



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

SPECIAL LOCATION

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

Thursday May 8, 2014

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

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

6:00 PM: 2014 GCNC Annual Plant Sale

7:00 PM: Spiders

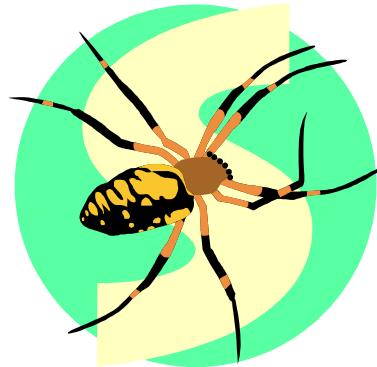
Presenter: Eugene M. Fuzy of Rutgers University

*Satiny web, a delicate twine
Glistening and swaying, beauty divine,
Where is the creature that spins this creation
Hidden away, kept in isolation?
Some view you as a menacing pest
But I for one, see beyond the rest.
You capture those who annoy and bite
Wrapping and draining all their fight.
Even though this arachnid causes hysteria
Remember, it just might save you from malaria.*

~Hobber9 (FFP Poetry Forum)

Eugene M. Fuzy of Rutgers University will present an exciting and enlightening presentation about spiders in our area. His talk will enable participants to identify spiders to family level. He will also demystify common perceptions and myths enshrouding spiders. This talk is geared for all ages and promises to keep the attention of children, homeowners and enthusiasts.

Eugene has been with the Rutgers University Department of Entomology at Rutgers University for over 17 years as a senior lab technician. He has managed a turfgrass entomology laboratory at Rutgers where he also conducted research on insecticides and biological control agents. He has given over 40 presentations on insects, spiders and motivation. His most notable roles have been an appearance on Monsterquest: Giant Spiders on the History Channel and co-discovering a new species of beneficial nematode. Eugene has been consulted on numerous newspaper articles as well. Although currently employed at the Rutgers based biorepository: RUCDR Infinite Biologics, the world's largest university-based biorepository, Eugene is still consulting with the entomology department and currently seeking an enriching career in the sciences again.



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. 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 – 2014 Gloucester County Bird Quest: Saturday May 3, 2014

The Gloucester County Nature Club and co-sponsors invite people of all ages to participate in the **2014 (15th annual) Gloucester County Bird Quest**. This year Bird Quest will take place on **Sat. May 3, 2014 from 7am to 12 noon throughout Gloucester County**.

We are pleased to return to Scotland Run Park (Wilson Lake) in Clayton for our picnic and gathering. 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 separate enrollment form.

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, live bird show, owl interpretive center, and prizes**.

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 Scotland Run by 12:30pm to be eligible for prizes.

- Join one of the buses lead 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. The buses will meet back at Scotland Run Park at 12:30pm.
 - Join one of three guided walks, each lasting between an hour and an hour and a half, in various natural places in Gloucester County lead by a bird expert who will help you identify the bird species present. 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. Hand in your results at Scotland Run Park at 12:30pm to be eligible for prizes.
- **7:00-8:30: Maple Ridge:** From the intersection of Rt 553 (Woodbury-Glassboro Rd) and Mantua Ave in Wenonah (and Holy Nativity Lutheran Church), travel .75 mile south on Rt 553 to the intersection with Bark Bridge Rd. Turn right into the parking lot at that intersection – it should be open. We have permission from the landowner to be there -- please do not park at Hutchinson Cabinets.
- **9:00-10:30: Chestnut Branch Park:** From Route 45 take 553A (Alternate) towards Sewell one and one half miles. The Park will be on your left. From Route 55 take exit 53 towards Wenonah. At the fourth light make a left towards Barnsboro. At the second light make a right onto Route 553A. The park will be on your right in about one mile. Park in the lower right gravel parking lot (you can cross over the walking path to get to the gravel lot).
- **11:00-12:30: Scotland Run Park (also the picnic location):** From Route 55 take exit 45 and proceed North on Route 553/ Buck Road. After 1.2 miles turn Right on CR 610/ Clayton-Aura Road. Continue on CR 610 for 3.8 miles. After the traffic light at Fries Mill Road, turn Left into the parking lot for Scotland Run Park. You will meet in the bluebird field adjacent to the parking lot.

Last year's Gloucester County Bird Quest attracted participants from across the county organized in teams representing schools, scout troops, environmental commissions, families and friends. Each year the Club holds pre-Quest field and classroom trainings, attracting 15-30 persons each, in which local experts help new birders learn to identify birds by sight, sound, behavior, and habitat. The winning team in 2013 located 77 species but everyone was a winner because of how much they learned about birds and the natural areas of Gloucester County through this fun, educational event

This year we will be celebrating 15 years of Bird Quest in addition to special activities. We have developed educational materials including a Quest t-shirt with original artwork featuring owls of Gloucester County. Participants will learn about owls of Gloucester County and the unique features of these amazing birds. These materials will have lasting educational value for teachers, students, and the general public. Live birds, including owls, will be at the park. **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. Feel free to attend any or all of them, even if you can't attend Bird Quest. Remaining Training Sessions are listed below:

Remaining Bird Quest 2014 Training Sessions

April 25 (Friday) 7:00 – 8:30 A.M. Woodland Birds and Birdcalls. Ceres Park, Mantua Twp.

Learn your woodland birds like wood thrush, scarlet tanagers, ovenbirds, water thrush, black and white warblers, and pine warblers. Birds will be identified by sound, sight or both. *Directions: From Rt. 322 take Lambs Rd (635) to Pitman-Barnsboro Rd (553Alt). Turn left onto Rt.553A. Watch for Ceres Park sign on your left after crossing over Rt 55.*

Leaders: Jayne Rhynard and Barry Bengel

April 26 (Saturday) 7:00 - 8:30 A.M. Forest Edge and Riparian Habitat. Triple Oaks, Franklinville

Access to Scotland Run riparian habitat and forest edge at Triple Oaks.

Directions: Triple Oaks Nursery is on the right (west) side of Rt. 47 (Delsea Drive) half a mile south of the center of Franklinville.

Leaders: Dwight and Doris Weir

April 27 (Sunday) 7:00 - 8:30 A.M. Forest Edge and Swamp Habitat. Railroad Avenue, Elk Township

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 turn left into the Elk Township Recreational Complex.Park in the paved lot.

Leaders: Ron and Linda Kegel

April 28 (Monday) 7:00 – 8:00 P.M. Birding by Ear — An Introduction to Birdcalls in a Classroom Setting. Wenonah Community Center, Wenonah

In an indoor setting, learn mnemonics and “tricks of the trade” to identify birds by their songs and calls. These is a great session for novices and those that would like to brush-up on their “Birding by Ear” skills.

Directions: Wenonah Community Center (Historic Train Station,) is located at the RR crossing at the corner of E. Mantua Avenue and N. East Avenue, Wenonah

Leaders: Brian Hayes and Erik Mollenhauer

April 29 (Tuesday) 7:00 -8 :00 A.M. 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; Gary and Margie Lizzi

April 30 (Wednesday) 6:00 - 7:30 P.M. Delaware River Riparian Habitat. Wheelabrator Refuge, Westville

At the intersection of the Delaware River and Big Timber Creek, the wide-open space behind the Wheelabrator plant is great habitat for swamp, meadow and river birds. Trails and old roads make access easy and Wheelabrator is more than accommodating. Bob White can be heard here. *Directions: Access from Rt. 130, opposite Hazel Ave in Westville, just south of Big Timber Creek. Meet at the pavilion in parking lot on*

Kris Mollenhauer and Marilyn Henry

Family Fun Walk: Wednesday, May 28 @ 6:00pm at Old Pine Farm Natural Lands Trust, Deptford.

All ages are welcome. These walks are for anyone that enjoys seeing the wonder of the natural world through a child's eye. You don't need children to join these walks with active, excitable, and enthusiastic children... Bring a baby in a backpack, a toddler in tow, grade schoolers, parents, or grandparents along for a walk. We will walk at child's pace stopping to look at anything interesting we find. The walk will last an hour or so. Dress in layers according to the weather. Bring your sense of adventure and join us for a fun walk outdoors.

Old Pine Farm Natural Lands Trust is one of the few remaining natural and protected areas along the highly-developed tidal portion of Big Timber Creek. It is located in the Blackwood Terrace section of Deptford. It offers a variety of terrain, including a meadow, woodlands and wetlands, while being surrounded on three sides by many acres of fresh water in Big Timber Creek. There are several trails to walk and a picnic table near the creek.

Directions:

From Woodbury: Drive east on Cooper Street towards Blackwood. Cross Delsea Drive. At the next traffic light, go straight. At the fork, bear right to go down Good Intent Road. As you go through the second traffic light you have crossed Route 41. The fourth street on your left is Rankin Avenue. Make a left turn (you cannot make a right) and drive to the end of the street where you will see a parking lot.

From Pitman/Glassboro/Clayton: Drive North on Delsea Drive towards the Deptford Mall. At the Five Points intersection, go straight which puts you on Route 41. At the second traffic light you are at the intersection of Route 41 and Good Intent Road. Make a right turn. The fourth street on your left is Rankin Avenue. Make a left turn and go to the end of the street where you will see a parking lot.

Trip Leader, Maria Keefe cell/text 609-315-4759 Email: mariakeefe19@comcast.net

Conservation Corner – Time to go to bat for bats

(Sandy Barnes, Philadelphia Inquirer)

Bats are in trouble, and you can help.

In 2006, scores of dead bats were found on the ground outside a cave in Albany, N.Y. Since then, biologists have been in a race to identify the cause and stop the carnage. Millions of insect-munching bats in 22 states have died.



The malady, called white-nose syndrome because it involves a white fungus that appears on the muzzles of bats hibernating in caves, affects little brown bats the most. Wildlife experts are fearful nearly all of them in Pennsylvania and New Jersey - and well beyond - will die.

But some little brown bats aren't dying. And some other bat species don't appear to be as vulnerable. By now, "every bat left in the landscape is precious," Bucknell University researcher DeeAnn Reeder said.

You can help the bats by giving them summer homes. And you can help the researchers by joining a summer bat count. Bats are emerging from hibernation now, and they'll be looking for places to gather in "maternity colonies" to have their young. Usually, this is a barn, church steeple, abandoned house, or some other building. Even a tree.

But buildings get torn down. Trees fall over. So putting up a bat house - the bat version of a bird nesting box - is one of the things that can be done to reduce stress on the bats in summer, said wildlife biologist Cal Butchkoski, one of the Pennsylvania Game Commission's true bat men.

Generally, bat houses are thinner than a bird's nesting box, because bats like tight places. The idea is to mimic the space between a tree trunk and its bark, according to Bat Conservation International, an advocacy and educational group in Texas.

Best of all, helping bats will help you, too. The little guys devour massive quantities of insects, including mosquitoes. According to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, a single bat can eat half of its body weight each night - up to 3,000 insects an hour. "Before white-nose hit, I had 1,030 bats in two large bat boxes in my back yard," said Butchkoski, who lives in Huntingdon County, west of Harrisburg. "And I could sit out back at dusk and enjoy the evening."

In 2010, the population dropped to 400. The next year, they were all gone. "In 2012, I put in a fire pit and things to make smoke" to try to control insects, he said.

Those with gardens also can benefit from bats, because they eat cucumber beetles. The DEP says 150 big brown bats can eat enough cucumber beetles each summer to protect farmers from 18 million of the beetles' larvae. This is important because controlling the larvae costs close to \$1 billion annually.

Topping it all off, many garden pests can somehow detect the feeding sounds bats make, and they skedaddle. So, without bats, the DEP says, we would be more dependent on toxic pesticides to control insects.

Another way people can help is to join an annual bat count, which helps biologists determine how bat populations in a given area are faring from year to year. Pennsylvania and New Jersey have bat counts.

The idea is that you stand outside a known bat site at dusk and count the bats as they emerge. The count is done in June, and again later in the summer, when the pups begin flying - so you can see how the colony has grown. "We're not going to give up hope," Butchkoski said.

Here are bat-house tips from Butchkoski and others:

- The house should be at least 10 feet above the ground, but not over a window or some other place where you wouldn't want droppings.
- The house should get sun most of the day; bats like temperatures between 85 and 100 degrees.
- Avoid areas with trees, which might be shady and might have hawks or owls in residence.
- Bats like water, so make sure the house is within about a quarter-mile of a stream, pond or river.
- Even if you want to buy a bat house instead of making one, check out some of the building plans so you know what to look for. Not all manufactured houses are adequate, Butchkoski said.

If you don't get bats in the spring, be patient. It's common for bats to roost somewhere else, but to begin checking out alternatives for next year late in summer.

Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: May 2014

- May 4, 2014 (Sunday) 11:00 am to 4:00 pm - **OPEN HOUSE FOR THE BIRDS!** Tri-State Bird Rescue, located at 110 Possum Hollow Road in Newark, DE, invites the community to its FREE annual Open House. New in 2014 are self-guided tours of the wild bird clinic during the day, where visitors can peek at baby birds in our nursery. Activities for children include build-a-bird craft, scavenger hunt, and face painting. Exhibitors from birding and environmental organizations will be on hand; food and Tri-State merchandise will be available for purchase. Donations of cash, paper towels, and single-ply white toilet paper (used to make nests for baby birds) are gratefully accepted. For more information, visit www.tristatebird.org or call 302-737-9543 x108.

- May 18, 2014 (Sunday), 2:00 pm – **Walk in the Wild: Blossoms.** 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.

- Evening Bird Walk: Tuesday 5/20 at 6:00 pm. Bring binoculars and discover the many species of birds that call Scotland Run Park home.
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 5/7 at 10:00 am
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 5/21 at 2:30 pm
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 5/10 at 10:00 am

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:

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

June 13, 2014: **Annual Picnic** – Chestnut Branch Park, Mantua Township

2013-2014 GCNC Field Trips

June 22, 2014: **Walk at Two Mile Beach Unit of the Cape May Wildlife Refuge**

July 12, 2014: **Butterfly Walk with Chris Herz.** Location TBD, 9:30am

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 May Executive Committee meeting will be held on May 4th at the home of Jayne Rhynard. 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:

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

* The term of the Trustees listed above will end June 2014. Their names will be on the ballot for re-election to a 2014-2017 term.

2012 – 2015 term: Brian Hayes, Karen Kravchuck, Kris Mollenhauer, Rich Dilks

2013 – 2016 term: Barry Bengel, Elaine Dzeima, Paula Hayes, Dave Partridge

We will be electing Trustees for the term of 2014-2017. 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 2014 Official Ballot

Board of Trustees (Term for 2014 – 2017)

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

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

Erik Mollenhauer

Bonnie Dann

Jackie Partridge

Jayne Rhynard
