



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

November 2007

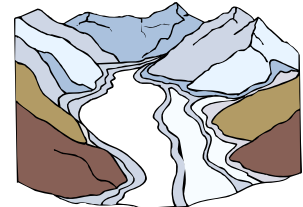
Program - Pine Barrens Wetlands: Geographical Reflections of South Jersey's Ice Age Past

Thursday, November 8th at 7:00 PM at EIRC, Sewell

Presenter: Mark Demitroff

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks

Mark's fascinating presentation on the New Jersey Pine Barrens will weave together historical geology with threads of folklore, archeology, botany and local history. His program chronicles 200,000 years of global climate change, and how regional environmental dynamics relate to local cultural ecology and folkways. Studying man's relationship to unusual landforms called *spungs*, *cripples*, *blue holes*, and *savannahs* provides important insight into our recent past. Water is a central theme. Of particular concern is an apparent fading of local wetlands. This phenomenon is attributed to a regional lowering of the near-surface water table. Critical habitat for specialized plants and animals disappears as the groundwater drops. Better recognition, understanding, and appreciation of the many exceptional South Jersey wetlands can become an effective tool in attempts to preserve our collective heritage from exurban sprawl.



Mark Demitroff is a pinelands geographer and member of the Permafrost Group at the University of Delaware, where he is a fellow and Ph.D. student. Searching local wetlands for clues to the East Coast's cold, dry, and windy past, Mark joined forces with eminent cold-climate specialists in pursuit of old frozen dirt. Mr. Demitroff has published papers that seriously question older interpretations of Pleistocene conditions across the southern reaches of the Garden State. He is also a NJ Certified Tree Expert with a broad knowledge of New Jersey's native trees and shrubs.

Field Trip – Voices from the Land: Art in Natural Landscapes

Saturday, November 3rd, 9:00 AM

Trip Leader: Kris Mollenhauer



Join the Nature Club on a two hour autumn ramble through Ceres Park in Mantua Twp, as small groups rearrange natural materials to make original eco-art. No reservation required. We will assemble at 9:00 AM in the main parking lot of Ceres Park.

Directions: From the intersection of Route 45 (Broad Street) and Cooper Street in Woodbury, go south on Route 45 for 4.2 miles. Turn left (from right hand lane across from the Telford Inn) onto Route 553Alt (Main Street) in Mantua. Go south on Route 553Alt for 3.6 miles. The park entrance will be on the right. There is a small gravel parking area. The park is immediately north of Route 55.

Field Trip – Lichens of the Pine Barrens
Saturday, November 10th, 10:00 AM to mid-afternoon
Trip Leader: Karl Anderson



Here's your chance to learn about some interesting but often overlooked organisms. The New Jersey Pine Barrens provide a good environment for lichens, and we could see thirty or more species. We will of course also take note of other plants and birds, as we walk or drive to a few choice spots.

Directions: Meet at the Brendan Byrne (formerly Lebanon) State Forest office at 10:00 AM. Dress to suit the weather, bring lunch and beverage, and have a hand lens (5x or better) if you have one (the trip leader will have a few extras). From western Gloucester County, probably the best route to the meeting place is via Route 295 north to Route 70. Take Route 70 east for about 22 miles to the intersection with Route 72 at the "Four Mile" traffic circle, then continue on Route 70 east for about one mile. Turn right (south) at the signed entrance road to Brendan Byrne SF, and follow it a short distance to the office. Travel time from Woodbury is about one hour.

By way of preparation for the trip, contact Karl Anderson at karlanderson6@aol.com, or phone 856-845-7075, to get (by mail) a few pages of information about lichens and a list of species seen on previous trips to this location.

Field Trip Report - Franklin Parker Preserve (October 6)

During this trip, Dr. Emile DeVito of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation showed nine members of the GCNC around portions of the NJCF's 9400-acre Franklin Parker Preserve, near Chatsworth. Of particular interest were the steps being taken to create high-diversity Atlantic white cedar swamps on lands that have been a cranberry monoculture for many years; these include bulldozing the "bogs" to restore natural topography and hydrology, before planting trees. Birds seen included belted kingfishers, wood duck, yellow-rumped warbler, merlin, snipe, and a few others. Wildflowers and plants of interest included showy aster, stiff aster, Maryland golden aster, downy goldenrod, golden club, sand myrtle, poison sumac, and sand jointweed, a.k.a. "fairy popcorn", as well as a colony of the rare and beautiful pine barrens gentian. Photos from this trip are available on the GCNC website.

Conservation Corner – Protecting Our National Symbol (from National Wildlife magazine, October/November 2007) – courtesy of Karen Kravchuck



The Bald Eagle's remarkable recovery provides a powerful reminder of how well the Endangered Species Act is working. In declaring last June that our national symbol can now be removed from the list of threatened species protected by the law, the U.S. Department of Interior announced a new strategy from managing the nearly 10,00 breeding pairs of the birds currently ranging in the lower 48 states. The agency also acknowledged the role that NWF activists played in shaping that strategy.

The process began in early 2007, when NWF learned that federal authorities might weaken regulations protecting the eagles once the species is removed from the list. NWF asked its e-Champions, as its member activists are called, to write to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and demand that its eagle rules include an explicit, strong definition of what constitutes "disturbing" the birds. The activists flooded FWS with thousands of emails – so many that Interior officials singled out

the input of NWF members. The result: The new federal regulations provide landowners and others with tough mandates to prevent them from harming the birds.

“The Fish and Wildlife Service listened to public concerns and enacted meaningful measures to safeguard eagles and their habitat for many years to come,” says John Kostyack, NWF’s director of wildlife conservation campaigns. “This demonstrates the power the public can wield in influencing the outcome of critical conservation decisions.

To learn about how you can become an e-Champion, visit <http://www.nwf.org/action>.

While Waiting for High-Tech, Think Low-Tech by Loretta Dunne

Although the reality of global warming is no longer in dispute, there continues to be little legislative actions to control it. The idea that a technological solution will be discovered to save the planet from the dramatic changes that will most likely come with global warming seems to be something that many people are counting on.

Of course, there are some high tech solutions available now, such as more energy efficient appliances and more fuel-efficient cars. We cannot forget that wonderful invention, the programmable thermostat, which allows you to have your heat start fifteen minutes before you get up in the morning and sets the temperature back when you go to work.

But the low tech, simple approaches, such as conserving resources, are not getting the emphasis that they need. How do you conserve? By driving less, insulating your home, and turning down the heat, you can go far to reducing your own impact on global warming.

That is why I urge you to do two things this winter. Take out that warm sweater or fleece vest and wear it in the house so that you can turn down the thermostat one or two degrees. And then, why not get an extra, warm blanket for your bed, so that you can also turn the thermostat lower at night and still feel comfortable?

Think conservation, in the ways that we thought about it during the 1970s gas crisis, when President Carter turned down the heat in the White House and wore a cardigan. This approach will reduce your CO2 emissions and also keep more dollars in your pocket – a wonderful combination.

Old Growth Forests and Northern Spotted Owl Under Attack by Loretta Dunne

The Bureau of Land Management has proposed a plan that would remove protection for 800,000 acres of old growth forests in Oregon and boost logging of trees that are more than 200-years old. The BLM is proposing to eliminate most old growth reserves and open these now-protected areas to logging. This area is a spotted owl stronghold and a key corridor connecting the Coast Range and the Cascades. Please write a letter now to the Bureau of Land Management opposing this plan for our national forest. Comments are being received until December 10th. Refer to the plan by its name, the "Western Oregon Plan Revisions (WOPR)". This is our public land and we must protect it!

Send letters:

Bureau of Land Management, Western Oregon Plan Revisions Office
333 SW 1st. Avenue, Portland, OR 97208

Learn much more at and send email comments at the Oregon Heritage Forests webpage:
http://www.oregonheritageforests.org/old_growth_giveaway

Other Nature Notes

Wild Birds Unlimited offers an everyday 10% discount to GCNC members!

Wild Birds Unlimited has a discount agreement with the GCNC executive board and is pleased to offer GCNC members an everyday 10% discount on all purchases excluding optics and food or sale items. Sharon Oakes, owner of Wild Birds Unlimited, appreciates the many volunteer contributions made by GCNC members and hopes members can benefit from this discount. Members are requested to identify themselves as GCNC members before their sales are finalized. Questions? Please call Sharon at 218-2973.



Reminder – Vote “Yes” for open space on November 6th.

On November 6th, please remember to vote “Yes” on Question # 3 – the Green Acres, Farmland, Blue Acres and Historic Preservation Bond Act of 2007. By authorizing the state to issue \$200 million in general obligation bonds, the Act would provide funds to keep New Jersey’s open space, farmland and historic preservation programs afloat for one more year and to begin a new Blue Acres program to purchase flood prone properties. This is critical to protect wildlife habitat, preserve open space, create urban parks and help to protect New Jersey’s drinking water.

What’s New? Birding for Boaters Brochure

New Jersey Audubon Society has teamed up with partners around the state to provide boaters with an informative brochure to enrich their boating experience by **identifying the 28 most common birds** found in and near NJ coastal waters. This brochure is part of the state’s education outreach effort, and not only includes tips on bird identification, but also provides recommendations for proper boating “dos and don’ts” to minimize disturbance to coastal nesting species. The informative 11 X 17 brochure folds to a pocket-sized 4 ½ X 5 ½ inches, and is printed on water resistant stock.

What’s Included?

- 1. *Bird-friendly Boating Practices*** that can minimize disturbances to nesting species, especially those designated “threatened” or “endangered” while enjoying a day on your boat.
- 2. *Tips on How to Identify a Bird*** provides guidelines on what to look for when watching birds, such as what habitat they are in, what the bird is doing, and unique markings on the bird.

Go to <http://www.njaudubon.org/education/PDF/BIRD4BOATERS.pdf> to download an 8 ½ x 11 PDF copy of the brochure for a complete look at the contents. Limited copies are available at Wild Birds Unlimited in Washington Township.

November Events by other Organizations

- November 3 (Saturday) - Field trip: Birding the Delaware River to the Bay. 8:30 A.M. - 2:00 P.M. Leader: Frank Lenik. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. \$Fee. For info: <http://njudubon.org/centers/rancocas/>
- November 3 (Saturday) - Fall Work Party; Clean up Along Woodbury-Glassboro Road. Sponsored by the Wenonah Environmental Commission. Meet at the Wachovia Bank parking lot at 9:00 A.M. <http://www.wenonahenvironmentalcommission.org>.
- November 10 (Saturday) - Field Trip: Birding the West Deptford Scenic Trail (River Winds Trail). 8:45 A.M. to early afternoon. Leader: Lloyd Shaw. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. \$Fee. For info: <http://njudubon.org/centers/rancocas/>.
- November 17 (Saturday) - Field trip: Bombay Hook NWR. Leader: Barbara Jones. Sponsored by the Burlington County Natural Sciences Club. For info: <http://oldsquaw.tripod.com/>.
- November 17 (Saturday) - Field Trip: John Heinz Refuge. Leader: Bob Duke. Sponsored by the Audubon Wildlife Society. For info: <http://www.audubonwildlifesociety.org>.

The following events take place at the **Scotland Run Nature Center** in Clayton. For details and to register, call the center at 856.881.0845. All events are free.

- **Bird Walk:** Saturday 11/3 at 8am
- **Afternoon Nature Stroll:** Wednesday 11/28 at 2:30 pm
- **Nature Tots:** Wednesday 11/14 at 10am
- **Scout Saturdays:** Saturday 11/17 at 10am
- **4H Kids Nature Club Meeting:** Saturday 11/3 at 10:30 am

Did you miss the Stream Assessment Training sponsored by the South Jersey Land & Water Trust (SJLWT) and still like to get involved? Contact Mike Hogan, SJLWT Habitat Assessment Coordinator at 609.476.2086 or hoganpho@verizon.net to arrange a program overview and field training.

Natural Events for the month of November

- Persimmons ripen - they are delicious when fully soft-ripe, astringent when unripe.
- Witch hazel in bloom.
- Woodchucks and chipmunks go into hibernation.
- Bats seek their hibernating sites in caves and abandoned mines.
- American tree sparrow, sometimes called the "winter chippy", is a regular winter bird feeder visitor.



Looking Ahead:

2007-2008 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the interesting and diverse field trips we have lined up for this year:

- December - Christmas Bird Count
- January 22, 2008 (Tuesday) - Full Moon Hike at Alcyon Park - Kris Mollenhauer
- February 16, 2008 (Saturday) - Long Beach Island - Karl Anderson and Gale Cannon
- March 15, 2008 (Saturday) - Ringing Rocks State Park, PA - Brian and Paula Hayes
- April 12, 2008 (Saturday) - Salem County Birding - Lloyd Shaw
- May 18, 2008 (Sunday) - Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve - Richard Dilks
- June 21, 2008 (Saturday) - Unexpected Refuge - Karl Anderson and Sarah Summerville

Upcoming GCNC Programs (All occur on Thursdays)

Here is the program list for the rest of this year:

- December 13, 2007 – Bald Eagles & Wildlife Conservation (Join meeting with SJL&WT)
 - Presenter: Larry Niles of the Conserve Wildlife Foundation
- January 10, 2008 - Mammals of New Jersey
 - Presenter: Karl Anderson
- February 14, 2008 - Traditional Pot Luck Dinner & Craft Night
- March 13, 2008 - The Sport of Geocaching
 - Presenter: Joe Valentino
- April 10, 2008 - The Birds of Panama
 - Presenter: Jeff Holt
- May 8, 2008 - Horseshoe Crabs
 - Presenter: Sue Ann Slotterback from the Cape May Nature Center
- June 12, 2008 - Annual Picnic

Reminder - Membership Dues



The Gloucester County Nature Club's memberships run from September through August. If you haven't renewed your membership, do so as soon as possible. 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 \$15 for electronic mailings and \$20 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 October Meeting, or send your renewal form and a check payable to "Gloucester County Nature Club" to: Ed Cleary, 1874 McKee Ave., Deptford, NJ 08096.

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 468-6536.
- The November Executive Committee meeting will be held at the home of Karen Kravchuck on November 4. The December Executive Committee meeting will be held at the home of Barry Bengel on December 9. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.
- 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 6 Greenwood Drive, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15th of the preceding month.

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 2007-2008

- New Member Renewal
- Paper Membership(\$20) - regular mail
- Electronic Membership(\$15) - 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 Individual ____ or Family ____

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: _____