



Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

April 2017

Program - Birds of Gloucester County and Tips on Photographing Them

Thursday, April 13, 2017 at 7:00pm at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Wenonah, NJ

Presenters: Dennis DiMarco & Marilyn Henry

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342



"In order to see birds it is necessary to become a part of the silence."

~ Robert Lynd

"Whosoever possesses a camera should never know boredom."

~ Wayne Gerard Trotman



New Jersey has an incredibly rich diversity of bird life. At least 475 species have been noted here. That figure includes year round residents, summer residents, winter residents and birds passing through our region during spring and fall migrations. The variety of habitats in Gloucester County, including woodlands, meadows, farmlands, freshwater wetlands, ponds, creeks, the Delaware River and even suburban communities adds to the diversity of bird species here as well. It has been said that to know nature, we should begin by looking at what can be seen around us where we live. Tonight, our presenters, Gloucester County Nature Club members Dennis DiMarco and Marilyn Henry, will reveal the birds of Gloucester County as captured through the camera's lens and photographer's eye.

In this presentation, Dennis and Marilyn will present photos of a number of species of birds, highlighting those found in Gloucester County. They will also explain how to photograph birds including what camera gear works well, what settings are preferable and what you the photographer should do regardless of the kind of camera you own. The presentation will be emailed as a PDF document to all participants requesting it.

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).

2017 Gloucester County Bird Quest: Saturday May 6, 2017



The Gloucester County Nature Club and co-sponsors invite people of all ages to participate in the **2017 (18th annual) Gloucester County Bird Quest**. This year Bird Quest will take place on **Sat. May 6, 2017 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 separate enrollment form on BirdQuest flyer

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, live bird show, owl interpretive center, 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 led 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.
 - 7:00-8:45: Tall Pines Preserve (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 onto Bark Bridge Rd then in 200ft turn left into the parking lot, meet there. There are no bathrooms at Tall Pines.

- 9:30-11:15: Glassboro Wildlife Management Area: Meet at Carpenter Ave in Clayton. From the Intersection of 322 and Route 47 (Delsea Drive), take RT 47 South into Clayton. Make a left onto Carpenter Ave – about 1.6 miles south of Route 322. Meet in the parking / turn around area where the road turns to dirt.
- 11:30-12:30: 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 participants from across the county organized in teams representing schools, scout troops, environmental commissions, families and friends. Each year the Club holds pre-Quest field and classroom trainings, attracting 15-30 persons each, in which local experts help new birders learn to identify birds by sight, sound, behavior, and habitat. The winning team in 2016 located 109 species in 5 hours!!! A tremendous effort when you consider all teams saw a total of 151 species but everyone was a winner because of how much they learned about birds and the natural areas of Gloucester County through this fun, educational event.

This year we have developed educational materials including a Quest t-shirt with original artwork featuring a blue jay in an oak tree holding an acorn which we are using to discuss the old connection between Jays and oaks, birds and forests. Participants will learn about the importance of forests for some bird populations and the many unseen aspects of a forest that help birds thrive. These materials will have lasting educational value for teachers, students, and the general public. Live birds, including owls, will be at the park. **The \$15 fee per participant helps to defray the cost of lunch, T-shirts, prizes etc.**

More information and registration forms are 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 bkhayesoutdoors@gmail.com or 856.649.8723.

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.

Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: April 2017

- **Cape May Bird Observatory's 22nd Annual Optics Sale**

On Saturday & Sunday, April 8 - 9, 2017 from 9 to 5, Cape May Bird Observatory will hold its 22nd Annual Optics Sale at the NJ Audubon's, Center for Research & Education, 600 Rt. 47 N. Cape May Court House (Goshen), NJ. Manufacturer's representatives from Kowa, Leica, Opticron, Swarovski, Vanguard and Zeiss will be available on Saturday to share their expertise and show you the latest advances in optics. Don't underestimate the value of their knowledge, OR the chance to try almost 90 models of binoculars and 30 spotting scopes!

Sales events like this don't continue and grow for over 20 years unless they offer real value! The Center will have factory refurb, demo products, discontinued (but "new") items, and just plain special deals that should allow nearly everyone to pocket significant savings, whether you're looking to save big on high end optics or find an entry level bargain (starting as low as \$29).

All items are limited in quantities, so arrive early for the widest selection and be patient, as we allow only as many into the sale room as we have people to help them. Enjoy browsing the main shop (where many

specials can also be found) and learning from the optics sales reps while you wait. There is no line on Sunday, but usually still plenty of bargains!

Unlike in years past, this year both days are OPEN TO THE PUBLIC rather than member-only. But NJ Audubon and/or CMBO still VERY MUCH appreciates your membership, and hope that if you are not a member, or your membership has lapsed, you will join or renew NJ Audubon and/or CMBO. AND, only members get a 10% discount on all books, gifts, NJA & CMBO clothing, bird feeders, houses & accessories, PLUS special reduced rates on programs & field trips!

- ****Rescheduled**** April 26, 2017 (Tuesday), 6:00pm - **Annual South Jersey Land & Water Trust Fundraising Dinner** at Auletto's Caterers (1849 Cooper St., Deptford Township, NJ, 08096. Tickets are \$40 each, which includes a delicious Italian dinner. Tickets may be purchased online at www.sjlandwater.org/event-directory or by mailing a check with "Annual Dinner" in the memo line to 21 Main St. Swedesboro, NJ 08085. The evening will feature a delicious Italian dinner by Auletto's Caterers, an introduction to the Land Trust and its successes over the past 25 years, and a silent auction of fine art pieces donated by dozens of local artists and artisans. Art pieces include handmade jewelry and ceramics, paintings, drawings, photographs and mixed media artwork in a range of styles. All proceeds from the evening will fund SJLWT's ongoing work in land preservation, watershed assessments, volunteer training, open space stewardship, natural resource conservation and education about South Jersey's cultural, historical, and natural treasures.

The following events are also sponsored by the South Jersey Land & Water Trust. Maps, directions, and more information can be found at <http://sjlandwater.org/event-directory>.

- **Spring Workday at Oldmans Creek Preserve:** Sunday 4/2 at 9:00am, 21 Main St./Auburn-Pointers Rd., Swedesboro, NJ 08085 (FREE) Please bring your own work gloves and drinking water, wear appropriate shoes and dress for the weather. All necessary tools will be provided.
- **Walk in the Woods at Matt's Landing:** Saturday 4/15, 10:00am to 1:00pm. Join South Jersey Land and Water Trust staff member Michael Hogan for a 2 hour guided tour of Delaware Bay/Heislerville Wildlife Management Area in Matt's Landing, Cumberland County. FREE for SJLWT members and \$3 per nonmember. Please RSVP by emailing MHogan@SJLandWater.org. **Directions:** We will meet at the parking lot in Matts Landing. Take Rt. 55 south to Rt. 47 south, continue 7.9 miles to right on Glade Road, continue 1.5 miles to right on Main Street, continue .7 miles to right on Matts Landing Road, follow road to end, look for Michael's silver pickup truck.

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 4/1 at 9:00am
- Nature Tots – April Showers: Tuesday 4/4 at 10:30am
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 4/8 at 10:00am
- Nature Tots – Bunnies and Eggs: Tuesday 4/11 at 10:30am
- Afternoon Nature Stroll – Wednesday 4/12 at 2:30pm
- Nature Tots – Earth Day: Tuesday 4/18 at 10:30am
- Nature Tots – Spring Has Sprung: Tuesday 4/25 at 10:30am

The Long Beach Island Foundation, 120 Long Beach Blvd, Loveladies, NJ, 08008 hosts **Science Saturday** programs from January through April. For details and to register for programs, call the foundation at (609) 494-1241 or see www.LBIfoundation.org. All events are free for members and \$5 for non-members.

- Saturday 4/1, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm: **Create Your Own Native Plant Garden**

- Saturday 4/8, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm: **The American Oyster in the Barnegat Bay**
- Saturday 4/22, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm: **Earth Day Celebration**
- Saturday 4/29, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm: **Billfish Tagging with NOAA**

Conservation Corner by Suzan Delozier

CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECTS

It's April and a new season of growth is upon us! This is a good time to investigate the many citizen science projects that need input from people who care about the environment. Below are a few projects to consider. Check them out and see if you would like to participate in any of them.

Citizen Science Project	Description	Where is it found?
Monarch Larva Monitoring Project	Volunteers submit data on monarch larval and milkweed distribution. The website contains excellent online training.	http://monarchlab.org/ and click on Monarch Larva Monitoring Project
Journey North (and Journey South)	Participants submit data on the migration of several animals including hummingbirds and monarchs.	http://www.learner.org/ and click on Journey North
eButterfly	Participants submit butterfly sightings and are able to maintain personal checklists and photos.	http://www.e-butterfly.org/
Lost Lady Bug	Contributors submit photos of ladybugs. Website provides training material.	http://lostladybug.org/
Firefly Watch	Volunteers submit data on fireflies. Website also contains excellent online training.	https://legacy.mos.org/fireflywatch/
Bumble Bee Watch	Volunteers submit photos of bumble bees. Using information provided by the website, a volunteer may attempt to identify the bee.	http://www.bumblebeewatch.org/
eBird and Merlin	Participants record and keep track of their checklists on eBird. Data is used by Merlin, a free bird identification app for smartphones.	http://ebird.org/content/ebird/ and http://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/
Dragonfly Pond Watch	Volunteers submit data on migratory dragonflies. Five species are focused on. Website contains identification help.	http://www.xerces.org/dragonfly-migration/pondwatch/

UPDATE ON MONARCHS

In Mexico, the wintering health of monarchs is measured by the area in hectares that they occupy (one hectare is approximately 1.47 acres). This winter the area occupied is 2.91 hectares, down 27% from the previous winter. It is likely that an extreme ice storm early in last year's spring migration is at least partly the cause of the decline. However, the decline is not as severe as scientists feared. Monarch Joint Venture states that a minimum area needed for a stable population is 6 hectares and that an additional 1.6 billion milkweed stems are needed along with a diversity of nectar plants. Please consider putting common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*), swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) and/or butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) in your garden along with some beautiful nectar plants. See <http://monarchjointventure.org/get-involved/create-habitat-for-monarchs> for help creating a habitat for monarchs.



Mid to late March is when the butterflies depart their winter sanctuary and begin their flight north. **Both host and nectar plants are needed by monarchs and other butterflies and pollinators.** The Monarch Watch web page <http://monarchwatch.org/garden/plant-list-monarchwatch.pdf> is an excellent source for identifying host and nectar plants that are suitable for northeast gardens. The Xerces Society has a plant list for the Mid-Atlantic States located at http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/MidAtlanticPlantList_web.pdf.

Report your sightings of monarch butterflies, caterpillars and milkweed to Journey North at <http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/monarch/SpringWatch.html>.

Looking Ahead:

Listed below are the programs we have lined up for the remainder of the club year. Meeting dates are the **second** Thursday of the month.

May 11, 2017: **Annual Plant Sale (6:00pm)** and **Program: A Green Legacy: John Burroughs and the Catskill Mts (6:45pm)** - Erik Mollenhauer

June 8, 2017: **Annual Picnic (6:00pm)** at Alcyon Park, Pitman, NJ followed by **Program: Surfskis, Outrigger Canoes, Kayaks, Lifejackets, Rescue Throw bags, Paddles - Up Close & Personal** - Glen Forest Green, P.E., U.S. Canoe Assoc. Safety Committee Chairman

Remaining 2017 GCNC Field Trips

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

May 6, 2017 - **BirdQuest**

June 10, 2017 - **Horseshoe Crab Walk**

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 April Executive Committee meeting will be held on April 9 at the home of Karen Kravchuck.

Bird Quest Training Sessions 2017

Please note that there are AM and PM sessions!

April 19 (Wednesday) 7:30 - 9 A.M.

Washington Lake Park

626 Hurffville-Cross Keys Rd, Sewell, NJ 08080

This is the largest municipal park in New Jersey and in spring it comes alive with songbird and raptor migrants adding to the year-round residents. Red-winged Blackbirds and Canada Geese are nesting around the lakes. Many migrants begin nesting in the woods, especially near the streams, and the Bluebirds are active around their boxes. ***Directions:** Meet at the parking lot by the amphitheater, accessible from either entrance.*

Leaders: Marilyn Henry and Barb Bassett

April 20 (Thursday) 6 - 7:30 P.M.

Old Pine Farm Natural Lands Trust

400 Rankin Ave., Deptford, NJ 08096

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 onto Rankin Ave. Follow to end and park. Walk down woods road to the Big Timber Creek.*

Leader: Ed Cleary

April 22 (Saturday) 7:30 - 9 A.M.

Greenwich Lake Park

Tomlin Station Road, Gibbstown, NJ 08027

The paved and unpaved trails here explore various habitats and wind past lagoons and waterways that drain eventually into the Delaware River. In spring, look for Green Herons among the reeds and emergent vegetation in the small ponds and along the banks of the lake. Listen for the song of Yellow Warbler among other migrants. ***Directions:** Meet in the main parking lot.*

Leaders: Jayne Rhynard and Marilyn Henry

April 23 (Sunday) 6 - 7:30 P.M. Birding Basics.

Alcyon Lake Park

Track Ave. Pitman, NJ 08071 (off W. Holly Avenue)

Learn the basics of good birding and the tools of the trade. Discover the world of birding from bird guides to binoculars, birding etiquette to bird song and of course bird identification. Any level of interest is welcome. Questions are encouraged. A walk around the park will let you use your newfound - or refreshed - skills. ***Directions:** Drive past sports fields; meet at the pavilion.*

Leaders: Rich Dilks, Mike and Suzan DeLozier

April 24 (Monday) 6:30 - 8 P.M. Birding by Ear - Part 1

“An Introduction to Birdcalls”

Wenonah Lake

W. Maple St., Wenonah, NJ 08090

Learn mnemonics and “tricks of the trade” to identify birds by their songs and calls. This is a great session for novices and those that would like to brush-up on their “Birding by Ear” skills. ***Directions:** Meet in the parking lot.*

Leaders: Brian Hayes and Jeff Mollenhauer

April 25 (Tuesday) 7 - 8:30 A.M.

Tall Pines State Preserve

Bark Bridge Rd., Sewell, NJ 08080

Newly preserved by the state, this former golf course has ponds, marsh and wetlands, and patches of eastern hardwood forest. More than seventy species of birds, including the Bald Eagle, a rare albino Red Tail Hawk and eleven species of warblers, have been identified here. ***Directions:** From Rt. 553 (Woodbury-Glassboro Rd) turn west onto Bark Bridge Rd. Park in the lot on the left. Please do not park at Hutchinson Cabinets.*

Leaders: Rich Dilks and Erik Mollenhauer

April 27 (Thursday) 6 - 7:30 P.M. Junior Birding

Red Bank Battlefield Park

100 Hessian Avenue National Park, 08063

This field trip is designed to introduce young birders to the "sport." Binoculars to borrow will be available to all participants on this trip. As they enjoy all the birds, young birders will be shown how to locate and identify birds through binoculars and in field guides. This is a great first field trip for a child that is interested in birding. Depending on the age and size of the group of the birders we can divide the group by age or ability. This trip will be designed to be fun and engage children with the goal of introducing them to the activity. However, any level of interest is welcome. Questions are encouraged.

Directions: Meet at the pavilion closest to the river.

Leaders: Paula Hayes and Maria Keefe

April 28 (Friday) 7 – 8:30 A.M.

Ceres Park Nature Preserve

Main Street/Alternate Route 553, Mantua Township, 08080

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: Meet in the Main Street parking lot.*

Leaders: Barry Bengel and Jayne Rhynard

April 29 (Saturday) 7:30 – 9 A.M.

Chestnut Branch Park

545 Main Street, Mantua, NJ 08051

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: Meet at the butterfly garden, beyond the basketball courts.

Leaders: Bob Duke and Jay Hoffecker

April 30 (Sunday) 7:00 - 8:30 A.M.

Scotland Run Park

980 E Academy St, Clayton, NJ 08312

In the largest of the county parks, Warblers and other song birds are abundant and conspicuous in the spring. Look for Prairie Warbler, Ovenbird, Eastern Bluebird, Field Sparrow, Orchard Oriole, and Louisiana Water thrush, among others. *Directions: Meet in the parking lot on the lake side of Academy St.*

Leaders: Ron and Linda Kegel

May 1 (Monday) 6– 7:30 P.M. Birding by Ear - Part 2

“To Pish or Not to Pish, That is the Question.”

Jack Sheppard Community Center (historic train station)

E. Mantua Ave & N. East Ave, Wenonah, NJ 08090

In a classroom setting, continue to learn mnemonics and “tricks of the trade” to identify birds by their songs and calls. Learn about Pishing - What is it? Who does it? Is it right for you?

Leaders: Brian Hayes and Jeff Mollenhauer

May 3 (Wednesday) 6 - 7:30 P.M.

Wheelabrator Refuge

600 Crown Point Rd, Westville, 08093

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. Bob White can be heard here.

Directions: Access from Rt. 130 (Crown Point Rd,) opposite Hazel Ave in Westville, just south of Big Timber Creek. Meet at the pavilion in parking lot.

Leaders: Kris Mollenhauer and Marilyn Henry

May 4 (Thursday) 6 - 7:30 P.M.

RiverWinds Park

1000 Riverwinds Drive, Thorofare, NJ 08086

Riverside shrubs and forested areas along the Delaware River make for great birding here. Start at the West Deptford Scenic Trail and, if time allows, continue along the Delaware River. Look for migrating warblers, scarlet tanagers, hawks and maybe a bald eagle! *Directions; Turn left onto RiverWinds Drive. Go approx.1000 ft, then turn right at the trail sign.*

Leaders: Gary Lizzi and Gale Cannon