



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

July/August 2009

This is an abbreviated version of our newsletter with all of the club's summer activities listed. The next newsletter will be the September issue. Enjoy the remainder of your summer!

- Barry Bengel, Newsletter Editor

Summer Field Trips!

Field Trip – An Introduction to Ferns at Ceres Park, Mantua Twp. Saturday, July 11th, 9:00 AM to Noon

Leader: Karl Anderson

Meet at the Ceres Park parking area. Ferns look difficult, but they are actually rather easy to identify, and there are only about fifty species in New Jersey. We will probably see about fifteen of them, in the course of a slow walk along the trails. Other plants of interest will probably not be ignored. Bring beverage and insect repellent, and dress to suit the weather.

Directions: See your copy of Natural Places of Gloucester County. But if you've worn it out and have not had a chance to purchase another, well, from the intersection of Route 45 and Route 553A (Main Street) in Mantua, take Route 553A south for about 3.6 miles. The park entrance will be on the right, immediately north of Route 55.



Field Trip – Boundary Creek and Other Sites in Western Burlington County Saturday, July 18th, 9:00 AM to Mid-Afternoon

Leader: Karl Anderson

Meet at 9:00 AM at the parking area in Boundary Creek Natural Resource Area. Bring lunch, beverage, binoculars, and dress to suit the weather. In addition to Boundary Creek, we hope to visit the 19th- and early 20th-century industrial site of Smithville, and walk the 1 1/2 mile Smith's Woods Trail. Walking will be level and dry. We might also make a quick stop at the Rancocas Nature Center to admire their butterfly garden. We should see some nice views of Rancocas Creek and of Smithville Lake, and see a few birds, butterflies, and flowers.

Directions: Boundary Creek NRA is on Creek Road in Moorestown. Take Route 295 to Exit 43B, towards Delran. The preserve will be on the right, two miles from Route 295. There is a large blue sign. Distance from Woodbury is about 25 miles. For information about this site and other Burlington County parks, go to: http://www.co.burlington.nj.us/departments/resource_conservation/parks/.

Field trip – The Heart of the Pinelands **Sunday, August 9th, 9:00 AM to Early Afternoon**

Leader: Karl Anderson



Meet at 9:00 AM at the Atsion Ranger Station on Route 206 in the Wharton State Forest. Bring lunch, beverage, tick and insect repellent, and dress to suit the weather. Be prepared for wet walking. Cameras and binoculars are optional. This will be primarily a botanical trip; we will visit several locations, including some of the savannahs along the Batsto River near Quaker Bridge; road conditions will dictate our actual route. We should see a few species of orchids, plus bladderworts, sundews, pitcher plant, and other specialties of the area.

Directions: The Atsion Ranger Station is on the east side of Route 206, about ten miles south of the intersection of Routes 70 and 206 at the Red Lion traffic circle. Or, if traveling on the Atlantic City Expressway, it is about ten miles north of Exit 28. It is immediately north of the Atsion Lake recreation area. Distance from Woodbury is about 35 miles, either way.

Field trip – Ceres Park Microbioblitz **Saturday, August 29th, 9:00 AM to Noon**

Leader: Karl Anderson

Meet at the Ceres Park parking area. We will walk the trails at a leisurely pace, attempting to identify and list every species of vascular plant and vertebrate (and perhaps butterflies and dragonflies) that we observe. Bring binoculars, field guides, beverage, insect repellent.

Directions: See your copy of Natural Places of Gloucester County. But if you've worn it out and have not had a chance to purchase another, well, from the intersection of Route 45 and Route 553A (Main Street) in Mantua, take Route 553A south for about 3.6 miles. The park entrance will be on the right, immediately north of Route 55.

Family Fun Stream Walk

Monday, August 3rd at 9:30 AM in Pitman

Trip Leader: Maria Keefe (856) 627-7010 Email: walkingwith4boyz@comcast.net

We'll explore what is in, on, under and around the creek as we walk in the water. We'll look for fish, frogs, turtles, mussels, animal prints, flowers, birds and more. Wear appropriate water shoes or old sneakers and bring repellent.

Directions: From Broadway in Pitman go west on Holly Avenue. Turn right at Elm Street (the 4th street on the right; before Alcyon Lake). Make the 2nd left onto Albert Ave. Proceed to end of Albert. Parking is on left, behind Memorial School.

Family Fun Walk

Thursday, August 13th at 9:30 AM at Wenonah Lake

Trip Leader: Maria Keefe (856) 627-7010 Email: walkingwith4boyz@comcast.net

We will meet for a ramble through the woods and around the lake. The trail is through thick woods and is cool even on a hot day. Join us as we look for frogs, raccoon tracks, and listen for kingfishers. We will meet at the Wenonah Lake parking lot at W. Maple St. and N. Jefferson Ave.



Directions: From Woodbury-Glassboro Rd. (Rt. 553)- Go west on Maple St., crossing the railroad tracks. At the stop sign at the bottom of the hill, turn right into the Wenonah Lake parking lot. From Rt. 45 – Take Ogden Station Rd. east through the Oak Valley section of Deptford Twp. (If approaching on Rt. 45 from the north, use the jug handle just past the West Deptford Shop Rite.) After approximately one mile, Ogden Rd. becomes Maple St. You will pass Wenonah Lake on your left. At the stop sign, turn left into the Wenonah Lake parking lot.

Natural Events for the month of July

- Blueberries ripen in early July.
- Bog asphodel, now found only in New Jersey, blooms in early July in Pinelands fens.
- The first brood of monarch butterflies is emerging from their chrysalis.
- Raccoons, skunks, and opossums are digging up and eating turtle eggs.
- Breeding and nesting season for birds ends this month except for goldfinches and late bluebirds
- Thistle plants are beginning to seed; goldfinches gather thistleseed for nesting materials
- Listen for the feeding calls of young barred and great horned owls.
- Yellow warblers begin to head south in July; migration is complete in August

Natural Events for the month of August

- Perseid meteor shower - August 12.
- Sweet goldenrod, early goldenrod, cardinal flower, and other late-summer flowers bloom.
- Sweet pepperbush in bloom.
- Purple martins begin roosting in phragmites along the Maurice River near Port Elizabeth in preparation for their southern migration. Peak numbers usually occur around the third week in August.
- Red knots pass through New Jersey again on their southward migration to Chile. Adults are still in breeding plumage.
- Fall raptor migration begins in mid-August with small numbers of several species, including American kestrels, ospreys and bald eagles.
- Gray squirrels give birth to second brood.
- Early warblers migrating south through New Jersey.
- American goldfinches finish nesting late in this month
- Second brood of hummingbirds begin to appear at feeders.
- Birds are feeding on fruits of flowering dogwood trees.

Events by other Organizations: July/August 2009

- July 26 (Sunday) – Exploring Burlington County’s Botanical Diversity. 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Leader; Sandra Keller. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. \$Fee. For info: <http://njudubon.org/centers/rancocas/>.
- August 1 (Saturday) – Savannahs of the Batsto River. 10:00 AM to late afternoon. Leader: Ted Gordon. Be prepared for wet walking. Sponsored by the Philadelphia Botanical Club. For info: www.ansp.org/hosted/botany_club/

- August 9 (Sunday) – Finding Fungi at Rancocas. 10:00 AM to 1:30 PM. Joint trip with the New Jersey Mycological Society. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. \$Fee. For info: <http://njudubon.org/centers/rancocas/>.
- August 23 (Sunday) – Butterflies, Birds, Garden, and Meadow Walk. 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Leader: Sandra Keller. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. \$Fee. For info: <http://njudubon.org/centers/rancocas/>.

The following events take place at the **Scotland Run Nature Center** in Clayton. For details and registration, call the center at (856) 881-0845. All events are free.

- **Bird Walks:** Tuesday 7/14 and 8/11 at 6:00 PM
- **Star Party! The Perseid Meteor Shower:** Wednesday, 8/12 8:30-11:30 PM. Catch a falling star and join the Astronomy Professors from Rowan University to view the annual Perseid Meteor shower. The professors will have telescopes on hand so you can check out all of the astral wonders. Bring a lawn chair and meet us back at the boat launch area. If the sky is too cloudy for viewing or it decides to rain, we'll try again the next evening, Thursday, August 13.
- **Gloucester County Parks Ecotours:** August 24 thru 28 at 10 AM. Explore the wild side of the county park system. Meet at the Scotland Run Nature Center at 9:00 AM to carpool, or at the parks at 10:00 AM. 8/24 – Atkinson Park (meet at the tennis courts), 8/25 – Pitman Golf Course (meet in the parking lot), 8/26 – Scotland Run (meet at the nature center), and Red Bank Battlefield – will include a tour of the Whitall House (meet at the Ranger Office), 8/29 – Greenwich Lake Park (meet in the parking lot).

Other Nature Notes

Wild Birds Unlimited offers an everyday 10% discount to GCNC members!

Wild Birds Unlimited offers an everyday 10% discount (for non bird food items) to GCNC members! *Due to the current volatile market for bird food, the 10% discount for these items has had to be discontinued.* However, members will still receive credit for their purchases towards the Frequent Seed Shopper Program. WBU offers the GCNC discount on all other items in the store. Members are requested to identify themselves as GNNC members before their sales are finalized. Questions? Please contact Sharon at (856) 218-2973 or sillybird348@comcast.net.



Looking Ahead:

Club Notes:

- If you'd like to receive the newsletter electronically or receive more info about the club please email Karen Kravchuck at blackbirdsinging@hotmail.com or call 468-6536.
- The Nature Club is always looking for ideas for future programs and field trips. Please contact the program or trip coordinator if you have ideas or would like to help.
- Information for the next newsletter should be sent to Barry Bengel at sharkeyes@comcast.net or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15th of the preceding month.