



# Friendly, fun, and Informative Bird Watching

June 2022

Issue 58

## Annual Dues for 2023

Dues for 2023 are due and can be paid starting in August. 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 available for renewals, new memberships, and donations on **our website**.

## June Field Trip

This June we were finally able to get a trip to Lakehurst scheduled after 3 years due to Covid restrictions. Our



group of 9 members spent almost 4 hours searching the grasslands at the Joint Base for 5 target birds:

Eastern Meadowlark, Grasshopper Sparrow, Upland Sandpiper, Horned Lark, and Common Raven. And we got them all plus several Common Nighthawks, and American Kestrel. It looks like Greg is eyeing Jeanine's sandwich with anticipation of a snack.



No meeting in July. Information about the August meeting will be sent out next month.

## Field Trips:

**July 9—SOBG Picnic**

**August 6—Birds and Butterflies at Forsythe NWR**

## SOBG 2022 Picnic



The SOBG Annual Picnic will be held on July 9<sup>th</sup> at the home of Nancy Lynch, 102 S. Commodore Drive, Little Egg Harbor. A listing has been sent out to all members for what you plan to bring to the event. The SOBG will supply the hot dogs and burgers as

always. Still time to sign up and join us.

## Nominating Committee Formed

As we are now a 501(c)3, our bylaws require us to have elections for 4 officers: president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary. We have formed a committee to formally submit names for these offices at the November meeting for beginning in office as of January 2023. If you are interested in one of these positions, please let us know.



**Friends in Southern Ocean Birding Group (group)**

# Birding Belize—Part 2

By Susan Puder

On the fifth day of our trip to Belize, we began our first full day at Crooked Tree Sanctuary/Birdseye View Lodge with a power boat ride exploring the Crooked Tree Lagoon



and Spanish Creek. What a great morning spent out on the water, where early fog disappeared to a sunny afternoon.

The birding was incredible and involved no walking. Jabirus, wood storks, ducks, herons, vultures, and hawks all gave us wonderful photo ops. My all-time favorites



were the Aplomado Falcons.



That afternoon we explored the pine/oak savanna on the upper end of the island of Crooked Tree. Acorn woodpeckers were busy near their nest hole, and a variety of warblers were viewed, including yellow-throated, black and white, and Grace's, which was a lifer.



The next day we took

another boat ride this time to Lamanai Mayan Ruins. This was a 25-mile trip up the New River, stopping along the way for bird viewing opportunities, which didn't disappoint. Tiger-heron, Great Black Hawk, egrets, herons, and my favorites Bat Falcons and Snail Kite.



Some Long-nosed Bats and a Lesser Nighthawk were also highlights of the ride.

Lamanai was very interesting with history dating back to 16<sup>th</sup> century BC. There are three main temples that we



walked to, learning the history, and looking for birds. The national flower of Belize is the Black Orchid. One surprise bird was the Azure-crowned Hummingbird, which provided everyone good views, but hard to

photograph. During lunch we had brown jays looking for handouts.



One the trip back to the Lodge, a Sungrebe gave us good views, but again hard to photograph.



Our last full day was spent visiting Altun Ha, another Mayan ruin and getting Covid testing in Belize City. In the City, we were able to spend some time at a park looking out on the Caribbean Sea. There Royal and Sandwich Terns, Ruddy Turnstones, and other shorebirds added to our birding lists. A very distance Brown Booby was spotted by Dale in the scope.

The grounds of Birdseye View Lodge also provided lots of birds, with three species of orioles, Lesser Goldfinch feeding her young, some warblers, Russet-naped Wood



Rails, Black-collared Hawks, and hummers, including the common Rufous-tailed Hummer.

All in all, it was a great trip. I saw over 200 species, with 38 lifers. Crooked Tree is the best place to go, with the Lodge designed especially for birders. Food was great, guides were terrific, and all had a wonderful time.