



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

March 2013



Program - The Little Things That Run The World

**Thursday, March 14, 2013 at 7:00 PM at the Wenonah Community Center,
Wenonah, NJ (directions below)**

Presenter: Susan Ellis

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342

When you have seen one ant, one bird, one tree, you have not seen them all.

~E. O. Wilson

When Harvard biologist E.O. Wilson opened the invertebrate exhibit at the National Zoo, he spoke on behalf of "The Little Things that Run the World," urging the conservation of the estimated 990,000 species of tiny, ancient invertebrates that we depend on to till our soil, renew our earth, and pollinate our plants. Dr. Wilson's words can hardly be improved, and so it is the title of this presentation, focusing on pollinators. For, in fact, the little animals that pollinate plants do far more than provide us with beautiful flowers, they feed the world. In this presentation you'll be introduced not just to invertebrates, but to other tiny animals -- such as birds, bats, lizards and slugs -- that also perform the critical job of pollination. Recently, pollinators have received a great deal of attention because of the dwindling populations of honey bees. The loss of these "domesticated" pollinators is of great concern, but nearly all pollinators are experiencing alarming population declines. Many people are unaware of the extent to which we depend on insects, especially bees, for much of what we find on our dinner tables. Find out who some of these little creatures are, what they do, what is happening to them, and why they are so important -- plus discover a few simple things that you can do to help right away!

As a lifelong bug-hugger, Susan Ellis shares her love for tiny wildlife through photography. She specializes in portraits of insects, capturing their remarkable shapes and colors as well as their gestures and expressions. She hopes her work will engage viewers' awe, compassion, appreciation, and sense of relatedness to these very common, important, yet often unobserved or unappreciated little animals. Susan earned her M.Sc. in biology (behavioral ecology) from York University, Canada, with original field research in South Africa on the foraging ecology of insect eating bats. There she found that she was most fascinated by the insects the bats were eating! Though not an entomologist, she is interested in the ways people have regarded insects throughout history, in art, literature and culture, and how people develop different attitudes towards insects. In real life she's a biological equipment specialist for the USDA, working with microscopes and digital imaging equipment, and is a member of the continuing education faculty at Delaware College of Art and Design, teaching close-up photography. She is also a novice beekeeper.

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 – Birding the Delaware Bayshore
Saturday March 23, 2013, 9:00 AM to Mid-afternoon
Trip Leader: Joseph Esterly**

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. Meet for car-pooling at 9:00 AM at the main parking lot of Scotland Run Park, off Academy Street in Clayton. Dress to suit the weather, bring lunch and beverage, and have fuel in your car if you plan to drive during the trip. For additional information, phone trip leader Joseph Esterly at 856-629-7626.



**Family Fun Walk
Sunday, March 10, 2013 at 11:00 AM**

Trip Leader: Maria Keefe (cell/text: 609-315-4759 or mariakeefe19@comcast.net)

Come on out for a walk at Chestnut Branch Park in the cold fresh air. All ages are welcome. These walks are for anyone that enjoys seeing the wonder of the natural world through a child's eye. You don't need children to join these walks with active, excitable, and enthusiastic children... Bring a baby in a backpack, a toddler in tow, grade schoolers, parents, or grandparents along for a walk. We will walk at child's pace stopping to look at anything interesting we find. The walk will last an hour or so. Dress in layers according to the weather. Bring your sense of adventure and join us for a morning outdoors.

Directions: From the intersection of Rt 45 (Broad Street) and Cooper Street in Woodbury, go south on Rt 45 for 4.2 miles. Turn left (from right hand lane) onto Rt 553Alt (Main Street) in Mantua. Go south on Rt 553Alt for 1.6 miles. The park entrance will be on the left. There is a large paved parking area. Meet at the wildflower garden.

Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: March 2013

- March 17 (Sunday), 2:00 PM – **Walk in the Wild: Spring Ephemerals: Wildflowers and Others.** 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.
- March 23 (Saturday) 9:00 11:00 AM - **Mad Horse Creek WMA Walk.** Sponsored by Salem County Nature Club. Meet at LAC Mun Bldg in Hancock's Bridge. We'll drive to the WMA, then park for what should be a good walk in interesting habitat. Suggest boots, could be wet.

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.

- Volunteer Meetings: Fridays 3/1, 4/5, and 5/3 (Workshop) at 9:00 AM
- Bird Walks: Saturdays 3/2 and 4/6 at 8:00 AM; Tuesday 5/14 at 6:00 PM
- Nature Tots: Wednesdays 3/13, 4/10, and 5/8 at 10:00 AM
- Scout Saturday: Saturdays 3/16, 4/13, and 5/11 at 10:00 AM
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesdays 3/20, 4/17 and 5/22 at 2:30 PM
- Nature Explorers: Saturday 3/23 at 10:00 AM
- Wild Workshop: Friday 5/3, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Stream Watch Workshops: Friday, 3/22 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM and 5/10 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM
- Canoeing / Kayaking: Saturday 5/18 at 11:00 AM.



Natural Events for the month of March

- Woodchucks emerge from hibernation.
- Male skunks wander widely, searching for mates.
- Red maples flower in late March, with male and female flowers on separate trees.
- Roadside "weeds" such as speedwell, wintercress, hairy bittercress, purple dead-nettle, and storksbill bloom before most native wildflowers.
- Eastern screech owls, New Jersey's most common owl, lay eggs beginning in March and continue through May.
- Woodcocks begin courtship flights.
- Male goldfinches begin to molt into their brilliant yellow breeding plumage.
- Eastern Phoebes return this month..

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.

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.

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

April (Dates listed below) – **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.

2013 Gloucester County Bird Quest: Saturday May 4, 2013

The Gloucester County Nature Club and co-sponsors invite people of all ages to participate in the **2013 (14th annual) Gloucester County Bird Quest. This year Bird Quest will take place on Sat. May 4, 2013 from 7 AM to 12 noon throughout Gloucester County.**

***We are pleased to return to Scotland Run Park (Wilson Lake) in Clayton for our picnic and gathering. We hope to reach new families and continue to excite our legacy participants with a wonderful setting for our picnic. Scotland Run Park is located at 980 West Academy St., Clayton, NJ 08312 (directions below).**

See the registration form on the last page of the newsletter.

During this time, teams visit parks and natural sites in Gloucester County to find as many different bird species as they can. The Quest is:

- A way to discover Gloucester County's parks and natural areas
- A way to discover the unique birds that live in and through our county
- An opportunity to learn how to identify birds by sight, sound, behavior, and habitat
- An opportunity to have fun with family, friends, and colleagues
- A light-hearted competition

The Quest is an educational event: novices are encouraged to participate.

How it works: Teams have 5 hours on Saturday (7am to noon) to visit sites in Gloucester County. Birds are identified by sight or sound. The goal is to find as many different species of birds as possible. At noon, all participants gather at **Scotland Run Park in Clayton** to report results and for **(free) lunch, t-shirts, and prizes.**

You can participate in one of the following ways:

- Form a team, plan your route (locations you will visit) for the day of the event and record all the bird species you see within Gloucester County. Hand in your results at Scotland Run by 12:30pm to be eligible for prizes.
- Join one of the buses lead by a bird expert. These buses will visit a few locations in the County where bird experts will help you to identify the many bird species. The buses will meet back at Scotland Run Park at 12:30pm.
- Join one of three guided walks, each lasting between an hour and an hour and a half, in various natural places in Gloucester County lead by a bird expert who will help you identify the bird species present. These walks will be paced and placed so you can participate in all of the walks or just one or two while you spend the rest of the time birding on your own. Hand in your results at Scotland Run Park at 12:30pm to be eligible for prizes.
 - **7:00-8:30: Maple Ridge:** From the intersection of Rt 553 (Woodbury-Glassboro Rd) and Mantua Ave in Wenonah (and Holy Nativity Lutheran Church), travel .75 mile south on Rt 553 to the intersection with Bark Bridge Rd. Turn right into the parking lot at that intersection – it should be open. We have permission from the landowner to be there -- please do not park at Hutchinson Cabinets.
 - **9:00-10:30: Chestnut Branch Park:** From Route 45 take 553A (Alternate) towards Sewell one and one half miles. The Park will be on your left. From Route 55 take exit 53 towards Wenonah. At the fourth light make a left towards Barnsboro. At the second light make a right onto Route 553A. The park will be on your right in about one mile. Park in the lower right gravel parking lot (you can cross over the walking path to get to the gravel lot).
 - **11:00-12:00: Scotland Run Park (also the picnic location):** From Route 55 take exit 45 and proceed North on Route 553/ Buck Road. After 1.2 miles turn Right on CR 610/ Clayton-Aura Road. Continue on CR 610 for 3.8 miles. After the traffic light at Fries Mill Road, turn Left into the parking lot for Scotland Run Park. You will meet in the bluebird field adjacent to the parking lot.

Last year's Gloucester County Bird Quest attracted hundreds of participants made up of families, friends, teachers, school groups, scout troops, environmental commissions ... residents of Gloucester and neighboring counties. **If you have participated in the past why not invite a friend or colleagues to join you for this year's Bird Quest!**

Our theme this year is "Hungry Birds" and will be featured in a T-shirt by Gariel Graphics. **The \$12 fee per participant helps to defray the cost of lunch, T-shirts, prizes etc.**

More information and registration forms will be posted to the Gloucester County Nature Club's website at www.gcnatureclub.org. For more information, join a team or reserve a seat on the bus, contact Brian Hayes at bhayes@eirc.org or 856.582.7000 x110.

Participants are encouraged to attend any of a series of free field trainings in the evenings, mornings and weekends before the Quest. Training sessions are listed at the end of this newsletter.

Bird Quest 2013 Training Sessions

April 20 (Sat), 7:00- 8:30 AM. Forest/Edge Habitat. Chestnut Branch Park, Mantua.

Find the hidden habitat in any location. This multiple use park has some great birding spots around and among the ball fields. Find species that like the edge like indigo buntings, mockingbirds, and yellow-rump warblers.

***Directions:** From the intersection of Rt 45 (Broad Street) and Cooper Street in Woodbury, go south on Rt 45 for 4.2 miles. Turn left (from right hand lane) onto Rt 553Alt (Main Street) in Mantua. Go south on Rt 553Alt for 1.6 miles. The park entrance will be on the left. There is a large paved parking area. Meet at the butterfly garden.*

Leaders: Bob Duke and Jay Hoffecker

April 21 (Sun), 6:00 – 7:30 PM Birding Basics. Alcyon Lake, Pitman.

Learn the basics of good birding and the tools of the trade. Discover the world of birding from bird guides to binoculars, clothing to footwear, etiquette to bird song and of course bird identification as well. Any level of interest is welcome. Questions are encouraged.

***Directions:** From Rt 55 Exit 53A (or Exit 53 if coming from the south) take Rt 553 (Glassboro Road) south for about 1.5 miles to Holly Avenue. Turn right (west) on Holly Avenue. Continue for 1.2 miles to the park entrance, which is on the left. There is a small sign. Drive past sports fields; meet at the pavilion.*

Leaders: Rich Dilks and Karen Kravchuck

April 22 (Mon), 7:00 – 8:30 AM. Woodland Birds and Bird calls. Ceres Park, Mantua Twp.

Learn your woodland birds like wood thrush, scarlet tanagers, ovenbirds, water thrush, black and white warblers, and pine warblers. Birds will be identified by sound, sight or both. ***Directions:** From Rt 322 take Lambs Rd (635) to Pitman-Barnsboro Rd (553Alt). Turn left onto Rt553A. Watch for Ceres Park sign on your left after crossing over Rt 55.*

Leaders: Jayne Rhynard and Barry Bengel

April 25 (Thur), 6:00- 7:30 PM. Delaware River Riparian habitat. Wheelabrator Refuge, Westville

At the intersection of the Delaware River and Big Timber Creek, the wide open space behind the Wheelabrator plant is great habitat for swamp, meadow and river birds. Trails and old roads make access easy and Wheelabrator is more than accommodating. Bobwhite can be heard here. ***Directions:** Access from Rt 130, opposite Hazel Ave in Westville, just south of Big Timber Creek. Meet at the pavilion in parking lot on the right just before the guard station.*

Leaders: Loretta Dunne and Paula Hayes

April 27 (Sat), 7:00-8:30 AM. Forest Edge and Riparian habitat, Triple Oaks, Franklinville, NJ

Access to Scotland Run riparian habitat and forest edge at Triple Oaks Nursery. *Triple Oaks is on the right (west) side of Rt 47 (Delsea Drive) half a mile south of the center of Franklinville.*

Leaders: Dwight and Doris Weir

April 28 (Sun), 7:00-8:30 AM. Forest Edge and Swamp habitat. Railroad Avenue, Elk Twp.

Directions: From Rt. 322 in Richwood turn at light onto Aura Rd. (Rt. 667.) Continue 3.5 mi. and turn Right onto Whig Lane Rd.(Rt. 619.) At fork stay Left. Pass Aura Elementary School and turn left into the Elk Township Recreational Complex. Park in the paved lot.

Leaders: Ron and Linda Kegel

April 30 (Tues), 7:00-8:00 AM Birds of Local Waterways. Old Pine Farm, Deptford

Open views of the water provide good opportunity for sighting water birds like ducks, herons, red-wing blackbirds, and mergansers. Wooded section could produce woodpeckers, nuthatches, warblers, chickadees, and tufted titmouse. **Directions:** *Access from Good Intent road (Rt.534), turn North onto Rankin Ave. Follow to end and park. Walkdown woods road to the Big Timber Creek.*

Leaders: Ed & Millie Cleary; Gary and Margie Lizzi