



Friendly, fun, and Informative Bird Watching

January 2023

Issue 65

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**.

Field Trips:

February 4—Manasquan Inlet and Monmouth County Ponds

Volunteers for SOBG

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.

Don't forget to complete the SurveyMonkey on field trips.



February 2 Meeting

The SOBG monthly meeting will be our annual 'Favorite Birds' program. This is always a fun and popular program in which members get the opportunity to describe their favorite birding moments of the past year. Tell us about your 'Favorite Birds of 2022'...it could be a rarity or lifer that you saw for the first time, it could be a local bird or a more exotic one that you saw on your travels elsewhere, it could be some behavior of a common species that you observed, or just anything that made it a special birding moment to share. Due to time constraints, we ask that you limit your slot to 5 minutes, and within that time frame you can describe a single story, or you can show and describe up to five birds. All you have to do to participate is submit photos to Greg Prelich (gprelich@gmail.com) by January 30, and Greg will assemble them into a slide show. Please submit your photos early and don't wait until the last minute, giving Greg enough time to assemble the slide show.

We'll see you at the meeting Feb. 2 at 7PM in the **Lacey Library at 10 East Lacey Road in Forked River**, sharing these stories and photos of that make birding so much fun. The meeting starts at 7PM, but doors open by 6:30.



Friends in Southern Ocean Birding Group (group)

2022 Tuckerton Christmas Bird Count

By Morry Kaptian

First Report: All of the reports are now in and I have done the official tally. Just as a reference, our best ever species total since Southern Ocean Birding Group revitalized the Tuckerton count in 2010 was during the 2020 CBC with 96 species. This year we topped that with 97 species. What a great job everyone did! We are inching closer to that elusive 100 species count. Josh Gant did some additional birding yesterday and found 5 species we didn't see on Saturday. We can't add them to our total, but they do get reported as extra data into the CBC database (Thanks Josh!) It also tells me that we left some meat on the bone and getting a Tuckerton species count of over 100 species is definitely possible.

Final Report: The Tuckerton count data has been finalized, and a bow has been tied on this year's Christmas Bird Count. The only change from past communications was with our total species count - one of our hawk species was disallowed on lack of compelling evidence, so our total species is now 96 this year - tied with our best ever.

A fantastic accounting of how we did has been put together by Greg Prelich and can be found here: <https://southernoceanbirdinggroup.org/projects/cbc/>

Thanks go to Greg as always for adding context to the raw data we produce; reading his narrative is really one of the highlights of doing the count for me. SOBG members will also see something on the count in one of the next newsletters.

With that it will be "radio silence" from me until November when I will start the call for the 124th annual count.

First Field Trip for 2023

The first field trip of the new year was held on January 21, 2023, with 16 members braving the cold winds at Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge. Josh Gant and Jason Nargiz served as our guides as we caravanned around the Wildlife Drive.

Our first stop started with a bang at Gull Tower and the drive there: Red-shouldered Hawk sitting in a tree just hanging out, Tundra Swans and Pintails, Bald Eagles flying over, Long-billed Dowitchers, Coot, and Greater Yellowlegs just at the start.



Continuing along the drive, more waterfowl gave us good views as the wind started to really blow.



Green-winged Teal, Northern Shovelers, Gadwalls, American Wigeon, Mallards and Black Ducks, all three Mergansers, and about 3500 Snow Geese gave all a thrill. Northern Harriers were abundant along with a Gray Ghost who flew along side the drive.

Heading along the east dike, a immature Bald Eagle was giving the Osprey platform a once over, trying to maintain some dignity in the gusting winds and provided great photo ops.



Once we hit the dogleg, no Short-eared owls were present, but sharp-eyed Josh found a small flock of sparrows, including Song, Savannah, and Tree sparrows in the blowing grasses. Trying to find them was like a "Where's Waldo" exercise. But everyone seemed to have gotten glass on them.



At the Forsythe Overlook, more sparrows were flying around, completing our day. All in all 55 species were found, very successful trip!!

Our thanks to Josh and Jason for the great job of spotting and sharing their knowledge with some new members who joined us, and us old time members. More photos on next page.

