



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

January 2008

Program – Mammals and Mammal Skulls of New Jersey

Thursday, January 11th at 7:00 PM at EIRC, Sewell

Presenter: Karl Anderson

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks



New Jersey has at least 48 species of terrestrial mammals (not including man) but this is in general an overlooked and unstudied group of organisms. Few mammalogists elect to pursue their calling in New Jersey! Most of our mammals are small, many are nocturnal, almost all of them are smart enough to keep away from people, and thus even some rather common species are rarely seen in the wild. But they do leave traces of their presence, including skeletal materials, which can be picked up in the woods and fields or found in owl pellets. This slide program will introduce some of these local mammals, match them with photographs of their skulls, and point out what to look for when faced with an unknown specimen. Karl spent a few years picking up and processing roadkills, so a few real skulls from his collection will be on display. And if you have any unidentified skulls lying around the house by all means bring them in and we'll see if we can put a name to them!

Field Trip – Moonlit Walk at Alcyon Park

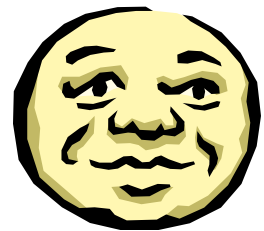
Tuesday January 22nd, 7:00 PM at Alcyon Park, Pitman

Trip Leader: Kris Mollenhauer

Co-leader: Erik Mollenhauer

On Tuesday January 22nd at 7 PM we will welcome the first full moon of the New Year with a moonlit walk at Alcyon Park in Pitman. Bundle up for a short hike around the park. Why is it so hard to keep track of the rising and setting of the moon? Is it the lady in the moon, the man in the moon or the rabbit in the moon? Children and adults will get some facts and some fiction about our old friend, Luna. We'll also take a look at some constellations in the winter sky.

This is a weather-related event and is entirely dependent on a clear sky. So if it is cloudy, we will try again on Wednesday, January 23th at 7PM. The park is located off Holly Ave., on the west side of Alcyon Lake. Drive through the gates and park on the upper level near the playground.



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.



December Events by other Organizations

- January 12 (Saturday) - Field trip: Birding the North Shore. Leader: Cliff Jones. Sponsored by the Burlington County Natural Sciences Club. For info: <http://oldsquaw.tripod.com/>.
- January 19 (Saturday) - Field trip: Trenton Marsh (Overwintering Birds). Leader: John Maret. For info: <http://www.audubonwildlifesociety.org/>.
- January 26 (Saturday) - Field trip: Salem County Winter Raptors. Noon to 6:00 P.M. Leader: Sandra Keller. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. \$Fee. For info: <http://njudubon.org/centers/rancocas/>.

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 Walks: Saturdays 1/5 and 2/2 at 8 A.M.
- Afternoon Nature Strolls: Wednesdays 1/16 and 2/20 at 2:30 P.M.
- Nature Tots: Wednesdays 1/9 and 2/13 at 10 A.M.
- Scout Saturdays: Saturdays 1/12 and 2/9 at 10 A.M.
- 4H Kids Nature Club Meeting: Saturdays 1/5 and 2/2 at 10:30 A.M.
- Cabin Fever Walk and Craft: Saturday 1/26 at 10 A.M.

Natural Events for the month of January

- Earthworms burrow below frost line and become dormant.
- Newly fallen snow makes it easy to find and study animal tracks.
- First mating season for gray squirrels.
- Look for flocks of robins eating holly berries in your backyard.
- Great horned owls, America's earliest nesting owl, may be on eggs by the end of the month.
- As days lengthen, tufted titmice and cardinals start singing.

Looking Ahead:

2007-2008 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the upcoming field trips for the remainder of this year:

- 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:

- 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

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 February Executive Committee meeting will be held at the home of Karl Anderson on February 10. 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.