



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

April 2010

Program – The Hawks of Southern New Jersey

Thursday, April 8th at 7:00 PM at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Wenonah, NJ (directions below)

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks (856) 468-6342

Today I saw a Red-Tailed Hawk
Oh, the majesty of its flight
I breathe deeply as it turns and banks
Feeling the very spirit of the Hawk
Penetrate my very soul

It spoke to me of ancient spirits soaring
Looking down upon mother Earth
~Anonymous

To be one with the Hawk.
To see through the eyes of the one in flight.
To soar the heights with the majestic birds.
To feel the freedom of the moment.
~Anonymous



Hawk is a general term for diurnal birds of prey in the family, Accipitridae (and the Osprey- the only member of the monotypic family, Pandionidae). Included in this grouping are Accipiters, Buteos, and Falcons. Fourteen species of hawks regularly occur in New Jersey, either migrating through, breeding or wintering in Southern New Jersey. Hawks are strong, powerful birds. Their feet are equipped with sharp, curved talons for capturing prey, and their strong beaks are hooked for biting and tearing flesh. Swift fliers, some hawks can attain speeds of over 150 mph when diving. Some species undertake long migrational journeys, traveling thousands of miles each year - a testimony to their strength and stamina. Their sense of hearing is excellent, and their eyesight the best in the entire animal world. Not only can hawks see greater distances than humans, but their visual acuity (the ability to see clearly) is eight times that of ours. Tonight we will learn about these handsome and intelligent birds that grace our skies from the prominent and vocal Red Tail, New Jersey's most common hawk, to the diminutive Kestrel and the Rough-legged hawk, a rare winter visitor.

Our presenter will be expert birder and naturalist, Don Frieday of New Jersey Audubon's Cape May Bird Observatory. Those of you that were fortunate to hear Don's January 2009 presentation to the GCNC on the Owls of New Jersey know we can look forward to a program presented with knowledge and enthusiasm and to an evening that will be informative and entertaining.

Directions: The Holy Nativity Lutheran Church is located just off Rte 553 (Woodbury Glassboro Rd.) immediately south of the traffic light at Mantua Ave. The church parking lot can be accessed by entrances on either Woodbury-Glassboro Road or Lenape Trail (first left off of Mantua Ave).

Field Trip – Biking through Glassboro Woods

Saturday April 17th, 10:00 AM

Trip Leaders: Brian and Paula Hayes



The recent warm weather has made everyone itch to get outside for some fresh air and exercise. Join us for this family friendly bike trip from Glassboro to Williamstown the “secret” way on a paved path. We will ride through woods, open fields, and suburban neighborhoods along this converted railroad bed. The newer portion of this trail where we start provides access to great habitat in the spectacular Glassboro Woods WMA. Searching for early spring migrants, we say farewell to some of our winter friends. Bring binoculars to enjoy the birds . . . Are the wood thrush back? Do you hear blue-winged warblers? Have the Phoebes started their nests yet? We will break for all spring wildflowers. . .

Can you find Dutchman’s breeches? Do you see any trout lilies? What else might be there? The trip is about 6 miles long and we will travel up and back (12 miles) on the paved path. You must provide your own bikes.

Directions: We will meet just off of Route 47 between the Robins Nest and Grove St. in Glassboro. From Clayton take Rt 47 (Delsea Dr) North. After Grove St. (on your left) make the next right, you will pass the bike path on your right and park along the path on the street. From Glassboro take Rt 47 (Delsea Dr.) South. After Rt 322 heads East take the first left and park along the bike path on the street.

Field Trip Report – Manasquan Reservoir, March 20, 2010

Birds seen during this trip included bald eagle (at a nest); osprey (also at a nest); six species of waterfowl; and a pair of bluebirds, apparently just-arrived from their winter quarters, who immediately upon getting “on territory” began to investigate a nesting box. Other vertebrates seen included eastern painted turtle and a somewhat out-of-normal-habitat diamondback terrapin. Mourning cloak and eastern comma butterflies were seen. The weather was absolutely perfect. The environmental center is one of the best in New Jersey, with a nice array of well-maintained displays, plus some live fish, reptiles, and amphibians. The Manasquan Reservoir is part of the Monmouth County Park System. Too bad there is nothing like it in Gloucester County.

Family Fun Walk

Tuesday, April 6, 2010 at 10:00AM at West Deptford Scenic Park, West Deptford.

Trip Leader: Maria Keefe (856) 627-7010

Email: walkingwith4boyz@comcast.net

Hop along with us on Tuesday, April 6 @ 10:00AM. Get the kids out in the fresh air as we walk West Deptford Scenic Park. We will walk at a toddler's pace exploring as we go. Dress in layers according to the weather. Bring your own backpack and/or a stroller that is able to be pushed on unpaved paths. Everyone welcome.

Directions: From Exit 21 on I-295, take Delaware Avenue west. In about 0.4 mile, cross Grove Street. Continue for another 0.3 mile, on what is then called Riverwinds Drive. Watch for a sign to the trail, on the right. Meet in the parking lot.

Gloucester County Bird Quest: Saturday May 1, 2010

The Gloucester County Nature Club and many area businesses, industries, and local environmental commissions invite people of all ages to participate in the **2010 (Eleventh Annual) Gloucester County Bird Quest**. The **2009 Bird Quest** will take place on **Sat., May 1, 2010 from 7 AM to 12 noon in Gloucester County**.

From 7 AM to 12 noon teams visit parks and natural sites in Gloucester County and find as many different bird species as they can. The Quest is:

- A way to discover Gloucester County's parks and natural areas
- A way to discover the unique birds that live in and through our county
- A chance to learn how to identify birds by sight, sound, behavior, and habitat
- A chance to have fun with friends and colleagues
- A light-hearted competition

The rules are simple: Identify as many different bird species as you can between 7am and noon staying within the boundary of Gloucester County. You can participate in one of the following ways:

Form a team, plan your route (locations you will visit) for the day of the event and record all the bird species you see within Gloucester County. Hand in your results at Atkinson Park no later than 12:30 to be eligible for prizes.

Join a bus led by a bird expert. These buses will visit a few locations in the County where bird experts will help you to identify the many bird species. At each stop, participants walk with the expert birder to explore a natural area and discover the local bird life. The buses will meet back at Atkinson Park between noon and 12:30 PM.

Participate in our guided walks led by a bird expert who will help you identify the bird species. These walks will be paced and placed so you can participate in all of the walks or just one or two while you spend the rest of the time birding on your own.

Guided Walks

7:00-8:30: Field of Dreams, West Deptford Township

Directions: From Interstate 295, Exit 21, take Crown Point Road (Rt 44) West . Drive for approximately .25 miles and take a right onto River Road. Park in the lot.

9:00-10:30: Chestnut Branch Park, Mantua Township

Directions: From the intersection of Rt 45 (Broad Street) and Cooper Street in Woodbury, go south on Rt 45 for 4.2miles. Turn left (from right hand lane) onto Rt 553Alt (Main Street) in Mantua. Go south on Rt 553Alt for 1.6 miles. The park entrance will be on the left. There is a large paved parking area. Meet at the wildflower garden.

11:00-12:00: Washington Lake Park, Washington Township

Directions: From the intersection of Rt 47 and Hurffville-Cross Keys Road (Rt. 654) in Hurffville, go southeast on Hurffville-Cross Keys Road for 1.2 miles. The park entrance will be on the right. Follow the main road past several playing fields and parking lots. Park in Lot E, just past the Amphitheater.

No matter how you participate, everyone meets at Atkinson Park between noon and 12:30 to hand in their results (total number of bird species seen that day from 7am to noon), share stories, activities, games, and for a free lunch. The emphasis of this event is on learning and sharing, not on the competition. Everyone who participates receives a t-shirt and is eligible for a variety of prizes.

Drawing on the popularity of last year this year we will again be having games and activities at Atkinson Park for the children as well as live animals they can see up close.

The day will culminate in a presentation from a wildlife handler from Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge who will have live birds and animals. They will discuss what these animals eat, where they sleep, and the habits and habitats of each species. The cost to participate is \$12 per person. In addition, you can purchase additional t-shirts, bird identification flash cards (\$4), or "The Natural Places of Gloucester County" book (\$12) created by the Nature Club to promote the natural beauty of our County which will help you identify birds or locations to visit during the event.

Want to sign up for BirdQuest? There is a registration form at the end of this newsletter. Send in the filled-out form with your check (made out to The Gloucester County Nature Club) to GCNC, ATTN: Brian Hayes, P.O. Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080.

You say you don't know one bird from another? The Gloucester County Nature Club offers a series of training sessions in the weeks leading up to the event itself to teach you everything from the basics of bird watching to identifying birds not by sight but by their songs or calls. These trainings are worthwhile even if you already know how to identify birds. They can help you discover the natural places of Gloucester County as well. During the trainings you will visit some of the many local places where you can enjoy nature anytime of the year. These locations are perfect for photography of animals and plants of Gloucester County.

We are always looking for people who are willing to help with this event. We need volunteers willing to coordinate teams, t-shirt distribution, record tallying, and help the day of BirdQuest with site preparations, food pickup, cleanup, or as an experienced birder who could help teams identify birds. If you would like to help you can call Brian Hayes at (856) 582-7000 x110 or e-mail at bhayes@eirc.org.

Participants can attend any of a series of free field trainings in the evenings, mornings and weekends before the Quest. A complete list of training sessions is provided below.

Bird Quest 2010 Training Sessions

April 14 (Wednesday), 6:00 – 7:30 PM Birding Basics

Alcyon Lake, Pitman. Learn the basics of good birding and the tools of the trade.

Directions: From Rt 55 Exit 53A (or Exit 53 if coming from the south) take Rt 553 (Glassboro Road) south for about 1.5 miles to Holly Avenue. Turn right (west) on Holly Avenue. Continue for 1.2 miles to the park entrance, which is on the left. There is a small sign. Drive past the sports fields; meet at the pavilion.

Leader: Deb Maka Co-leader: Karen Kravchuck

April 15 (Thursday) 6:00 – 7:30 PM Bird Quest Training

Wheelabrator Refuge, Westville

Directions: Access from Rt 130, opposite Hazel Ave in Westville, just south of Big Timber Creek. Meet in parking lot on the right just before the guard station.

Co-Leaders: Brian Hayes & Erik Mollenhauer

April 18 (Sunday), 7:00 – 8:30 AM Bird Quest Training

Ceres Park, Mantua Twp.

Directions: From Rt 322 take Lambs Rd (635) to Pitman-Barnsboro Rd (553Alt). Turn left onto Rt553A. Watch for Ceres Park sign on your left after crossing over Rt 55.

Leader: Barry Bengel Co-leader: Jayne Rhynard

April 20 (Tuesday), 6:00 – 7:00 AM Bird Quest Training

Old Pine Farm, Deptford

Directions: Access from Good Intent road (Rt.534), turn North onto Rankin Ave. Follow to end and park. Walk down woods road to the Big Timber Creek.

Co-leaders: Ed & Millie Cleary

April 21 (Wednesday), 6:00 – 7:30 PM Bird Quest Training

West Deptford Field of Dreams

Directions: From Interstate 295, Exit 21, take Crown Point Road (Rt 44) West . In about .25 miles, take a right onto River Road. Park in the lot.

Leader: Gary Lizzi Co-leader: Margie Lizzi

April 22 (Thursday), 6:00 – 7:00 PM Bird Quest Training

Greenwich Township Walking Trail, Greenwich

Directions: From Interstate 295 Exit 16B, go north on Democrat Road (Rt 673) toward Gibbstown for about 0.2 mile to Swedesboro-Paulsboro Road (Rt 653). Turn right and go about 0.5 mile to the Nehaunsey Middle School, which will be on the left, just before the Greenwich Township Library. Turn into the school parking lot. The entrance to the trail is behind the school, and is marked with a small green sign.

Leader: Bob Duke Co-leaders: Doris and Dwight Weir

April 24 (Saturday), 7:00-8:30 AM Step Up Your Birding

Chestnut Branch Park, Mantua

Directions: From the intersection of Rt 45 (Broad Street) and Cooper Street in Woodbury, go south on Rt 45 for 4.2 miles. Turn left (from right hand lane) onto Rt 553Alt (Main Street) in Mantua. Go south on Rt 553Alt for 1.6 miles. The park entrance will be on the left. There is a large paved parking area. Meet at the wildflower garden.

Co-Leaders: Kris & Erik Mollenhauer

April 25 (Sunday), 7:00-8:30 AM Bird Quest Training

Railroad Avenue, Elk Twp.

Directions: From Rt. 322 in Richwood turn at light onto Aura Rd. (Rt. 667.) Continue 3.5 mi. and turn Right onto Whig Lane Rd.(Rt. 619.) At fork stay Left . Pass Aura Elementary School and Recreational Park . Turn Left onto Railroad Ave. Go .2 mi. to a field of pine trees on the right. Park on the dirt lane next to the pine trees.

Leader: Ron Kegel Co-Leader: Loretta Dunne

April 27 (Tuesday), 6:00 – 7:30 PM Birding by Ear Part I

Wenonah Community Center, Wenonah This is an introduction to bird calls in a classroom setting.

Directions: From Woodbury/Glassboro Road (Rt 553) in Wenonah, turn onto Mantua Avenue. Proceed to the intersection of East Mantua Avenue and North East Avenue. The community center is located in the old railroad station.

Co-Leaders: Kris Mollenhauer & Paula Hayes

April 28 (Wednesday), 6:00 – 7:00 AM Birding by Ear Part II

Red Bank Battlefield Park, National Park

Directions: From Interstate 295 Exit 22, take Red Bank Avenue west for about 0.5 mile to Hessian Avenue. Turn left on Hessian Avenue, and continue for 1.2 miles to the park. Meet at the parking area on the left.

Leader: Gale Cannon Co-Leader Karl Anderson

Other Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: April 2010

- April 17 (Saturday) - Fossil Collecting on the Spoil Banks of the C & D Canal. 10:00 AM - mid-afternoon. Leader: Ned Gilmore. Sponsored by the Burlington County Natural Sciences Club. For info: <http://oldsquaw.tripod.com/> or contact Karl Anderson at karlanderson6@aol.com or phone 856-845-7075.
- April 24 (Saturday) – Early Migrants at Greenwich Lake. 9:00 AM – early-afternoon. Leader: Bob Duke. Sponsored by the Audubon Wildlife Society. For info: <http://www.audubonwildlifesociety.org/>.
- April 24 (Saturday) – Birding Glassboro Woods and Red Bank Battlefield. 7:45 AM – early afternoon. Leader: Lloyd Shaw. \$Fee. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. For info: phone 609-261-2495.

- April 24 (Saturday) – Botany of the Stow Creek Area, Cumberland County. 10:00 AM – late afternoon. Leaders: Renee Brecht and Dr. Gerry Moore. Sponsored by the Philadelphia Botanical Club. For info: <http://www.ansp.org/hosted/botany club/>
- April 25 (Sunday) - Marl Ravines of Gloucester County (Ceres Park and Chestnut Branch). 9:00 AM - early afternoon. Leader: Karl Anderson. Sponsored by the Burlington County Natural Sciences Club. For info: contact Karl at karlanderson6@aol.com, or phone 856-845-7075.
- April 25 (Sunday) – Early Migrants at Taylor’s Refuge . 8:15 AM – late morning. Leader: Sandra Keller. \$Fee. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. For info: phone 609-261-2495.

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

- Bird Walks: Saturday, 4/10 at 8:00 AM and Tuesday, 5/11 at 6:00 PM
- Afternoon Nature Strolls: Wednesdays 4/21 and 5/19 at 2:30 PM
- Nature Tots: Wednesdays 4/14 and 5/12 at 10:00 AM
- Scout Saturday: Saturdays 4/17 and 5/8 at 10:00 AM
- Canoeing/Kayaking: Saturday 5/15 at 1:00 AM
- Wonders Of Wetlands (WOW) Workshop: Friday, 5/21 from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Gloucester County Water Fest; Sunday 6/6 from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Natural Events for the month of April

- Pond turtles emerge from hibernation and bask in the sun.
- Spring beauty, bloodroot, and trout lily bloom on the floor of deciduous woodlands.
- Spring peepers and wood frogs begin calling when vernal ponds warm to about 50 degrees F.
- Shad migrate up the Delaware River to spawn.
- Ruby-throated hummingbirds, purple martins, and warblers begin to arrive.
- Most juncos and white-throated sparrows have left by the end of the month.
- Rose-breasted grosbeaks show up at feeders for a few days before heading north.
- Prairie warbler, misnamed when it was first found in a barren area in Kentucky, returns late April – mid May.
- The peak of spring raptor migration is mid- to late-April. Consider a visit to a hawk lookout.
- Red-winged blackbirds return to marshes.

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 218-2973 or sillybird348@comcast.net.



Looking Ahead:

Upcoming GCNC Programs

May 13, 2010: **Hummingbird Gardening** – Ward Dasey

June 10, 2010: **Annual Picnic** (location TBD) and **Awakening Spirits: The Art of Tracking** – Bill Marple, Instructor, Tom Brown Tracker School

Upcoming GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the field trips we have lined up for the rest of the year. Changes and additions are not impossible. If you would be able and willing to lead a field trip, please contact Karl Anderson at karlanderson6@aol.com or (856) 845-7075.

April 17 (Saturday): **Bike the Glassboro Woods Trail** – Brian and Paula Hayes

May 9 (Sunday): **Wildflowers at Ridley Creek State Park** – Richard Dilks

June 12 (Saturday): **Brendan Byrne State Forest** - Karl Anderson

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.
- The April Executive Committee meeting will be held on April 5th (Monday) at the home of Elaine Dzeima. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.

Election of Trustees - The May Nature Club meeting is when we annually hold elections for our Board of Trustees. The Trustees hold the ultimate governing power of the Club. The Trustees elect the members of the Executive Committee (president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and chairpersons of the standing committees). The Trustees' other primary responsibility is to provide direction to the Executive Committee because our by-laws specify that the Board of Trustees authorizes power to the Executive Committee for the day-to-day operations of the Club.

Trustees meet annually at a joint meeting with the Executive Committee in June. There are a total of 12 members of the Board of Trustees. Elected Trustees agree to serve a 3 year term and one third of the Trustees are elected by the Club's membership at the May meeting. The current Trustees are as follows:

2007 – 2010 term: Barry Bengel, Elaine Dzeima, Paula Hayes, Dave Partridge

2008 – 2011 term: Erik Mollenhauer, Robert Cassel, Bonnie Dann, Jackie Partridge

2009 – 2012 term: Brian Hayes, Karen Kravchuck, Kris Mollenhauer, Carol Cassel

We will be electing Trustees for the term of 2010-2013. If you are interested in running for election, please contact Karen Kravchuck at 856-468-6536 or at blackbirdsinging@hotmail.com.

ANNUAL PLANT SALE! The snow has FINALLY melted! It is officially Spring! And that means it's time to be in our gardens, getting them ready for the warm weather season. This means it is also time for the Club's annual plant sale. Hopefully, once again, we'll have a wonderful combination of nursery grown plants and plants from our very own gardens.

Here's where your part of this comes in. As you are in your gardens in the next couple of weeks keep an eye out for plants you can share. Maybe it could be some of those perennials you have been meaning to divide or a volunteer shrub or tree that just has to be moved. Even some extra seeds that you collected in the fall would be great. Just pot them up or pack them up and bring them with you. Please mark them carefully, though, so we keep the mystery plants to a minimum.

The Plant Sale will be held just before the May meeting. It will start at 6:00 PM at the Holy Nativity Church. It is open to the public so please tell family and friends.

Bird Quest Registration - May 1, 2010

Be sure to include your name, address, phone # and T-shirt size on the form. Mail the form with a check (\$12 per person) payable to Gloucester County Nature Club to: GC Nature Club, P.O. Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080. Questions? Contact Brian Hayes at (856) 582-7000 x110 daytime, (856) 468-9272 evenings and weekends or pnbhayes@comcast.net. Entries must be received by April 23, for t-shirts to be guaranteed.

Name of Team (ex: Heritage Hummingbirds) _____
Name of Team Leader (contact person) _____ T-shirt size _____
Leader's mailing address _____

Leader's phone number _____ Leaders email
address _____
Person #2 (name) _____ T-shirt size _____

Person #3 _____ T-shirt size _____
Person #4 _____ T-shirt size _____
Person #5 _____ T-shirt size _____

Our team will be participating on the Walks _____ or on the Bus _____ or as a Team

Attach extra sheet with additional names and T-shirt sizes.

Bus Space is limited: first come first served. You must reserve a seat in advance. Bus leaves at 7 am from Atkinson Park.

Fill in here for additional items: Additional T-shirts: Qty _____ (\$12.95 each)
Birds of Gloucester County Flash Cards _____ (\$4.00/set)
Natural Places of Gloucester Co. NJ book _____ (\$12.00 each)