



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

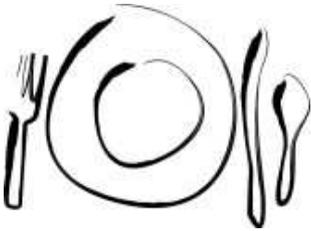
February 2012

**Traditional Pot Luck Dinner at 6:00 PM followed at 7:00 PM by program:
My Favorite Book About Nature**

**Thursday February 9, 2012 at 6:00 PM at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church,
Wenonah, NJ**

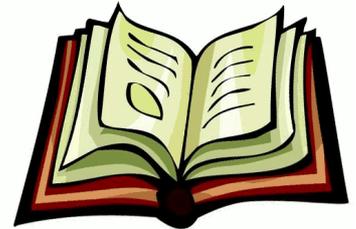
Presenter: Club Members

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



This month we will again be gathering for one of the nature club's most popular traditions, our February Pot Luck Dinner. Join us on this winter night for an evening of warmth and congeniality with friends and fellow club members, and share the good food, good conversation and good company. Please bring either an entrée or dessert and a plate and utensils for yourself. Also please note the dinner begins at 6:00 P.M.

My Favorite Book About Nature. We all have one. Maybe some of us have dozens. But we all have a special book that has connected us to the natural world, a book that speaks directly to us and has moved us or inspired us see and experience nature in a way we hadn't before. Maybe it was a book we read in childhood or a book we just finished the other day. Maybe it was an illustrated children's book, or perhaps a book of poetry, scientific discovery, natural history or a wonderful story that ever after resides in memory and imagination. This evening you are invited to bring that book you love and share it with fellow club members in an informal and friendly setting. Find out what wonderful books you fellow members have been reading and very likely you will end up adding some great titles to your own reading list for these long winter nights.



Directions: The Holy Nativity Lutheran Church is located just off Rt 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 – Wheelabrator Waste to Energy Facility, Westville

Saturday February 18, 2012 Starts 10:00 AM

Leaders: Jayne Rhynard, Joe Achey

The Conservation Committee is pleased to sponsor this month's indoor "field" trip. We invite you to join us for a specially guided tour of the Wheelabrator plant to see firsthand how our municipal waste is converted into electricity powering 15,000 Gloucester County homes. We will meet at 10:00 AM in the reception area at the front of the building and you may park in the lot closer to the plant inside the gates. We will learn about non-ferrous metals processing, electric power production and air quality control. In addition, we can hear about the Eastern Bobwhite project and weather permitting, walk the 150 acre Wildlife at Work site, the first of its kind in the United States.

Kid's Corner - Build a Miniature Winter Race Track* by Deb Maka

The snow has fallen and you've already built a snowman. What can you do outside now? Try building a winter race track.

How to Build the Track

- Find an area of snow that has been piled up. Snow that is frozen hard works the best.
- Use a metal spoon to carve parallel tracks in the snow.
- Try to make your track in the snow at a slight angle down toward the finish line.
- Use gloved fingers to smooth out your track.

How to Use your Race Track

- Gather items that you want to race. (rubber balls, acorns, toy cars, rocks, etc)
- You can have multiple tracks and race items against your friends or brothers/sisters.
- If you are playing alone, You can have multiple tracks and race items against your friends or brothers/sisters.
- After each race, each person can make changes to their track trying to create the fastest course.
- If you are playing alone, you can still race items yourself. If you want, you can use a stopwatch to time each race. Then you can try to get a faster time with each race.

* Adapted from: National Wildlife Federation; Fun Winter Outdoor Activities for Families – To Beat Cabin Fever (<http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/National-Wildlife/Outdoors/Archives/2010/Winter-Activities>)

Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: February 2012

- February 4 (Saturday) – 9:00-11:00 AM. **Animal Signs Family Hike.** Sponsored by the Palmyra Cove Nature Park. \$Fee. Reservations required. For information phone 856-825-1900 x 270.
- February 11 (Saturday) – 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM. **Cumberland County Eagle Festival.** Family programs, exhibits, speakers, and guided walks. Mauricetown Fire Hall, Mauricetown NJ. \$Fee. For information: www.co.cumberland.nj.us/
- February 11 (Saturday) – 6:30 PM (after the Eagle Festival). **Chili Bowl and Auction fundraiser.** Mauricetown Fire Hall, Mauricetown NJ. Sponsored by the Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River. \$Fee. For information: www.coumauriceriver.org/

- February 17 - 20 (Friday - Monday). **Great Backyard Bird Count.** Count birds in your backyard or other locations, submit highest daily species totals. Organized by the Cornell Lab. Of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. For information: <http://www.birdcount.org/>
- February 19 (Sunday), 2:00 PM, **Walk in the Wild.** 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. For more information call Carl Ford at 856-579-4441. We will do this on the third Sunday of each month, with a different focus each month.
- February 26 (Sunday) – 10:30 AM-Mid-afternoon. **Salem County Winter Birding.** Leader: Sandra Keller. \$Fee. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. For information 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 Walk: Saturday 2/4 at 8:00 AM
- 4H Kid's Nature Club: Saturday 2/4 at 10:30 AM
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 2/8 at 10:00 AM
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 2/11 at 10:00 AM
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 2/15 at 2:30 PM
- Winter Wonders Family Walk: Saturday 2/25 at 10:00 AM.

Natural Events for the month of February

- Skunk cabbage flowers are emerging from the ground, in wetlands throughout the County. As they grow they generate heat, which melts the frozen ground around them.
- Alder catkins are swelling and will open on the first warm days.
- Melting snow may reveal the trackways of meadow voles, dug along the interface between the frozen ground and snow cover.
- Broom crowberry in bloom in the Pinelands.
- Mourning cloak butterflies emerge from hibernation on warm days.
- Killdeer and great blue herons return from the south as waterways thaw and snow cover melts.
- Chipmunks reappear around bird feeders.
- Best time for viewing tundra swans at Whitesbog and other Pinelands ponds.

Looking Ahead:

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

March 8, 2012: **Dragonflies** - Mary Lenahan

April 12, 2012: **Birding Trails of Florida** - Joe Baur

May 10, 2012: **Rare Plants of Southern New Jersey** - Renee Brecht

June 14, 2012: **Annual Picnic** (Location to be determined)

2012 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the field trips we have lined up for the rest of the year. 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.

Saturday March 24, 2012: **Birding the Delaware Bayshore**

Drive some of the roads along the bay in Cumberland County, looking for waterfowl and raptors including bald eagle, northern harrier, and short-eared owl. Leader: Joseph Esterly.

Sunday April 22, 2012: **Wildflowers Along the Wenonah Trail**

An easy walk to see some of the early spring wildflowers along the trail. Leader: Richard Dilks.

Saturday May 5, 2012: **Gloucester County Bird Quest**

Form a team, join a group, or go on your own to visit natural places in Gloucester County to identify as many birds as you can between 7:00 AM and Noon. Pre-registration is required.

Saturday June 9, 2012: **Kayaking and Birding**

At a local park. With luck we might see bald eagle, osprey, beaver, and possibly river otter. Leader: Jay Hoffecker.

Club Notes:

- Check out our **NEW FACEBOOK PAGE:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gcnatureclub/>. Note: You will need to have a Facebook membership, and new group members will need to be added by the administrator. Join today and share your nature information!
- 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 February Executive Committee meeting will be held on February 5th at the home of Karen Kravchuck. Please contact Karen for more information.