1. Adult general rules above apply
2. Each contestant will be expected to make the following calls: **(A)** Greeting/Long Distance Call, **(B)** Feeding/Flock Call **(C)** Lay Down/Landing Call **(D)** Comeback Call **(E)** Overall Routine. The judges may ask for an additional call.
3. Prizes, in the form of gift cards: First Place - \$35.00, Second Place - \$30.00, Third Place - \$25.00.

CALLING CONTESTS- Youth

Sunday 10:00 a.m. Stage

YOUTH GENERAL RULES:

1. Each caller will be allowed a maximum of 90 seconds. You will be **DISQUALIFIED** if you exceed 90 seconds. A red light will be used as a timing device. The light will remain off for 80 seconds. When the light comes on the caller will have 10 more seconds to finish his call.
2. Entry is **free**. Each contestant will draw a number for order of appearance. The contestants in any callback that the committee may require will draw a new number before each appearance.
3. Once the contest has started, you are not permitted to leave the designated isolation area.
4. The contest will take place on the stage and you must face the audience while competing.
5. Contestants may at no time attempt to make visual or verbal contact with the judges.
6. Registration is from 9:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. the day of the contest
7. Contestants must be 16 years of age or under.

YOUTH BARNEGAT BAY OPEN DUCK CALLING CONTEST

1. Youth general rules above apply.
2. Each contestant will be expected to make the following calls: **(A)** Hail or long distance call **(B)** Mating or lonesome duck call **(C)** Feed or chatter call **(D)** Comeback call **(E)** Overall routine.
3. Prizes, in the form of gift cards: First Place - \$25.00, Second Place: \$20.00, Third Place - \$15.00

YOUTH BARNEGAT BAY OPEN GOOSE CALLING CONTEST

1. Youth general rules above apply.
2. Each contestant will be expected to make the following calls: **(A)** Greeting/Long Distance Call **(B)** Feeding/Flock Call **(C)** Lay Down/Landing Call **(D)** Comeback Call **(E)** Overall Routine. The judges may ask for an additional call.
3. Prizes, in the form of gift cards: First Place - \$25.00, Second Place: \$20.00, Third Place - \$15.00



RETRIEVERS

*** RETRIEVER CONTEST- PUPPY**

Saturday 12:30 p.m. Skeet/Dog Area

1. The dog must not be more than 1 year old the day of the contest.
2. The contest will be open to all breeds of dogs. The contest will be judged on the dog's ability to retrieve waterfowl. The dog must show the judge his ability to work with a decoy rig.
3. The dog must demonstrate obedience to the handler at all times. The dog must be on a short leash until the start of the contest. Handlers are responsible for curbing and cleaning up after their dog.
4. Retrieval bumpers will be provided for all entrants. Personal bumpers will **not** be permitted.
5. **You may register any time before the contest.** The judges reserve the right to limit entries to the number that can be accommodated within the allotted time. Contestants will be taken in the order of registration.
6. The retrieves may include land, water and double retrieves and will increase in difficulty until a ranking is achieved. Type of retrieve is at the judges' discretion.
7. E-Collars may not be worn by dogs during the competition.
8. In cases where one owner enters multiple dogs within a contest, each dog must then have its own separate handler with them at the time of the contest.

*** RETRIEVER CONTEST - NOVICE**

Saturday 1:30 p.m. Skeet/Dog Area

1. The contest is open to dogs who have **never won any blue ribbon in this or higher retriever competition.**
2. Rules 2 through 8 of the Puppy Contest apply.

*** RETRIEVER CONTEST - ADVANCED**

Sunday 1:00 p.m. Skeet/Dog Area

Rules 2 through 8 of the Puppy Contest apply. **At the judge's discretion, they may add an additional retrieve as a tiebreaker.**

***Note: Due to increased participation, each dog may only enter one contest. Please choose the contest that best suits your dog's ability. Exception: ribbon winners in puppy and novice contest may enter the advanced contest.**

SKEETSHOOTING

PRELIMINARY SKEETSHOOT FROM A SNEAKBOX

Saturday 7:00 a.m. -10:30 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Skeet/Dog Area

Sunday 7:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Skeet/Dog Area

1. Shooters must be at least 10 years of age. A \$5 fee will be collected for shooters ages 10-15 and \$10 for 16 and up. All shooters under 18 years of age **MUST** be registered by a parent or guardian.
2. A round consists of 6 clay pigeons thrown as 4 singles and 1 double. Shooters who break all 6 clay pigeons will be eligible to enter the Adult Open competition on Sunday morning (see below).
3. A sneakbox will be provided for the shooter. To qualify for the Adult Open Championship, shooters **MUST** be seated on the **BOTTOM** of the sneakbox. Shooters may **NOT** signal for the release or placement of clay pigeons. A shooter's gun may **NOT** be mounted on their shoulder until after the clay pigeons are released. This scenario simulates an actual gunning situation as closely as possible.
4. Contest officials may check the shooter's gun before each round. All safety considerations are at the judge's discretion with no appeal.
5. Guns must be unloaded with the breach open and safety on until a shooter is called to enter the sneakbox. Upon completion of the round, the gun must be unloaded with the breach open and safety on before leaving the boat.
6. You are only allowed one shot at each clay pigeon. A clay pigeon must be shattered or at least have a chip knocked off to be considered broken. Dust, by itself, does not constitute a broken clay pigeon.
7. Steel shot for 12 and 20 gauge shotguns will be provided. Owners of other gauge shotguns must bring their own steel shot.
8. A limited selection of guns may be available for loan on request. This is not a guarantee, so please bring your own gun.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SKEETSHOOT FROM A SNEAKBOX- ADULT OPEN

Sunday 11:30 a.m. Skeet/Dog Area

1. This contest is free-of-charge, but limited only to those shooters who have qualified by breaking all 6 clay pigeons during a preliminary round (see above). Contest lineup will be determined by qualifying order.
2. Contestants will shoot doubles until they miss until a ranking is achieved based on the number of consecutive broken clay pigeons. You are only allowed one shot at each clay pigeon. Judges' decisions will be final on all shots for all finalists.
3. Shooters **MUST** be seated on the **BOTTOM** of the sneakbox. Shooters may **NOT** signal for the release or placement of clay pigeons. A shooter's gun may **NOT** be mounted on their shoulder until after the clay pigeons are released. This scenario simulates an actual gunning situation as closely as possible.
4. Rules 4 through 8 from "Preliminary Skeetshoot from a Sneakbox" also apply (see above)

WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP SKEETSHOOT FROM A SNEAKBOX

Saturday 10:30 a.m. Skeet/Dog Area

1. This contest is free-of-charge to all women shooters who have paid for a preliminary round. A fee will be collected from shooters who have not paid for a preliminary round. Fees are listed under the Preliminary Skeetshoot from a Sneakbox rules (see above). All shooters under 18 years of age **MUST** be registered by a parent or guardian.
2. Initial contest round consists of 4 clay pigeons thrown as singles. You are only allowed one shot at each clay pigeon. Top scoring shooters will be called back to shoot singles until they miss until a ranking is achieved based on the number of consecutive broken clay pigeons.

3. Shooters **MUST** be seated on the **BOTTOM** of the sneakbox. Shooters may **NOT** signal for the release or placement of clay pigeons. A shooter's gun **MAY** be mounted on their shoulder before the clay pigeons are released.
4. Rules 4 through 8 from "Preliminary Skeetshoot from a Sneakbox" also apply (see page 6)
5. Winner of Women's competition will also be eligible to compete in the World Championship competition on Sunday.

YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIP SKEETSHOOT FROM A SNEAKBOX

Saturday 11:00 a.m. Skeet/Dog Area

1. This contest is free-of-charge to all youth shooters ages 10 to 15 years as of the day of the contest. Payment for a preliminary round is **NOT** required. All youth must be registered by a parent or guardian.
2. Initial contest round consists of 4 clay pigeons thrown as singles. You are only allowed one shot at each clay pigeon. Top scoring shooters will be called back to shoot singles until they miss until a ranking is achieved based on the number of consecutive broken clay pigeons.
3. Shooters **MUST** be seated on the **BOTTOM** of the sneakbox. Shooters may **NOT** signal for the release or placement of clay pigeons. A shooter's gun **MAY** be mounted on their shoulder before the clay pigeons are released.
4. Rules 4 through 8 from "Preliminary Skeetshoot from a Sneakbox" also apply (see page 6)
5. Winner of Youth competition will also be eligible to compete in the World Championship competition on Sunday.

ARCHERY

ARCHERY – WATERFOWL SHOOT

Sunday 11:30 a.m. Park Athletic Field

This contest is for **adults age 16 years and older**. Jump shooting waterfowl with a bow and arrow is becoming increasingly popular. The contest will simulate, as closely as possible, an actual hunting situation. **Please bring your own bow.** You may bring your own Flu-Flu arrows or we will provide them for you. **Register one hour before contest.**

1. All bows must be legal for hunting in the State of New Jersey. **(A minimum draw weight of 35 pounds.)** Compound bows must shoot aluminum arrows. Re-curved bows may shoot cedar or aluminum. **All arrows must be rubber tipped.** All other safety considerations are at the judge's discretion with no appeal.
2. You will be shooting a one square foot cardboard target with a waterfowl silhouette. The target will slide down a cable. You must shoot the target before it hits the ground. You will shoot three arrows from a distance of fifteen yards. One point will be awarded for hitting the cardboard, two points for hitting the waterfowl silhouette on the target.
3. In the case of a tie, there will be a shoot-off. Contestants will then shoot from twenty yards.

YOUTH ARCHERY -WATERFOWL SHOOT

Sunday 10:30 a.m. Park Athletic Field

1. This contest is open to all children ages 10 to 15 the day of the contest.
2. All rules of the Adult Archery Waterfowl contest apply.



GUNNING DECOY CONTESTS

GENERAL RULES:

*** THESE RULES APPLY TO ALL DECOY CONTESTS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED***

1. The contest is an open contest. Novice, Intermediate and Professional will be judged together. We hope to encourage all those making decoys to enter. The contest is designed to give everyone an equal chance to display his/her skills and help revive the art of working decoys.
2. Decoys must be carved within one year of the contest date.
3. Floating birds must be self-righting and properly balanced for rough or calm water usage. Exceptions: stickups and canvas-winged Brant. See specific contests rules for self-righting requirements. Balancing method must be practical for hunting use. Decoys must have a means to attach weight. Anchor weights will be provided the day of the show.
4. Decoys must be painted in a manner that can be duplicated by a hunter to a reasonable degree. Combing, stippling, brushing, ragging, scratching and blending are allowed.
5. Decoys will be judged in the lake. Judging will be done approximately from a distance of 10 yards. Thus, the profile and appearance as a gunning decoy will be the primary judging factor.
6. Contest judge's decisions are final for any question regarding the entries. Judges may handle any decoy for pre-qualifying purposes.
7. There is no limit to the number of entries, except within a particular species. Only two birds per species [one male and one female] may be entered by each contestant for each contest.
8. Decoys should not have any identifying markings on them or, if so, those markings must be covered with tape prior to submission.
9. First, second, third and honorable mention ribbons will be given for each of the species, if there are enough decoys entered in that species. First place decoys in each species will compete for the Best in Class. Best in Show will be chosen from the class winners and a plaque will be awarded to the winner.
10. **All decoys must be entered between 6:30 and 10:00 a.m. the day of their contest and must remain on display until Sunday 3:00 p.m. for the enjoyment of the public. Please do not enter your birds unless they can remain on display until 3:00 p.m. Sunday. Failure to do so will mean forfeiture of ribbons. You may mark a decoy for sale at the show tent after judging. You may enter only the species listed. All others will not be eligible for judging.**
11. All birds must be life size or slightly larger except in the miniature contest.

The 2026 Bird of the Year is the Pintail.

The 2027 Bird of the Year is the Hooded Merganser.

BARNEGAT BAY GUNNING DECOY CONTEST - TRADITIONAL

Saturday 2:00 p.m. Decoy Tent

1. Decoys must be carved solely from wood. No keels.
2. Decoys in this contest should be representative of those made during the market-gunning era. They should be carved and painted in one of the sub-styles that made coastal New Jersey decoys so famous (i.e. Tuckerton, Parkertown, Barnegat, Head of the Bay). Decoys must be painted in a simple manner that could easily be duplicated by the hunter to a reasonable degree.
3. No detailed carvings such as carved or raised wings or tail feathers. No burning or delicate bills or tails. The decoys are to be gunning decoys; sturdy and constructed for the rough treatment they would receive in actual hunting. Exceptions are raised wings on gulls and canvas-winged Brant. No inserted tails on Pintail or Long-tailed Duck.
4. You may only enter the species listed below. All others will not be eligible for judging but may remain on display.
5. Marsh decoys **must self-right from the side** and diving duck decoys **must self-right from any position**. Geese and floating confidence decoys must self-right from the side position
6. ****General rules** from page 8 apply**
7. The **first place winner for the Bird of the Year species category** will be giving a plaque in addition to any other awards that it may receive.

BARNEGAT BAY DECOY CLASSES & SPECIES

<u>MARSH DUCKS</u>	<u>DIVING DUCKS</u>		<u>GEESE</u>	<u>CONFIDENCE*</u>
Black Duck	Canvasback	Common Merganser	Brant	Floating
Mallard	Scaup	Coot	Canada	Stick-ups
Northern Pintail	Common Goldeneye	Scoter	Snow/Blue	
Green-winged Teal	Redhead	Eider		*non-game
Blue-winged Teal	Ring-necked Duck	Long-tailed Duck		species only
American Wigeon	Bufflehead	Harlequin		
Wood Duck	Ruddy Duck	Barrows Goldeneye		
Gadwall	Hooded Merganser			
Northern Shoveler	Red-breasted Merganser			

YOUTH GUNNING DECOY CONTEST AGE 14 & UNDER

Saturday 12:30 p.m. Decoy Tent

Carvers may carve any species listed in the Barnegat Bay Gunning Decoy Contest. The carvers must be 14 years or younger the day of the contest. No adult help is permitted other than bandsawing a pattern. All decoys will be judged together. First, second, third, and honorable mention ribbons will be given. A plaque will be given for first place. ****Traditional Barnegat Bay Contest rules** apply except for rule 1. Decoys can be carved in either cork or wood. ******

YOUTH GUNNING DECOY CONTEST AGE 15 TO 17

Saturday 12:30 p.m. Decoy Tent

Carvers may carve any species listed in the Barnegat Bay Gunning Decoy Contest. The carver must be between 15 and 17 the day of the contest. No adult help is permitted other than bandsawing a pattern. All decoys will be judged together unless there are sufficient entries to divide into classes. First, second, third, and honorable mention ribbons will be given. A plaque will be given for first place *and* that decoy will advance to the adult Barnegat Bay Decoy -Traditional Contest. Decoys must be carved from wood to ensure that the first place winner adheres to the adult rules. ****Traditional Barnegat Bay Contest rules** apply. ******

BARNEGAT BAY GUNNING DECOY CONTEST – DECORATIVE SLICK

Sunday 11:00 a.m. Decoy Tent

1. Carvers may carve any species of duck or goose listed in the Barnegat Bay Traditional Gunning Decoy Contests with the exception of those in the confidence category. Confidence birds will not be judged in this contest. First, second, third and honorable mention ribbons will be given in Marsh, Diver and Goose classes. No more than one drake and hen per species may be entered.
2. Decoys must be carved solely from wood. No keels.
3. You may *only* enter the species listed in the Barnegat Bay Decoy species list above. All others will not be eligible for judging but may remain on display.
4. Decoys in this contest are considered the evolution of the Barnegat Bay Decoy. They should be carved in the Barnegat Bay style but more originality in painting is allowed rather than merely being reproductions of older decoys. Painting should still be consistent with a gunning decoy as these are to be considered working rather than decorative decoys.
5. No detailed carvings such as carved or raised wings or tail feathers. No burning or delicate bills or tails. The decoys are to be gunning decoys; sturdy and constructed for the rough treatment they would receive in actual hunting. No inserted tails on Pintail or Long-tailed Duck.
6. Marsh decoys **must self-right from the side** and diving duck decoys **must self-right from any position**. Geese and floating confidence decoys must self-right from the side position.
7. ****General rules** from page 8 apply, except for rule 9. ******

DELAWARE RIVER GUNNING DECOY CONTEST

Saturday 11:00 a.m. Decoy Tent

We are looking for the best examples of the Delaware River school of carving, however originality is encouraged. Decoys must be carved solely from wood. No Keels. No Confidence Decoys. You may only enter the species listed below. All others will not be eligible for judging but may remain on display. Marsh decoys **must self-right from the side** and diving duck decoys **must self-right from any position**. Geese must self-right from the side position. ****General Rules** on page 8 apply******

DELAWARE RIVER DECOY CLASSES

MARSH DUCKS

Black Duck
Mallard
Northern Pintail
Green-winged Teal
Blue-winged Teal
American Wigeon
Wood Duck
Gadwall
Northern Shoveler

DIVING DUCKS

Canvasback
Scaup
Common Goldeneye
Redhead
Ring-necked Duck
Bufflehead
Ruddy Duck
Hooded Merganser
Common Merganser

GEESE

Brant
Canada
Snow/Blue

MINIATURE GUNNING DECOY CONTEST

Saturday 1:30 p.m. Decoy Tent

Decoys will be judged in three separate categories: Barnegat Bay Traditional, Barnegat Bay Decorative Slick and Delaware River. Refer to full size rules for each category. Decoys **will not** be judged in the water. Carvers may carve any species listed in their respective full size categories. The decoys should be 6" or less from breast to end of tail. We are looking for a miniature gunning decoy, not a decorative carving. No carved in feathers with the exception of raised primaries in a Delaware Style bird. The paint should be a simple pattern as in a true working decoy. Birds must be carved within one year of the contest.

CONTEMPORARY GUNNING DECOY CONTEST *Saturday 12:00 p.m. Decoy Tent*

1. Carvers may carve any species of duck or goose listed in the Barnegat Bay Traditional Gunning Decoy Contests with the exception of those in the confidence category. First, second, third and honorable mention ribbons will be given in Marsh, Diving and Goose classes. A plaque will be given for the best of the classes. No more than one drake and hen per species may be entered.
2. These are elaborate gunning decoys. Although these are gunning decoys, judging will be based on likeness to species with no restriction on painting. Detailed bills, elevated primaries, and minimal feather carving (i.e. tail feathers, scapulars, tertials, and primaries) are acceptable as long as they are not fragile. No burning or stoning. Tail inserts are acceptable for Pintail and Long-tail Duck providing they can withstand hunting conditions but must be made of wood.
3. Decoys can be made of any material except for cork, which is a separate category.
4. Decoys must float properly and be stable in the water. Marsh decoys **must self-right from the side** and diving duck decoys **must self-right from any position**. Geese decoys must self-right from the side position. Keels are permitted but not required.
5. ****General rules** from page 8, with the exception of rule 4 & 9, apply. ******

CORK GUNNING DECOY CONTEST

Sunday 10:00 a.m. Decoy Tent

We are looking for the best examples of Cork Gunning Decoys. Any style is suitable as long as it is a working decoy. Keels are permitted. The species is up to you but no confidence decoys. Decoys will be judged by class, i.e., Marsh, Diving and Geese. Cork decoys must self-right from the side only. There will be first, second, third and honorable mention ribbons given in three classes with sufficient entries. A plaque will be given for the best of the classes. ****General Rules** on page 8, with the exception of rule 9, apply. ******

ADVANCED CARVER CONTEST

Sunday 12:00 p.m. Decoy Tent

1. This contest is for advanced carvers. Entrants should understand the decoys entered in this contest will be judged alongside professional decoy carvers and previous Old Time Barnegat Bay Decoy & Gunning Show Best in Show and Best Overall winners. We are looking for the best examples of the Barnegat Bay style and Delaware River school of carving, however originality is encouraged. This contest is designed to help proliferate the art of decoy carving and to create friendly competition among advanced and professional decoy carvers.
2. Decoys in this contest are considered the very best work of advanced Barnegat Bay and Delaware River Decoy Carving. The decoys are to be suitable for gunning; sturdy and constructed for the rough treatment they would receive in actual hunting. Although decoys in this contest should be suitable as working decoys, judging will be based on likeness to species but more originality in painting is allowed rather than merely being reproductions of older decoys.
3. You may *only* enter the Bird of the Year species, the **Pintail**. All others will not be eligible for judging but may remain on display. Carvers may enter no more than one hen and one drake in each style of carving, Barnegat Bay and Delaware.
4. Detailed bills, elevated primaries, and minimal feather carving (i.e. tail feathers, scapulars, tertials, and primaries) are acceptable as long as they are not fragile. No burning or stoning. Tail inserts are acceptable for Pintail and Long-tail Duck, when they are the bird of the year, providing they can withstand hunting conditions and must be made of wood.
5. Decoys must be carved solely from wood. No keels.

6. Decoys must float properly and be stable in the water. Marsh decoys **must self-right from the side** and diving duck decoys **must self-right from any position**. Geese decoys must self-right from the side position.
 7. Ribbons will be given for first, second, third and honorable mention in each style of carving, Barnegat Bay and Delaware River. First place winners of each style will compete against each other and that winner will be given a best overall plaque.
- **General Rules** on page 8 apply except 1, 4, and 9. **

DECOY RIG CONTESTS

GENERAL RULES:

1. You must enter a rig of six (6) decoys of this year's featured bird, the **Pintail**. You must register first and then the entrant must place rigs in the water. Bring hip boots to set out your rig. We will assign you a number before judging. After the judging, a sign with the carver's name and hometown will be placed next to the rig.
2. Decoys must have lines 4 ft. long with weights. Rigs must be entered by 10 a.m. Saturday. Decoys will be on display along park shoreline from 10:00 a.m. Saturday until 3 p.m. Sunday. You may take your decoys out of the water after 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. They must be returned to the water by 8:00 a.m. Sunday. If you choose to remove them from the water, they must be placed on the beach and **NOT** removed from the park. It is permissible to wax your decoys to avoid discoloration from the cedar water in the lake but keep in mind that the judges will be looking for a low gloss finish.
3. Should any decoy come apart or sink before or during judging, that rig will be disqualified.
4. Only one rig per carver. Head and neck position may vary.
5. Decoys should not have any identifying markings on them or, if so, those markings must be covered with tape prior to submission.
6. **Hooded Merganser** will be the species for **2027**.

DELAWARE RIVER GUNNING DECOY RIG CONTEST

Sunday 9:00 a.m. Decoy Tent

All rules from the Delaware River Decoy Contest apply, except for species.

BARNEGAT BAY GUNNING DECOY RIG CONTEST

Sunday 9:30 a.m. Decoy Tent

All rules of the Traditional Barnegat Bay Decoy Contest apply, except for species.

SHOREBIRD CONTESTS

GENERAL RULES:

1. Entries must be handmade of wood and mounted on a single stick attached to a suitable base. Only one bird per base is allowed. The contest tent can experience strong winds so please make sure your bases are heavy enough to avoid tipping over.
2. Decoys must be full bodied. Please see specific contest for painting restrictions.
3. For these contests, a shorebird is defined as a species listed under the Shorebird category in recent editions of an Eastern North America Sibley or Peterson field guide. The species is up to you.
4. Birds must be carved within one year of the competition.

TRADITIONAL SHOREBIRD DECOY CONTEST

Saturday 1:00 p.m. Decoy Tent

This contest is a revival of a decoy form not seen since the early 1900's. Decoys must be painted in a manner that can be duplicated by a hunter to a reasonable degree. No wood burning or airbrushing. Birds should reflect the style of the old-time carvers. General rules above apply.

DECORATIVE SLICK SHOREBIRD DECOY CONTEST

Saturday 1:00 p.m. Decoy Tent

There are no restrictions on painting, let the real bird be your guide. No wood burning, as this is a decoy. No carvings or details that cannot withstand the rigors hunting. These are still working decoys. General rules above apply.

YOUTH SHOREBIRD DECOY CONTEST AGE 17 & UNDER

Saturday 12:30 p.m. Decoy Tent

All rules from the Traditional Shorebird Decoy Contest apply. Adult help is NOT permitted other than bandsawing a pattern.

TRADITIONAL SHOREBIRD RIG CONTEST

Saturday 10:30 a.m. Decoy Tent

1. Rigs shall consist of six (6) birds of the designated species. You can carve any combination of these birds totaling 6 individuals, but you must include at least one of each species. **One rig per carver.** All rules of the traditional shorebird contest apply other than the choice of species.
2. The **2026** rig species will be the **Willet and Short-billed Dowitcher.**
3. Birds must be mounted on a single stick with no base. Entries must be handmade of wood. All birds must display the same season's plumage (i.e. all summer or all winter plumage.)
5. Rigs must remain along the park shoreline from **10:00 a.m. Saturday until 3:00 p.m. Sunday.** You must register first and then place your rigs.
5. Your rig will be assigned a number before judging. Your name will be placed on your rig after judging.
6. The **2027** rig species will be a combined rig of **Long-billed Curlew and Golden Plover.**

ANTIQUED CONTESTS

Sunday 10:30 a.m. Decoy Tent

ANTIQUED GUNNING DECOY CONTEST

1. Decoys should be antiqued or distressed to imply age.
2. Decoys are to be made of wood, cork or canvas.
3. Carvers may carve any species listed in the **Barnegat Bay Gunning Decoy Contest.** Marsh, diver, goose and confidence will be judged together unless there are enough entries to split into the different classes.
4. Entries should be rigged with ballast and anchor attachments, as with any gunning decoy, but will not be floated during judging.
5. Birds can be inspired by, but should not be copies of, the work of old-time carvers.
6. ****Gunning Decoy Contest General Rules** on page 8, with the exception of rules 3, 5 and 9, apply. ******

ANTIQUED SHOREBIRD DECOY CONTEST

Decoys should be carved this year and then antiqued or distressed to imply age. Birds can be inspired by, but should not be copies of, the work of old-time carvers. Traditional Shorebird rules on page 12 apply.

ADDITIONAL CONTESTS

WORKING FISH DECOY CONTEST

Sunday 8:30 a.m. Decoy Tent

We are looking for a traditional, functional Ice Fishing Decoy. The body of the decoy must be made of wood but detail pieces can be made of other materials. Please place a snap swivel or screw eye in the position that you wish the decoy to be judged. They will be judged on their swimming ability as well as how they are carved. The judging will take place in the lake and we will provide the stick for judging. There will be first, second, third and honorable mention ribbons given in four divisions. One overall winner will be selected from the division winners. **Divisions will be: 6" and under, over 6" and under 12", 12" and over, and critters.** Fish must be completed within one year of the contest date.

HEAD WHITTling CONTEST

Sunday 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Decoy Tent

1. The bird is the **Pintail**. You will have two (2) hours to carve and return your blank.
2. There will be a total of 6 heads available to carve. This contest is first come, first serve.
3. Contestants must furnish all tools. No power tools allowed.
4. Whittling blanks will be available at the registration table at the Decoy Contest Tent before the contest on Sunday. At the carver's discretion, eyes may be carved or added. Keep in mind this must be in the Barnegat Bay style.
5. The **Hooded Merganser** will be the species for **2027**.

DECORATIVE CONTESTS

Saturday 12:00 p.m. Park Community Center

DECORATIVE FISH CONTEST

1. Categories are freshwater and saltwater fish. One overall winner will be chosen between the first place category winners and given a plaque.
2. Fish must be life-size and made of wood. Detail pieces can be made of other materials. A base is optional. Wood burning and texturing are O.K.
3. Fish must be native to New Jersey waters.
4. You will be limited to two entries per category.
5. Fish must be completed within one year of the contest date.

DECORATIVE BIRD CONTESTS:

Categories: Bird of Prey, Game Bird, Songbird, Shorebird, Wading Bird & Waterfowl* (*includes other water birds such as gulls, terns and cormorants)

1. Birds must be made of wood. A base is optional but only one entry can be mounted per base. Carvings are not required to be life-size, primarily in the case of larger species. However, carvings considered miniatures should not be entered.
2. Wood burning, texturing, pre-cast feet and feather insertions are permitted. Let the real bird be your guide. You will be limited to two entries per species, one male and one female.
3. The species is up to you in each contest but must be native to New Jersey.
4. The carving must be completed within one year of the contest date.
5. Ribbons will be awarded to the first, second and third place winners in each category and then a *single plaque* will be awarded to the one overall decorative bird out of the first place winners.

MODEL BOATS

Saturday 10:00 a.m. Park Community Center

GENERAL RULES:

1. Boats must be made from wood at a scale of 1 inch to 1 foot. Do not be afraid to show detail.
2. Boats can be painted or finished clear to show workmanship. Either type finish will be considered equally in judging.
3. Models must have been constructed within one year of the contest date.
4. Boats can only be entered in the name of builder.
5. Only one boat per contestant may be entered in a category
6. **One overall winner will be chosen from the first place winners in each category and given a plaque.**

MODEL SOUTH JERSEY GUNNING BOAT- HALF MODEL CATEGORY

Traditionally, the half model was the first stage in building a full-size boat. The builder designed his hull through the use of this model and then lifted the lines off the model and lofted them onto his full-sized working plans. Your half model should be a traditional South Jersey gunning boat (i.e., Sneakbox, Gunning Garvey, Melon Seed, Mullica River Rail Skiff, Delaware River Rail Skiff, Delaware Ducker, Garvey, Sharpie, etc.) used for gunning parties or market gunning. You may design your own variation of a particular type of boat (as the boat builder would have done) or you may (since we are not expecting you to build a boat from your model) use the lines from an existing boat to build your model. Whichever the case, please indicate on the model whose design you used. We are looking for a real boat builder's half model. Detail is not acceptable. (Exceptions would be a rudder, centerboard or basic spar plan, which is important in the overall design). The model should be made of solid wood. It may be carved from a single piece of wood or be a block or lift model in the traditional manner. The model may be mounted on a flat board but this is not necessary. The finish should be oil, varnish, shellac or left without a finish. Since this is a revival of a craft largely extinct since the 1930's, the distressing of the model and the creation of an artificial patina to the finish is acceptable. You may also incorporate the actual working lines into the model in a traditional way. General rules for model boat listed above apply

MODEL TRADITIONAL WORKING/PLEASURE BOAT-

Baymen used boats for more than just hunting. Fishermen, clammers, shrimpers and even lifeguards all required boats built for their specific needs. This contest attempts to preserve these types of boats, some of which were designed specifically for our local waters and conditions

1. Any traditional boat commonly used in South Jersey waters whose purpose was primarily other than hunting is eligible for this contest.
2. Boat can be sail or motor-powered, with detail encouraged as items used in actual operation. (Example: oyster boat with dredge on deck with baskets.)
3. Boats must be of New Jersey origin
4. General rules for model boats listed above apply.

MODEL BARNEGAT BAY SNEAKBOX CONTEST- GUNNING CATEGORY

This contest is intended to foster waterfowl lore through the construction of miniature classic, feather-edged sneakboxes made famous in this area.

1. Complete scenes are not encouraged; however, if submitted, should not exceed 24 inches x 24 inches.
2. Boats should be painted camouflage green, brown or white.
3. The addition of accessories; i.e., decoys, ice hooks, etc., to add realism to the model is acceptable and encouraged.

- General rules for model boats listed above apply.

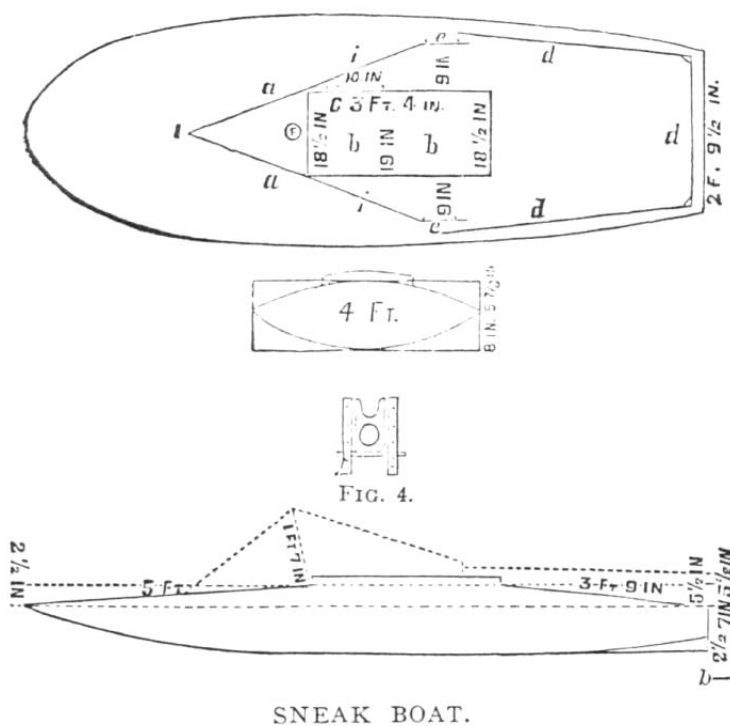
MODEL SOUTH JERSEY GUNNING BOAT CONTEST - OPEN

- The sneakbox is not the only traditional South Jersey craft used for duck and shorebird hunting. You may build a model of any traditional South Jersey boat used for gunning. Some examples are: Gunning Garvey, Pond Box, Rail Skiff, Delaware Ducker, Garvey (used for gunning parties or market gunning), Layout Rig, etc.
- Boats must be finished, as it would be used for gunning, with the necessary accessories.
- General rules for model boats on page 15 apply.

YOUTH MODEL TRADITIONAL SOUTH JERSEY BOAT CONTEST- OPEN

This contest is open to any traditional South Jersey pleasure, working or hunting boat.

- This contest is open to entrants ages 17 and under.
- Help may be given cutting wood out on power tools but the boat is expected to be built/finished by the builder.
- General rules for model boats on page 15 apply.



BOAT BUILDING

Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (Judging) Park

BEST GRASSED DUCK BOAT

This contest will judge the hunter's ability to make his boat disappear into the landscape while hunting.

1. Any boat traditionally hunted from in our region may be used.
2. Any material may be used, but emphasis will be placed by the judges on the materials being effective in Barnegat Bay and other South Jersey waters.
3. Due to space limitations, boat designed for large hunting parties are not eligible.
4. Only one boat per contestant may be entered.
5. A free space will be provided, but all boats entered will be on display in the same, designated area with limited supervision.
6. No merchandise may be sold from the contest spaces.
7. All boats must be detached from vehicle and left in designated area for the duration of the show.
8. Boats must be in place by **8:00 am Saturday morning** and must stay in place until end of show, **4:00 pm, on Sunday**. Friday setup is permissible, until 7:00 pm. Gates open Saturday at 5:00 am.

BOAT BUILDING GENERAL RULES:

1. Only the builder may enter the boat, except for the Antique Restoration Contest.
2. Boats will be on display at Tip Seaman County Park.
3. Boats must be constructed within one year of the contest date except for Antique Restoration Contest.
4. **Please contact us prior to the show to reserve a space for your boat entry.**

BARNEGAT BAY FEATHER-EDGED SNEAKBOX CONTEST –

TRADITIONAL SAIL or ROWING

1. Boats must be feather-edged sneakboxes. (Deck meets the hull.) The widest part of the hull and deck planks should be a minimum of 5 inches. Boats must be a minimum of 10 feet long.
2. Boats must be made of wood. Wood may be fiberglassed. (Plywood boats may be entered in the development sneakbox category.) You may paint your boat white, duck boat green or left natural.
3. Sailing boats must be sprit rigged in the traditional Barnegat Bay style. Synthetic sails are acceptable.
4. Boats must be completely ready for hunting (i.e., a decoy rack, hatch, etc.) Boats must have two ice runners and/or a skeg.
5. Fasteners are at the builder's discretion. The boat must have traditional horned oarlocks. The oarlocks must be fastened through the deck with a butt block. A motor mount is acceptable.
6. All boats must have a breakwater and the aft deck must be self-draining (method at builder's discretion).

BARNEGAT BAY SNEAKBOX CONTEST-

TRADITIONAL DEVELOPMENT CLASS

This is the class where old meets new, for the builder who uses traditional plank on frame or plywood construction.

1. Frames can be sawn, laminated or steam bent. Cedar, plywood, strip planking or cold mold (laminated wood and epoxy) can be used for deck and hull construction.
2. Boats must have a sneakbox hull. Fasteners and oarlocks are at the builder's discretion. Boats must have a breakwater and the aft deck must be self-draining. Boats must have two ice runners and/or a skeg.
3. Innovation is encouraged.

BARNEGAT BAY SNEAKBOX CONTEST- CONTEMPORARY CLASS

The sneakbox was an evolving boat until the earlier part of the 20th century. We recognize that new materials or design factors have and will continue to come into play. We hope this category will help foster the evolution of the sneakbox well into the 21st century.

1. Boats can be of any modern material, such as fiberglass, epoxy, or aluminum.
2. Boats must have a sneakbox hull, with a breakwater and self-draining aft decks, as well as two ice runners and/or a skeg.
3. Although these boats may be produced from production style molds, they will be judged on craftsmanship, innovations, and ingenuity, along with function. Handwork is also encouraged.

ANTIQUE SOUTH JERSEY GUNNING BOAT RESTORATION CONTEST

South Jersey has had a long tradition of superior ship and boat builders. Unfortunately, many of their names and their creations have been lost to time. We want to encourage the restoration of boats that still exist from our not-too-distant past. The boat should be a traditional South Jersey Gunning Boat (i.e., Sneakbox, Rail Skiff, Beach Skiff, Gunning Garvey, Sharpie, Pond Box, full-size Garvey, etc.) The boat should be restored as nearly as possible to the original condition of the boat, keeping in mind the builder's intent. You should use the original builder's methods, material and hardware as much as possible. Original equipment and accessories should also be included to the extent available. Fiberglass is discouraged unless it is original to the boat. However, we recognize important boats found in terrible condition sometimes require radical means to save them from oblivion. This will be taken into consideration when judged. You should provide the boat builder's name, if known, and the history of the boat, (i.e., former owner's names, stories and facts about the builder, etc.). **Photo documentation of the restoration is required.** A minimum of a before and after photograph is required.

CONTEMPORARY GUNNING BOAT – DEVELOPMENT CLASS

1. We would like to encourage the development of new and better boats for duck hunting incorporating new designs, technology and building materials.
2. Boats must be primarily used for duck or railbird gunning.
3. Boats may be of a mass-produced design.

SOUTH JERSEY POND BOX CONTEST

1. Boats should be less than 10 ft. in length and must show a Garvey heritage in their design.
2. Originality, craftsmanship and hull design will be judged. We encourage traditional materials but modern materials will be judged equally.

SOUTH JERSEY TRADITIONAL HUNTING AND WORKING BOAT CONTEST

1. Any traditional boat design used for hunting or working the bay and ocean will be judged in this division (except Sneakboxes). Eligible gunning boats include, but are not limited to, Gunning Garveys, Melon Seeds, Rail Skiffs or Delaware Duckers. Working boat types may be Garveys, Seabright Skiffs, or any other traditional type used by baymen, surfmen or others making their living on the bay.
2. Boats should be constructed of primarily of wood, either solid or plywood, and may be fiberglassed.

ART & PHOTO CONTEST

Saturday 11:00 a.m. Park Community Center

ART CONTESTS-OPEN ADULT

1. Art contests will be held at the Park Community Center, Tip Seaman County Park. **ARTWORK MUST BE ENTERED ON SATURDAY BY 10:00 a.m.**
2. All artwork should capture the beauty and atmosphere of the natural and/or cultural elements of our state's maritime regions, or of the New Jersey Pine Barrens. It must be completed within one year of the contest. Work that does not meet this qualification will not be eligible for judging.
3. Art can be Oil, Watercolor, Acrylic, Pastel or Drawing Mediums by the artist (no production machine print accepted.) The categories are **1) Oil & Acrylic, 2) Watercolor, 3) Pastel, Pencil, Charcoal, and Ink.**
4. **You may only enter up to 3 entries per medium category listed above.**
5. Paper or any fragile work must be matted, framed, protected with glass and provided with adequate hanging ability.
6. Entries must be left on display until 3:00 p.m. Sunday. **Ribbons will be forfeited if entry is removed earlier.**

PRIZES: First, second and third place ribbons will be given for each of the three categories listed above and one plaque and a \$200 gift card to an art supply store will be awarded for Best in Show Art. Winning artwork will have the opportunity to be on display for one month at a regional public location.

YOUTH ART CONTEST AGES 8 to 10 & 11 to 13

Contestants must be between the ages of 8 -10 or 11-13 the day of the contest. Children may enter up to 3 entries in their choice of mediums listed above. All will be judged together within each division. All rules **except** rule 4 of adult open contest apply.

PRIZES: First, second and third place ribbons will be given for each age grouping. The first place winner of Ages 8 to 10 will receive a gift card to an art supply store for \$50 and the first place winner of Ages 11 to 13 will receive a gift card to an art supply store for \$75.

YOUTH ART CONTEST AGES 14 to 17

Contestants must be between the ages of 14 - 17 the day of the contest. You may enter a maximum of three entries in any medium. All will be judged against each other. All rules **except** rule 4 of the adult open contest apply.

PRIZES: First, second and third place ribbons will be given and one plaque and a gift card to an art supply store for \$75 will be awarded for first place.

PHOTO CONTESTS-OPEN ADULT

1. Photo contests will be held at the Park Community Center, Tip Seaman County Park. **Photographs MUST BE ENTERED ON SATURDAY BY 10:00 a.m.**
2. Photos should capture the beauty and atmosphere of the natural and/or cultural elements of our state's maritime regions, or of the New Jersey Pine Barrens. The natural habitat of the waterfowl and the people who hunted the Jersey Shore area must be accurate, no matter what the style or medium of the photo work. Photos must be taken within one year of the contest. Work that does not meet this qualification will not be eligible for judging.
3. There will be two photography categories: **1) Black & White 2) Color.**
4. **You may only enter up to 3 entries per category listed above.**
5. Photographs must be 8 x10 inches and matted or back mounted with an adequate border on mat or mounting board. No frames or glass.
6. Entries must be left in the show until 3:00 p.m. Sunday. **Ribbons will be forfeited if entry is removed earlier.**

PRIZES: First, second and third place ribbons will be given in each category and one plaque and a \$200 gift card to an art supply store will be awarded for Best in Show in Photography. Winning photography will have the opportunity to be on display for one month at a regional public location.

YOUTH PHOTO CONTEST AGES 10-17

Contestants must be between the ages of 10 - 17 the day of the contest. All rules from the adult contest apply. You may enter a maximum of two entries in any medium.

PRIZES: First, second and third place ribbons will be given in each category and one plaque and a gift card to an art supply store for \$75 will be awarded for Best in Show -Youth Photography.

CONTEST SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

Skeet/Dog Area

Preliminary Skeetshoot from a Sneakbox	7:00 am-10:30 am
Women's Skeetshoot from a Sneakbox	10:30 am
Youth Skeetshoot from a Sneakbox	11:00 am
Retriever Contest- Puppy	12:30 pm
Retriever Contest- Novice	1:30 pm
Preliminary Skeetshoot from a Sneakbox	3:00 pm-5:00 pm

Decoy Tent

Traditional Shorebird Rig Contest	10:30 am
Delaware River Gunning Decoy Contest	11:00 am
Contemporary Gunning Decoy Contest	12:00 pm
Youth Decoy & Youth Shorebird Contest	12:30 pm
Shorebird Decoy Contests	1:00 pm
Miniature Decoy Contest	1:30 pm
Barnegat Bay Gunning Decoy Contest - Traditional	2:00 pm

Park Community Center

Model Boat Contest	10:00 am
Art & Photo Contests	11:00 am
Decorative Contests	12:00 pm

Park

Boat Building Contests (Judging)	10:00 am-12:00 pm
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Stage

Duck & Goose Calling Contest-Adult	10:00 am
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SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2026

Skeet/Dog Area

Preliminary Skeetshoot from a Sneakbox	7:00 am-11:00 am
World Championship Skeetshoot Finals	11:30 am
Retriever Contest-Advanced	1:00 pm

Decoy Tent

Working Fish Decoy Contest	8:30 am
Delaware River Gunning Decoy Rig Contest	9:00 am
Barnegat Bay Gunning Decoy Rig Contest	9:30 am
Cork Gunning Decoy Contest	10:00 am
Antiqued Shorebird & Decoy Contest	10:30 am
Head Whittling Contest	10:00 am-12:00 pm
Barnegat Bay Gunning Decoy Contest - Decorative Slick	11:00 am
Advanced Carver Contest	12:00 pm

Park Athletic Field

Archery Contest-Youth	10:30 am
Archery Contest- Adult	11:30 am

Stage

Duck & Goose Calling Contests-Youth	10:00 am
Awards Ceremony & Conklin Presentation	3:30 pm-4:00 pm

NOTE: All contest entries must be checked in at event site by 10:00 am the day of the contest.

*see show program for exact schedule