



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public
November 2005

Program – Bringing Water to South Jersey

Thursday, November 10th at 7:00 PM at EIRC, Sewell

Program Coordinator - Bob Cassel 478-2496



Do you know where your drinking water comes from? How safe is it? Will limited drinking water supply affect growth and development in South Jersey? David Legg and Suzanne Chiavari of New Jersey American Water Company will answer your questions and provide the full story on drinking water in our region. Our program speakers will tell us all about the American Water Company, which has a long history back to 1886 and is currently serving over 16 million customers in several states by operating over 350 water and wastewater systems.

This is the combined annual meeting of the Gloucester County Nature Club, the Federation of Gloucester County Watersheds, and the South Jersey Land Trust. As always, this is a chance to meet other environmentally-concerned people, and to get an update on the organizations too.

Field Trip – Avalon Sea Watch and Cape May Hawk Watch

Saturday November 5th, 8 AM to 2 PM

Trip Leader: Jeff Holt

Co-leader: Kris Mollenhauer



NOTE: This trip occurs BEFORE the regular club meeting.

First stop will be the Avalon Sea Watch located at the extreme north end of the island. Annually, the Cape May Bird Observatory counts hundreds of thousands of Loons, Scoters, Cormorants, Mergansers and other waterfowl as they migrate south. With the help of naturalists from the CMBO, we'll learn to identify these birds as they stream past in huge flocks. From the Sea Watch, we'll drive to the Hawk Watch at Cape May Point State Park. Late October/early November is always the best time of year for a possible rarity such as Swainson's Hawk or Golden Eagle.

Meet at 8:00 at the WAWA on Route 47 in Dennisville (located just north of Rt. 83). That's a good central place to meet; they have a big parking lot and also have bathroom facilities. From the WAWA to Avalon Sea watch isn't more than 1/2 hour. Building in time at the WAWA for people to use the facilities, buy coffee, etc., we can figure on getting to the sea watch around 9ish. We'll plan on about 2 hours there, depending on weather and what's moving through. From there we'll drive down to the Hawk Watch, arriving around noontime. After a couple of hours there, we'll head home at 2 PM or so.

Field Trip Report: Urban trees of Wenonah and Woodbury (10/16/05) - by Karl Anderson

This trip sought out unusual, large, or otherwise interesting trees in parks, on streets, and on private properties. Among the exotics seen were monkeypuzzle tree, cedar of Lebanon, deodar cedar, sawtooth oak, ginkgo, trifoliolate orange, Chinese scholar tree, and Japanese zelkova. Water oak and bald cypress, though native to New Jersey, were seen only as planted specimens; but shingle oak was seen "in the wild" at its only New Jersey site. The largest tree seen was a tuliptree 15'-4" in circumference. Good specimens of American elm, persimmon, and shagbark hickory were also noted.



The weather was lovely and there were thirteen participants. Many thanks to co-leader Karen Kravchuck for contacting property owners for permission to visit their trees, to Erik Mollenhauer for a plethora of interesting information about many of the species, and to Richard Dilks for alerting us to the interesting trees of Wenonah Park. Those who did not attend the trip can get a copy of the itinerary by e-mailing karlanderson6@aol.com.

Conservation Corner – Preparing for Winter by Loretta Dunne

Outside

Now is the time to prepare your yard for winter. The raking ritual is common, but there are some variations that might be beneficial for your yard and garden.

- Leaves can be mowed and captured into a lawnmower bag or raked together. The mowed leaves can be put into a compost pile
- A pile of leaves or brush left in a corner of a yard can provide some protection for wildlife.
- Shredded leaves also can be used as mulch to protect the roots of trees and perennials from heavy winter freezes.

I used to clear out my garden at the end of the summer and placed the plants into my compost pile. Now, I only remove the diseased plants. I leave part of my garden standing over the winter. The end-of-summer flowers provide seeds for birds and other wildlife to enjoy for the entire winter. The birds get some food and shelter and I get to enjoy more wildlife activity in my yard over the winter.

Dead trees or dead limbs have a place in the yard. If they can be safely left where they stand, they will provide food and shelter for cavity nesting birds to roost at night. The bark usually provides a large amount of insects that attract woodpeckers, nuthatches, brown creepers and more.

Fall can also be a good time to plant bushes, trees and vines. Think wildlife when you plant bushes to provide shelter and food. Additionally, trees and bushes can be planted in such a way as to decrease your energy needs. Trees can provide shade for the summer or wind breaks for the winter, reducing your energy needs.

Inside

Since I purchased my first tank of oil a few days ago, the timing is right to consider winterizing the home. Some of the ideas below are simple and can be completed easily, while others would be larger projects:

- Does your attic have enough insulation? Insulation in the attic is essential for keeping the heat in during the winter and the cooled air, if you have an air conditioner, in during the summer.
- Place weather-stripping on your door. Remember that weather-stripping wears out and may need replacement.
- Electrical outlets on an outside wall frequently let in cold air. Insulation kits can be purchased that provides padding that goes inside the outlet.
- One of the quickest dollar-saving tasks you can do is caulk, seal, and weatherstrip all seams, cracks, and openings to the outside. The U.S. government website on energy efficiency, http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/housing/energy-savers/insulation.html, indicates you can save 10% on your heating bill by doing this.

Other Nature Notes

Heritage Woodland Nature Reserve Clean-Up

The Friends of Mullica Hill have asked the Nature Club to help promote a clean-up of their new Heritage Woodland Nature Reserve which is scheduled for Saturday, November 5 from 1:15 to 5:00 PM. For details and directions, please contact them at (856) 478-2908 ext 401, or at heritage@friendsmh.org.

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.

Reminder –Vote on November 8th

Ballot Question 2

Ballot Question 2 on November 8th will ask voters to approve funds to reduce diesel fuel emissions. These emissions increase the risk of lung cancer, asthma and other diseases. The plan will clean up over 30,000 over the next decade. It requires many commercial vehicles, such as buses and sanitation trucks to reduce their diesel fuel emissions and requires them to retrofit with cleaner burning engines. New Jersey voters are being asked to approve a constitutional amendment that will direct a portion of state revenue (derived from the corporate business tax) for this air pollution clean-up. It will not create a new tax, but simply redirect existing revenues.

This passage of this plan is being supported by groups such as the American Cancer Society, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and New Jersey Public Interest Research Group (NJPIRG). A *yes* vote on this ballot question would allow this Corporate Business Tax revenue to be used to implement the diesel program. A *no* vote would withhold funding for the program and it would not be implemented.

Assembly members up for re-election this year

Below is the list of incumbents and their stance on the Fast Track Repeal Bill. If there are NJ Sierra Club endorsements in the race, they are mentioned.

District 3

Clayton, East Greenwich, Elk twp, Greenwich, Harrison Twp., Logan, Mantua, National Park, Paulsboro, South Harrison, Swedesboro, Wenonah, West Deptford, Woolwich

Incumbents

John Burzichelli **Did not sign on to the Fast Track Repeal Bill**
Douglas Fisher **Did not sign on to the Fast Track Repeal Bill**
Phil Rhudy and Jim Zee are running in this district and endorsed by NJ Sierra Club

District 4

Franklin Twp., Glassboro, Monroe, Newfield, Pitman, Washington Twp.

Incumbents

David Mayer **Did not sign on to the Fast Track Repeal Bill**
Robert Smith **Did not sign on to the Fast Track Repeal Bill**
Frank Winters is endorsed by NJ Sierra Club

District 5

Incumbents

Nilsa Cruz-Perez **Signed on (actually Co-sponsored) the Fast Track Repeal Bill!**
Joseph Roberts **Did not sign on to the Fast Track Repeal Bill**

Local Primary Sponsors of the original Fast Track Bill

State Senator (and current Freeholder candidate) Stephen Sweeney (District 3)
State Senator Fred Madden (District 4)

Looking Ahead

Programs-

December 8th - Organic Farming
January 12 – John James Audubon

Field Trips-

December 17th (Sat.)- Christmas Bird Count
January 14 (Sat.) – Full Moon Walk at Alcyon Park (Kris Mollenhauer)

Club Notes:

- The November Executive Committee meeting will be on November 6th at Loretta Dunne's house.
- If you'd like to receive the newsletter electronically or receive more info about the club please email Deb Maka at deborahann@backpacker.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.
- We're still looking for a field trip coordinator and secretary. If anyone is interested, please email Deb Maka at deborahann@backpacker.com or call 863-0330.
- 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.