



# Gloucester County Nature Club

## Monthly Newsletter

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

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

March 2010

### **Program – Gaviotas: A Village To Reinvent The World**

**Thursday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Wenonah, NJ** (directions below)

**Presenter: Hollister Knowlton**

**Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks (856) 468-6342**

Gaviotas is an ecovillage in the llanos (tropical grasslands) of Columbia. It was founded in 1971 by Paolo Lugari who assembled a group of engineers and scientists in an attempt to create a mode of sustainable living in one of the least hospitable political and geographical climates in South America.

Gaviotas has since become a model for development in the third and fourth worlds. The twin goals of Gaviotas are to create a sustainable economy that meets the needs of people while not merely preserving the natural environment but actually restoring ecological health and biodiversity. The Gaviotas village is noted for the planting of over 1.5 million trees. Among the inventions that Gaviotas has produced are a children's see saw that drives a water pump and a distinctive 'sunflower design windmill is well-suited to the plains in Colombia. Our speaker this evening is Ms Hollister Knowlton, who has traveled to Gaviotas and has lectured extensively on what she has seen there. Ms. Knowlton is clerk of the Quaker Earthcare Witness of The Americas and a member of the Policy Committee of the Friends Committee On National Legislation. The book, Gaviotas: A Village To Reinvent The World by Alan Weisman is a good source of information for those who wish to read more on the subject of Gaviotas.



### **How big is our carbon footprint tonight?**

As a consciousness raising exercise, Hollister Knowlton has suggested that we calculate the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that we produce and put into the atmosphere by the simple act of coming together tonight. So when you enter the building a club member will ask you how many miles round trip you will drive tonight coming to and returning home from this meeting. Then using a standard MPG average and total miles driven, we will calculate the poundage of CO<sub>2</sub> generated collectively by us this evening (Note:one gallon of gas creates about 20 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>). The club has then agreed to make a carbon offset donation to Gaviotas based on the Gaviotas standard of \$7.00 per ton.

**Directions:** The Holy Nativity Lutheran Church is located just off Rte 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 – Manasquan Reservoir**  
**Saturday March 20<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 AM to Mid-afternoon**  
**Trip Leader: Jonathan Weir**

Manasquan Reservoir should produce a good variety of waterfowl, plus birds like brown creeper, osprey, golden-crowned kinglet, and others. Meet at the Environmental Center, where there are clean restrooms, nature exhibits, video camera on a nesting bald eagle, and a bird sightings log. All of the paths are hard packed and wide. There are picnic benches. Bring lunch, beverage, binoculars, and spotting scope if you have one.

This trip could be canceled for bad weather, and rescheduled for March 27; if things look doubtful, please contact leader Jonathan Weir at 732-292-1715 the evening before the trip, or before 7:30 AM on the morning of March 20.

**Directions:** Take I-295 or the NJ Turnpike to Interstate 195 east. Proceed on I-195 east to Exit 28B, Rt. 9 north-Freehold. Stay in right lane when entering Rt. 9 north. At first traffic light, turn right onto Georgia Tavern Road. Follow Georgia Tavern Road for 0.3 mile. Continue straight for Environmental Center on right. Distance from Woodbury is about 65 miles. For additional information about the Environmental Center go to <http://www.monmouthcountyparks.com/page.asp?agency=133&Id=2627>

**Family Fun Walk**  
**Friday, March 19, 2010 at 10:00AM at Timber Creek Park, Gloucester Township**  
**Trip Leader: Maria Keefe (856) 627-7010 Email: [walkingwith4boyz@comcast.net](mailto:walkingwith4boyz@comcast.net)**

Join us for a walk on the last day of winter on Friday, March 19, 2010 at 10:00AM at the Timber Creek Park, Gloucester Township. **\*\*Note that there are two parks with the same name, see the directions\*\*** We will walk at a toddler's pace exploring as we go. Dress in layers according to the weather. Bring your own backpack and/or a stroller that can be pushed on unpaved paths. All ages welcome.

**Directions:** Entrance to park is on Chews Landing Road, Gloucester Township. From the Deptford Mall head south on Almonesson Road toward Deptford Center Road. Turn left at Deptford Center Road. Turn left at Hurffville Rd/ Rt 41 (signs for Runnemede/Haddonfield/State Hwy 41N). Continue to follow Hurffville Road. Continue on Clements Bridge Road. Slight right at W Evesham Rd. Turn right at South Black Horse Pike/Rt 168. Turn left at Chews Landing Road.

**The East Coast Vulture Festival 2010 Is Coming**  
**Saturday March 6, 2010**  
**Wenonah, NJ**

**Featuring programs from:**

- *The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia*
- *One Heart Drumming Group*
- *Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge*



The 200 Black and Turkey Vultures are in their winter roost. The time is approaching for us to come together for the fifth year of this annual celebration and homage to these amazing birds, sponsored by the Gloucester County Nature Club and the Wenonah Environmental Commission. This year the festival is proud again to partner with **The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia** and to bring you

programs from **Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge** and **One Heart** drumming group presenting American Indian songs and stories. It will be an afternoon and evening of fun, education, wildlife encounters, music, dance, good company and a great time for all.

**Vulture Day Children's Fair** will again be held at the Wenonah Community Center (the historic railroad station) 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M. This family oriented event will transform the Community Center into a "children's vulturefest" with hands-on vulture arts & crafts, games, educational and vulture art displays, and guided walks to observe the vultures and their roost. The **Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge** will be present with a special not-to-be-missed exhibit, hosted by Refuge naturalists that will include live birds and reptiles. This event is FREE and open to the public.

**The East Coast Vulture Festival 2010 Evening Roost** will be held at Wenonah School from 6:30 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. with the formal program starting promptly at 7:00 P.M. The highlights of this year's festival will begin with the special program *Animals With Bad Reputations* presented by **The Academy of Natural Sciences** and featuring live animals including a skunk, snake and alligator and very possibly a live Turkey Vulture. Come see and learn about these fascinating animals and why their bad reputations are so undeserved. The program will also feature a performance by **One Heart** drumming group of traditional American Indian songs, dances and stories. The evening will also include a return live performance by singer/songwriter, Jim Six, a comic vulture skit and the awarding of the 2010 VEE Grants. Fruit, coffee and elegant desserts were served. Tickets are ordered in advance. The price is \$18 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under.

**For more information on the festival, go to our web site at [www.EastCoastVulturefestival.org](http://www.EastCoastVulturefestival.org).**

Proceeds from the festival go to support environmental education through the festival's VEE (Vulturefest Environmental Education) Grant Program.

### **Conservation Corner – Yard Cleanup for Spring: Keep Wildlife in Mind** by Jayne Rhynard

Hopefully we will all see our yards again one day soon! With all our recent snow, you may have noticed how birds (and other critters like squirrels and moles) have been much more dependent on what we humans put out for them to eat. And you may have also noticed as the snow has receded and patches of ground began showing again how animals flocked to those patches of earth, especially areas which have leaf litter. Leaf litter restores essential organic materials to soil, it also is a source of food and provides hiding places and homes for many species. Beetles, millipedes, centipedes, spiders and both larvae and adult forms of butterflies and moths (including lovely Luna moths) exist in leaf litter. Then birds like Towhees and Fox Sparrows do athletic kicks with both feet to clear the leaf litter to uncover them as food. Blue Jays hunt for acorns hidden in it. As you clean up for Spring consider leaving some leaf litter around your yard, especially under borders or under shrubs.

With our harsh winter this year there are many branches that have fallen either under the weight of our snow(s) or with the winds that have accompanied the storms. Providing a brush pile in a corner of your yard is something simple you can do to help reuse and repurpose. Using trimmed or fallen tree limbs of different sizes to build a brush pile provides animals shelter from the elements as well as predators. Nature uses just about every part of a dead tree. Invertebrates, mosses, lichens & fungi use bark; bare limbs serve as perches and look-outs; moisture-rich dead wood helps ensure that the next generation of trees or forest will grow. Bluebirds, Woodpeckers, Wood Ducks, Chickadees, and Flying Squirrels all use cavities in dead trees as places to nest and rear their young. Removal of dead materials from the ecosystem can result in habitat loss for almost 1/5 of animals. Where they pose no danger and it's reasonable, consider keeping dead trees or limbs for a richer ecosystem.

## Other Nature Notes

### **For the Club's Canoeing Fans: Some Suggested Reading**

Here are two books that may be of great interest to those who like to canoe. According to Jane Daniels, they are fun to read, and very different.

- **"Tecate Journal"** by Keith Bowden (along the El Paso River on the border)
- **"Two Coots in a Canoe"** by David Morine, four hundred miles along the Connecticut River

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

Wild Birds Unlimited offers an everyday 10% discount (for non bird food items) to GCNC members! *Due to the current volatile market for bird food, the 10% discount for these items has had to be discontinued.* However, members will still receive credit for their purchases towards the Frequent Seed Shopper Program. WBU offers the GCNC discount on all other items in the store. Members are requested to identify themselves as GNNC members before their sales are finalized. Questions? Please contact Sharon at 218-2973 or [sillybird348@comcast.net](mailto:sillybird348@comcast.net).



### **Events by other Organizations: March 2010**

- March 6 (Saturday) – **Insects in Winter Family Hike.** 9:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M. \$Fee. Sponsored by the Palmyra Cove Nature Park. For info: <http://palmyracove.org/>.
- March 13 (Saturday) – **Winter Waterfowl in Salem County.** 9:00 AM – Mid-afternoon. Leader: Jean Gutsmuth. Sponsored by the Audubon Wildlife Society. For info: <http://www.audubonwildlifesociety.org/>.
- March 20 (Saturday) – **Beginning Birding for Adults.** 9:00 AM – Noon. \$Fee. Sponsored by the Palmyra Cove Nature Park. For info: <http://palmyracove.org/> or phone 856-829-1900 x 267.
- March 20 (Saturday) – **Salem County Early Migrants.** 8:45 AM – Mid-afternoon. Leader: Lloyd Shaw. \$Fee. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. For info: phone 609-261-2495.

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 Walks: Saturdays, 3/6 and 4/10 at 8:00 AM; Tuesday, 5/11 at 6:00 PM
- Afternoon Nature Strolls: Wednesdays 3/17, 4/21 and 5/19 at 2:30 PM
- Nature Tots: Wednesdays 3/10, 4/14 and 5/12 at 10:00 AM
- Family Nature Adventure: Saturday 3/20 at 10:00 AM. "Could it be Spring?" walk
- Aquatic Project Wild Workshop: Friday, 3/19 from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Scout Saturday: Saturdays 4/17 and 5/8 at 10:00 AM
- Canoeing/Kayaking: Saturday 5/15 at 1:00 AM
- Wonders Of Wetlands (WOW) Workshop: Friday, 5/21 from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Gloucester County Water Fest; Sunday 6/6 from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM

## Natural Events for the month of March

- Woodchucks emerge from hibernation.
- Male skunks wander widely, searching for mates.
- Red maples flower in late March, with male and female flowers on separate trees.
- Roadside "weeds" such as speedwell, wintercress, hairy bittercress, purple dead-nettle, and storksbill bloom before most native wildflowers.
- Eastern screech owls, New Jersey's most common owl, lay eggs beginning in March and continue through May.
- Woodcocks begin courtship flights.
- Male goldfinches begin to molt into their brilliant yellow breeding plumage.
- Eastern Phoebes return this month.



## Looking Ahead:

### Upcoming GCNC Programs

April 8, 2010: **Hawks of Southern New Jersey** – Don Freiday, NJ Audubon Society

May 13, 2010: **Hummingbird Gardening** – Ward Dasey

June 10, 2010: **Annual Picnic** (location TBD) and **Awakening Spirits: The Art of Tracking** – Bill Marple, Instructor, Tom Brown Tracker School

### 2009-2010 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the field trips we have lined up for the rest of the year. Changes and additions are not impossible. If you would be able and willing to lead a field trip, please contact Karl Anderson at [karlanderson6@aol.com](mailto:karlanderson6@aol.com) or (856) 845-7075.

April 17 (Saturday): **Bike the Glassboro Woods Trail** – Brian and Paula Hayes

May 9 (Sunday): **Wildflowers at Ridley Creek State Park** – Richard Dilks

## 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](mailto:blackbirdsinging@hotmail.com) or call 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](mailto:sharkeyes@comcast.net) or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.
- The March Executive Committee meeting will be held on March 7<sup>th</sup> at the home of Bonnie Dann. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.

## Bird Quest Registration

Be sure to include your name, address, phone # and T-shirt size on the form. Mail the form with a check (\$12 per person) payable to *Gloucester County Nature Club* to: GC Nature Club, P.O. Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080. Questions? Contact Brian Hayes at (856) 582-7000 x110 daytime, (856) 468-9272 evenings and weekends or [pnbhayes@comcast.net](mailto:pnbhayes@comcast.net). Entries must be received by April 23, for t-shirts to be guaranteed.

Name of Team (ex: Heritage Hummingbirds) \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Team Leader (contact person) \_\_\_\_\_ T-shirt size \_\_\_\_\_  
Leader's mailing address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Leader's phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Leaders email  
address \_\_\_\_\_  
Person #2 (name) \_\_\_\_\_ T-shirt size \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Person #3 \_\_\_\_\_ T-shirt size \_\_\_\_\_  
Person #4 \_\_\_\_\_ T-shirt size \_\_\_\_\_  
Person #5 \_\_\_\_\_ T-shirt size \_\_\_\_\_

Our team will be participating on the Walks \_\_\_\_\_ or on the Bus \_\_\_\_\_ or as a Team \_\_\_\_\_

Attach extra sheet with additional names and T-shirt sizes.

**Bus Space is limited:** first come first served. You must reserve a seat in advance. Bus leaves at 7 am from Atkinson Park.

**Fill in here for additional items:** Additional T-shirts: Qty \_\_\_\_\_ (\$12.95 each)  
Birds of Gloucester County Flash Cards \_\_\_\_\_ (\$4.00/set)  
Natural Places of Gloucester Co. NJ book \_\_\_\_\_ (\$12.00 each)