



# Friendly, fun, and Informative Bird Watching

December 2022 Issue 64

## 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**.

## Holiday Party



Our thanks goes out to Carol and Dave for sharing their lovely home for our Annual Holiday Party on December 7<sup>th</sup>. Everyone had a wonderful time and enjoyed all the great food and the time together.

Wishing all the Best for a Birdy and Happy New Year!

## Field Trips:

January 21—Forsythe NWR

## Tuckerton Christmas Bird Count

On Saturday, December 17th the Tuckerton Circle held its Christmas Bird Count (CBC) for 2022. Around 23 people participated, with a preliminary count of 91 species. Good Job everyone and thank you. More info to follow. Thanks to Morry Kapitan for handling the operations.



Friends in Southern Ocean Birding Group  
(group)

## January 5 Meeting

The Nominating Committee has identified candidates for President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Also, nominations from the floor will be accepted at our in-person Business Meeting, scheduled for **Thursday, January 5, 2023, at the Wells Mills County Park Nature Center**, 905 Wells Mills Road, Waretown, NJ. Doors will open at 6:30 for social time, and our business meeting will begin at 7 pm.

President – Amy Ryan

Vice President – Josh Gant

Secretary – Valerie Henken

Treasurer – Robert Leifeste

President Ex-Officio – Susan Puder

Also, we are still accepting volunteers for the committees. The final decision on Committee Chairpersons will be up to the President. If you would like to get more involved in the operations of our club, let us know if you are willing to serve as Chair or supporting member of any of our committees, including the Programs, Field Trips, Membership, Webmaster, Scholarship, or Finance Audit.

We also have other service opportunities throughout the year, including Social Events, Refreshments, Special Events, Publicity, and Annual events like the Great Bay Clean up and Christmas Bird Count. If you are interested in any committees or service opportunities, please reply to this email with your interest and contact information.

We look forward to seeing you at our first meeting of 2023 and the many fun and informative events we will be planning for the coming year!

# A Fond Farewell



As 2022 draws to a close, my tenure at President of the Southern Ocean Birding Group does too. When I started the group back in 2008, I was hoping to meet new friends as I had only been in Barnegat about 4 years, and learn all about birds, which was becoming a new passion for me. On both counts I was wildly successful.

Our first meeting was in the basement of the Tuckerton Seaport Visitor Center with 12 people expressing an interest in a birding group in Ocean County. From that small group, some of whom are still active in the group, and Fred Lesser, the Southern Ocean Birding Group was formed. Taking small steps in the beginning with a monthly meeting at the Seaport, and programs given by mostly our own members, we began our journey together.

Field trips around the area expanded our knowledge of birds, and with a grant from the Southern Ocean Chamber of Commerce, we were able to put together a map of the Best Birding locations in Ocean County. As the years past, more events helped to promote the group and increase our presence in the county. Wings Over LBI was added as an annual event in March with programs at Science Saturday at the LBI Foundation, and a second program at Barnegat Lighthouse State Park in the afternoon. Some of those days in March were brutally cold and windy, but members gritted it out on the jetty informing visitors of what birds were being seen in the inlet.

Later on, we added our annual community service project of the clean up of Great Bay Boulevard in early April. Then spring migration gets us out for several field trips to find beautiful warblers and other passerines during April and May. Fall brings another wave of these birds and having the Cape May house over the past 7 years has been great fun.

Nancy Lynch graciously opens her home for our annual picnic, when we can relax together, eat, and have a fun day. By the way, eating has become a second feature of our group, with picnics, holiday parties, and just finding a local place after a morning of birding. The death diner sticks out in my memory, with if you've been with us for a while, you'll know the story behind that.

Our numbers grew over the years to almost 80-90 members these days. I am proud of our achievements over the years,

especially starting in 2014 giving scholarships to outstanding graduates of MATES, who go on to environmental studies in college.

We have had great programs by local authors and experts in the birding field, such as, Rick Wright, Kevin Karlson and Dale Rosselet, Scott Whittle, and our own Fred Lesser and Pete Bacinski. Our own in-house experts like Greg, Josh, Amy, and even me have provided entertaining and informative presentations over the years. Our exchange programs with Tucson Audubon were great and should be continued.

As I look forward to Amy Ryan taking over the group, with new officers, I hope everyone will continue to provide the support to them as you have to me over the past 14 years. I believe that new officers and new ideas will spur us to a new and exciting future. Already, we are working on new methods of transparency for the organization, which should be available to all this coming January. Amy comes with years of experience in leading non-profit organizations, and with the same expectations that I did: meet new people and learn more about birding.

As for me, I will continue to provide advice when requested and help with the transition. I am now Vice President of the Friends of E.B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, and hope to share with them all that I learned at the Friends Academy in July. Also, I hope to have more time to work on my photography and write articles for Nature Photographer Magazine. And to catch up on the stack of magazines that have accumulated over the past few months.

I want to thank everyone for all you do to keep the SOBG a vital organization, and who have helped me over the years. As they say, I couldn't have done without you. I see a bright future ahead with new leadership, and I'll still be around, just a bit more rested. **THANK YOU!**

Photo courtesy of Karmela Moneta