



Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

May 2012

Program - Rare and Endangered Plants of Southern New Jersey & 2011 Annual Plant Sale

**Thursday May 10, 2012 at 6:00 PM at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church,
Wenonah, NJ** (directions below)

Presenter: Renee Brecht

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks (856-468-6342)

Reminder: Starting time for the plant sale is **6:00 PM**, for the program **7:00 PM**.

*To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower....*

~William Blake

*No matter how chaotic it is,
wildflowers will still spring up
in the middle of nowhere.*

~Sheryl Crow



We are all familiar with the lovely April blooming Swamp Pink or the rare pinelands species, the Bog Asphodel, but Southern New Jersey is a botanically rich and diverse region with many more beautiful, rare and endangered plant species. The many different habitats and ecological niches present in Southern New Jersey's inner and outer coastal plains support a great variety of plant communities. Further, the ranges of many northern and southern species also converge in New Jersey. The Pine Barrens region alone contains 45 threatened and endangered species. The rich botanical heritage of Southern New Jersey also includes the Sensitive Joint Vetch, known in New Jersey from a single location in Cumberland County, the hemiparasitic Chaffseed, and the exquisite blue Pine Barrens Gentian just to name a few.

Join us for a look at this amazing world of rare and endangered plant species that are just outside your door, here in southern New Jersey. Renee Brecht of Millville, New Jersey will give us a glimpse into the world of some of our rare local flora.

Brecht, former Associate Director of Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and its Tributaries, also trains U.S. Fish and Wildlife volunteers for the annual Swamp Pink Survey. While she has expertise in a wide range of natural topics, her special interests are botany, herpetology, and local history. Brecht will be sharing her knowledge of unusual local plants at the meeting. Though currently employed in the tech field, she continues to foster her love for the outdoors.

ANNUAL PLANT SALE! It's that time again! Spring is here and 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 Lutheran Church. It is open to the public so please tell family and friends.

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 - 2012 Gloucester County Bird Quest: Saturday May 5, 2012

The Gloucester County Nature Club and co-sponsors invite people of all ages to participate in the **2012 (13th annual) Gloucester County Bird Quest. The 2012 Bird Quest** will take place on **Saturday May 5, 2012 from 7 AM to 12 noon throughout Gloucester County.**

***We are very excited to be in a new location this year for the picnic – Scotland Run Park (Wilson Lake) in Clayton. We hope to reach new families and continue to excite our legacy participants with a wonderful setting for our picnic. Scotland Run Park is located at 980 West Academy St., Clayton, NJ 08312 (directions below).**

See the registration form on the Bird Quest brochure.

During this time, teams visit parks and natural sites in Gloucester County to 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
- An opportunity to learn how to identify birds by sight, sound, behavior, and habitat
- An opportunity to have fun with family, friends, and colleagues
- A light-hearted competition

The Quest is an educational event: novices are encouraged to participate.

How it works: Teams have 5 hours on Saturday (7am to noon) to visit sites in Gloucester County. Birds are identified by sight or sound. The goal is to find as many different species of birds as possible. At noon, all participants gather at **Scotland Run Park in Clayton** to report results and for **(free) lunch, t-shirts, and prizes.**

We have three ways you can participate:

- Organize your own Quest team with colleagues, friends, and/or family and visit parks and natural areas as a team to find your bird species.

- Join a bus - with support from Wheelabrator, LP of Gloucester County, the club will again operate expert guided buses for individuals unable to form their own teams and are willing to join a larger group.
- Walk with our expert guides at locations around Gloucester County for those folks who are looking for a smaller group size but are not able to form a team.

Last year's Gloucester County Bird Quest attracted hundreds of participants made up of families, friends, teachers, school groups, scout troops, environmental commissions ... residents of Gloucester and neighboring counties. **If you have participated in the past why not invite a friend or colleagues to join you for this year's Bird Quest!**

Our theme this year is "Gardening for Nature" and will be featured in a T-shirt designed by Gariel Graphics. **The \$12 fee per participant helps to defray the cost of lunch, T-shirts, prizes etc.**

More information and registration forms will be posted to the Gloucester County Nature Club's website at www.gcnatureclub.org/. For more information, join a team or reserve a seat on the bus, contact Brian Hayes at bhayes@eirc.org or 856.582.7000 x110.

Participants are encouraged to attend any of a series of free field trainings in the evenings, mornings and weekends before the Quest.

Remaining training sessions are:

April 28 (Saturday) 8:00- 9:30 AM Attracting Wildlife to your Backyard

Doris and Dwight Weir's Backyard

Come see how Doris and Dwight attract a wide variety of birds to their backyard. They will share how they use feeders and plants to ensure birds and other wildlife visit and return to their yard. This yard takes advantage of a wooded area behind the house and with careful planning provides turkeys and woodpeckers with food and cover. Come see how a few small changes can add up to a big difference. **Directions:** *Take route 42 South and turn right onto Greentree Road. Turn right onto Hurffville Road. Take Hurffville Road to the Wedgewood Country Club and turn right onto Wilson Road. Take the 3rd right onto Bryant Road and then make an almost immediate left onto Forest Drive. Take the 2nd left onto Brae Ct. They live at 24 Brae Court, Turnersville.*

Leaders: Doris and Dwight Weir

April 29 (Sunday) 7:00- 8:30 AM Attracting Wildlife to your Backyard

Ron and Linda Kegel's Backyard

Ron and Linda live in a typical suburban development, but their yard and its visitors are not so typical. They have chosen plants and designed their yard to maximize every bit of space. They have breeding bluebirds, tree swallows and several other songbirds. Ron will share his "yard list" which will certainly inspire participants in this trip to think differently about birding in their own yard. **Directions:** *From route 47 south in Clayton, make a left onto Academy Street (towards Scotland Run Park). After 1 mile make a right onto East Ave. Go ½ mile and turn right into Countryside Development (Moore Blvd.), make the first right onto Countryside Circle. They live at 3 Countryside Circle, Clayton.*

Leaders: Ron and Linda Kegel

May 2 (Wednesday), 7:00-8:00 AM Birds of Local Waterways

Old Pine Farm, Deptford

Open views of the water provide good opportunity for sighting water birds like ducks, herons, red-wing blackbirds, and mergansers. Wooded section could produce woodpeckers, nuthatches, warblers, chickadees, and tufted titmouse.

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.*

Leaders: Ed & Millie Cleary

May 2 (Wednesday) 6:00 – 7:30 PM River access and creating Bobwhite habitat

Wheelabrator Refuge, Westville

Explore the newly restored Bobwhite (a type of quail) habitat. This location has many different types of habitat including access to the Delaware River and the mouth of the Big Timber Creek. Waterfowl, orioles, warblers, eagles and scrub species are fairly common. Often a good stop to find migrant birds. *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.*

Leaders: Bob Duke and Loretta Dunne

Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: May 2012

- May 5 (Saturday) – 10:00 AM to mid-afternoon. **Wildflowers at Assunpink Wildlife Management Area, Monmouth County.** Leader: Karl Anderson. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. For information: contact leader at 856-845-7075 or e-mail karlanderson6@aol.com.
- May 18 (Friday) – 8:30 AM and 4:00 PM – **TGIF Nature Walks.** Sponsored by the Camden County Park Department. Free, but registration is required. Phone 856-858-3614 to register and to learn the locations. Bad weather cancels.
- May 20 (Sunday) – 1:30-3:30 PM. **Birds, Bees, and Butterflies at the Rancocas Nature Center.** Guided walk. \$Fee. For information phone 609-261-2495.
- May 20 (Sunday), 2:00 PM, **Walk in the Wild.** 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. For more information call 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 Walk: Tuesday, 5/15 at 6:00 PM
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 5/9 at 10:00 AM
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 5/12 at 10:00 AM
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 5/16 at 2:30 PM
- Nature Explorers: Thursday 5/10 at 4:00 PM at 10:00AM; Saturday 5/19 at 11:00 AM
- Crafting: Wednesday 5/23 at 10:00 AM
- Canoeing/Kayaking: Saturday 5/19 11:00 AM
- Performers in the Park: Saturdays 2:30 to 3:30 PM, when performers are available

Natural Events for the month of May

- Jack in the pulpit, pink lady's-slipper, and mayapple bloom by mid-May in the County's remnant woodlands.
- Early spring flowers such as spring beauty fade rapidly, as trees leaf out and shade the forest floor.
- Princess tree, or Paulownia (named after an 18th-Century Russian princess) blooms with large clusters of pale purple flowers. It's an invasive species but still very pretty.
- By late May, monarch butterflies arrive from the south and begin laying their eggs on newly emerged plants of common milkweed.
- Young rabbits, gray squirrels, and other small mammals are leaving their home nests. Drive carefully.
- Horseshoe crabs spawn on Delaware Bayshore beaches from late May to early June.
- Red knots arrive for their stop-over at the Delaware Bay area to double their weight on horseshoe crab eggs in preparation for their nonstop journey to Arctic breeding grounds.

Looking Ahead:

2012 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the trips we have lined up for the rest of the year. If you would be able and willing to lead a summer field trip, please contact Karl Anderson at karlanderson6@aol.com or 856-845-7075.

Saturday June 9, 2012: **Kayaking and Birding**

At a local park. With luck we might see bald eagle, osprey, beaver, and possibly river otter. Leader: Jay Hoffecker.

2012 Programs

Listed below are the programs we have lined up for the rest of the season. Meeting dates are the **second Thursday** of the month.

June 14, 2012: **Annual Picnic** (Scotland Run Park)

Club Notes:

- Check out our **FACEBOOK PAGE:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gcnatureclub/>. Note: You will need to have a Facebook membership, and new group members will need to be added by one of the administrators. Join today and share your nature information!
- 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 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 sharkeyes@comcast.net or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the **15th** of the preceding month.
- The May Executive Committee meeting will be held on May 6 at the home of Karen Kravchuck. Please contact Karen 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:

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

2010 – 2013 term: Barry Bengel, Elaine Dzeima, Paula Hayes, Dave Partridge

2011 – 2014 term: Erik Mollenhauer, Bonnie Dann, Jackie Partridge, Jayne Rhynard

We will be electing Trustees for the term of 2011-2014. If you are interested in running for election, please contact Karen Kravchuck at 856-468-6536 or at blackbirdsinging@hotmail.com.

Gloucester County Nature Club 2012 Official Ballot

Board of Trustees (Term for 2012 – 2015)

Mark an X in the box to the left of the candidates of your choice.

(Please vote for no more than four (4) candidates)

Brian Hayes

Karen Kravchuck

Kris Mollenhauer

Richard Dilks

Remaining Bird Quest 2012 Training Sessions