



Friendly, fun, and Informative Bird Watching

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southernoceanbirdinggroup.org

Due to the CoVid-19 emergency, all in person meetings are cancelled for the foreseeable future. The Tuckerton Seaport buildings are closed, as is Jacques Cousteau NERR, Long Beach Island Foundation, and the Visitor Information Center at E. B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge. The Wildlife Drive is opened around the Refuge, and Cedar Bonnet Island is also open; Ocean County parks facilities are open, and you can walk around the park trails. Some are doing zoom programs, so check their websites. Please use common sense, a face covering, and 'social distancing'.

Annual Dues for 2021

Dues for 2021 are due. Singles are \$20, and couples are \$35 for the year. You can send a check, payable to Southern Ocean Birding Group, to: SOBG, c/o Jeanine Apgar, 206 N. Frankfurt Ave, Egg Harbor City, NJ 08215. **Online Paypal is now available for renewals, new memberships, and donations on our website.**

SOBG Calendar of Events

The SOBG Calendar on our website is currently being updated with new programs and field trips for 2021. So, check out our site to see what's coming up.

Save the Date of April 10th for our Annual Clean Up of Great Bay Blvd. More info to follow.



Friends in Southern Ocean Birding Group (group)



February 4, 2021 Virtual Meeting

We will have a virtual Zoom Meeting on February 4, 2021 at 7 p.m. Tune in for "**More Birds, Close to Home: My Crazy Record-Breaking Ocean County Big Year 2020,**" by Amy

Davis, and find out how Amy broke the eBird record for most species seen in the county in a year, by a lot, during a pandemic.

Amy is fascinated by avian status and distribution, and she has worked on several American Birding Association publications, including *North American Birds*, for which she currently serves as report publication editor as well as regional editor for the Hudson-Delaware region.

Previously, she was Sightings department editor at *Birding* and technical reviewer at *Birder's Guide*. Amy also loves citizen science and volunteered extensively for breeding bird atlases in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and West Virginia. Amy lives in Forked River, NJ.

A Zoom invite will be sent next week. In the meantime, stay safe and enjoy the holidays.

Field Trips

- **February 16—Great Backyard Bird Count on LBI and CBI**
- **March 20—Barnegat Inlet and Environs**
- **April 24—Belleplaine State Forest**

Backyard Birding with A Purpose

By

Nancy Gallagher

My backyard is a nature preserve in progress. I have been enjoying bird watching there for years and decided to provide more for the birds than just seeds. Over the course of a few years, I have transformed my yard, previously composed of



grass, flower beds and a small vegetable garden, into an oasis for birds and butterflies as well as squirrels, raccoons, groundhogs,

chipmunks, rabbits; and sometimes my friends. September is the most beautiful time in there, with asters in abundance, boneset, goldenrod, etc. in full bloom.

Rather than cutting back the grasses, asters, goldenrod, and numerous overgrown “weeds” in the fall, I leave that dreaded job until early Spring, so the birds can enjoy the seeds and places to hide and/or shelter during the



winter months. I also have a heated birdbath on my deck that they enjoy all year. My cat and I have enjoyed watching many birds preening and wading.

Although I enjoy watching the birds just to enjoy them, when I learned of Cornell Lab of



Ornithology’s Project FeederWatch, I realized that while doing something I enjoyed, I could

also contribute important data to help scientists analyze decreases and/or increases in species

populations and distribution as well as diseases and irruptions. The data I send from my backyard are compiled and analyzed with those submitted from all over the US and Canada.

You do not have to be a seasoned birder to get



involved. You just need a good bird guide and be willing to spend a little time on two consecutive days each week from November to April. I don’t know if you could still get involved this year, but it is certainly something to consider for

next year. In the meantime, it is never too late to set out feeders. And, suet attracts many birds, especially woodpeckers. You can get more information at www.feederwatch.org.

Some of my favorite birds that have visited are: Red-shouldered Hawk, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Baltimore Orioles.



I apologize for the quality of the photos of birds in my yard. They were taken through a window, which was not always as clean on the outside as I would have liked.

