



# Gloucester County Nature Club

## Monthly Newsletter

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

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

December 2013

### Program: Iron

Thursday, December 12, 2013 at 7:00pm at the Wenonah Community Center, Wenonah, NJ (directions below)

Presenter: Karl Anderson

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342

Iron is the fourth most abundant element of the Earth's crust – after oxygen, silicon, and aluminum. But because iron has a strong affinity for oxygen, iron from terrestrial sources is never found in a free state, i.e., you will never find a “nugget” of iron. Iron melts at 2,800 degrees Fahrenheit, higher than copper or aluminum. Molten iron at that temperature dissolves carbon, and also combines chemically with carbon to form iron carbides, which are extremely hard. Crystals of iron carbide, which exist in a solid solution in the solidified metal; act something like the reinforcing bars in concrete. Pure iron is softer than aluminum, and very ductile. The addition of carbon makes it harder, but at the expense of ductility. Steel is the alloy of iron with up to about 2 percent of carbon. When the carbon content gets much above that level, the iron becomes very hard, but also very brittle. This is cast iron. It can be melted and poured into molds, and it can be machined, but it cannot be bent or rolled into shapes. Iron was first produced from its ores about 3,500 years ago, in the Near East. Its influence on the cultures of the time was profound. New Jersey was a major iron producing area for about a hundred years, starting in the middle of the 18th century. The iron industry set the pattern of settlement of our state, and had effects on the environment that we still see today.



**Directions:** The Wenonah Community Center (historic train station) is located at the RR crossing at the corner of E. Mantua Avenue and N. East Avenue, Wenonah, NJ.

**From the east, north or south,** take Woodbury-Glassboro Rd (Rt. 553), and turn west at the light onto Mantua Avenue. The Community Center is approximately 1/2 of a mile ahead on the right (at the railroad crossing).

**From the west,** take Wenonah Ave. in Mantua east for approximately a mile (becomes Mantua Ave. when you enter Wenonah) to the RR crossing. The Community center is on the left. There are small parking lots near the Community Center along East Ave and West Ave, plus additional parking is available along the surrounding streets.

## **Field Trip – Northwestern Gloucester County Christmas Bird Count** **Saturday, December 14th 2013, 5:00 A.M. if... 'til Sunset**

**Compiler:** Ron Kegel

Please join us for the Gloucester County Christmas Bird Count field trip on the 14th of December. This citizen science mission is orchestrated by the National Audubon Society and has been ongoing for over 110 years, our count over 60! Our count circle is a 15 mile radius split up into 13 sections with delineations being streams, rivers, and roadways. The day starts with some areas looking for owls in the wee hours of the morning, while others may look to see some daylight before commencing. Each area has a leader and said leader generally dictates the start time and progression to peruse the area. You may join an area that is close to you, or one that you would like to bird, or with someone you enjoy birding, or all of the mentioned.



Experience is not needed. The leaders can help you identify or conversely maybe you can teach we leaders something. It is always nice to get out and see some different territories. You may arrange how much time you would like to participate. Most leaders probably appreciate a full day but we all are appreciative of whatever hours you might volunteer. Warm clothes and food are a necessity. As well, a pair of binoculars is always helpful. Each year is different and there is no guarantee you will see the same things. That's what makes this endeavor so much fun, you don't know what to expect and usually there are some surprises.

Feeder watching is an option too perhaps you are unable to join us this day. If you are home and watch your feeders throughout the day, you may tally what you see and turn the results in for addition. The one requirement is to tally the most you have seen of one species at one sitting. If you see 5 House Finches at 9:45 for example, and then 7 at 10:45, only count the highest # being 7. Please contact me if you would like to participate and I will send you a checklist!

The evening of the Count we will be assembling at Kirk and Donna Strohmeier's for a wrap-up of the day. It is an opportunity to compare notes on what everyone saw and to socialize with some goodies to eat (usually by a warm fire). I encourage you to join us despite a rather long day afield. Call for directions if you do not know where the Strohmeier's are located.

Please contact me if you need a group to join or if you have any questions.

Ron Kegel - compiler

1-856-881-9262

## **Family Fun Walk at Chestnut Branch Park, Mantua.**

**Sunday, December 8th, 2013 at 11:00am**

**Trip Leader:** Maria Keefe (cell/text: 609-315-4759 or [mariakeefe19@comcast.net](mailto:mariakeefe19@comcast.net))

Come on out for a walk at Chestnut Branch Park in the cold fresh air. **All ages are welcome.** These walks are for anyone that enjoys seeing the wonder of the natural world through a child's eye. You don't need children to join these walks with active, excitable, and enthusiastic children. Bring a baby in a

backpack, a toddler in tow, grade schoolers, parents, or grandparents along for a walk. We will walk at child's pace stopping to look at anything interesting we find. The walk will last an hour or so. Dress in layers according to the weather. Bring your sense of adventure and join us for a morning outdoors.

**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.

## Nature Notes

### Events by other Organizations: December 2013

- December 15, 2013 (Sunday), 2:00pm – **Walk in the Wild: Holidays in Nature.** 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/](http://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.

**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.

- Nature Tots: Wednesday 12/4 at 10:00am
- Bird Walk: Saturday 12/7 at 8:00am. Bring binoculars and discover the many species of birds that call Scotland Run Park home.
- 4H Kids Nature Club: Saturday 12/7 at 10:30am
- Trim A Tree for Wildlife: Saturday, 12/7 at 10:30am. A fun, family event. Make an edible ornament for wildlife and decorate the trees around the nature center. A great way for kids to learn it's better to give than receive by sharing with your furred and feathered friends. Every family will get to take an ornament home, so you can start this tradition in your own yard!
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 12/11 at 2:30pm
- Evergreen Wreath Making Thursday, 12/12 at 7:00pm Enjoy a relaxing evening at the Nature Center. Bring a wire coat hanger, ribbon, pruners, wire and fresh cut evergreens. If you don't have these materials, there will be plenty to share. For ages 12 and older.
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 12/14 at 10:00am. Spend a Saturday morning with family and friends, and help your Scouts fulfill some of their outdoor requirements. Scout Saturdays are once a month.



## **Natural Events for the month of December**

- Geminid meteor shower - December 13.
- Shortest day of the year is December 22.
- Bald eagles arrive from the north and winter in New Jersey.
- Raptor migration ends mid-month.
- Great horned owls are pairing up this month – listen for their calls
- Watch for late waterfowl migrants – shovelers, mergansers and goldeneyes.
- Take part in a local Christmas Count.

## **Looking Ahead:**

Listed below are the programs and field trips we have lined up for the rest of the season. Current schedule is subject to change. Meeting dates are the **second** Thursday of the month.

## **2013-2014 GCNC Programs**

January 9, 2014: **John Steinbeck, Ed Ricketts and California's Central Coast: A Tale of Symbiotic Friendship and Love of the Natural World** - Erik Mollenhauer & Brian Hayes

February 13, 2014: **Pot Luck Dinner** (Program TBD)

March 13, 2014: **Splendors of the Sierra Nevadas: Hiking the John Muir Trail** - Kris Mollenhauer

April 10, 2014: **Birding Adventure in Costa Rica** - Marilyn Henry

May 8, 2014: **Spiders** - Eugene Fuzy

June 13, 2014: **Annual Picnic** - Location TBD

## **2013-2014 GCNC Field Trips**

January 11, 2014: **Birding Rancocas with Lloyd Shaw**

February 15 2014: **Scotland Run Moonlit Hike and Campfire**

March: TBD

April: **Bird Quest Trainings** including a junior birder training

May 3, 2014: **Bird Quest**

June: TBD

## **Club Notes:**

- If you'd like to receive the newsletter electronically or receive more info about the club please email Karen Kravchuck at [president@gcnatureclub.org](mailto: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](mailto:newsletter@gcnatureclub.org) or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.
- The December Executive Committee meeting will be held on December 8<sup>th</sup> at the home of Karen Kravchuck Dann. Please contact Karen for more information.
- **Join Our Meetup Group!** The Gloucester County Nature Club is now using the online tool, Meetup.com to advertise our field trips. We strongly encourage you to give it a try. By signing up you will be able to see up to minute information related to field trips (weather, changes or cancellations if needed), communicate with the leaders and others going on trips of interest. Simply sign up with an email address to join the group and you will be informed of upcoming trips and Nature Club events. It's a great way to be reminded of the trips you didn't want to forget and meet new members! Check out the link and sign up!! <http://www.meetup.com/Gloucester-County-Nature-Club/>