



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

January 2013

Program - Orion the Hunter

Thursday, January 10, 2013 at 7:00 PM at the Wenonah Community Center,
Wenonah, NJ (directions below)

Presenter: Erik Mollenhauer

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342



In ancient Greece, the greatest hunter of all was Orion. A slayer of fierce animals and monsters, Orion was a giant of a man and the hero of excess. The best-known winter constellation, he was cloaked in various forms and names: Lord of All Creatures... Light of the Sky... Gilgamesh... Osirus... Siktut the Seal Hunters... The Dancing Young Men.

In fact and legend, Orion's reach extends beyond this Earth to the darkest core of human imagination and to the outer limits of our galaxy. For the hunt... is a fact of nature... not just a human pursuit. The whole world is a hunt. Each of us... all living things... hunt.

And the careers of men follow the creatures they pursue.

Join us as we explore Orion and hunting... in culture and endeavor... imagination and story.

"I walked away from our campfire one night to go to the camp of the Bushmen... Halfway between I saw against the star-sheen the figure of something. It was a woman, holding a child up to the stars and saying something. I whispered to my interpreter: 'What's going on?' He said to me, 'Well, that woman, she's asking the stars to take away from this child the heart of a child and give him the heart of a star.' 'Why the heart of a star?' I asked. 'Because the stars are great hunters and she wants her little boy to have the heart of a hunter.'"

- Laurens Van der Post, Patterns of Renewal

He who fights monsters should see to it that in the process, he does not become a monster. And when you look into the abyss, the abyss looks into you.

- Nietzsche

Myths are only stories, and stories are only lies, and lies are all we have. - Michael Chabon

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 – Winter Waterfowling along the Delaware River

Saturday January 19, 2013 Starts 10:00 AM

Trip Leader: Sandra Keller

Our trip this month will be a joint Audubon Wildlife Society – Gloucester County Nature Club venture. We will meet at 10:00 AM at the upper parking lot for the Red Bank Battlefield in the town of National Park, Gloucester County. This is the lot on your right as you drive toward the river. We will be birding several local Delaware River spots in the region. I will be scouting the week before to determine which spots will have the most waterfowl for us. The trip won't go in bad weather – if in doubt, please call Sandra Keller a day or two before the trip, at 856-383-2756. Bring many layers of clothing as the temperature close to the river can be a lot cooler than just half a mile inland! Participants can bring a lunch, but there will be opportunities during the day to buy something. There will also be restroom opportunities.



Family Moonlit Hike

Sunday, January 27, 2012 at 6:30 PM

Trip Leaders: Paula Hayes (cell: 609-221-5195 or pnbhayes@gmail.com) and Maria Keefe (cell/text: 609-315-4759 or mariakeefe19@comcast.net)

Join us as we experience the magic of walking in the woods by the light of the moon. We explore the music of the night as our eyes give way to our other senses and we share the night with owls, raccoons, and flying squirrels. Come out and see tree silhouettes, moon shadows and the stillness of the woods in winter. The walk is short but will include uneven and sloping wooded trails so sturdy walking shoes are recommended. The walk will last about one hour which will give us time for some stories as well. This event will be cancelled in the event of rain. To really enjoy the splendor of the night keep your flashlights off and in your pocket. This event is open to all ages.

Directions: From Lambs Road in Pitman, at Carolina Blue turn onto Pitman Rd. (route 624) towards Barnsboro. The parking lot is **one mile** from the intersection of Lambs Road and Pitman Road, go past the Pitman Golf Course Parking Lot and club house. The lot is on the right in a wooded area just before Jefferson Road.

The Northwestern Gloucester County Christmas Bird Count - conducted on December 15, 2012

Thanks to all who participated in the Christmas Bird count on Saturday the 15th! With a couple of areas yet to report, we had in the neighborhood of 60 participants (maybe a few more!). Likewise the species count for the birds sits at 91! There were some excellent sightings. Many saw Snow Geese, Bald Eagles, Nuthatches, Robins, and Red-tailed Hawks. The big 'finds' were Dunlin (found in a flock mixed with Killdeer and a 'fly-over' small, flock (8) of Sandhill Cranes!

I'll provide a complete summation of the Count in the February newsletter. Thanks again to the Strohmeier's for opening up their house that evening for the 'wrap-up"! **Ron Kegel, compiler**

****Quick side note:** January 1st is a great time to start a 'Bird Year List'. It can be as simple as a yard list or on a bigger scale such as a Gloucester County list. Of course some go bigger than this and do a 'Big Year' and go national. Whatever you might have in mind, it is fun! I've been keeping a yard list for 18 years and it is interesting to see the changes. This year at this date, 12/21/12, we are sitting on 99 species, our highest total. We are hoping we might hit the century mark but we need that one more! #99 came when my wife and 3 year old grandson saw an enormous flock of Snow Geese overhead while outside. The grandson turned to my wife and said "Hey A'ma did you see that bird parade?" Nothing more needs to be said.

Conservation Corner – 7 New Year's Resolutions for Energy Conservation (courtesy of Spark Energy)

A lot of people make New Year's resolutions every year. You've probably made some yourself over the years, like saving money or getting in shape. If you're looking to save money this year, there are some energy efficiency resolutions you can make that can put money back in your pocket right away.

These resolutions don't require you make big, expensive home improvements. Instead, they mostly require that you simply change your behavior. In fact, The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy estimates that simple behavioral changes can account for up to 15 percent of all energy savings.

Here are seven New Year's energy efficiency resolutions that, unlike some other New Year's resolutions, are actually easy to keep.

1. **Turn off lights when you leave the room.** If you have incandescent light bulbs, you should turn them off to conserve energy whenever they're not needed. If you have compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs), you should turn them off if you're leaving a room for more than 15 minutes. The way CFLs work, it's more cost effective to leave the lights on if you'll return to the room within 15 minutes.
2. **Upgrade to energy-efficient lighting.** Incandescent light bulbs are cheap, but only 10 percent of the energy they use actually produces light. The remaining 90 percent produces only heat. When your incandescent bulbs burn out, replace them with either energy saving incandescent bulbs, CFLs, or light-emitting diodes (LEDs). Compared with incandescent bulbs, energy saving incandescent bulbs are about 25 percent more energy efficient and last three times as long, CFLs are about 75 percent more efficient and last 10 times longer, and LEDs are about 80 percent more efficient and last 25 times longer.
3. **Install a programmable thermostat.** You can save as much as 10 percent a year on heating and cooling costs by turning your thermostat back 10 degrees for eight hours a day. And the easiest way to do that is to install a programmable thermostat. Once you install your programmable thermostat, or if you already have one, set your temperature to be 10 degrees cooler in the winter or 10 degrees warmer in the summer when you're away at work. Set your temperature to return to where you want it right before you return home. For best results, set your at home/away temperatures to 68/78 degrees in the summer and 68/58 in the winter.

4. **Use ceiling fans.** Ceiling fans help circulate the air in a room and can help you stay cooler or warmer for pennies on the dollar compared with running your air conditioner or furnace. In the summer, run ceiling fans counter clockwise to force air down and cool you with a wind chill effect that can make the room feel 4 degrees cooler and save you 14 percent off of air conditioning costs over a cooling season. In the winter, run ceiling fans clockwise to force air up, which moves warm air at the ceiling down the walls and back to the floor where it does a better job of warming you.
5. **Turn off your computer and monitor when not in use.** Personal computers, especially desktops, can use a lot of electricity if they're left on when not in use. Contrary to what you may think, a PC will reach the end of its "useful" life due to advances in technology long before frequent start ups and power downs affect their service life. Get in the habit of turning your computer and monitor off whenever you're not using it. In case you forget, make sure to set your PC's energy saving mode to put the monitor to sleep after 5 minutes of inactivity and your computer to sleep after 15 minutes.
6. **Use power strips to slay energy vampires.** Most home electronics and appliances continue to use electricity even when in "standby" mode or when you think they're off. After all, anything with a clock — like a DVR for recording your favorite shows or a coffee maker for brewing a pot of Joe when you wake up — or an infrared receiver for receiving "on" signals from a remote control, needs continuous power to operate. To help slay the energy vampires that continuously feed on electricity, hook up all of the devices you can (minus maybe your DVR and coffee maker) to power strips that you can use to switch off your devices completely when you're not using them.
7. **Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes.** About 60 percent of the energy used by a dishwasher and 70 percent to 90 percent of the energy used in a clothes washer goes towards heating the water. To save money, make sure to only wash full loads of dishes and clothes (most people tend to underload their machines, which wastes energy and money). If you have an energy-efficient dishwasher or clothes washer, make sure to set the appropriate load size if you have to wash less than a full load.

Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: January 2013

- January 20 (Sunday), 2:00 PM – **Walk in the Wild: How do plants and animals survive the Winter?** 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/ 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.

- Bird Walks: Saturday 1/5 and 2/2 at 8:00 AM
- 4H Kids Nature Club: Saturday 1/5 and 2/2 at 10:30 AM
- Volunteer Meeting: Friday 2/1 at 9:00 AM
- Nature Explorers: Saturday 2/9 at 10:00 AM
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 1/16 and 2/13 at 10:00 AM
- Project Learning Tree Educator Workshop Friday 1/11 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 2/23 at 10:00 AM
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 1/23 and 2/20 at 2:30 PM

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:

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

February 14, 2013: **Valentine's Day Pot Luck Dinner & program Worship-worthy Chocolate** – Marie Hageman

March 14, 2013: **Pollinators: The Amazing Insects Among Us** – Susan E. Ellis

April 11, 2013: **Birding South Carolina** – Jeff Mollenhauer

May 9, 2013: **The Fossils at Inversand and the KT Boundary Mass Extinction** - Dr. Kenneth Lacovara, Drexel University

June 13, 2013: **Annual Picnic** (Location to be determined)

2012-2013 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the field trips we have lined up for the season. Changes and additions are not impossible. If you would be able and willing to lead an additional field trip, please contact Karl Anderson at karlanderson6@aol.com or (856) 845-7075.

February – **To be determined.**

March 23 (Saturday) – **Birding the Delaware Bayshore.** Leader: Joe Esterly

April 27 – **Birding at Long Bridge Park.** Leader: Bob Duke.

April (Dates to be determined) – **Bird Quest Training Sessions**

May 4 – **Bird Quest**

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 January Executive Committee meeting will be held on January 6th at the home of Jayne Rhynard. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.