



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

November 2015

Program - Spring Wildflowers of the Great Smoky Mountains **(Annual Joint Meeting With The South Jersey Land & Water Trust)**

**Thursday, November 12, 2015 at 7:00pm at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church,
Wenonah, NJ (directions below)**

Presenter: Rich Dilks

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342

We are pleased to welcome the South Jersey Land & Water Trust to our annual joint meeting. We share the SJLWT's goals of working to keep our environment healthy and making sure that natural areas and open space will be an important part of our region's future. We will welcome SJLWT President, Suzanne McCarthy, who will speak briefly on current SJLWT projects.



“Vegetation is to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park what granite domes are to Yosemite, geysers are to Yellowstone and sculptured pinnacles are to Bryce Canyon National Park.”

~Arthur Stupka

25 year park naturalist at GSMNP



The Cherokee called these ancient mountains the “land of a thousand smokes” They have a beauty and a majesty that can be awe inspiring. The scale of their wonders is both vast and panoramic and as diminutive as a delicate woodland wildflower. The Smokies and its peoples have experienced and suffered much. Once a part of the lands of the Cherokee nation, the Smokies saw the Cherokee forced from their homes in the tragic Trail of Tears. These ancient mountains saw the coming of the white settlers in the early nineteenth century, whose traditional mountain culture lingered in these hills well into the 1930's. They saw forests cleared for farming and pasturage, then the coming of the lumber companies who ravaged the forest, creating desolation. And finally in 1934, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, one of America's great parks, was created to preserve the natural diversity and cultural heritage of this unique region of the Southern Appalachians.

The Great Smokies have an amazing diversity of wildlife and plant life. They have been called the salamander capitol of the world with 30 species found in the park. With their topographical features, geology and their mild and wet climate producing a wide variety of habitats, the Smokies are home to over 1,500 species plants, including over 100 species of trees and shrubs, 30 species of orchids and 10

species of trilliums. Every April the forest floor, the meadows, the creek sides and the valleys and hillsides come alive with white fringed phacelia, showy orchis, crested iris, yellow trillium, fire pink and so many more for that brief period between the ending of winter and the leafing out of the forest canopy. Tonight, Rich Dilks will guide us along the late April trails and roadsides of the Great Smoky Mountains to view its flora and to learn something of the natural history and human history of one of America's great places.

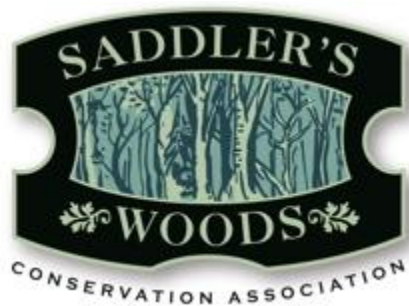
Directions: The Holy Nativity Lutheran Church is located just off Rt 553 (Woodbury-Glassboro Rd.) immediately south of the traffic light at Mantua Ave. The church parking lot can be accessed by entrances on either Woodbury-Glassboro Road or Lenape Trail (first left off of Mantua Ave).

Field Trip – Guided Hike of Saddler's Woods

Sunday, November 22, 2015 at 10: 30 am

Trip Leader: Paula Hayes pnbhayes@gmail.com or cell 609-221-5195 (for day of trip questions)

Join us for a walking tour of Saddler's Woods, a 25 acre urban forest located in Haddon Township that contains old growth forest, young woodlands, meadow areas, and the headwaters of Newton Creek. Saddler's Woods is one of the last remaining old growth forests in the Eastern U.S. with beech and oak trees over 200 years old. This area gives us a glimpse of what the woods would have looked like when the Lenni Lenape inhabited the area prior to European settlement. This land is part of a historic area named for escaped slave Joshua Saddler who escaped a Maryland Plantation by way of the Underground Railroad. He settled on the land which is now preserved. We will tour the woods with a member of the Saddler's Woods Conservation Association; this private non-profit is dedicated to education, research, and to the area's restoration. The group asks for a \$2 donation when touring the woods with a guide, monies raised are used to further their mission. Come hear the history of this special place, how it was preserved, and about the concepts of Old Growth, Edge Effect and Invasive Species.



Address for GPS: 250 MacArthur Blvd., Haddon Township (may come up as Collingswood)

Driver's Directions: From Rt. 295 North take exit 29B to US 30 West (White Horse Pike). Travel 2.4 miles, then turn right onto Cuthbert Blvd. Go about a half mile, then turn right at the first traffic light onto MacArthur Blvd. Continue down MacArthur Boulevard just past the entrance to Westmont Plaza. Saddler's Woods is on your right. Parking is available on the street.

MEETUP: In order to reach members with the most up to date field trip information we are asking everyone who is able to sign up for the Gloucester County Nature Club Meetup site. By accessing the site at www.meetup.com/Gloucester-County-Nature-Club/ or using the QR Code to the right, you will be directed to the site. Once you are signed up on the site you will receive up-to-date information on upcoming trips, meetings, events, and fun walks. If you attend field trips you should consider joining Meetup even if you receive the newsletter electronically.



Mad Hatter's Tree Party Wrap-up

As nearly 250 participants and volunteers already know, the Mad Hatter's Tree Party held on Sunday October 25 was a big success. Despite a light early morning rain, the weather cleared by the 1:00pm start time and remained nearly perfect all afternoon. The trees cooperated too, as the Autumn colors were out in full force.

From chief organizer Erik Mollenhauer: "First... I want to THANK everyone involved in carrying out The Mad Hatter's Tree Party. From every angle, it was a huge success.... would not have been so without the combined efforts and talents of everyone. THANK YOU... and CONGRATULATIONS on an amazing accomplishment. Even though I couldn't be every place, I witnessed many special moments as kids and adults were captivated by your words, your images, your music and most of all your passion".

Everyone on site must have noticed a film crew onsite documenting the event. In the coming months, Ed Waters will edit and produce a short film about the Tree Party. At the same time as that is happening, Erik Mollenhauer will put together printed materials about the event. When combined, we will have a video and print guide that can be given to other communities showing them how to host something similar.

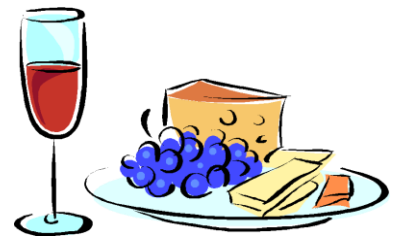
It is not expected that the film or guide will be available until possibly late winter. But when it is nearing completion and a date set for release, a first screening will likely be scheduled for one evening in Wenonah.

If you have any questions or thoughts in the weeks and months ahead, please feel free to contact Erik.

Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: November 2015

- November 6 (Friday), 7:00pm 'til 9:00pm – **Wine and Cheese Tasting**. Live Music. Silent Auction. Sponsored by South Jersey Land & Water Trust. \$20 SJLWT members, \$25 non-members. At Cedarvale Winery, 205 Repaupo Station Rd, Logan Twp. For more details and to purchase tickets see <http://www.sjlandwater.org/> or contact Christine Nolan at (856) 881-2269.



- November 15 (Sunday), 2:00pm – **Walk in the Wild: Twigs**. 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. We will do this on the third Sunday of each month, with a different focus each month. Please check at www.oldpinefarm.org for changes to the schedule and directions. Meet in the parking area at the end of Rankin Avenue in Blackwood Terrace. 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. No reservations necessary -- just show up!

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 11/7 at 8:00am. A beautiful time of year for a leisurely morning walk. Bring your binoculars and discover the many species of birds that call Scotland Run Park home.
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 11/18 at 10:00am
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 11/14 at 10:00am. A great way for scouts to earn their naturalist and forestry badges.
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 11/25 at 2:30pm

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:

Listed below are the programs we have lined up for the rest of this season. Meeting dates are the **second** Thursday of the month.

December 10 2015: **Yellowstone** – Karl Anderson

January 14, 2016: **If You Plant It, They Will Come** - Ron and Linda Kegel

February 11, 2016: **Pot Luck Dinner (6:00pm) & Bag it, a documentary film (7:00pm)** - Interactive member activity

March 10, 2016: **A Journey Through Time and Space: Following the Ancient Song-lines of Ireland** - Erik Mollenhauer & Brian Hayes

April 14, 2016: **A Panama Adventure** - Barbara Bassett

May 12, 2016: **Annual Plant Sale (6:00pm) and Program: The Horseshoe Crab Lab 6:30pm)** - Sue Slotterback, The Wetlands Institute

June 9, 2016: **Thursday, June 9, 2016 Annual Picnic (6:00pm) at Alcyon Park, Pitman, NJ followed by program: Bluebirds** - Allen Jackson, President, New Jersey Bluebird Society

2015-2016 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the field trips we have lined up for the rest of this season. 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.

December 19, 2015 - **Christmas Bird Count** (Ron Kegel)

January - **Winter Birding Trip**

February - **Hike at Palmyra Cove**

March - TBA

April - **Bird Quest Trainings**

May 7, 2016 - **Bird Quest**

June - **Duke Farms**

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 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 sharkeyes@comcast.net or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15th of the preceding month.
- The November Executive Committee meeting will be held on Sunday November 8th at the home of Karen Kravchuck. Please contact Karen for more information.