



Friendly, fun, and Informative Bird Watching

March 2021

Issue 43

southernoceanbirdinggroup.org

Due to the CoVid-19 emergency, all in person meetings are cancelled for the foreseeable future.

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.**

CLEANUP
For Saving the Earth
Great Bay Blvd. Wildlife Management Area

Saturday, April 10, 2021
9:00 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Meet at 9 at
Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve
130 Great Bay Blvd. Tuckerton

Supplies will be available

Let's Make a Difference!



Members April 1, 2021 Virtual Meeting

We will have a virtual Zoom Meeting on April 1, 2021 at 7 p.m. Our April meeting will be Birding in Central Florida presented by member Greg Prelich. Greg spent about half of this past year in central Florida. He will tell us about some of the locations and species that he saw and compare birding in Florida vs NJ. Join us for this Zoom meeting.

A Zoom invite will be sent shortly. In the meantime, stay safe and get vaccinated.

Field Trips

- April 24—Belleplain State Forest
- May 15—Double Trouble State Park
- May 22—Heislerville and Delaware Bayshore



Friends in Southern Ocean Birding Group (group)

Cape May House

The Board is waiting until April to see how things are going in the country and in NJ to determine whether we will rent the Cape May Lodge, probably the first week in October. We are all anxious to be able to spend the week down there together, but safety must come first. First,



everyone will have to be vaccinated before we can even consider it. **If you are planning to stay at the house in October if it's a go, please let me know.** We would need 12 people to spend 4 nights each to make it possible.

Adding a Water Feature for Birds

By Eileen Bennett

Water is a great addition to your backyard habitat, and it can help attract a variety of bird species that you might not see at your feeders. Ideally, bird baths should be under 3" deep. You can help birds find your bath by adding some type of movement to the water. Moving water is also much less likely to be a breeding area for mosquitos.

If you already have a bird bath, you can add moving water in a variety of ways. There are solar water wigglers, electric mini waterfalls, or dripper systems that attach to your hose bib. These options range in price between \$20-\$60, all readily available on Amazon. All of these solutions are designed to sit within the bird bath. Misters are also a fun option to situate near the bath, and you can usually use the same tubing that you'd use for a dripper system (1/4" ID hose is the most common), using a T fitting, so you can have both fed by your hose bib. Misters can help attract hummingbirds to your water feature.

For my water feature, I elected to go with something that uses a small pump to create a ground level 'stream'. It is actually a ground level, three tier bird bath. We set the tiers on a small mound of dirt to provide height and overlapped each tier to prevent water loss. There is a pump at the bottom level, and we buried the pump's outflow hose and routed it to the top tier and bordered the edges with some rocks. We've had this for many years,

and recently made some improvements to reduce the number of refilling trips. We replaced the bottom tier with a whiskey barrel liner, which holds about 20 gallons. It does have steep sides, so we fabricated a heavy-duty mesh false bottom cut to size, which sits over the pump using a PVC 'table' and filled it with some gravel. This prevents any critters from drowning if they fell in, which also has the added benefit of trapping any leaf debris and



keeping it away from the pump motor. We also enlarged the prefilter on the pump inlet so that it doesn't clog as easily as the muck builds up, since we do get a lot of mud sediment as this is all ground level.

Maintenance on this feature involves rerouting the outlet hose to the garden and flushing the tiers with fresh water until it runs clear (about every 4-6 weeks in summer) and removing the false bottom and rinsing out the filter. It just requires weekly refill of about 5-10 gallons that's lost to evaporation and splashing. We do shut this off during the winter, and just put in a heated bird bath on top of the upper tier so that our visitors have access to water all year long.

Any wildlife habitat requires 4 things – Food, Water, Shelter, and a Place to Raise Young. With the addition of a bird bath or water feature, you'll be helping your backyard birds tremendously!

March 20 Field Trip



Eight members of the SOBG went to Barnegat Light State Park for our field trip. Highlights included 5

Ipswich Sparrows and 2 Piping Plovers. Overall, 29 species were seen. The weather got better as the day progressed, and all had a good time. Next field trip is April 24 to Belleplain State Forest for warblers. Hope to see you there.