



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

April 2008

Program – Some Birds of Panama

Thursday, April 10th at 7:00 PM at EIRC, Sewell

Presenter: Jeff Holt

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks (856) 468-6342

Panama is a country the size of South Carolina, yet with a bird population greater than all of North America, approximately 950 species. We'll take a look at some of the unique and colorful birds that inhabit this southern most Central American country. The slide show will focus on birds found in the area of the famous Canal and in the Darien, an area of impenetrable forest near Panama's border with Columbia. It is a region so remote that the Pan American Highway doesn't pass thru it.



Our presenter is club member, Jeff Holt, who is a fellow of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club and author of numerous published articles on ornithology. Jeff's program, based on his travels in Panama last year, will introduce us to the splendor and diversity of bird life in these rich and exotic Neotropical regions.

Field Trip – Salem County Birding

Saturday, April 12th, 8:45 A.M. to early afternoon

Trip Leader: Lloyd Shaw



Possibilities on this traditional early spring trip include a good variety of waterfowl, bald eagle, osprey, other raptors, pectoral sandpiper, other shorebirds, horned lark and other overwintering passerine birds, and early migrants such as palm warbler and pine warbler. The trip will visit several localities in addition to the Pedricktown Marsh, including Mannington Meadows, Featherbed Lane, and Money Island Road. This is a joint trip with the Rancocas Nature Center.

Directions: Meet at the north end of the Pedricktown Causeway (which is currently closed to though traffic). To get there, take I-295 south to Exit 10, then go west on Center Square Road for about one mile to Pedricktown Road. Turn left (south) to the causeway. Dress to suit the weather, bring binoculars (and a scope if you have one), have fuel in your car, and bring lunch and beverage. For additional information, phone the leader at (856) 986-0681.

Conservation Corner – Free Recycling Through the Mail



U.S. Postal Service Starts Service in 1,500 Post Offices

WASHINGTON, DC —Free and green. Those are the goals of a pilot program launched on March 17th by the U.S. Postal Service that allows customers to *recycle small electronics and inkjet cartridges* by mailing them free of charge.

The “Mail Back” program helps consumers make more environmentally friendly choices, making it easier for customers to discard used or obsolete small electronics in an environmentally responsible way. Customers use free envelopes found in 1,500 Post Offices to mail back inkjet cartridges, PDAs, Blackberries, digital cameras, iPods and MP3 players – without having to pay for postage.

Postage is paid for by Clover Technologies Group, a nationally recognized company that recycles, remanufactures and remarkets inkjet cartridges, laser cartridges and small electronics. If the electronic item or cartridges cannot be refurbished and resold, its component parts are reused to refurbish other items, or the parts are broken down further and the materials are recycled. Clover Technologies Group has a “zero waste to landfill” policy: it does everything it can to avoid contributing any materials to the nation’s landfills.

It was this philosophy that won Clover the contract with the Postal Service, besting 19 other companies, said Anita Bizzotto, chief marketing officer and executive vice president for the Postal Service.

“As one of the nation’s leading corporate citizens, the Postal Service is committed to environmental stewardship,” Bizzotto said. “This program is one more way the Postal Service is empowering consumers to go green.”

The free, postage-paid Mail Back envelopes can be found on displays in Post Office lobbies. There is no limit to the number of envelopes customers may take.

The pilot is set for 10 areas across the country, including Washington, D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles and San Diego, but could become a national program this fall if the pilot program proves successful.

“We know our customers are interested in real solutions for proper disposal of personal electronics,” Bizzotto said. “Everyone from consumers to businesses to non-profit organizations use the mail, and the Postal Service works to manage resources wisely to minimize environmental impact.”

Contact: Joanne Veto
joanne.m.veto@usps.gov

NOTE: This program is not in our area yet, but hopefully it will be here this fall.

Red Knot Update - Horseshoe Crab Harvest Banned Indefinitely!

Horseshoe crabbing has been banned indefinitely in New Jersey thanks to a new law signed by Governor Jon S. Corzine on Tuesday, March 25. As mentioned in last month’s newsletter, the Red Knot, a migratory shorebird whose numbers are declining, feeds on the crabs' eggs as it passes through the Delaware Bay while migrating between South America and the Arctic.

"We all have to recognize that one action begets another action, and in the last few years I think we all come to realize how fragile our Earth is and it needs to be protected," Corzine said before signing the ban into law.

This is a large victory for environmentalists, and all of us who made sure our opinion was made known to our legislators should feel a sense of pride in this success.

Kid's Corner - Milk Carton Viewer* by Deb Maka
(It will help you answer the question: What lives in a puddle?)

What You Need:

- Milk or beverage container, any size
- Plastic wrap
- Strong rubber bands, big enough to go around your container
- Scissors to cut the container

Directions:

1. Cut off the bottom of the container (milk or juice carton, plastic milk jug, etc.)
2. Cut a piece of heavy plastic wrap big enough to cover the opening at the bottom of the container and about half way up the sides of the container
3. Use rubber bands to hold the plastic wrap in place
4. Open up the top of the container so you can look through the top and out the bottom

After you've made your viewer, go to your favorite pond, stream, or puddle and stick your viewer part-way into the water (with the plastic wrap side in the water). Look inside and you'll see inside the water. What can you find living in a puddle?

* adapted from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department website
(www.tpwd.state.tx.us/kids/explore/viewer.phtml)

The 2008 Gloucester County Bird Quest: Saturday May 3, 2008

The Gloucester County Nature Club and its co-sponsors invite people of all ages to participate in the **2008 (ninth annual) Gloucester County Bird Quest. The 2008 Bird Quest** will take place on **Sat., May 3, 2008 from 7 AM to 12 noon throughout Gloucester County.**

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. At noon, all participants gather at Atkinson County Park on Delsea Drive to report results and for **(free) lunch, t-shirts, and prizes.**

We encourage you to organize your own Quest team with colleagues, friends, and/or family. Last year's Gloucester County Bird Quest attracted several hundred 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!** With support from Wheelabrator, LP of Gloucester County, the club will again operate two (free) guided buses for individuals unable to form their own team and who are willing to join a larger group. Our theme this year is "Natural Places of Gloucester County" and will be featured in a T-shirt designed by the club's own Gary Lizzi. A county map and other materials are provided to registered teams. **A \$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, to receive a registration form, join a team or reserve a seat on the bus, contact Paula or Brian Hayes at pnbhayes@comcast.net or (856) 468-9272.

Participants are encouraged to attend any of a series of free field trainings in the evenings, mornings and weekends before the Quest. The training sessions are listed below, and an entry form can be found on the last page of this newsletter. More detailed directions and additional site information can be found in our book, *Natural Places of Gloucester County NJ*.

Bird Quest 2008 Training Sessions

April 14 (Monday), 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Birding Basics

Alcyon Lake, Pitman Learn the basics of good birding and the tools of the trade.

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 the sports fields; meet at the pavilion.

Leader: Deb Maka

Co-leader: Waltraut Paust

April 15 (Tuesday), 6:00 – 7:00 AM

Bird Quest Training

Chestnut Branch Park, Mantua

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.

Leader: Kris Mollenhauer

Co-leader: Elaine Dzeima

April 16 (Wednesday), 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Bird Quest Training

Greenwich Township Walking Trail, Greenwich

Directions: From Interstate 295 Exit 16B, go north on Democrat Road (Rt 673) toward Gibbstown for about 0.2 mile to Swedesboro-Paulsboro Road (Rt 653). Turn right and go about 0.5 mile to the Nehaunsey Middle School, which will be on the left, just before the Greenwich Township Library. Turn into the school parking lot. The entrance to the trail is behind the school, and is marked with a small green sign.

Leaders: Bob Duke

Co-leaders: Doris and Dwight Weir

April 17 (Thursday), 6:00 – 7:00 AM

Bird Quest Training

Red Bank Battlefield Park, National Park

Directions: From Interstate 295 Exit 22, take Red Bank Avenue west for about 0.5 mile to Hessian Avenue. Turn left on Hessian Avenue, and continue for 1.2 miles to the park. Meet at the parking area on the left.

Leader: Gale Cannon

Co-leader: Karl Anderson

April 20 (Sunday), 7:00 – 8:30 AM

Bird Quest Training

West Deptford Scenic Park, West Deptford w/ DVOC

Directions: From Exit 21 on I-295, take Delaware Avenue west. In about 0.4 mile, cross Grove Street. Continue for another 0.3 mile, on what is then called Riverwinds Drive. Watch for a sign to the trail, on the right. Meet in the parking lot.

Leader: Jeff Holt

April 21 (Monday), 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Bird Quest Training

Old Pine Farm, Deptford

Directions: Access from Good Intent road (534), turn North onto Rankin Ave. Follow to end and park. Walk down woods road to the Big Timber Creek.

Co-leaders: Ed and Millie Cleary

April 22 (Tuesday), 6:00 – 7:00 AM

Bird Quest Training

Greenwich Lake Park, Greenwich

Directions: From I-295 Exit 15, go north on Tomlin Station Road (Rt 607) toward Gibbstown. The park entrance will be on the right, in about 0.25 mile.

Leader: Gale Cannon

Co-leader: Karl Anderson

April 23 (Wednesday), 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Birding by Ear Part I

EIRC building, Washington Twp This is an introduction to bird calls in a classroom setting.

Directions: Located right on Delsea Dr. (Rt 47) in Washington Twp just south of the Terra Nova Restaurant (used to be the Italian Bistro).

Co-leaders: Brian and Paula Hayes

April 24 (Thursday), 6:00 – 7:00 AM

Birding by Ear Part II

Ceres Park, Mantua Twp Take the skills you learned in the classroom into the field.

Directions: From Rt 322 take Lambs Rd (635) to Pitman-Barnsboro Rd (553Alt). Make a left onto Rt553A. Watch for Ceres Park sign on your left after crossing over Rt 55.

Leader: Barry Bengel

Co-leader: Jayne Rhynard

April 27 (Sunday), 7:00 – 8:30 AM

Bird Quest Training

Floodgate Road, Greenwich

Directions: From I-295 Exit 14 (Repaupo Station Road), take Repaupo Station Road west. In 0.6 mile it crosses Rt 44 and becomes Floodgates Road. Continue on Floodgates Road for another 1.6 miles to its end.

Leader: Ron Keigel

Co-leaders: Doris and Dwight Weir

April 27 (Sunday), 6:00 – 7:00 PM

Bird Quest Training

Glassboro Woods, Clayton

Directions: From the intersection of Rt 47 (Delsea Drive) and eastbound Rt 322 in Glassboro, go south about 1.7 miles on Rt 47. Immediately after crossing the Clayton Borough boundary, an unmarked dirt road will branch off on the left. This is Carpenter Ave. Meet at the spot where the pavement ends.

Leader: Bob Baruzzi

Co-leader: Lloyd Shaw

April 28 (Monday), 6:00 – 7:00 AM

Bird Quest Training

Wheelabrator Refuge, Westville

Directions: Access from Rt 130, opposite Hazel Ave in Westville, just south of Big Timber Creek. Meet in parking lot on the right just before the guard station.

Leader: Gary Lizzi

Co-leader: Arlene Beebe

April 29 (Tuesday), 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Bird by Ear Part III

EIRC building, Washington Twp This is an introduction to bird calls in a classroom setting.

Directions: Located right on Delsea Dr. (Rt 47) in Washington Twp just south of the Terra Nova Restaurant (used to be the Italian Bistro).

Co-leaders: Kris and Erik Mollenhauer

April 30 (Wednesday), 6:00 – 7:00 AM

Birding by Ear Part IV

Lake Narraticon, Swedesboro Take the skills you learned in the classroom into the field.

Directions: From Kings Highway (Rt 551) in Swedesboro turn onto Lake and then turn onto Park Ave. Access is from the end of Park Ave.

Leader: Gary Lizzi

Co-leader: Margie Lizzi

May 1 (Thursday), 6:00 – 7:00 PM

Bird Quest Training

Wenonah Woods, Wenonah

Directions: From Woodbury/Glassboro road (Rt 553) in Wenonah, turn onto Maple Ave. At the second stop sign turn right into the lake parking lot.

Leader: Rich Dilks

Co-leader: Loretta Dunne

Other Nature Notes

Wild Birds Unlimited offers an everyday 10% discount to GCNC members!

Wild Birds Unlimited has a discount agreement with the GCNC executive board and is pleased to offer GCNC members an everyday 10% discount on all purchases excluding optics and food or sale items. Sharon Oakes, owner of Wild Birds Unlimited, appreciates the many volunteer contributions made by GCNC members and hopes members can benefit from this discount. Members are requested to identify themselves as GCNC members before their sales are finalized. Questions? Please call Sharon at 218-2973.



WANTED: Information about Gloucester County Big Trees

The Nature Club is embarking on a new project - a publication about the trees of Gloucester County. For each species, there will be identifying information, a description of the range nationwide and in New Jersey, habitat information, a compilation of hopefully-interesting facts, and notes on where to find the species in Gloucester County. There will be photos of leaves, fruit, bark, and overall aspect. Between 35 and 40 species will be covered.

We would like to tell readers of this publication where to find some good examples of each species. So if any readers of this newsletter can provide locations for exceptionally large, well-grown specimens of any native trees (plus non-native white pine, princess tree, Norway maple, Norway spruce, black locust, and common catalpa) that are growing on public land or that are easily visible from a public road, please get this information to Karl Anderson, 46 North Childs Street, Woodbury NJ 08096; karlanderson6@aol.com. A complete list of tree species slated for this project will be on the GCNC website. Many thanks!

Events by other Organizations

- April 20 (Sunday) - **Nature Walk at Amico Island**. 2:00 P.M. Leader: Jen Bulava. Sponsored by the Burlington County Division of Parks. For info: www.co.burlington.nj.us/departments/ and click on "parks".
- April 26 (Saturday) - **Field trip: Birding at Bridgeton City Park (for spring migrants)**. 8:00 A.M. to early afternoon. Leader: Lloyd Shaw. Sponsored by the Audubon Wildlife Society of N.J. For info: www.audubonwildlifesociety.org/.
- April 27 (Sunday) (rain date May 4) - **Wildflower Walk at Smith's Woods (near Mount Holly)**. 2:00-4:00 P.M. Leader: Jen Bulava. Sponsored by the Burlington County Division of Parks. For info: www.co.burlington.nj.us/departments/ and click on "parks".

The following events take place at the Scotland Run Nature Center in Clayton. For details and to register, call the center at (856) 881-0845. All events are free.

- Bird Walks: Saturday 4/5 at 8:00 AM and Tuesday 5/13 at 6:00 PM
- Kids Nature Club: Saturdays 4/5 and 5/3 at 10:30 AM
- Afternoon Nature Strolls: Wednesdays 4/23 and 5/14 at 2:30 PM
- Nature Tots: Wednesdays 4/9 and 5/7 at 10:00 AM
- Family Nature Adventure: Saturday 4/26 at 10:00 AM
- Scout Saturdays: Saturdays 4/12 and 5/10 at 10:00 AM
- Learn to Play Folk Guitar: Saturdays 4/19 and 5/31 at 10:00 AM
- Canoeing & Kayaking: Saturday 5/17 at 11:00 AM
- Water Fest: Sunday June 1, 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Natural Events for the month of April

- Pond turtles emerge from hibernation and bask in the sun.
- Spring beauty, bloodroot, and trout lily bloom on the floor of deciduous woodlands.
- Spring peepers and wood frogs begin calling when vernal ponds warm to about 50 degrees F.
- Shad migrate up the Delaware River to spawn.
- Ruby-throated hummingbirds, purple martins, and warblers begin to arrive.
- Most juncos and white-throated sparrows have left by the end of the month.
- Rose-breasted grosbeaks show up at feeders for a few days before heading north.
- Prairie warbler, misnamed when it was first found in a barren area in Kentucky, returns late April – mid May.
- The peak of spring raptor migration is mid-to-late April. Consider a visit to a hawk lookout.
- Red-winged blackbirds return to marshes.

Looking Ahead:

2007-2008 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the upcoming field trips for the remainder of this year:

- May 18, 2008 (Sunday) - Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve - Richard Dilks
- June 21, 2008 (Saturday) - Unexpected Refuge - Karl Anderson and Sarah Summerville

Upcoming GCNC Programs (All occur on Thursdays)

Here is the program list for the rest of this year:

- May 8, 2008 - Horseshoe Crabs - Sue Slotterback from the Cape May Nature Center
- June 12, 2008 - Annual Picnic

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 468-6536.
- The May Executive Committee meeting will be held on May 4th at the home of Ed & Millie Cleary. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.
- 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 6 Greenwood Drive, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15th of the preceding month.

Bird Quest Registration

Be sure to include your name, address, phone # and T-shirt size on the form. Mail the form with a check (\$12 per person) payable to *Gloucester County Nature Club* to: GC Nature Club, P.O. Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080. Questions? Contact Paula Hayes at 468-9272 or pnbhayes@comcast.net. Entries must be received by April 25 for t-shirts to be guaranteed on day of event.

Name of Team (ex: Costello's Cardinals) _____

Name of Team Leader (contact person) _____ T-shirt size _____

Leader's address & Telephone _____

Person #2 (name) _____ T-shirt size _____

Person #3 _____ T-shirt size _____

Person #4 _____ T-shirt size _____

Person #5 _____ T-shirt size _____

Person #6 _____ T-shirt size _____

Person #7 _____ T-shirt size _____

Attach extra sheet with additional names and T-shirt sizes.

Bus Space is limited: first come first served. You must reserve a seat in advance. Bus leaves at 7 AM from Atkinson Park. **Please attach a list of names of any people who wish to ride the bus.**

Fill in here for additional items: Additional T-shirts: Qty _____ (\$12.95 each)

Birds of Gloucester County Flash Cards _____ (\$4.00/set)

Natural Places of Gloucester Co. NJ book _____ (\$12.00 each)