



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

February 2014

Thursday, February 13, 2014

6:00 PM Pot Luck Dinner

7:00 PM After Dinner Activity: Nature Story Sharing

SPECIAL LOCATION

The Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Wenonah, NJ (directions below)

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342

Please note the dinner begins at 6:00 PM



Our annual Pot Luck Dinner is always a highlight of the year and a great opportunity to share a meal with and enjoy the company of our fellow club members. Our after dinner activity this year will invite you to engage in a friendly and informal conversation with your table mates about our mutual love, interest and delight in nature. You may wish to share an experience you've had, tell of a marvelous place you have been to or just offer a simple reflection on how nature is a part of your life. We will have a chance to share, listen to and enjoy stories and experiences that amuse, move or inform us and come away from the evening knowing our fellow club members a little bit better than before. There will be a facilitator at each table who will have an optional set of questions (e.g. Did you have a favorite place in nature as a child?) to get things started. We all have stories and we all love stories. What better way to spend a winter's night than sharing them with friends.

As always, please bring either an entrée or dessert and a plate and utensils for yourself.

Directions: The Holy Nativity Lutheran Church is located just off Rt. 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: Family Moonlit Hike and Campfire at Scotland Run

Saturday, February 15, 2012 at 6:30 PM

Trip Leaders: Paula Hayes (cell: 609-221-5195 or pnbhayes@gmail.com) and Maria Keefe (cell/text: 609-315-4759 or mariakeefe19@comcast.net)

Join us as we experience the magic of walking in the woods by the light of the moon. We explore the music of the night as our eyes give way to our other senses and we share the night with owls, raccoons,

and flying squirrels. Come out and see tree silhouettes, moon shadows and the stillness of the woods in winter. The walk is short but will include uneven and sloping wooded trails so sturdy walking shoes are recommended. The walk will last about one hour which will give us time for some stories as well. We will end with a campfire compliments of the Scotland Run staff. This event will be cancelled in the event of rain. To really enjoy the splendor of the night keep your flashlights off and in your pocket. This event is open to all ages. **To reserve your spot for this special event please register by calling Scotland Run at 856-881-0845 or emailing ltaylor@co.gloucester.nj.us.**



Directions: Take exit 45 off route 55 to Centerton- Clayton. Make a left onto Buck Road (Rt. 553). Make a right at the first traffic light onto Academy Road (Rt. 610). Take Academy Road for 2 miles crossing over route 47 and Fries Mill Road. Just beyond Fries Mill Road turn right into the Nature Center. There is a detour on Academy St. off of Fries Mill Rd. Can go around detour sign at the light at the intersection. The actual detour starts just past the entrance to the park.

Address for GPS: 980 East Academy Street, Clayton.

Audubon Christmas Bird Count – Detailed Report - by Ron Kegel, compiler

Thanks again to everyone who participated in the Northwestern Gloucester County Christmas Bird Count, 2013 edition! The count was very successful and some very interesting ‘finds’ were had. I hope you all had a worthwhile experience. The snow cover made it interesting for most as at times it was somewhat difficult to get off the road. As Cathy Carter, daughter Lauren, and Suzanne McCarthy were to find out, it could even be treacherous! As luck would have it unfortunately they became stuck in mud and needed the help of a tow truck. After experiencing this they all had enough (as one would expect) and needed time to get to warm and recuperate! Apologies to Cathy and the team. Here’s to a better time next year – has to be!

Your hard work paid off as we were able to “bag” 93 species! This is pretty good knowing we had snow cover, limited pull off area, and chilly conditions. We had a few interesting ‘misses’ (Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Swans-Cathy usually gets these, some duck species, Pied-billed Grebes, and others) which prevented us from reaching 100 species. Each year it seems there are trade-offs that keep us from that goal of 100. The count has consistently been near or in the 90’s. This is testimony to consistency in the participants and the leaders too!

Highlights included what appeared to be higher #'s in Mallard, Black Vulture (20 years ago hard pressed to find Black Vulture in Gloucester Co.), Bald Eagle, Kestrel (up a little bit), Wild Turkey, Red-bellied Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Robin (nearly 4000), Golden-crowned Kinglet, “Stinkin’ Starlings, Towhee, (36 phenomenal), and good #'s in Junco’s and White-throated Sparrows.



The unusual found were Osprey and Long-tailed Duck found by Ed Komczyk and his group, a female Wilson’s Warbler (photographed) by Bob Duke and friends, and a Bonaparte’s Gull seen by the folks in Lloyd Shaw’s group. A Snowy Owl was spotted in the county during the count week yet not seen the day of the count! There has been a major invasion of these owls along the east coast. Hopefully you folks are getting out to see these sightings. Last one I saw was well over 20 years ago in Camden. Prior to the Tweeter Center existence there was a scrap yard on the site and a bird spent the better part of the winter on the scrap heap.

I would personally like to thank Kirk and Donna Strohmeier for entertaining us for the ‘wrap-up’ once again this year. Has become a wonderful tradition

and we much appreciate! Sure was nice to go into a nice warm home after a chilly, and as it were to turn out, wet day. Thanks to Glen Green for submitting a 'feeder list'. Welcome to the folks joining us for the 1st (?) time! Don Evans, Harry Ruhle, Cheryl Osolinski, Barb Basset (2nd?), Mike Pasquarello, Dan Ceravolo, Connie Harley, Marie Hageman, and Jan Gable (hopefully I got everyone).

On this note, next year our count will be on Saturday, December 20! Please set aside the date. May 2014 be a happy and healthy new year for all. Hope to see you at some of the Gloucester County Nature Club meetings. Keep on birding. Make a difference!

Ron Kegel, compiler

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Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: February 2014

- February 8, 2014 (Saturday), 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM – **2014 Cumberland County Winter Eagle Festival.** Mauricetown Fire Hall, Noble Street, Mauricetown NJ. Special Family Programs, Lectures, Exhibits, Vendors, Food. For more information call 856-453-2177 or visit www.co.cumberland.nj.us.
- February 16, 2014 (Sunday), 2:00 PM – **Walk in the Wild: Partnerships.** Sponsored by the Old Pine Farm Natural Lands Trust. Free. Experience a casual stroll on the trails of the land trust with a knowledgeable leader to observe the plants, animals, natural features and processes, and just plain magic that make this place very special. Meet in the parking area at the end of Rankin Avenue in Blackwood Terrace. Please check at www.oldpinefarm.org/ for changes to the schedule and directions. Or just use your favorite mapping program or your GPS by typing in "400 Rankin Ave, Deptford, NJ." Further details available by calling Carl Ford at 856-579-4441. We will do this on the third Sunday of each month, with a different focus each month.

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: Saturdays 2/1 and 3/1 at 8:00 AM. Bring binoculars and discover the many species of birds that call Scotland Run Park home.
- Nature Tots: Wednesdays 2/12 and 3/12 at 10:00 AM
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesdays 2/19 and 3/19 at 2:30 PM
- Scout Saturday: Saturdays 2/8 and 3/22 at 10:00 AM

Natural Events for the month of February

- Skunk cabbage flowers are emerging from the ground, in wetlands throughout the County. As they grow they generate heat, which melts the frozen ground around them.
- Alder catkins are swelling and will open on the first warm days.
- Melting snow may reveal the trackways of meadow voles, dug along the interface between the frozen ground and snow cover.
- Broom crowberry in bloom in the Pinelands.
- Mourning cloak butterflies emerge from hibernation on warm days.

- Killdeer and great blue herons return from the south as waterways thaw and snow cover melts.
- Chipmunks reappear around bird feeders.
- Best time for viewing tundra swans at Whitesbog and other Pinelands ponds.

Looking Ahead:

Listed below are the programs and field trips we have lined up for the rest of the season. Current schedule is subject to change. Meeting dates are the **second** Thursday of the month.

2013-2014 GCNC Programs

March 13, 2014: **Splendors of the Sierra Nevadas: Hiking the John Muir Trail** - Kris Mollenhauer

April 10, 2014: **Birding Adventure in Costa Rica** - Marilyn Henry

May 8, 2014: **Spiders** - Eugene Fuzy

June 13, 2014: **Annual Picnic** - Location TBD

2013-2014 GCNC Field Trips

March: Black Run Preserve Hike (Evesham Township)

April: **Bird Quest Trainings** including a junior birder training

May 3, 2014: **Bird Quest**

June: TBD

Club Notes:

- If you'd like to receive the newsletter electronically or receive more info about the club please email Karen Kravchuck at president@gcnatureclub.org or call 856-468-6536.
- 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 newsletter@gcnatureclub.org or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15th of the preceding month.
- The February Executive Committee meeting will be held on February 9th at the home of Barry Bengel. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.
- **Join Our Meetup Group!** The Gloucester County Nature Club is now using the online tool, Meetup.com to advertise our field trips. We strongly encourage you to give it a try. By signing up you will be able to see up to minute information related to field trips (weather, changes or cancellations if needed), communicate with the leaders and others going on trips of interest. Simply sign up with an email address to join the group and you will be informed of upcoming trips and Nature Club events. It's a great way to be reminded of the trips you didn't want to forget and meet new members! Check out the link and sign up!! <http://www.meetup.com/Gloucester-County-Nature-Club/>