



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

September 2006

Program – Encountering Backyard Wildlife
Thursday, Sept 14th at 7:00 PM at EIRC, Sewell
Presenter: Vicki Schmidt

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks



Although much of Gloucester County has been transformed from a rural to a suburban landscape, the communities and neighborhoods in which we live still team with a surprising variety of wildlife. We commonly see gray squirrel, chipmunk, raccoon, opossum, skunk, red fox, gray fox, deer, groundhog, songbirds, raptors and vultures. Even beaver and coyote are among us. If you see an animal that appears sick or injured, what should you do? How prevalent is rabies among our wildlife population? If you see a raccoon active during daylight, is that a sign it's rabid? Are bats the dreaded carriers of disease that some claim them to be? Vicki Schmidt is a Gloucester County resident and licensed wildlife rehabilitator, who has worked with Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research in Newark, DE. Vicki will be presenting a fascinating program that will familiarize us with the wild animals that live all around us. She will explain techniques used to save animals that have become victims of oil spills and other environmental hazards, and how an animal can be restored to health and returned to the wild. This will be an informative evening that will help us to make our encounters with wild things more beneficial for both ourselves and for the animal.

Field Trip – The Blue Hole, Monroe Twp.
Sunday September 17th, 2:00 PM

Trip Leader: Erik Mollenhauer

Co-leader: Kris Mollenhauer

Join us for a Sunday ramble to one of Gloucester County's legends: the "Blue Hole". Situated one mile off Piney Hollow Rd in a heavily wooded area of Pine Barrens vegetation, the Blue Hole is a stone's throw from the Great Egg Harbor River. Legends abound about this circular pond (about 135 feet across) with sky blue water. Known in the past as the "Jersey Devil's bathtub", the area was frequented by locals in the 1930's, who reportedly warned their children not to swim or go near the water, as it was thought that demons from below would pull their victims down. One story says that the Blue Hole does not completely freeze over in winter due to hot springs coming up from deep in the earth. Another story has it that the Blue Hole is bottomless, as tested by some folks who paddled a boat to its middle and threw over a weighted line--that kept going--and going-- We invite you



to discover the truth for yourself; if you plan on joining us, pick up a drivers map at the September meeting (above) or follow the directions below.

“While men believe in the infinite, some ponds will be thought to be bottomless.”
--Henry David Thoreau

Directions: From Williamstown, take Rt 322 East. Turn left at traffic light for Piney Hollow Rd. Go less than one mile and park on the left in a dirt parking lot for the State shooting range. This is about .2 miles BEFORE the Great Egg Harbor River. If you cross over the Great Egg Harbor River you have gone too far. Group will meet in the parking lot at 2 PM.



Summer Field Trip Reports

Field Trip Report - Mantua Creek Stream Walk (7/12/06) by Ed Cleary

July 12th's creek walk was enjoyed by a small group (15) of adults and children. Mother Nature was kind and held off the rains. The water was refreshing, and we were able to see several large fish, a snapping turtle, fresh water mussels and snails. We also saw a great blue heron and heard the flutelike wood thrush sing its song. Erik Mollenhauer also educated us on how invasive plants unbalance the native environment.

Field Trip Report - Mantua Creek Trail Walk at Wenonah Woods (8/3/06) by Rich Dilks

It was a typically hot and humid South Jersey summer day and at 6:00 P.M. a small group (9 in all) met for a GCNC sponsored early evening walk along Mantua Creek Trail in Wenonah's Conservation Area. Our first stop was to view the creek and marsh from the overlook at the Mantua Ave. bridge. There we saw the marsh plant community of Wild Rice, Pickerelweed, Spatterdock and Jewelweed. We also saw the magenta flowers of the invasive Purple Loosestrife and learned how the Wenonah Environmental Commission in cooperation with the State of NJ has instituted a program of biological control to preserve the marsh's biodiversity by the release of host specific, Loosestrife-eating Galerucella beetles. We then entered the Mantua Creek Trail and walked through an area of damp wooded thickets, noting the trees such as the Common Persimmon, Red Maple, Tuliptree, Green Ash and a magnificent American Sycamore, and shrubs such as Arrowwood, Spicebush, Black Haw and Buttonbush. The trail then led to higher ground, still paralleling the creek and the habitat changed to a drier, more open woodland, dominated by White and Chestnut Oaks. Flowering Dogwood and Pinxter Flower were common in the understory. Here we saw our first evidence of Wenonah's newly resident beaver colony- the stump of a large Green Ash, felled this past year by the beavers. Among the herbaceous plants observed in bloom was the Naked-flowered Tick Trefoil, with its delicate pink blossoms and barbed fruit (nature's velcro). We stopped briefly at Clay Hill, the site of the old 1860's railroad trestle then continued through the woods and over a short boardwalk, flanked by Silky Dogwoods, bearing clusters of still unripe fruit. The walk led finally, to a path cut through the late summer growth of tall grasses, Great Ragweed and Loosestrife that took us to the open meadow at the creek's edge, close to the beavers hidden creek side den. As dusk began to fall we retraced our steps, happy to have become a bit more familiar with the diverse habitats preserved along this part of Wenonah's 135 acre Ring of Green and to have observed some of the trees, shrubs, wildflowers and wildlife found there.

Field Trip Report - Grass Walk (8/17/06) by Karl Anderson

About 30 species of grasses, from A to Z (that's *Agrostis* to *Zizania*, of course) were seen on this walk at the West Deptford Scenic Trail, and some basic information about this very large and important plant family was passed along to participants. Also seen were camphorweed, hyssop-leaved thoroughwort, New York ironweed, swamp milkweed, and boneset - all in bloom. But the hit of the evening may have been a large population of catalpa sphinx moth caterpillars, of all ages, on (what else?) the leaves of a catalpa tree. This yellow-and-black "catawba worm", is well known and sought as bait by catfish and 'brim' fishermen throughout the eastern United States. But it was a new one for all of us!

Field Trip Report - Cedar Lake Microbioblitz (8/27/06) by Karl Anderson

Seen during this trip to a wildlife management area on the border between Atlantic and Gloucester Counties were 20 species of birds, 10 species of dragonflies and damselflies, 115 species of plants, 3 species of amphibians, one reptile (box turtle) and a few butterflies, other insects, and one fish (chain pickerel). Most of the plants were species typical of a New Jersey Pine Barrens pond shore - including bladderworts, meadow beauty, yellow-eyed grasses, pickerelweed, and a number of grasses and sedges. Birds included white-eyed vireo, eastern kingbird, great crested flycatcher and great blue heron. Anybody who really would like a list, contact Karl Anderson.



Conservation Corner – New Jersey is Hot by Loretta Dunne

This is the year when Global Warming has gotten more attention than ever before. If you haven't seen the movie "An Inconvenient Truth", I can recommend it. I learned a lot from it, not the least of which was that, overwhelmingly, all articles in scholarly scientific journals confirm that global warming is real. The doubts raised are by those outside the scientific scholarly community, by scientists who are working for corporations or by the media.

It is definitely time to do two things on global warming – learn more and make changes in our actions that are causing global warming. There are many books on global warming. Here are two acclaimed titles, both of which are available through the Gloucester County Library system:

Field Notes from a Catastrophe by Elizabeth Kolbert

The Weather Makers: How Man is Changing the Climate and What it Means for Life on Earth by Tim Flannery

New Jersey and Global Warming

Check out New Jersey Public Interest Group's (NJPIRG) (www.njpirg.org) campaign to reduce global warming for our state. Studies quoted on their site present a terrible future for the state unless global warming is reversed. They indicate that, if we continue the current trends, sea levels off the Atlantic Coast will rise 2 to 4 feet by 2100. This puts Atlantic City and the surrounding suburbs under water or subject to chronic flooding. Long Beach Island, Cape May and much more would be washed away. Also submerged would be cities such as Bayonne, Jersey City and Hoboken, not only devastating the citizens (60% of New Jersey's population lives on the coast) and economy of the state, but also adding a large variety of toxins to our waters.

Additionally, the NJPIRG report indicates that New Jersey, as a heavily populated area, contributes to 0.5 percent of the world's global warming pollution, more than Chile, Ecuador and Peru combined.

Important Action

Send a letter to Governor Corzine, urging him to take action. Steps such as developing more energy efficient buildings, setting minimum efficiency standards for all new appliances sold in the state, starting a program to encourage carpools, passing a gas-guzzler fee to give incentives for fuel efficiencies, and encouraging offshore wind energy are just some ways the governor could make a difference for global warming. Contact him now, and urge that he make the reduction of global warming a priority.

Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-6000
<http://www.state.nj.us/governor/govmail.html>

What About You?

The actions that we can all take personally to reduce global warming are the same steps that are necessary to reduce your own energy consumption:

- Drive less. When you purchase a car, buy one that gets great mileage!
- Buy energy efficient appliances. Look for the energy star ratings on major appliances. Fix broken appliances, if possible, rather than purchasing new ones.
- Support clean, renewable energy. Support wind energy.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with fluorescent ones.
- Be aware of your water use. Install low-flow showerheads and faucets. Turn your hot water down. Take showers instead of baths.
- Plant a tree and protect all of our remaining open space. Trees breathe in carbon dioxide, which causes global warming. Trees also can protect your home from the sun, reducing air conditioning costs.
- Recycle paper, plastic and glass. Use less of all of these materials. Carry a cloth shopping bag in the car and use it. When you buy paper, buy recycled.
- Caulk and use weather-stripping in your home. Make it as energy efficient as possible.
- Make sure all of your elected officials know that you consider global warming a top priority.

These are just some of the steps that will reduce global warming. They are not new to any of us, but the need to take these actions is more compelling than ever before.

Other Nature Notes

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

Wild Birds Unlimited has a discount agreement with the GCNC executive board and is pleased to offer GCNC members an everyday 10% discount on all purchases excluding optics and food or sale items. Sharon Oakes, owner of Wild Birds Unlimited, appreciates the many volunteer contributions made by GCNC members and hopes members can benefit from this discount. Members are requested to identify themselves as GCNC members before their sales are finalized. Questions? Please call Sharon at 218-2973.

A Wild Birds Unlimited Special for Renewed and New Members!

Wild Birds Unlimited-Washington Township will be having their 3rd Annual Feeder Trade-In Event during the month of September. Typically for this event, anyone can bring in any old birdfeeder, no matter what condition it is in, and receive a 20% discount off the purchase price of a new feeder. *HOWEVER, for anyone who has newly joined or has renewed their Nature Club membership, they will receive a 25% discount (per new feeder) for each old birdfeeder they bring to trade in.* No feeder, no matter how ratty, squirrel damaged or nasty, will be turned away! There is also no limit to the number of old feeders that can be brought in to trade for new feeders! Just tell us that you've renewed or have newly joined at the time of purchase!

All salvageable feeders will be cleaned and refurbished and donated to local schools, home schoolers, nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Any teacher, home schooler, nursing home or assisted living facility interested in being a recipient of refurbished birdfeeders is encouraged to visit or contact Wild Birds Unlimited at 856.218.2973 or sillybird348@comcast.net. Refurbished feeders will be available in October.

2006 "Cradle of Birding" Wildlife and Conservation Festival John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum Saturday, September 16th from 7 am to 3 pm

Visit the 3rd Annual Cradle of Birding Festival for Exhibits, Live Animals, a Birds of Prey Show, Bird-A-Thon, Live Music, Food, Games and Workshops in Fly Tying, Optics, Photography, Fishing and much, much more! And it's all FREE!

The 2006 festival will feature renowned keynote speaker, photographer and tour guide Kevin Karlson. Kevin is author of the new highly acclaimed book "The Shorebird Guide," as well as "Birds of the Arctic Tundra." Kevin was also the photographer for Kenn Kaufmann's Focus Guide to Birds of North America and is the manager of Jaeger Tours, where he has led countless ecotourism trips to exotic destinations for birds and other wildlife. His keynote program will include a photography and natural history lecture on shorebirds of North America, followed by a book signing in the Tinicum Treasures Bookstore on the refuge following his talk on Saturday afternoon.

For more information, call 215.365.3118 or visit <http://heinz.fws.gov/>

Reminder - Membership Dues

September brings with it membership renewals. This year we will be keeping the price the same as last year. Please remember that your dues are the only costs associated with being a club member, we do not charge for any of our programs or field trips. Many organizations charge their members for each walk or activity they attend. We believe that the club is still an excellent value and hope the added cost will not deter any of our members. It is much cheaper for us to send the newsletter electronically to our members and as a result those members who choose to receive the newsletter electronically will receive a discount on their membership. The dues are \$15 for electronic mailings and \$20 for regular mail delivery. Please fill out the membership form at the end of this newsletter and bring it along with your dues to the September Meeting, or send your renewal form and a check payable to "Gloucester County Nature Club" to: Ed Cleary, 1874 McKee Ave., Deptford, NJ 08096.

Looking Ahead:

Programs- (All occur on Thursdays)

October 12 th	Hawaii: What Price Globalization? (Marie Hageman)
November 9 th	Raptors and Owls of Georgia (Caucasus) (Antonio Galvez)
December 14 th	Ecological Art: The Goldsworthy Lesson (Kate LeMay or Lee Whitehead)
January 11 th	Fossil Legends of Native Americans (Erik Mollenhauer)
February 8 th	Pot Luck Dinner & Program - Sharing Our Culture: From A Native American Indian Perspective (Jean Red Raven Kilian)
March 8 th	Natural Wonders of The Jersey Pines and Shore: Presentation and book signing (Michael Hogan)
April 12 th	Tropical Rainforests and New Jersey's Extraordinary Songbirds - Emile DeVito
May 10 th	Gardening Naturally: Native Plants in gardening and landscaping (Lorraine Kieffer) plus Annual Plant Sale
June 14 th	Annual Picnic.

Field Trips-

September 17 th (Sunday)	Blue Hole (Erik Mollenhauer)
October 15 th (Sunday)	John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge (Tinicum) (Jeff Holt)
November 5 th (Sunday)	Pine Barrens Hike (Gale Cannon)
December 16 th (Saturday)	Christmas Bird Count (Ron Kegel)
January 20 th (Saturday)	Backyard Bird Feeder Tour (Brian and Paula Hayes)
February 24 th (Saturday)	Cumberland County Birding (Bob Baruzzi)
March 11 th (Sunday)	Conowingo Dam (Bob Duke)
April 22 nd (Sunday)	Assunpink WMA Wildflowers and Birds (Karl Anderson)
May 19 th (Saturday)	Wenonah Woods (Richard Dilks)
June 16 th (Saturday)	Chestnut Branch (Kris Mollenhauer)

Club Notes:

Welcome Back...

I hope you had a good summer. I'd like to welcome our new members and welcome back those who are joining us for another successful year with the Gloucester County Nature Club.

As you know, the Nature Club only works because of the volunteers that donate their time and talents. If you'd like to become one of our valued volunteers, there are a variety of committees that could use your help. Whether the time you are able to commit is a single afternoon or a larger amount of time, your contribution is valuable. The Nature Club's committees are as follows:

- Community Events (chairs: Jackie Partridge, Bonnie Dann, Elaine Dzeima)
- Conservation (chair: Loretta Dunne)
- Educational Outreach (chairs: Kris Mollenhauer, Marge Dolente)
- Fieldtrips (chair: Karl Anderson)
- Hospitality (chair: Carol Cassel)
- Membership (chair: Mimi Glass)
- Newsletter & website (chair: Barry Bengel)
- Programs (chair: Rich Dilks)
- Publicity (chair: Maria Musciano-Keefe)
- Special Projects (chairs: Erik Mollenhauer, Bob Cassel, Jayne Rhynard)

If you would like to participate in one or more of the committees, please contact the committee chair or myself. I can be reached at deborah71@msn.com or 856-863-0330.

Deb Maka
Gloucester County Nature Club, president

- The October Executive Committee meeting will be held at Ed & Millie Cleary's house. Please contact Deb Maka for more information.
- If you'd like to receive the newsletter electronically or receive more info about the club please email Deb Maka at deborah71@msn.com or call 863-0330.
- 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 6 Greenwood Drive, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15th of the preceding month.

WAIVER

Gloucester County Nature Club and/or its leaders, officers, members or representatives shall not be liable for any injuries, loss or damage to person and/or property, direct or consequential, arising out of any trips and/or activities of the Gloucester County Nature Club. The assumption of risk, which is inherent in this type of outdoor activity, is implied on the part of each person who attends any Gloucester County Nature Club trip, and every person participating in any of said trips and/or activities assumes all risk and liability in connection therewith.

Everyone participating in any activity of the Gloucester County Nature Club will be required to read the release of liability, protecting the Gloucester County Nature Club and/or its leaders, officers, members and representatives from liability.

Gloucester County Nature Club and/or its leaders, officers, members and representatives are not in any way responsible for the personal safety of the attendees. When walking along a road, keep to the left, facing oncoming traffic and walk in a single file. When walking along trails, do not follow too closely or move too fast for your safety and for the safety of others (avoid collisions and/or whipped branches). FOLLOW THE LEADER: If you forge ahead, you may find yourself alone. Responsible adults must accompany children under the age of 16. If you expect to drop out of the group early, please inform the leader. Report to one or more of the hikers if you discontinue on route.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2006-2007

- New Member Renewal
- Paper Membership(\$20) - regular mail
- Electronic Membership(\$15) - newsletter via email; ***please provide email address below

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ ***Email Address: _____

Please note any special knowledge you would be willing to share: _____

Would you be willing to serve on a committee? If so, which committee(s): _____

Are there other ways you could participate? If so, how?

Would you like to give a gift membership? If so, indicate Individual ____ or Family ____

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

A note will be sent informing them of your gift membership in the GCNC, thank you.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE WAIVER

Signature: _____ Date: _____