



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

June 2015



Program - Annual Picnic at Alcyon Lake Park, Pitman, NJ
Thursday, June 11, 2015 at 6:00pm (directions below)
Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342



Note: Starting time for the picnic is 6:00pm

The June 11 meeting of the Gloucester County Nature Club will be our annual spring picnic. The picnic will be held this year at Alcyon Lake Park on the shores of historic and scenic Alcyon Lake. 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.

After the picnic, we will enjoy a nature walk through the park and along the lake. Earlier this spring, Allen Jackson of the NJ Bluebird Society (with the assistance of GCNC members) installed 4 bluebird boxes at Alcyon Lake Park.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Alcyon Lake's shore featured a boardwalk, skating rink, bowling alley and other arcade type attractions. The famous Alcyon Speedway once stood on the site of Alcyon Lake Park. Today, A half paved/half gravel trail meanders through attractive lakeside trees, and a wildflower meadow, where a variety of suburban wildlife can be found.

Directions: Directions to Alcyon Lake Park.

From points south: From Broadway in Pitman, turn west onto W. Holly Ave. Go .6/10 of a mile, passing Alcyon Lake on your left. Turn left onto Carr Ave. and proceed to the park entrance.

From points north: From Woodbury-Glassboro Rd. (Rt. 553) turn west onto Lambs Rd. and continue for 1.6 miles. Turn east (left) onto W. Holly Ave. and go 3/10 of a mile to Carr Ave. Turn right onto Carr Ave. and proceed to park entrance.

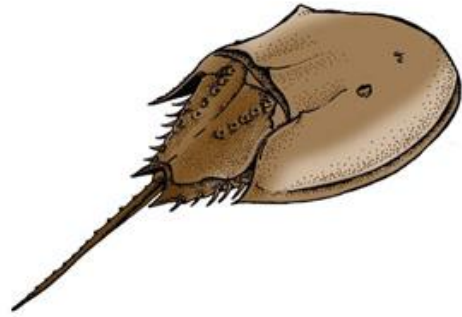
Field Trip – Horseshoe Crab Walk

Saturday, June 13, 2015 at 6:30pm

Leaders: Paula and Brian Hayes (Paula's cell for the day of the walk questions 609-221-5195)

Join us for a walk along the beach in the Villas, a Bay Shore community near Cape May. On this night, beaches all around the Delaware Bay host spawning horseshoe crabs as they have for many millions of years. We will begin our walk as the tide begins to rise and the sun sinks low in the sky. The horseshoe crabs time their egg laying for the high tide on new and full moons in May and June, this allows them to lay their eggs high on the beach. It is believed the crabs seek these conditions to make the climb up the beach easier and to lay their eggs above the rising tide on subsequent nights. As the tide rises up the Bay Shore beaches we will begin to see the male crabs gather along the edge of the surf awaiting the larger females. The males "cruise" along the surf waiting to latch onto female (using a special claw) for a ride

up the beach. Female will crawl up the beach to lay her eggs while the males, in tow, fertilize the eggs. We will walk about 2 miles along the beach, bring appropriate footwear or plan to go barefoot. We will stop often to see what treasures the tide brings in. Though the wind usually keeps the mosquitoes away you may want to bring bug spray. You may also want to bring a camera or binoculars. This walk is open to all but will have special appeal to families. If you are bringing children it is likely they will get wet and sandy “walking,” please plan for this eventuality and bring a towel and change of clothes for your child so they don’t need to ride home wet.



Directions: Meet at the beach on Walnut Avenue. Park near the intersection of Walnut Avenue and Delaware Avenue in the Villas (Lower Township). If you need an address for your GPS use 301 Walnut Ave, Lower Township, NJ 08251, this is the last house on the beach.

Summer Field Trips

Family Fun Stream Walk #1- all ages are welcome!

Wednesday, July 8th at 6:30 PM at Pitman Memorial School

Trip Leaders: Maria Keefe & Paula Hayes cell 609-221-5195 Email: pnbhayes@gmail.com

This stream walk is an old favorite, we do this one most years and it is always filled with a surprise or two. We'll explore what is in, on, under and around the creek as we walk in the water. We'll look for fish, frogs, turtles, mussels, animal prints, flowers, birds and more. Wear appropriate water shoes or old sneakers to walk in the water. We will get wet!! You may want to bring insect repellent.

Directions: From Lambs Road turn onto Hudson Avenue (near Total Turf Experience). Turn into Pitman Memorial School parking lot on the right.

Family Fun Stream Walk #2- all ages are welcome!

Tuesday, August 11th at 6:30 PM in Ceres Park, Mantua

Trip Leaders: Maria Keefe & Paula Hayes cell 609-221-5195 Email: pnbhayes@gmail.com

This park is a great one for summer hikes since its tall trees provide lots of shade. There is easy access to a stream after a short hike to the corner of this lovely park. We'll explore what is in, on, under and around the creek as we walk in the water. We'll look for fish, frogs, turtles, mussels, animal prints, flowers, birds and more. Wear appropriate water shoes or old sneakers to walk in the water. We will get wet!! You may want to bring insect repellent.

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. We'll meet in the parking lot.

Bird Quest Wrap-up 2015 - The Sounds of Spring

Thank you for helping to make the 16th annual Gloucester County Nature Club's Bird Quest a success on May 2nd, 2015. It was a beautiful day with perfect weather but since the date was early in May the majority of migrating birds had not arrived yet - but they are arriving now.

This was the third year in a row a team from Wenonah took the top honors but a new champion won by one bird species: The Trill Seekers. This group identified 88 species of birds that morning. Compiling the birds seen from each group there were 132 species of birds seen that day. A complete checklist of the birds seen at Bird Quest 2015 is available on our website.

At the gathering at Scotland Run Park everyone received lunch and our Bird Quest t-shirt with birds depicted in honor of Charley Harper's artistic style. The birds on the shirt are shown singing in keeping with our theme of bird songs. It was designed and drawn by George Yurgin at Gariel Graphics in Woodbury.

As the educational part of the theme there was a CD available (for free) with bird song tracks for learning the songs of common birds of Gloucester County. This CD includes the birds on the bird cards available through the Nature Club as well. There were two trainings prior to Bird Quest that focused specifically on common bird songs and how to identify/remember them. These bird song trainings, as with all of Bird Quest, is meant to stimulate and inspire you to get outside and explore the birds and bird songs you have in your back yard, Gloucester County, and across the State. We live in an incredibly rich area for birds – never more so than in spring – get out and enjoy it.

Thank you to all the sponsors – specifically Wheelabrator, which paid for the buses and the educational materials - and to all the volunteers who make this event a success: the on-site committee, the bus leaders, the walk leaders, the training leaders, Woodford-Cedar Run (donated amazing gift baskets), the Bird Quest Committee, and any others who have made a donation or contributed to the success of the event. You know who you are. **THANK YOU!**

Save the date: May 7, 2016 our 17th annual Gloucester County Bird Quest.

We welcome suggestions, improvements, and all offers of help. Contact me if you would like to be a part of the planning for future Bird Quests. bhayes@eirc.org

Thanks,

Brian Hayes

856.582.7000 x110

Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: June 2015

- June 7 (Sunday) **18th Annual Barnegat Festival**. Wanamaker complex at Island Hts, NJ. Free. For details see <http://bbp.ocean.edu>.
- June 21, 2015 (Sunday), 2:00pm – **Walk in the Woods: Ticks & Lyme Disease**. 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.

- June 25, 2015 (Thursday), 6:30pm – **Blue Gold: World Water Wars.** Movie sponsored by the Township of Deptford at the Deptford Municipal Building. Free. Documentary about the coming and inevitable water crisis.

The following events also 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.

- Nature Tots: Wednesday 6/10 at 10:00am. For preschoolers and their caregivers. Make a craft then take a walk on the trail.
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 6/20 at 10:00am. A great way for scouts to earn their naturalist and forestry badges.
- Nature Explorers: Hiking Scotland Run Park. Thursday 6/25 at 10:00am. Enjoy a leisurely walk on the trails looking for animal signs.
- Nature Explorers: Canoeing and Kayaking. Wednesday 6/24 at 10:00am.

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.

Club Notes:

- Congratulations to Karen Kravchuck, Kris Mollenhauer, and Rich Dilks, who were re-elected as trustees. Congratulations also go to Scot Barnes, who was elected for a first term as a trustee.
- 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 June Executive Committee meeting will be held on Sunday June 7th at the home of Karen Kravchuck. Please contact Karen for more information.