



# Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

[www.gcnatureclub.org](http://www.gcnatureclub.org)

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

March 2023

## **Program: World Class Museum Coming to Mantua Township, NJ: Jean and Ric Edelman Fossil Park of Rowan University**

**Presenter: Dr. Kenneth Lacovara, Director, Jean & Ric Edelman Fossil Park and Founding Dean, School of Earth & Environment, Rowan University**

**Thursday, March 9, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Wenonah, NJ (directions below)**

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342

Rising from a former marl quarry in Mantua Township, N.J., Rowan University's Jean & Ric Edelman Fossil Park Museum will be a world-class destination inspired by the deep-time perspective that the fossil record offers. Set into a 65-acre landscape, the museum will perch above the quarry where, within its muddy depths, 66-million-year-old marine and terrestrial fossils record the last moments of the dinosaur world. With an expected opening of Spring 2024, the museum will attract an estimated 200,000 or more guests per year. The project embraces sustainability, preservation and site-specific design with high-tech, interactive galleries and exhibits.



***Dr. Lacovara with a Mosasaur vertebra***

Research at the site, led by Fossil Park Director and Founding Dean of Rowan's School of Earth & Environment Dr. Kenneth Lacovara, is shedding light on ancient events that led to the world's 5th mass extinction, during which the dinosaurs (except for birds) and 75% of species went extinct—a pivotal, calamitous moment that paved the way for the modern world. The museum will feature immersive exhibits galleries, full-scale reconstructions of extinct creatures, hands-on learning experiences, live animal attractions, virtual reality, connections to the natural world, and gathering spaces to build community around the themes of exploration, discovery, and responsible stewardship of our planet.

Dr. Lacovara grew up in South Jersey and earned his bachelor's degree in geography, with minors in biology and anthropology, from Rowan in 1984. He completed his master's degree in coastal geomorphology at the University of Maryland College Park in 1986 and his doctorate in geology from the University of Delaware in 1998. A sought-after expert by international media outlets on issues related to science and scientific discovery, he is internationally known for his discovery of *Dreadnoughtus schrani*, a massive, plant-eating dinosaur that is the best example found of any of the largest creatures ever to walk the planet.

**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).

## **Save the Date!**

### **Saturday May 6, 2023 - Gloucester County Bird Quest**

The 23rd Annual Gloucester County Bird Quest will be held on the first Saturday in May. The theme this year will be "Birds on the Move" in recognition of humanity's increasing knowledge and appreciation of bird migration. The basic schedule will be the same as last year, only this time without a windy rainstorm (we hope): birding from 7 AM to noon, followed by a lunch gathering at Wheelabrator in Westville. There will be a new T-shirt design as well. We'll put full info including registration details in the April newsletter.

### **June 24, 2023 - Gloucester County Firefly Festival**

This year's Gloucester County Firefly Festival will be held at Tall Pines Preserve on Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 pm. The details will be in the May and June newsletters.

## **Nature Notes**

### **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.

### **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](mailto: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](mailto:sharkeyes@comcast.net) or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.

**YOUTUBE CHANNEL:** We are now posting recordings of recent club programs for the convenience of members and the public. To find the club's channel, use [this link](#) or search for the club's full name within YouTube. 14 videos are now available, including these recent additions:



- [Costa Rica: The Destination We Didn't Know We'd Love](#) (November 2022)
- [Hiking the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu \(January 2023\)](#)

Be sure to subscribe to the club's channel and "like" the videos so they will get recommended to more people! We will continue recording programs during this club year whenever permitted by speakers and their sponsoring organizations.