



Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

October 2016

Program - Tales from the Wood Wide Web: A Timeless Connection of People and Trees
Thursday, October 13, 2016 at 7:00pm at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Wenonah, NJ
Presenters: Erik Mollenhauer and "Otzi" the Iceman
Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342

We see trees as individuals and believe that they compete with other trees for light, water and nutrients. But that view is misleading. The truth... is paradoxical.

Like us, each individual tree is part of a social network, relying on other members of that network for growth, health and success. The forest social network is largely invisible to us, but recent studies are revealing a Wood Wide Web of relationships.

Members of that WWW were viewed as sacred gifts from the creator... by native people of North America, Europe and Asia. Members of the WWW have been used to build empires and cartels... have inspired revolutions and national conservation movements... have seen a multitude of uses since prehistoric times, including medicinal and hallucinogenic.

As the author Loren Eiseley wrote: "The world, I have come to believe, is a very queer place, but we have been part of this queerness so long that we tend to take it for granted. We rush to and fro like Mad Hatters, upon our peculiar errands, all the time imagining our surroundings to be dull and ourselves quite ordinary creatures. Actually, there is nothing in the world to encourage this idea."

This program will explore the WWW and some of its members who reside here in the forests of Gloucester County. Testimony will be provided by club member Erik Mollenhauer ...and Otzi "The Iceman", late of the Austrian Alps. Anyone participating in this month's "Mad Hatter's Tree Party" will find this program of interest.

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 – The Blue Hole

Saturday, October 29, 2016 at 11:00am

Trip Leader: Maria Keefe -cell/text 609-315-4759

Join us for a family friendly walk on Halloween weekend to one of Gloucester County's legends: the "Blue Hole". Situated one mile off Piney Hollow Rd in a heavily wooded area of the Pine Barrens, the Blue Hole is a stone's throw from the Great Egg Harbor River. Unlike the brown tinted cedar water that is typical of the Pinelands the water of the Blue Hole is crystal clear. The water is also surprisingly void of fish and other wildlife that usually is found in Pinelands ponds. There are many legends about this circular pond with sky blue water. Known in the past as the "Jersey Devil's bathtub", the area was frequented by locals in the 1930's, who reportedly warned their children not to swim or go near the water, as it was thought that the Leed's Devil would pull the victims down. One story says that the Blue Hole does not completely freeze over in winter due to hot springs coming up from deep in the earth. Another story has it that the Blue Hole is bottomless, as tested by some folks who paddled a boat to its middle and threw over a weighted line--that kept going--and going--. We will share stories of the Jersey Devil, the Blue Hole, and talk about some of the theories behind the formation of this unique body of water.

We will walk approximately a half mile through the pines along sandy paths. Bring water and a repellent for insects, ticks and chiggers, is strongly recommended. Dress in layers according to the weather. All ages are welcome. We will walk at a slow to moderate pace to enjoy the beautiful pinelands.

Directions: Take the Black Horse Pike (Rt 42) south through Williamstown. At the traffic light at Geet's Diner, the Black Horse Pike becomes Rt 322. Continue south from Geet's Diner for approximately 8 miles to the traffic light at Piney Hollow Road. Using the jug handle, turn left (east) onto Piney Hollow Road. Continue for about 8/10 of a mile and turn left onto the first available unpaved road. This is about 2/10 of a mile BEFORE the Great Egg Harbor River. If you cross over the Great Egg Harbor River you have gone too far. There is no marker but two posts on the sides of the unpaved path. If you cross the small bridge over the Great Egg Harbor River, you've gone too far. Follow the unpaved road for about 500 feet to the parking area of the former gun range.

Special Event: The Mad Hatter's Tree Party

Sunday, October 23, 2016 1:00pm – 4:00pm



The Mad Hatter's Tree Party is a fun way for people to learn about the trees of our community and the critical role that trees play in a healthy environment. The Tree Party is a chance for families and people of all ages to share a whimsical adventure in a community forest.

This event consists of a self-paced, 45-minute walk in Wenonah Woods. This is more than an ordinary hike, though. You will stop at several locations to learn about specific trees along the trail and their role in the overall forest. All stations have been updated for this year and a children's story telling station will be available near the tea house. Musicians will add an instrumental accompaniment to your journey. At the end, you can share light refreshments in the Tea House with the Mad Hatter himself. This event is great for family, and takes place rain or shine.

Walk begins at Eldridge Trail, at the intersection of E. Pine St and S. Princeton Ave. in Wenonah. Families can arrive at their convenience as walks leave regularly. No pre-registration is necessary.

Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: October 2016

- October 1 (Saturday) – **Philly Fall Nature Fest.** At John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum (8601 Lindbergh Blvd., Philadelphia, PA) from 8:00am to 4:00pm. The annual festival has a new name and date! Celebrate the Refuge through exhibits, crafts, trolley tours, hands-on activities, walks, a photo contest, and so much more! All walks meet at the Visitor Center unless noted and are weather dependent. Binoculars are available to borrow from the front desk. For events requiring registration, please call 215-365-3118. See https://www.fws.gov/refuge/John_Heinz/visit/upcomingevents.html for a complete schedule of events.
- October 16 (Sunday), 2:00pm – **Guided Walk at Tall Pines State Preserve.** The Friends of Tall Pines State Preserve are conducting a free guided walk at the new state park. All members of the public are cordially invited. All ages are welcome and there is no need to register. With its dedication ceremony on June 20, Tall Pines became New Jersey's newest and Gloucester County's first state park. Located in Deptford and Mantua townships, the 110-acre preserve is an oasis of nature in the heart of suburban northern Gloucester County. Tall Pines State Preserve is located at the corner of Woodbury-Glassboro Road (Route 553) and Bank Bridge Road, just south of the borough of Wenonah. The entrance to the parking lot is off Bank Bridge Road, just west of the intersection with Woodbury-Glassboro Road. The preserve is open daily from dawn to dusk for passive recreational activities such as hiking, jogging, bicycling, fishing and bird watching. For more information on this event or Tall Pines State Preserve, contact Rich at rad721@verizon.net or 856-468-6342, or go to <http://friendsoftallpinespreserve.org/>.

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: Saturday 10/1 at 9:00am.
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 10/8 at 10:00am
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 10/12 at 10:00am
- Fall Foliage Paddle in Wilson Lake: Saturday 10/15 at 10:00am
- Nature Explorers: Saturday 10/22 at 10:00am.

Natural Events for the month of October

- Pine Barrens gentian in bloom in the Pinelands.
- Goldenrods, asters, bonesets, and blazing star in bloom.
- Cranberry harvest in the Pinelands.
- Autumn colors peak in late October.
- The greatest variety of raptor migration comes in mid-October, with golden eagles, red-shouldered hawks and more.
- Fox sparrows, one of the largest sparrows, are often seen under seed feeders during their autumn migration
- Wood ducks are migrating south
- Green-winged teal, one of the smallest dabbling ducks, are passing through the area as they migrate to the shore.

HUMANS, ANIMALS, AND NOISE POLLUTION

In the May 2016 issue of our newsletter, the effect of light pollution on humans and animals was discussed. Often we do not think about the effect of noise pollution on people and animals. The February 2016 edition of Bay Nature magazine (see www.baynature.org) included an article about white-crowned sparrows in the San Francisco area and how the birds are changing their song in order to cope with human generated noise. One way that males have adapted to the noise is to sing at a higher frequency in order to be heard. However, evidence shows that females may prefer males that sing at a normal, lower frequency resulting in a possible negative impact on mating. Noise can affect an animal's ability to locate prey, find a mate, communicate, and avoid predators.

- Studies have shown that scrub jays in the US avoid nesting in noisy areas near gas wells and compressors. Because scrub jays are critical to the health of a pine forest (they collect and bury pine seeds), the pine forests around gas wells are disappearing. Black-chinned hummingbirds will build their nests in noisy areas to avoid predators who are more sensitive to noise. By discouraging those birds sensitive to noise and replacing them with birds that do tolerate noise (house sparrows, starlings and crows in particular), whole ecosystems can be changed and environments that would never have been created in nature will emerge.
- Migratory birds are also susceptible to noise. Noise was played near an important rest stop for migrants resulting in a significant decline in numbers. When the noise was stopped, the number of migrants bounced back. Noise can influence a bird to skip a chance to rest and feed.
- It has also been shown that traffic noise negatively affects the ability of bats to locate prey.
- Male frogs, like the white-crowned sparrows above, must also call at a higher frequency to be heard at noisy sites. Female frogs of some species prefer lower-pitched calls which indicate larger and/or more experienced males. Again, as with white-crowned sparrows, breeding for frogs may be negatively affected. Also, the distance that a call travels is severely reduced by noise.
- Marine species are not immune to the effects of noise. Intense underwater noise is caused by shipping traffic, military sonar, seismic surveys, and industrial noise from oil and gas exploration. Noise travels faster and further in water. Whales, dolphins, and porpoises emit pulses of sonar clicks to locate food and pinpoint features in the environment – they can hear sounds thousands of kilometers away from waves breaking on a shore to cracking ice. Evidence increasingly shows that loud noises, particularly high-intensity sonar used by the Navy and powerful air guns used in oil and gas exploration, interfere with whales' navigation systems and cause the animals to strand themselves. The beached whales show signs of trauma such as bleeding around the ears and brain as well as bubbles in their organs which can occur due to sudden pressure change caused by sound. Noise has also been shown to reduce humpback whale communication.
- And humans are not immune either. People living with constant noise have increased levels of stress hormones and increased risk of heart attack.

What can be done about noise?

- Traffic noise can be reduced by developing quieter roads and cars and installing noise-reduction barriers around major traffic areas. Lower speed limits also reduce noise.
- Before construction on houses and industrial sites is allowed detailed environmental assessment should be done. Use of better materials and improved site planning is also necessary.
- Establish 'quiet zones' for marine life. Developing greener technologies including quieter ships, hull shapes and machinery is being looked at by industry and government.

Noise won't suddenly disappear. We won't suddenly stop driving. But an awareness of the harm done by noise may spur the development of quieter technologies. Science will certainly be of help. People need to be active in getting legislation passed restricting noise. And we can all take small steps to mitigate our own noise.

(Source: <http://www.nova.org.au>, key in 'noise pollution and the environment' in the search field.)

PETITION TO STOP SEISMIC AIRGUN BLASTING IN THE ATLANTIC

Oceana (www.oceana.org), an organization dedicated to ocean advocacy, asks that citizens tell NOAA (The National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration) to deny the use of seismic air-gun blasting used by gas and oil companies in the Atlantic Ocean. The blasts are so loud that they can be heard 2500 miles from the source and pose a threat to the last remaining North Atlantic right whales.

Find the petition at http://act.oceana.org/sign/NOAA_seismic-roadmap_2016/?utm_source=mailing&utm_medium=email&utm_content=seismic&utm_campaign=20160630seismic&t=2&akid=8271.1451135.Y7k8EJ

HUMMINGBIRDS ON THE MOVE

Adult male ruby-throated hummingbirds migrate first, giving juveniles and adult females more time to fuel up (less competition from the adult males) and to prepare for their migration. How can you tell a juvenile male from the females? Juvenile males have noticeably streaked throats. The streaks can be green, black, or tan. A few red feathers may peek through. These little birds must eat 1.5 to 3 times their body weight each day and so must visit hundreds of flowers a day. Your garden and feeders are an important resource for them. Visit Journey North at <http://www.learner.org/jnorth/> in the Spring to track the progress of hummingbirds headed north and to record your sightings if you wish.

Looking Ahead:

Listed below are the programs we have lined up for the remainder of the club year. Meeting dates are the **second** Thursday of the month.

November 10, 2016: **Protecting South Jersey's Waters: The Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer** - Richard Bizub, Dir. For Water Programs, Pinelands Preservation Alliance

December 8 2016: **An Amazon Expedition with EarthWatch** – Larry Lyons

January 12, 2017: **A Practical Guide to Plant Propagation** - Ron Kegel

February 9, 2017: **Pot Luck Dinner (6:00pm) & Program: Adventures in Paddling for Clean Water and a Healthy Ocean** - Margo Pellegrino

March 9, 2017: **Vulture Culture: A Face Only a Mother Could Love** - Jane Morton Galetto, President, Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River

April 13, 2017: **Birds of Gloucester County and Tips on Photographing Them** - Dennis DiMarco & Marilyn Henry

May 11, 2017: **Annual Plant Sale (6:00pm) and Program: A Green Legacy: John Burroughs and the Catskill Mts (6:45pm)** - Erik Mollenhauer

June 8, 2017: **Annual Picnic (6:00pm) at Alcyon Park, Pitman, NJ** followed by **Program: Surfskis, Outrigger Canoes, Kayaks, Lifejackets, Rescue Throw bags, Paddles - Up Close & Personal** - Glen Forest Green, P.E., U.S. Canoe Assoc. Safety Committee Chairman

2016-2017 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the field trips we have lined up for the remainder of the club year. Changes and additions are not impossible. If you would be able and willing to lead an additional field trip, please contact Paula Hayes at pnbhayes@gmail.com.

October 23, 2016 - **The Mad Hatter's Tree Party**

October 29, 2016 - **Blue Hole**

November 6, 2016 - **Drum Circle at Tall Pines**

December 17, 2016 - **Christmas Bird Count**

January 2017 - **Winter Ducks**

February 11, 2017 - **Scotland Run Full Moon Hike**

March 2017 - **TBD**

April 2017 - **BirdQuest Training Sessions**

May 6, 2017 - **BirdQuest**

June 2017 - **Horseshoe Crab Walk**

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 or call 609-617-6693 (cell).
- 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 October Executive Committee meeting will be held on Sunday October 9th at the home of Barry Bengel. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.

Reminder - Membership Dues

October continues our membership renewals. This year we will be keeping the price the same as last year. Please remember that your dues are the only costs associated with being a club member, we do not charge for any of our programs or field trips. Many organizations charge their members for each walk or activity they attend. We believe that the club is still an excellent value and hope the added cost will not deter any of our members. It is much cheaper for us to send the newsletter electronically to our members and as a result those members who choose to receive the newsletter electronically will receive a discount on their membership. The dues are \$20 for electronic mailings and \$25 for regular mail delivery. Please fill out the membership form at the end of this newsletter and bring it along with your dues to the monthly meeting, or send your renewal form and a check payable to "Gloucester County Nature Club" to: GCNC Membership, P.O. Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080.

You may also sign up and pay your membership dues electronically via PayPal. Just go to <http://gcnatureclub.org/membership.php> and fill out the online form.

WAIVER

Gloucester County Nature Club and/or its leaders, officers, members or representatives shall not be liable for any injuries, loss or damage to person and/or property, direct or consequential, arising out of any trips and/or activities of the Gloucester County Nature Club. The assumption of risk, which is inherent in this type of outdoor activity, is implied on the part of each person who attends any Gloucester County Nature Club trip, and every person participating in any of said trips and/or activities assumes all risk and liability in connection therewith.

Everyone participating in any activity of the Gloucester County Nature Club will be required to read the release of liability, protecting the Gloucester County Nature Club and/or its leaders, officers, members and representatives from liability.

Gloucester County Nature Club and/or its leaders, officers, members and representatives are not in any way responsible for the personal safety of the attendees. When walking along a road, keep to the left, facing oncoming traffic and walk in a single file. When walking along trails, do not follow too closely or move too fast for your safety and for the safety of others (avoid collisions and/or whipped branches). FOLLOW THE LEADER: If you forge ahead, you may find yourself alone. Responsible adults must accompany children under the age of 16. If you expect to drop out of the group early, please inform the leader. Report to one or more of the hikers if you intend to discontinue on the route.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2016-2017

- New Member Renewal
- Paper Membership (\$25) - regular mail
- Electronic Membership (\$20) - newsletter via email; ***please provide email address below

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ ***Email Address: _____

Please note any special knowledge you would be willing to share: _____

Would you be willing to serve on a committee? If so, which committee(s): _____

Are there other ways you could participate? If so, how? _____

Would you like to give a gift membership? If so, indicate Paper ____ or Electronic ____

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

A note will be sent informing them of your gift membership in the GCNC, thank you.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE WAIVER

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please mail completed form with payment to GCNC, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 or bring to a meeting.