



# Gloucester County Nature Club

## Monthly Newsletter

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

Nature Club meetings are open to the public  
May 2004

**Program—Rails to Trails & Plant Sale - Thurs, May 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM at EIRC, Sewell**

**Program Coordinator- Bob Cassel 478-2496**



Since 1986, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) has been enriching America's communities and countryside by helping to create and preserve a nationwide network of public trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors. RTC has over 100,000 members. There are now 1,193 rail-trails in the US, for a total of 12,648 miles. The PA-NJ-DE-NY region alone has 201 open trails totaling 1,800 miles and 188 projects totaling 1,900 miles. Many are not far from Gloucester County. One trail in Pine Creek Gorge PA is known by some as one of the most scenic bike paths anywhere. Headquartered in Washington, DC, Rails-to-Trails has field offices in CA, FL, MA, MI, OH and PA. Currently the Northeast Regional Director, Tom

Sexton, our program presenter, has been with RTC since 1991.

He has an extensive background in greenway development, recreation and environmental action. For more information about RTC: [www.railtrails.org](http://www.railtrails.org)  
Better yet, come to the May meeting!



Our annual plant sale will be held just before the start of our May meeting at EIRC. **The sale will start at 6:30** and the proceeds will benefit the nature club and its programs. Arrive early to shop for some wonderful new specimens for your garden. Much of what is offered at the sale comes from our own gardens. As you make your way to your flower beds now that spring has finally arrived, keep an eye out for those perennials that need dividing, "volunteers" in not quite the right spots, seeds, trees and shrubs, too. Whatever you can share, bring it with you and be part of the plant sale. Questions? Call Karen at 468-6536.



### **Field Trip - Bird Quest - Saturday May 1 from 7:00 am - Noon**

The 2004 Gloucester County Bird Quest will take place on Saturday May 1 from 7 AM to 12 NOON in Gloucester County. During this time, people will visit parks and natural sites in Gloucester County to find as many bird species as they can. The purpose of the Bird Quest is to draw attention to the remaining natural areas of Gloucester County, to learn how to identify birds by sight and sound, and to have fun with friends, colleagues and family. The Quest is an educational event; novices are encouraged to participate. At 12 noon, all participants gather at

Atkinson Memorial Park on Delsea Drive to report results and for a free lunch, t-shirts, and prizes.

This year's Quest is being supported by many local environmental commissions, businesses, and industries. Participants are encouraged to form teams of friends and family or join one of the buses (see below).

With cosponsor support, two buses will be provided for individuals to ride on, at no cost. The buses will stop at selected sites to look for birds. Last year's bus riders were treated to some wonderful looks at birds and we expect the same to happen again.

**We expect the buses to fill this year so please register early to guarantee a seat.** Last year's Quest attracted close to 300 participants, including teachers, school groups, scout troops, environmental commissions, families and residents of Gloucester and neighboring counties.

A county map and other materials are provided to each registered team. There is a \$10 registration fee per participant. To obtain more information, a team registration form, to join a team or ride a bus, contact Anne Rossell at 856-582-7000 x110, fax 856-582-4206 or email at [anner@eirc.org](mailto:anner@eirc.org). Forms are also available at the Nature Club's website: [www.gcnatureclub.org](http://www.gcnatureclub.org). Deadline for registration is **April 28**. The club, through the help of many members, has set up an extensive training schedule for the weeks prior to Bird Quest. There are still a few remaining trainings before Bird Quest.

### **Field Trip - Wildflowers at Sourland Mountain Preserve with Karl Anderson** **Saturday May 15, 10:00 – Mid-afternoon**

Sourland Mountain Preserve is located in Hillsborough Township, Somerset County, NJ. It sits within a 273 acre area of Central New Jersey's Sourland Mountain range and is composed of a deciduous forest with a swamp surrounded by two streams. We should see a good array of spring flowers that are not usually found in our area of South Jersey. This area was once valued by commercial industries for its large boulders composed of gray diabase or "trap rock," which was used to produce railroad ballast, concrete aggregate, and surfacing for road beds. Evidence from quarrying can still be found embedded along the fissures of some boulders as a testimony to the park's past activities. Be prepared for walking on trails that are rocky and may also be wet. Bring a lunch and a beverage, field guides, and binoculars (we won't ignore any interesting birds).

**Directions:** Take I-295 north (around Trenton) to Route 206 North (Exit 7B). Follow Route 206 north for about 17 miles to Route 514 (Amwell Rd) in Hillsborough; turn left (west) on Route 514 and go about 3 miles to East Mountain Road. Turn Left (south) on East Mountain Road. Parking area will be on the left, about 2 miles south. Travel time from Woodbury should be about 1 ¾ hours.

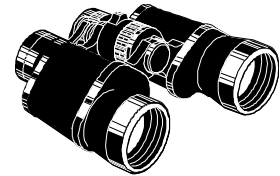
**The World Series of Birding**  
**May 15, 2004 – The 21<sup>st</sup> World Series of Birding**



Once again the Gloucester County Nature Club will sponsor a team to compete in the prestigious New Jersey Audubon Societies World Series of Birding. As they did last year, the “Ruffs” will again compete in the Limited Geographic Area competition. We will be pitting our knowledge of Gloucester Counties varied habitats against other New Jersey County teams, in attempt to find as many different species of birds within a single County, in 24 hours. In last year’s inaugural outing, the Ruffs

identified 123 species, earning a tie for 5<sup>th</sup> place out of 20 teams. As you read this, the 2004 edition of the team (Gale Cannon, Dr. Richard Ebert, Bob Baruzzi and Jeff Holt) have been putting in countless hours scouting for the avian riches to be found in throughout Gloucester County with the goal of improving on last years success.

While the World Series is a fun, exciting and exhausting competition, it serves a more important purpose - to raise money for important conservation endeavors. Just as we hope to identify more then 123 bird species, so to is our goal of surpassing last years fund raising efforts. This year we will be raising money to support the South Jersey Land Trust, and you can HELP! Pledge a \$1.00, \$.50, \$.25 or whatever you can afford for each bird we find. Alternatively, pledge a flat amount. Coerce family, friends, colleagues and co-workers to pledge. Your pledges will serve to protect our vanishing wilderness and as further incentive for the Ruffs to forego sleep as we search for that one last elusive species. Use the pledge form below to make your pledge and support the team!




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**Gloucester County Ruffs – World Series of Birding Pledge Form**

Name	Address	Phone	Pledge amount (Choose one)	
			Per bird	Lump

Please send your pledge(s) to Marge Dolente, 59B S. Evergreen Ave., Woodbury, NJ 08096. The results of our competitive efforts and your pledges will be posted on the website and in the next newsletter.

## **Proposed LNG Terminal in Logan Township**

In the mid 1970's, three citizens groups in Gloucester County, with the help of the New Jersey Public Advocate's Office, successfully opposed the building of not one but two liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminals along the Delaware River before the Federal Power Commission. One facility was slated for Raccoon Island, Logan Township while the other was to be built in West Deptford at the present Riverwinds site near Woodbury Creek. The state attorney generals in Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York also called for a moratorium before the FPC about building such facilities in populated areas. In rejecting the West Deptford site, FPC staff concluded if a LNG tanker accident happened, the public could be endangered by an LNG pool fire on the water or a vapor cloud coming ashore, and the most likely LNG accident would be between Wilmington and Bridgeport resulting in a pool fire. (The Raccoon Island site was abandoned by Transco when it failed to secure supplies of LNG from overseas.)

Now, some 30 years later, BP is proposing another LNG import terminal near the mouth of Oldmans Creek in Logan Township (the Crown Landing project) which would require dredging the Delaware River for docks and see the arrival of 100 ships a year carrying the hazardous super cold (-260° F) cargo every three days. BP is saying the facility and tankers will pose no threat to public safety, but a January 2004 report to Congress concluded, "*LNG imports pose significant safety challenges. LNG is inherently hazardous and its infrastructure is potentially attractive to terrorists. The recent LNG terminal fire in Algeria demonstrates that, despite technological improvements since the 1940s, LNG facilities can still experience serious accidents.*"

To find out more about the hazards and dangers of LNG, go to Tim Riley's website at [www.timrileylaw.com](http://www.timrileylaw.com). Tim is leading the fight against proposed LNG Terminals in California.

As always, please contact your local elected officials at the State, County, and Municipal level and let them know your feelings on this potentially disastrous project.

*James Cromley*

## **Disposing VX in the Delaware River**

The U.S. Army has been working for years to develop a safe and efficient disposal plan for VX nerve gas that was created during the Cold War, when chemical weapons seemed like a legitimate form of defense. But a current proposal to destroy 1,200 tons of VX and ship the byproduct to South Jersey for further treatment still has many unanswered questions. Most of all: Will this be safe for people and the environment?

Those questions must be settled if the Army has any hope of swaying increasingly skeptical government officials in New Jersey and Delaware.

The current proposal would have the VX chemically destroyed at the military site where it is stored – the Newport Chemical Depot in Newport, Indiana. Left behind would be about two million gallons of a watery residue called hydrolysate. The caustic but nonlethal hydrolysate would then be trucked about 630 miles to DuPont’s Secure Environmental Treatment facility in Deepwater, N.J., near the Delaware Memorial Bridge. It would take trucks two years to complete the shipments.

After the hydrolysate went through further treatment at DuPont, a liquid the Army says is harmless would be dumped into the Delaware River. “Mother Nature would do the final treatment – diluting the liquid still more as it headed out to the ocean.”

Public hearings have been held. Both New Jersey Gov. Jim McGreevey and Delaware Gov. Ruth Ann Minner plus Senator John Corzine and Rep. Rob Andrews have opposed the plan. DuPont has announced that it will not accept the contract with the Army until the Center for Disease Control and Prevention can establish there is not genuine risk to the millions of humans who recreate in, and draw their drinking water from, the Delaware River. This process of treating VX has never been done before and is like a big experiment. We need to push for an *independent science body* to assess whether this plan would threaten fish and other aquatic life.

While Gloucester County may be upstream of DuPont, the river is tidal and flows this way, besides we are all connected with Delaware Bay and the ocean. Every spring we can celebrate the Shad that return from the sea and travel up the Delaware to spawn. They have done this for thousands of years and we need to assure their future passage. Stay informed about this issue and write to your representatives. WE ALL LIVE DOWNSTREAM.

*Kris Mollenhauer*

### **Looking Ahead:**

#### Programs-

June 10th-Picnic at Washington Lake Park 6:00 PM

September 9<sup>th</sup>- A Journey through the Looking Glass with Kevin Karlson

#### Field Trips-

### **June Field Trip – Brightview Farm, Saturday June 12, 8:30 AM to Noon**

Meet at Timberline Shopping Center on Woodbury Glassboro Rd in Sewell. We will carpool north for an hour to the Fort Dix area to search the hay meadows for Bobolinks, Dickcissels, Meadowlarks and Bluebirds. The Bobolink is not your typical backyard bird. This black bird has a yellow head and white back that looks like a dandelion gone to seed. It has the most unusual call - it sounds like the whistles and beeps of the little robot R2D2 in the movie Star Wars. This call is often given in flight. Check out this website for further description: [www.delawarevalleybirding.com/place007.htm](http://www.delawarevalleybirding.com/place007.htm).

Trip Leader: Bob Duke

Co-leader: Kris Mollenhauer

**Directions to Brightview Farm:**

From Route 295 North exit onto Route 38 East. Continue for about 8 miles and then turn left onto Route 206 North. From the intersection of Route 206 and 537 (Monmouth Road) proceed east on 537, through Jobstown and straight across Route 68 (traffic light) to Route 545 (Wrightstown-Georgetown Road). Turn left onto 545 and look for the signed lane (Brightview Farm) about a half-mile on the right.

Turn into the lane; a large beautiful restored farmhouse will be on your left and a horse barn on your right. Proceed straight-ahead with woods on your right and pasture on your left. There is usually a sign in book at the first gravel intersection in a box on the fence. Please sign in and report sightings.

**Club Notes:**

As summer approaches we are still looking for members to help out at community events. If you are interested in volunteering for a few hours please call one of our Community Events Coordinators - Jackie Partridge 848-4852, Bonnie Dann 845-4650, or Elaine Dzeima 227-0839