



Friendly, fun, and Informative Bird Watching

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Checkout our website at www.southernoceanbirdinggroup.org for our calendar of events, informational links, and other news.

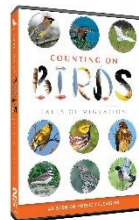
Holiday Party On December 7

Our 9th Annual Holiday Party is set for December 7th and all are asked to bring along a dish or dessert for the event. A signup sheet has been sent to all members. It's always a lot of fun and gives members a chance to catch up with other members in a relaxed and delicious setting.



We can have the Lighthouse building as it has more room for the group. The party starts at 6, and those who wish to help set up can arrive around 5. As we eat, a video on the Annual Christmas Bird Count in NH and Maine will be shown for entertainment and to get us excited about our CBC on December 16.

If you are bringing an item for the party, please let Jeanine Apgar (jga-2@comcast.net) or Rachel Corso (raeparsio@aol.com) know.



January 4 Meeting

Our next meeting is **January 4** at 6:30 p.m. at the **Tuckerton Seaport, Hunting Shanty**. The **Seaport** is located right on Route 9 in **Tuckerton**. Our program will be an audience choice of a video on either: Saving Songbirds, Plight of the Grasslands Birds, or Journey of the Broad-winged Hawk.

Due to possible weather issues in the winter, we don't have guest speakers. So informative and interesting videos will be our programs for January and February. But never fear, we have some terrific speakers lined up for 2018.

Light refreshments will be available.

Unusual Sightings in New Jersey

New Jersey is now seeing the peak of the raptor migration in Cape May and Sandy Hook. When the prevailing winds are North or Northwest, especially after a cold front, this is the time to get out with your binoculars and check the skies. Golden Eagles and Goshawks have been seen in Cape May, and the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge is also getting some interesting birds coming in, so don't let the cold weather deter you from your birdwatching experience.

Cloverdale Farm County Park

On Route 554 (W. Bay Avenue) in Barnegat is a hidden treasure for bird watchers. Cloverdale Farm County Park is a former cranberry farm with several bogs and large pond in the back of the park. It has several easy trails taking you around the bogs and wooded areas.

Our own Greg Prelich leads a monthly 2-hour bird walk, which is perfect for all levels of birds. You need to be prepared to walk a few miles, dress for the weather, wear comfortable sneakers or boots, and bring a pair of binoculars. Bringing a camera is also recommended is recommended. The winter walks are from 9-11 a.m. on the following dates: January 13, February 10, March 10. The program is free but pre-registration is needed. You can call the Ocean County Parks & Rec Dept. at 732-506-9090.

Also at Cloverdale for the adventurous, there are Owl Prowls scheduled through the winter. You will be taken on a guided walk through the forest looking for these nocturnal birds of prey. Eastern Screech Owls and Great Horned Owls are present and nest in the winter months. Again, pre-registration is needed. Dates and times:

December 29, 5-6:30 p.m.

January 5, 5-6:30 p.m.

February 2, 5:30-7 p.m.

March 2, 6-7:30 p.m.

March 9, 6-7:30 p.m.

There are many great trips with Ocean County Parks & Recreation, so if you can get a copy of their Winter Program Guide, you can certainly find a trip that is right for you and your family.



Annual Tuckerton Christmas Bird Count December 16



The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is a long-standing program of the National Audubon Society, with over 100 years of citizen science involvement. It is an early-winter bird census, where thousands of volunteers across the U.S., Canada, and many countries in the Western Hemisphere go out over a 24-hour period on one calendar day to count birds.

Prior to the turn of the 20th century the Christmas tradition was to have hunting contests; the group that was able to 'bag' the most birds won. As you can well imagine this eventually took a heavy toll on our bird populations. With numbers dropping noticeably and wildlife conservation just beginning to take hold, Frank M. Chapman an officer of the newly formed Audubon Society, proposed that on Christmas Day 1900 a new competition begin - a Christmas Bird census! No longer would birds be shot for sport during the holidays, they would be counted. That tradition continues today, one hundred and eighteen years later!

The SOBG conducts the Tuckerton CBC this year on December 16. Volunteers will meet at the Tuckerton Seaport at 7 a.m.. Lunch break is at 11 a.m. at the Dynasty Diner on Rt. 9, and the count wraps up at 5 p.m.

If you are a beginning birder, you will be able to join a group that includes at least one experienced birdwatcher. Please let Linda Gangi know if you are planning on doing the count: lgangi@comcast.net

The volunteers will complete the count and meet at the Tuckerton Seaport Hunting Shanty at 5 p.m. to compile the species and numbers. The Group will have pizza and drinks for participants to celebrate their service.