



# Gloucester County Nature Club

## Monthly Newsletter

[www.gcnatureclub.org](http://www.gcnatureclub.org)

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

June 2009

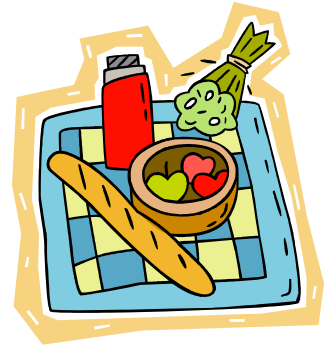
**\*\*Note the time and location change for this meeting\*\***

**Program – Annual Picnic at Red Bank Battlefield and The Art of Karen Paust**

**Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM at Red Bank Battlefield**

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

The June 11th meeting of the Gloucester County Nature Club will be our annual spring picnic. The picnic will be held this year at historic Red Bank Battlefield Park overlooking the Delaware River in National Park. We will be gathering at the Hessian Ave. Pavilion adjacent to the main parking area and just beyond the park headquarters. Our picnic will begin at 6:00 P.M. Attendees should bring a food item to share, and their own utensils, plates, and cups to cut down on the waste of disposables. As with all club functions, the picnic is open to the public so why not bring a friend? We hope you will join us for the picnic.



### **The Art of Karen Paust. 7:00 PM**

Our program for June will explore the work of artist Karen Paust. Ms. Paust will present a slide show of her work and tell us how the natural world of wildflowers, insects and mushrooms has inspired and shaped her artistic vision. Karen works in many media including painting, sculpture, beading and knitting, and will be bringing some of her work for display, including a sculpture piece and several broaches.

*“I have been creating with my hands for as long as I can remember; sewing, crocheting, knitting and learning from my mother and grandmother how to create what I envisioned without using a pattern. Beadwork sprang from my interest in botany. I taught myself how to weave beads together, realizing that beads reflected the nature world which I see as being made up of tiny particles all interconnected. Beading also allows me to combine sewing, knitting, painting and sculpting techniques into a very unique art form that interacts with light. I am inspired by my environment. I inspect many plants and insects contemplating how I would begin to bead them. I usually keep a sketch book and draw or watercolor the subjects that catch my interest. Then I try to find the appropriate beads for the project and start creating samples until I come up with the right combination. I make wearable pieces, such as brooches, necklaces and earrings, but I also create mobiles, and a few larger sculptures.”*

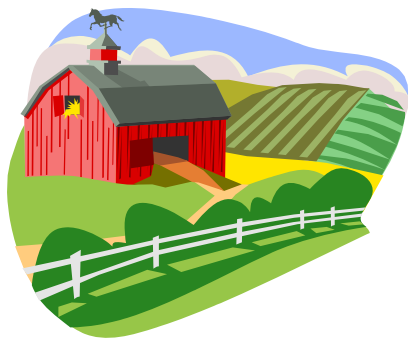
-Karen Paust

**Directions:** The park is located at 100 Hessian Ave, National Park, NJ. From the Woodbury area, take Route 45 (Broad St.) north from the center of Woodbury past Red Bank Ave. to Hessian Ave. Turn west (left) onto Hessian Ave. Continue on Hessian Ave. approximately 3 miles. Hessian Ave. terminates at the park entrance.

## **Field Trip – Birding at Brightview Farm**

**Saturday June 6<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 AM to Noon**

**Trip Leader: Bob Duke**



Brightview Farm has ideal habitat for field nesting birds. It is a horse farm and the owners don't mow the fields for hay until after the young ground-nesting birds ( Bobolinks, Meadowlarks, etc.) have fledged. We will walk the paths in late morning to avoid the heat.

We will meet at the Timberline Shopping Center at 8:00am in order to carpool to the farm. Bring drinks and snacks and binoculars and scopes, etc. There are no picnic tables or benches for having lunch there and you must(!) carry out any trash you might generate. Meet at the farm at 9:30am. I plan to be there no longer than 12:00 noon.

**Directions:** Take I-295 North to exit 52A (Columbus). You will exit onto Rt 656, which almost immediately merges with Rt 543. Stay on Rt 543 through Columbus. About 4-5 miles after Columbus, Rt 543 makes a sharp left turn. DO NOT make this turn. Stay on Mt Pleasant Rd. by going straight. There is a STOP sign at the intersection with Rt 68. Proceed across Rt 68 for a mile or so, until the STOP sign at Rt 545. Turn right onto Rt 545. Brightview Farm is about 1/4 mile on the left. Proceed straight onto the farm and follow the winding road to where there are fences on both sides of the road. Park on the grass just before the fence on the left.

There are no restroom facilities on the farm or on I-295. Proceed on Rt 545 to Wrightstown, and one of the fast-food restaurants before going onto the farm, if necessary.

Any questions, call Bob at (856) 848-7012, after 6:00 PM.

### **Bird Quest Wrap-Up** by Brian Hayes

We had another fantastic Bird Quest!! Thank you all for coming in the less than favorable weather. The response from the people who participated was – This Year was the best EVER!

Our winning team saw 76 species while for the day we had 128 species seen by all groups. We had 285 people registered and amazingly despite the weather almost all of them showed up back at the park.

Woodford Cedar Run Refuge with their live birds back at the park was a great cap of a wonderful day. Folks really enjoyed it and learned a lot from Katie and her feathered friends.

Everyone received our Bird Quest t-shirt, had a nice lunch and this year we added cake to celebrate our 10th year anniversary. A major milestone. As a special gift we gave out a free exclusive 10th anniversary Bird Quest tote bag to all participants! This nice cloth tote is a perfect size to take to the store or carry your books.

We had three full buses with one bus filled girl scouts (two troops - 48 kids and adults) who had a wonderful time. They all told me they will be back next year and bringing a friend.

What an incredible value. I can't imagine where they could get more for their money: Lunch with cake, t-shirts, tote bags, a ride on a bus, prizes, a show by Woodford Cedar Run, expert guided walks, expert

guides on the buses, breakfast at Wheelabrator, 12 trainings leading up to BQ, and a chance to see some great birds. ALL for \$12!!!! What a bargain!!!!

I look forward to seeing everyone next year – May 1, 2010 at our 11th annual Bird Quest. We hope to keep the momentum going from this year and make next year's quest even better.

Thank you to all the sponsors and to all the people who helped.

If you would like to help out next year please email Brian Hayes at [bhayes@eirc.org](mailto:bhayes@eirc.org) or call (856) 582-7000 x110.

### **Field Trip Report: Spring Wildflowers of The Wenonah Conservation Area, April 19, 2009**

We met at Wenonah Lake under lightly overcast skies on a calm and temperate Sunday morning to explore the woodlands of the Wenonah Conservation Area and to acquaint ourselves with the early spring wildflowers along the wooded trails and in the marshes of this inner coastal plain public nature reserve. The spring ephemerals were making their brief annual display and the highlights included areas with large carpets of Spring Beauty, Trout Lily and Canada Mayflower, the later having unfurled its foliage but not yet in bloom. Showy bright yellow Marsh Marigolds in the Mantua Creek marsh were contrasted by the nearby tiny green flowers of Golden Saxifrage only 1/8" across. We viewed patches of Wood Anemone, Dwarf Ginseng and Common Blue Violets. Along with woodland favorites such as Jack-in-the-pulpit and Wood Rush, troublesome invasives such as Lesser Celandine and Garlic Mustard were seen in abundance. The fiddleheads of several species of ferns were rising in graceful curves along the trails and other non-flowering plants we encountered were the primeval looking Field Horsetail, Shinning Clubmoss and Tree Clubmoss. One unexpected sighting occurred while the group was looking out over Mantua Creek from the Mantua Ave, bridge to observe the beaver lodge and dam. There in a tree, in plain sight was a Bald Eagle (its white head "like a golf ball in a tree", someone said). Other interesting birds observed included Barn and Rough-winged Swallows, a Greater Yellowlegs and numerous songbirds. By mid afternoon we had reached the end of our long walk at the Japanese teahouse pavilion near Comey's Lake, where the group relaxed in a tranquil setting sipping cold drinks. We had walked over 4.5 miles and enjoyed a day in this local woodland as it came alive again in the greening of spring.

- Rich Dilks

### **Field Trip Report: Allaire State Park, May 16, 2009**

About fifty species of birds were seen or heard on this trip to the ecologically diverse Allaire State Park. Species seen included scarlet tanager, eastern bluebird, great crested flycatcher, white-eyed and red-eyed vireos, ruby-throated hummingbird, and a great view of a common nighthawk – not flying over, as usually seen, but perched in the open on a branch of a large sycamore tree. Wild azalea was in good bloom, and a few spring flowers were still in evidence in the flood plain of the Manasquan River. The historic village was viewed in passing, as was the 19th-century Allaire Furnace, one of a very few surviving examples of its kind in New Jersey. The weather was perfect, despite predictions for afternoon showers. The trip was led by Jonathan Weir. Ten nature club members attended.

- Karl Anderson

## **Field Trip Report: Night in the Pine Barrens, May 23, 2009**

A moonless night, brilliant stars, the fragrance of fetterbush and pine, and the calls of the whippoorwill made this an aesthetic experience for all concerned, especially for those who are unused to driving the sand roads at night. Southern leopard frogs and carpenter frogs were heard calling, and Fowler's toads, green frogs, and the rare pine barrens tree frog were both heard and seen. The tree frog sighting was of an individual perched uncharacteristically high in a cedar, who persisted in calling every time we despaired of hearing him (only males call) again, but who was eventually spotted by Gale Cannon. Spiders, white-tailed deer, and a few other birds and plants, rounded out the "trip list". The trip was led by Karl Anderson and Gale Cannon. Seven nature club members attended.

- Karl Anderson

## **Gloucester County Nature Club Big Day Report: May 9, 2009**

The Gloucester County 2009 Big Day team of Lloyd Shaw, Gary Lizzi, and Gale Cannon enjoyed ideal weather conditions on May 9 for fifteen hours of birding in a variety of habitats in Gloucester County.

The first bird of the day was an eastern screech owl, heard at Wenonah Lake at 5:00 AM. The rest of the early morning was spent at sites along the Delaware River, where the best sighting was a pair of red-throated loons, seen flying over. Other species here included gadwall, red-breasted merganser, and green-winged teal. The next stop was Glassboro Woods, the county's forest jewel, where avian highlights included Kentucky, prothonotary, hooded, and worm-eating warblers along with Louisiana waterthrush and Acadian flycatcher. A total of 19 warbler species were seen during the day.

During the afternoon the county's remaining farmlands were scoured for birds of the open country. Avian highlights here included meadowlark, bobolink, American kestrel, white-crowned sparrow, eastern bluebird, horned lark, and a bald eagle. At day's end the team returned to Wenonah, where the last bird of the day was a black vulture, seen at its evening roost at 8:00 PM. 123 species were found during the day.

It was a fabulous day, and thank you all for your donations, which so far add up to over \$1000.00, to be split between Unexpected Wildlife Refuge, the Old Pine Farm Natural Lands Trust, and the Nature Club's Maple Ridge Preservation Fund. Donations are still being accepted.

- Karl Anderson

## **Family Fun Walk**

**Thursday, June 25 at 9:30 AM at Chestnut Branch Park**

**Trip Leader: Maria Keefe (856) 627-7010 Email: [walkingwith4boyz@comcast.net](mailto:walkingwith4boyz@comcast.net)**

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 is welcome.



**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.

## Natural Events for the month of June

- During courtship, a cedar waxwing pair may repeatedly pass a flower petal or insect back and forth.
- White-tailed deer are giving birth. The young fawns lie down and "freeze" when threatened.
- Longest day of the year is June 21.
- Pond turtles are digging nests and laying eggs, which will hatch in 80 to 90 days.
- Mountain laurel in bloom.
- Herons can be found roosting with young in marshes at the shore.
- Wood duck and mallard ducklings hatch and venture forth.
- Canada geese begin molting.

## Events by other Organizations: June to August 2009

- June 14 (Sunday) - 1st Mantua Creek Canoe & Kayak Race, Wenonah, NJ. Registration 9-10 AM. Race Start 10:30 AM. Prize for each paddler. Course: Upstream  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from Rr 45 to Wenonah Ave, turnaround buoy, then downstream  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to Rt 45 bridge. For info: [drbones@aol.com](mailto:drbones@aol.com).
- June 20 (Saturday) – Botany on the Sussex Branch Trail (Kittatinny Valley S.P.), Andover, NJ. A great spot for unusual ferns and other “limestone country” plants. 10:00 AM to mid-afternoon. Leader: David Austin. Sponsored by the Torrey Botanical Society. For info: [www.torreybotanical.org/](http://www.torreybotanical.org/).
- June 21 (Sunday) - Elephant Swamp Nature Trail in Elk Township, Gloucester County. 1:00 PM. Leader: Michael Hogan. For more information, contact Michael Hogan at (609) 476-2086 or [hoganphoto@verizon.net](mailto:hoganphoto@verizon.net). The trail head/parking area is located on south side Rt. 538/Cole Mill Road in Elk Township, approximately 2 miles west of Rt. 553/Buck Road.
- July 26 (Sunday) – Exploring Burlington County’s Botanical Diversity. 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Leader; Sandra Keller. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. \$Fee. For info: <http://njudubon.org/centers/rancocas/>.
- August 1 (Saturday) – Savannahs of the Batsto River. 10:00 AM to late afternoon. Leader: Ted Gordon. Be prepared for wet walking. Sponsored by the Philadelphia Botanical Club. For info: [www.ansp.org/hosted/botany\\_club/](http://www.ansp.org/hosted/botany_club/)
- August 9 (Sunday) – Finding Fungi at Rancocas. 10:00 AM to 1:30 PM. Joint trip with the New Jersey Mycological Society. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. \$Fee. For info: <http://njudubon.org/centers/rancocas/>.
- August 23 (Sunday) – Butterflies, Birds, Garden, and Meadow Walk. 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Leader: Sandra Keller. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. \$Fee. For info: <http://njudubon.org/centers/rancocas/>.

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

- Bird Walks: Tuesday 6/16, 7/14, and 8/11 at 6:00 PM
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 6/17 at 10:00 AM
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 6/24 at 2:30 PM

- Family Nature Adventure: Saturday 6/27 at 10:00 AM
- Evening Canoeing and Kayaking: Thursday 6/25 6:00 PM
- Star Party! The Perseid Meteor Shower: Wednesday, 8/12 8:30-11:30 PM. Catch a falling star and join the Astronomy Professors from Rowan University to view the annual Perseid Meteor shower. The professors will have telescopes on hand so you can check out all of the astral wonders. Bring a lawn chair and meet us back at the boat launch area. If the sky is too cloudy for viewing or it decides to rain, we'll try again the next evening, Thursday, August 13.
- Gloucester County Parks Ecotours: August 24 thru 28 at 10 AM. Explore the wild side of the county park system. Meet at the Scotland Run Nature Center at 9:00 AM to carpool, or at the parks at 10:00 AM. 8/24 – Atkinson Park (meet at the tennis courts), 8/25 – Pitman Golf Course (meet in the parking lot), 8/26 – Scotland Run (meet at the nature center), and Red Bank Battlefield – will include a tour of the Whitall House (meet at the Ranger Office), 8/29 – Greenwich Lake Park (meet in the parking lot).

### **Other Nature Notes**

#### **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 (856) 218-2973 or [sillybird348@comcast.net](mailto:sillybird348@comcast.net).



### **Looking Ahead:**

#### **Summer Field Trips!**

Listed below are the field trips we have lined up for this summer.

#### **Field Trip – An Introduction to Ferns at Ceres Park, Mantua Twp. Saturday, July 11th, 9:00 AM to Noon**

##### **Leader: Karl Anderson**

Meet at the Ceres Park parking area. Ferns look difficult, but they are actually rather easy to identify, and there are only about fifty species in New Jersey. We will probably see about fifteen of them, in the course of a slow walk along the trails. Other plants of interest will probably not be ignored. Bring beverage and insect repellent, and dress to suit the weather.

**Directions:** See your copy of Natural Places of Gloucester County. But if you've worn it out and have not had a chance to purchase another, well, from the intersection of Route 45 and Route 553A (Main Street) in Mantua, take Route 553A south for about 3.6 miles. The park entrance will be on the right, immediately north of Route 55.

**Field Trip – Boundary Creek and Other Sites in Western Burlington County.  
Saturday, July 18th, 9:00 AM to Mid-Afternoon**

**Leader: Karl Anderson**

Meet at 9:00 AM at the parking area in Boundary Creek Natural Resource Area. Bring lunch, beverage, binoculars, and dress to suit the weather. In addition to Boundary Creek, we hope to visit the 19th- and early 20th-century industrial site of Smithville, and walk the 1 1/2 mile Smith's Woods Trail. Walking will be level and dry. We might also make a quick stop at the Rancocas Nature Center to admire their butterfly garden. We should see some nice views of Rancocas Creek and of Smithville Lake, and see a few birds, butterflies, and flowers.

**Directions:** Boundary Creek NRA is on Creek Road in Moorestown. Take Route 295 to Exit 43B, towards Delran. The preserve will be on the right, two miles from Route 295. There is a large blue sign. Distance from Woodbury is about 25 miles. For information about this site and other Burlington County parks, go to: [http://www.co.burlington.nj.us/departments/resource\\_conservation/parks/](http://www.co.burlington.nj.us/departments/resource_conservation/parks/).

**Field trip – The Heart of the Pinelands  
Sunday, August 9th, 9:00 AM to Early Afternoon**

**Leader: Karl Anderson**

Meet at 9:00 AM at the Atsion Ranger Station on Route 206 in the Wharton State Forest. Bring lunch, beverage, tick and insect repellent, and dress to suit the weather. Be prepared for wet walking. Cameras and binoculars are optional. This will be primarily a botanical trip; we will visit several locations, including some of the savannahs along the Batsto River near Quaker Bridge; road conditions will dictate our actual route. We should see a few species of orchids, plus bladderworts, sundews, pitcher plant, and other specialties of the area.

**Directions:** The Atsion Ranger Station is on the east side of Route 206, about ten miles south of the intersection of Routes 70 and 206 at the Red Lion traffic circle. Or, if traveling on the Atlantic City Expressway, it is about ten miles north of Exit 28. It is immediately north of the Atsion Lake recreation area. Distance from Woodbury is about 35 miles, either way.

**Field trip – Ceres Park Microbioblitz  
Saturday, August 29th, 9:00 AM to Noon**

**Leader: Karl Anderson**

Meet at the Ceres Park parking area. We will walk the trails at a leisurely pace, attempting to identify and list every species of vascular plant and vertebrate (and perhaps butterflies and dragonflies) that we observe. Bring binoculars, field guides, beverage, insect repellent.

**Directions:** See your copy of Natural Places of Gloucester County. But if you've worn it out and have not had a chance to purchase another, well, from the intersection of Route 45 and Route 553A (Main Street) in Mantua, take Route 553A south for about 3.6 miles. The park entrance will be on the right, immediately north of Route 55.

## **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](mailto: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](mailto:sharkeyes@comcast.net) or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.

### **As usual, our Annual Plant Sale was a hit!**

The threat of impending rain storms seems to have become a tradition at the Club's Annual Plant Sale.

The storms held off — just barely— and once again, even though the threat of rain may have kept some away, the sale last month was a great success.

As always with our Plant Sale, the plants that we have to offer come from two fronts. When the idea of the Plant Sale started all those years ago it was plants that our members brought from their own gardens that were sold — and that tradition continues. Our members must have some beautiful gardens because you always have great plants to share. Thanks to all for their well-marked contributions.



This year, again, George, Bridget and Brian from Dean's Evergreens in Monroeville were a big part of our Plant Sale with their very generous donation of nursery plants. Much thanks to them for their continuing support. It's great to have them as a partner in this event!

If you are looking for more of the plants like the ones that Dean's Evergreens donated, try Groff's in Pitman, Prickett's in Sewell, Stecher's in Swedesboro, Vissali's in Monroeville and DiBella's in Woodstown. Dean's is a supplier to all of these places.

Thanks to Ron Kegel who works at Dean's Evergreens for spending his lunchtimes choosing just the right plants for us. The great selection of native plants was particularly appropriate with that evening's program, Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Garden

Thanks to Dave, Kris and Erik and their trucks, to Millie, Ed, Elaine and Dave for their cashier duties and to Karl and for his seemingly endless knowledge of the plant world.

Hope everyone found just the plants that you were looking for and that they are all safely tucked in your gardens. And don't forget — as you spend time in your garden this year, keep in mind what you might need or what you might share at next year's Plant Sale!