



Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public.

February 2019

Annual GCNC Pot Luck Dinner

After Dinner Activity: Tell Us About Your Favorite Place.

6:00pm Pot Luck Dinner

Thursday, February 14, 2019 at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church,
Wenonah, NJ (directions below)

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342



Please note the dinner begins at 6:00 pm and the evening activities at approximately 7: 00pm.

This February 14th we gather, as we have for many years past, for our traditional annual winter Pot Luck Dinner. It is always a highlight of the year and a great opportunity to gather together with fellow club members and share a wonderful meal on a cold winter's night in the warmth of good company. As always, please bring either an entrée or dessert and a plate and utensils for yourself.

"I believe that each person has a favorite place, a tree, a mountain, or a beach which they want to come back to, even if the return can only take place in the boundaries of their imagination."

— Sana Szewczyk,

Share Some Thoughts on Your Favorite Place.

We all have places to which we are connected. They are a part of who we are. Indeed, perhaps they, in some fundamental way, made us who we are. Tonight we're inviting members to share their thoughts about natural places that are special to them, whether it is a place from childhood or a place that you visit frequently, a grand vista at a national, park or that little patch of woods at the end of your street.



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 – Hike the Black Run Preserve

Sunday, February 10, 2019 at 11:00am

Trip Leaders: Maria Keefe and Paula Hayes 609-221-5195 (cell)

Note: This trip occurs 4 days before the monthly meeting

We will be visiting Evesham's Gem, Black Run Preserve. This green space is almost 1,000 acres and is open for hiking, biking, bird watching and other passive recreation. The hike will be approximately 2-3 miles of easy walking along pristine Pine Barrens wetlands, bogs, and some uplands. We will explore stands of Atlantic White Cedar in the wetlands and see members of the Heath Family of plants (huckleberry, blueberry, mountain laurel, sheep's laurel, etc). The still pristine Black Run Preserve watershed (covering over one thousand acres) is an island of native Pine Barrens plants and animals surrounded by suburbia and only fifteen miles from Philadelphia.

Directions: From I-295 north, exit at route 73 and head south 5-6 miles to Braddock Mill Road. Braddock Mill Road is south of The Promenade. You will pass The Promenade and then a Target store, at the next light turn left onto Braddock Mill Rd (it's called Kresson Rd. to the right), there is TD Bank on the corner. Go about ½ mile and make the first right as you pass a pond also on your right. Then make a quick left. You will still be on Braddock Mill Rd. Continue to the stop sign at Kettle Run Road. Turn right and travel 50 feet beyond the stop sign, then turn left at the large white "open space" sign into a parking area.

Bird Walks - New Recurring Event!

The Scotland Run Park Nature Center and the Gloucester County Nature Club will be hosting bird walks year-round on the **first and third Thursday of every month at 7:30am**. This month, walks will be on **February 7 and February 21**. Come and explore the nature trails as we look for all different species of feathered friends that the park has to offer. This event is open to all ages and families are encouraged to attend together. Bird walks will NOT take place during snow or rain.

Events by other Organizations: February 2019.

- February 2 (Saturday) – **2019 Cumberland County Winter Eagle Festival.** 8:00am – 4:00pm at Mauricetown Firehall 9544 Noble Street, Mauricetown, NJ. \$10.00 Adults, \$5.00 Children (12 and under)
 - **At the Firehall:** Speakers and presentations, Non-profit and commercial exhibitors, Local fare refreshments & lunch available, Live raptors exhibited by Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge. Hands-on art activities by Clay College.
 - **Along the Delaware Bay:** Five staffed viewing sites with scopes & birdwatching experts, Bayshore Center at Bivalve walks, food & activities, Morning & evening owl watches, Guided trail walks, East Point Lighthouse, Leechester Hall
- February 9 (Saturday) – **Tall Pines Winter Botany Walk.** 10:00am – 12:00pm at Tall Pines State Preserve, 1705 Glassboro Rd, Sewell, NJ 08080. Take a winter walk through Tall Pines with Michel Hogan of the South Jersey Land and Water Trust and learn how to identify plants in the winter! Without their greenery, many plants can be difficult to name, but in this walk you'll learn how to identify trees and shrubs even without their leaves. You'll also learn how to identify invasives and work to remove them from the property so native species can grow! So grab your coat and gloves, and wander through the winter woodland with us! Please bring your own loppers or pruners. Please RSVP: Contact Michael Hogan at hoganphoto@verizon.net or 609-476-2086 to RSVP and/or if you have any questions.
- February 15 - 18 (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://gbbc.birdcount.org>



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..

Conservation Corner by Suzan Delozier

Have you called your NJ legislators regarding Senate Bill 3086 and Assembly Bill 4460? Please see last month's newsletter (January 2019) for information on these two very important bills which regulate the sales, use and propagation of non-native plants in NJ. Then take a few minutes to call your state legislators and ask them to co-sponsor *their respective bill*. *Note: Assemblywoman Patricia Egan Jones of District 5 has signed on as a co-sponsor of A4460 – call and thank her.*

NATIVE PLANTS AND YOUR GARDEN

START PREPARING FOR YOUR ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY 2019 GARDEN BY SELECTING ONLY NATIVE PLANTS. Remember, native plants provide the nectar, berries, and nourishment needed by our birds and butterflies. Here are two websites that provide the names of nurseries that sell native plants in our area. Several of these nurseries (Clemenson Farms Native Nursery and Goshen Gardens, for example) have plant lists that will help you identify native plants.

- <http://www.patsuttonwildlifegarden.com/category/native-plants/> - This page is part of Pat Sutton's website that provides a wealth of information on all things wild.
- http://www.npsnj.org/plant_lists/Nurseries%20with%20Natives.pdf - A list provided by the Native Plant Society of New Jersey.

For more info on native plants try these websites.

- <https://xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/plant-lists/pollinator-plants-mid-atlantic-region/>
- https://www.audubon.org/native-plants?ms=digital-eng-email-ea-x-20190101_first-bird_medium&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20190101_first-bird&utm_content=medium - This National Audubon site is primarily concerned with native plants for birds but also provides info on butterfly and caterpillar plants.
- <https://www.prairienursery.com/> - website of Prairie Nursery Native Plants and Seeds.
- www.prairiemoon.com – website of Prairie Moon Nursery Native Seeds and Plants

THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT – WHAT IS IT AND WHY DOES IT EXIST?

While going through some old *Bird Watcher's Digests*, I came across an article in the 2016 July/August issue on the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) passed in 1916 and signed by the US and Canada and later by Japan, Mexico and Russia. The act states that it is unlawful to "pursue, hunt, take, capture, kill, possess, sell, purchase, barter, export, import, or transport any migratory bird, or any part, nest, or egg of any such bird, unless authorized under a permit issued by the Secretary of Interior". Violators face fines up to \$2000 and up to 2 years in prison. For the purposes of the act, the word 'migratory' means any bird that migrates from place to place (thus, all birds). The act recognizes 3 divisions of birds. First, 170 species of migratory game birds, sixty species of which are currently hunted for no more than 3.5 months a year and never during breeding season. Outside of hunting season these birds are fully protected. Second, migratory non-game birds are protected year round and include songbirds and the majority of other North American birds. Third, non-native birds such as the European Starling and house sparrow are not protected.

When Europeans arrived in North America there was such an abundance of wildlife that it was believed that birds were a bottomless economic commodity. John James Audubon reported in 1813 that a flock of passenger pigeons passed overhead for 3 days. It was not uncommon for a flock of the gregarious pigeon to be 300 miles long and a mile wide. An estimated 5 billion passenger pigeons existed on our continent, the largest population of any single bird species ever. Pigeon meat became the staple of the poor and slaves and was also shipped overseas. Market hunters decimated entire flocks at nesting sites by gunshot, felling trees, netting and poisoning with sulfur smoke. In 1857, a group of conservationists in Ohio tried to protect the bird but the state denied the effort claiming the pigeons were "wonderfully prolific". By 1914, the passenger pigeon was extinct.

But the extinction of the passenger pigeon wasn't enough to bring change. The Carolina parakeet, which fed on fruit, was systematically hunted to extinction by gun by 1920 because it was considered an agricultural nuisance. Particularly sad was the fact that parakeets would hover over wounded companions making themselves easy targets. In the 1870's, with the affluence of the industrial revolution, well-to-do women wore hats decorated with stuffed birds (warblers, woodpeckers, sparrows, bluebirds) and feathers from larger birds (egrets and herons). Between 1886 and 1900 more than 5 million birds were killed for fashion a year with Florida losing 95% of its water birds to the plume trade. Finally the Lacey Act of 1900 forbade the transporting of poached birds across state lines. In 1901 Theodore Roosevelt declared Florida's Pelican Island the first national wildlife refuge. After the murders of 3 wildlife wardens in Florida and the near extinction of the snowy egret, the selling of plumes was banned in 1910. This all led to the much more formidable Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

The Trump administration is attempting to weaken the MBTA. Until now, if someone caused harm to protected birds they were held liable. Trump is attempting to change the intent of the law by saying that someone is only responsible if they *intended* to harm birds. See the October 2018 newsletter for more information.

Looking Ahead:

Listed below are the remaining programs we have lined up for the remainder of the 2018-2019 season. Meeting dates are the **second** Thursday of the month.

2019 Programs

March 14, 2019: **National Hiking Trail of England and Wales** - Kris & Erik Mollenhauer

April 11, 2019: **How to Plan a Birding Trip to Colorado**.- Jeff Mollenhauer

May 9, 2019. **Annual Plant Sale** followed by program **Butterflies of New Jersey** - Steve Glynn.

June 13, 2019: **GCNC Annual Picnic** at Alcyon Park, Pitman, NJ followed by **A Guided Walk through Alcyon Woods**

2019 Field Trips

Listed below are the remaining field trips we have lined up for the 2018 – 2019 season. Changes and additions are not impossible. If you would be able and willing to lead an additional field trip, please contact Paula Hayes at pnbhayes@gmail.com.

March 16, 2019 - **Drum Circle at Scotland Run Park**

April 2019 - **Bird Quest Trainings**

May 4, 2019 - **Bird Quest**

June 21, 2019 - **Hike at Mantua Fossil Park**

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 609-617-6693 (cell).
- 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 Sunday February 10th at the home of Karen Kravchuck. Please contact Karen for more information.

GCNC 70th Anniversary Trivia

As mentioned at our January meeting, the Nature Club was started in 1949, so we're celebrating our 70th anniversary this year. Just for fun, below are some other notable 70-year anniversaries:

Jan - First Volkswagen Beetle (The Peoples Car) sold in USA

Jan 5 - US President Harry Truman labels his administration the "Fair Deal"

Jan 10 - First 45 rpm vinyl records are introduced

Jan 25 - 1st Israeli election won by David Ben-Gurion's Mapai party

Apr 4 - North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) treaty signed in Washington, D.C.

May 2 - Arthur Miller wins Pulitzer Prize for "Death of a Salesman"

May 23 - Federal Republic of [West] Germany created out of the American, British and French occupation zones

Jun 8 - George Orwell's book Nineteen Eighty-Four is published.

Jun 29 - South Africa begins implementing apartheid; no mixed marriages

Jul 29 - Moscow ends the blockade of West Berlin

Aug 3 - National Basketball Association (NBA) founded after Basketball Association of America (BAA) merges with National Basketball League (NBL)

Sep 21 - Chinese Communist leaders proclaim People's Republic of China

Oct 10 - RCA introduces a system for broadcasting color television

Nov 2 - Netherlands recognizes Indonesia as a sovereign state

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Shopping at Amazon can also benefit the Gloucester County Nature Club at **NO extra cost** to you!

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