



Friendly, fun, and Informative Bird Watching

February 2023 Issue 66

Annual Dues for 2023

Dues for 2023 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 available for renewals, new memberships, and donations on **our website**.

Field Trips:

March 18—Wings Over LBI, field trips to Barnegat Inlet, Holgate, and Cedar Bonnet Island, 1-4 p.m.

Birdy News Bits

- Bird decals work best if attached **outside** on the glass or window
- Bald eagle numbers continue to grow in NJ, with 250 active nests counted in 2022, producing 335 offspring
- Some bird species continue to decline, including grassland birds that have declined 34% and shorebirds by 33% since 1970. Additionally, 70 bird species have been newly identified as each having lost 50% or more of their populations in the past 50 years. Good news is that waterfowl have increased by 18% and ducks by 34%. Check out the 2022 State of the Birds Report link on our website.

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



March 2 Meeting

The SOBG monthly meeting will be with Terry Carruthers, who will be presenting "*New Jersey to*

Texas—a Five Day Birding Blitz". During a New Year's Eve dinner conversation, Terry Carruthers and Pete Shen decided to take off on a five day birding blitz to the Rio Grande in Texas, with a couple of exciting birding stops on the way. Come find out the strategies they used to maximize their birding opportunities and minimize their costs.

Terry is an Associate Naturalist with NJ Audubon. Join us for this virtual ride to the Lone Star State.

We'll see you at the meeting March 2 at 7PM in the **Lacey Library at 10 East Lacey Road in Forked River**. The meeting starts at 7PM, but doors open by 6:30.



Friends in Southern Ocean Birding Group (group)

Second Field Trip for 2023

Our second field trip of the year was rescheduled from February 4 due to very cold conditions, to February 18, when it was not quite as cold, and we were able to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count for Cornell.



Twelve hardy members and a guest braved the cold winds starting at Lake of the Lilies in Pt. Pleasant Beach.

Kildeers were running around, but nothing unexpected seen there. Next a few ponds in Pt. Pleasant before heading to Manasquan Inlet, where we were rewarded with Razorbills, loons, a few Longtail Ducks, and a Bonaparte's Gull.



Gull Island didn't produce any rare gulls, but some Red-breasted Mergansers, so onward to Belmar for restrooms and more birds hopefully.

Once arriving at Belmar Marina, we ventured out onto the public dock and found a immature Razorbill just floating around the whale-watching ships, giving us all great views and photo ops.



The next stop was Maclerie Park in Belmar, which gave us distant views of both wigeons (one Eurasian) and thousands of Atlantic Brant hanging out in the Shark River, occasionally taking off almost covering the sky.

We continued onto a hidden treasure off Hillside Road, giving us three Bald Eagles flying together, a Red-tailed Hawk, and a Coopers. Back to Shark River Inlet, there were more loons and a few more Razorbills. We finished up the afternoon at Lake Como and Silver Lake, collecting Hooded Mergansers and lots of Ruddy Ducks to wrap up the day.



Jason was our leader and our thanks goes out to him and helpers Greg and Jeanine for a great day of birding, especially the Razorbills, which under normal conditions are found well off shore, but are being found in inlets all along our coast this winter. Fun day had by all!



Photos by Jeanine Apgar, Sue Puder, and Claude DeLorraine