



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

September 2007

Program - The Glass Art and Personal Journey of Paul Stankard

Thursday, September 13th at 7:00 PM at EIRC, Sewell

Presenter: Paul Stankard

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks

"I am interested in integrating mysticism with botanical realism, giving the glass organic credibility. Through the work, I reference the continuum of nature, by portraying and exploring the mysteries of seeds, fertility and decay. The work celebrates the primal beauty of nature on an intimate level. It is influenced by the poetry of Walt Whitman."

Paul Stankard



Paul Stankard is an artist of international reputation and renown. His glass sculptures have been exhibited and admired in museums and galleries around the globe. Those who have been fortunate enough to have seen his work cannot but marvel at the exquisite detail of blossom or leaf lovingly recreated in glass. His is an artistic vision that is intimately connected to the natural world and infused with a love and knowledge of our native plants that inspire so much of his work. Thus he is both artist and naturalist. Paul will tell us this evening about his art, his craft and the personal journey of his life. Poet as well as sculptor, he will share with us his vision. Paul lives and works in Mantua, NJ and is truly one of Gloucester County's and the world's living treasures.

Field Trip – Birds and Butterflies at Amico Island Park, Delran Township, NJ

Saturday, September 15th, 9:00AM; leaving Timberline 8:00AM

Trip Leader: Gary Lizzi

Amico Island Park is a 55-acre peninsula featuring a diverse collection of habitats and terrain. With upland forests, freshwater ponds and wetlands, river shoreline and meadows, we will enjoy a rustic natural setting at the confluence of the Rancocas Creek and Delaware River. The various paths are fairly short and are paved and level. Adequate parking and restrooms are available. The park recommends wearing light colored clothes and bringing insect repellent. Bring a lunch as plenty of picnic areas are available.



Fall migration will be underway and hopefully we will see migrating southbound warblers; fresh water ponds and wetlands will offer glimpses of egrets, herons, and shore birds. We will try our hand at identifying various butterflies in the park.

We will be meeting at Timberline Shopping Center on Woodbury Glassboro Rd in Sewell at 8:00AM to carpool north for about an hour to Amico Island Park. If you would rather travel on your own, you can meet us there at 9:00AM by following these directions:

Directions: Take Rt. 130 North to Chester Ave. in Delran. Take Chester Avenue west to St. Mihiel Dr. (which is also called River Rd.). Turn Left onto St. Mihiel Dr. Take the third right onto Norman Ave.

Conservation Corner - Wake Up Call by Loretta Dunne

Walking at Riverwinds, which is close to my home in Woodbury, I frequently hear the song of the field sparrow – I can identify this one easily because it really does sound like a ping-pong ball hitting a table. And the truth is, I usually think, oh another field sparrow and try to find birds that excite me more.

That was before I read the disturbing report, “Common Birds in Decline” that Audubon recently published. This report indicates that even the most common birds are disappearing. Using citizen science, including data from nation-wide Christmas Bird Counts, the population of common birds since 1967 was examined. The field sparrow, that I ignored so blandly, is down 68%.

Although previously, there have been a lot of emphasis on warblers, who need to depend on habitats in both the tropics and the north, it seems that all birds are at risk. You might think that this is not exactly news. Yes, we have realized that the numbers are way down, but seeing the actual percentages is shocking. According to the report, “Since 1967 the average population of the common birds in steepest decline has fallen by 68 percent; some individual species nose-dived as much as 80 percent. All 20 birds on the national Common Birds in Decline list lost at least half their populations in just four decades.”

Walking at Riverwinds, it is possible to hear the bird that is number one on the Common Birds in Decline list, the Northern Bobwhite. They are down 82 %. The nine other birds considered common that have had the most precipitous declines are the evening grosbeak, northern pintail, greater scaup, boreal chickadee, eastern meadowlark, common tern, loggerhead shrike, field sparrow and grasshopper sparrow.

What can we do about it? The Audubon report suggest a number of steps: preserve farmlands, save grasslands, conserve wetlands, support sustainable forests, stop invasive species, halt global warming, patrol (and protect) beaches, monitor feeders (keep them clean) and get out and count. The most important step you can take from the Audubon list of what you can do is their “Take our cue” action. Make this report your personal wake up call. Although, as members of the nature club, we all do have a level of awareness and do our share to protect the environment, we can all do more. Get out there and fight for the future of these once common birds so that they do not turn up a few years from now on the endangered list and so future generations can hear that sweet whistle of the bob-white as it walks through the underbrush. Many of these birds are part of our landscape here in Gloucester County. Let’s keep it that way.

Much information contained here was found on Audubon’s website (www.audubon.org). See more on the Common Birds in Decline Report, including data on all 20 birds on the list at <http://www.audubon.org/bird/stateofthebirds/>.

Green Fun

There are a few Green Festivals in the area that might be of interest:

The **Green Festival of Philadelphia** is Sunday, September 9th, from 11AM – 6PM. There will be four city blocks of music, food art and exhibitions on South Street, between 7th and 11th Street. This should be an interesting event. Check out the website <http://www.greenfestphilly.org/> and “Party Like there IS a Tomorrow!” The Festival is free.

Another event is not so close to home, but still might be worth a visit, the **Philadelphia Renewable Energy and Sustainable Living Festival** in Kempton, PA., Saturday, the 22nd and Sunday, the 23rd. There is a \$12.00 entrance fee for this event and it covers most lectures, exhibitors and demos. But some workshops require additional fees. Learn more at <http://www.paenergyfest.com/>.

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.

September Events by other Organizations

- September 16 (Sunday) - 8th Annual Parade of Ponds Tour. Tour at 5:00 pm; Wine & Cheese Finale at 7:30 pm. Sponsored by the GFWC Woman’s Club of West Deptford. Tickets \$10. Info & Tickets: 856.853.0211.

Natural Events for the month of September

- The last brood of monarch butterflies emerges and flies south to Mexico.
- Black gum foliage turns red - first tree to get its autumn color.
- Wild grapes ripen - not all of them are sour.
- Turtle eggs hatch and hatchlings emerge and head for the nearest water.
- Robins begin to join together in large flocks
- Most hummingbirds depart by the end of the month
- Bats busy feeding – building fat reserves for hibernation and migration.
- Broad-winged hawk migration peaks in mid-month - plan a visit to a hawk lookout.



Looking Ahead:

2007-2008 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the interesting and diverse field trips we have lined up for this year:

- October 6, 2007 (Saturday) - Franklin Parker Preserve - Emile DeVito
- October 14, 2007 (Sunday) - Birding at Tinicum - Jeff Holt
- November 3, 2007 (Saturday) - Voices from the Land: Art in Natural Landscapes - Erik Mollenhauer
- November 10, 2007 (Saturday) - Lichen field trip – Brendan Byrne S.F. – Karl Anderson
- December - Christmas Bird Count
- January 22, 2008 (Tuesday) - Full Moon Hike at Alcyon Park - Kris Mollenhauer
- February 16, 2008 (Saturday) - Long Beach Island - Karl Anderson and Gale Cannon
- March 15, 2008 (Saturday) - Ringing Rocks State Park, PA - Brian and Paula Hayes
- April 12, 2008 (Saturday) - Salem County Birding - Lloyd Shaw
- May 18, 2008 (Sunday) - Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve - Richard Dilks
- June 21, 2008 (Saturday) - Unexpected Refuge - Karl Anderson and Sarah Summerville

2007-2008 GCNC Programs (All occur on Thursdays)

Here is a tentative program list for the rest of this year:

- October. 11, 2007 - **Jottings in the Woods**- A short program and book presentation on Walt Whitman and The Old Pine Farm Land Trust
 - Presenter: possibly Lynne Shivers of the the Old Pine Farm Land Trust.
- AND
- **Voices from the Land.** A presentation on an ecological art program.
 - Presenter: Kris Mollenhauer
- November 8, 2007 – **TBD** - Program will be jointly chosen by GCNC & SJL&WT. Discussions in progress.
- December 13, 2007 - **Owls of New Jersey**
 - Presenter: Don Freiday from the NJ Audubon Society. NOT CONFIRMED.
- January 10, 2008 - **Mammals of New Jersey**
 - Presenter: Karl Anderson
- February 14, 2008 - **Traditional Pot Luck Dinner & Craft Night**
- March 13, 2008 - **The Sport of Geocaching**
 - Presenter: Joe Valentino

- April 10, 2008 - **The Birds of Panama**
 - Presenter: Jeff Holt
- May 8, 2008 - **Horseshoe Crabs**
 - Presenter: Sue Slotterback from the Cape May Nature Center
- June 12, 2008 - **Annual Picnic**

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.

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 6 Greenwood Drive, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15th of the preceding month.

Message from the President:

I hope everyone has had an enjoyable summer. I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome our new members and welcome back those current members 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 who donate their time and various talents. If you'd like to become one of our valued volunteers and sit on a committee, 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 always valuable. The Nature Club's committees are as currently as follows:

Community Events (chairs: Jackie Partridge, Bonnie Dann, Elaine Dzeima)

Conservation (chair: open)

Educational Outreach (chairs: Kris Mollenhauer, Marge Dolente)

Field Trips (chair: Karl Anderson)

Hospitality (chair: Carol Cassel)

Membership (chair: Bob Cassel)

Newsletter & website (chair: Barry Bengel)

Programs (chair: Rich Dilks)

Publicity (chair: open)

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 <mailto:blackbirdsinging@hotmail.com> or (856) 468-6536.

Karen Kravchuck

President, Gloucester County Nature Club

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 intend to discontinue on the route.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2007-2008

- 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: _____