



Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public.

April 2021

Monthly GCNC meetings are currently suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please stay tuned, as the situation is continually evolving.

Our regular monthly meetings are may be suspended, but we are happy to be able to present the following:

Special Live Online Program!

Roger Tory Peterson and the Origins of the Modern Field Guide - A personal history by

Lee Allen Peterson

A special online live presentation of the Gloucester County Nature Club

Thursday, April 8, 2021 at 7:00pm

Presenter: Lee Allen Peterson

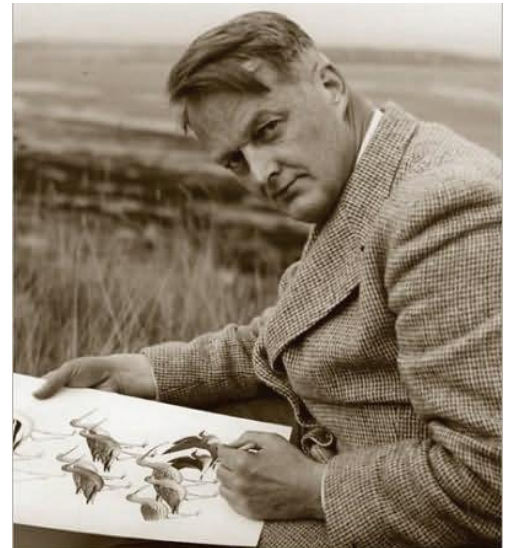
Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342

Web link: <https://meet.jit.si/GCNCMeeting>

This presentation is free and open to the public

“Artist, author, and influential conservationist Roger Tory Peterson pioneered the modern age of bird watching with his breakthrough 1934 book, *A Field Guide to the Birds*. Until Peterson came along, field guides were largely the work of ornithologists....Suddenly, with Peterson’s book, birders had clear, useful images, with arrows pointing to the distinguishing feature or features of each species, painstakingly painted by the author.”

~Steve Grant



The modern field guide was born.

Lee Peterson is the younger son of famed naturalist, Roger Tory Peterson. A naturalist himself, Lee has traveled extensively throughout North America lecturing on his father and his own area of expertise - edible wild plants. He is the author of "*A Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants*" in the Peterson Field Guide Series.

Lee and his wife Courtney currently reside in southeastern Pennsylvania and design and make an award-winning line of Natural History themed jewelry under the name - Courtney Design.

Guided Bird Walks at Scotland Run Park **1st & 3rd Thursdays of every month, 8:00am – 9:30am**

Volunteer birders from the Gloucester County Nature Club will be leading twice monthly walks beginning in March. Come help search for the many birds that visit or inhabit Scotland Run Park. These 2021 walks are free and will take place the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month from March 4th through October 21st, 8 am to 9:30 am. Meet at the Nature Center parking lot. Participants are encouraged to bring binoculars. Mask wearing and social distancing will be observed.

MEETUP: In order to reach members with the most up to date field trip information we are asking everyone who is able to sign up for the Gloucester County Nature Club Meetup site. By accessing the site at www.meetup.com/Gloucester-County-Nature-Club/ or using the QR Code to the right, you will be directed to the site. Once you are signed up on the site you will receive up-to-date information on upcoming trips, meetings, events, and fun walks. If you attend field trips you should consider joining Meetup even if you receive the newsletter electronically.



Bird Quest 2021

For many of us in the club, being in the outdoors among the birds this past 12 months has provided a welcome respite from an otherwise homebound existence during the pandemic. On Saturday, May 1st, the club is bringing back our annual bird-spotting competition called Bird Quest, although not exactly in the same form this time. We always have a theme; this year it's the **Natural Places of Gloucester County** in recognition of the second edition of the club's book.

What's different this year? First, there will be no T-shirt, which surely will disappoint some people. But that also means there will be no cost to participate, and therefore no need for you to rush to mail in a paper registration form and check.

On the day of the event, teams or individuals will have the usual 5 hours (7 AM to Noon) to visit sites of their choice. The goal as always is to **identify as many bird species as possible by sight or sound**.

This year, we are not limiting site locations to Gloucester County. Feeder watches are also acceptable. For safety, we encourage participants to follow [guidelines](#) from the 2020 Audubon Christmas Bird Count:

- Adhere to social distancing and/or masking at all times in the field.
- Carpooling should only occur within existing families or social "pod" groups.
- No in-person gatherings afterwards.

To expand on that last point, the final big difference this year is that our post-Quest gathering will be held virtually. To make this kind of gathering possible, participants will submit their bird checklists through a website instead of having to hand in a piece of paper. For those without easy smartphone or computer access, we encourage you to make use of local libraries, many of which will be open at that hour on Saturday.

Here are some ways you can get ready for May 1st:

- Sign up for a training session on [Meetup](#); the schedule is in this newsletter.
- Starting in mid-April, visit the new Bird Quest website: birdquest.gcnatureclub.org. There you will be able to find the rules, our traditional paper checklists (for use in the field), and general info about the event.

Training Sessions for Bird Quest 2021

Please note that there are AM and PM sessions!

April 11 (Sunday) 6 PM to Dusk

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 & Karen Kravchuck

April 15 (Thursday) 8 – 9:30 AM

Tall Pines State Preserve — Bark Bridge Rd., Sewell, NJ 08080

Gloucester County's only state park, 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 and eleven species of warblers, have been identified here.

Directions: From Rt. 553 (Woodbury-Glassboro Rd) turn west at the light 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 20 (Wednesday) 5:30 PM to Dusk

Scotland Run Park — 980 E Academy St, Clayton, NJ 08312

Scotland Run Park is the largest of the county parks, spanning over 1,000 acres including the eighty acre Wilson Lake. Migrant warblers and other songbirds are abundant. Look for Prairie Warbler, Ovenbird, Eastern Bluebird, Field Sparrow, Orchard Oriole, and Louisiana Waterthrush, among others.

Directions: Meet at the Wilson Lake side of the Scotland Run parking lot.

Marilyn Henry and Jayne Rhynard

Please note that there are 2 Training Sessions on April 21" AM and PM

April 21 (Wednesday) 7:30 — 9 AM

George Eldridge Trail— E. Pine St, Wenonah, NJ 08090

Eldridge Trail is part of the Wenonah Conservation Area, a ring of green that extends nearly the entire circumference of the town. This is good spot for thrushes, warblers, maybe even a Pileated Woodpecker.

Directions: From E. Mantua Ave, head south on S. Clinton Ave. to E. Pine St. Meet in front of 212 East Pine.

Leader: Dan Ceravolo

April 21 (Wednesday) 6 PM to dusk

Wenonah Lake — Maple St. & N. Jefferson Ave., Wenonah, NJ 08090

Follow the Wenonah Lake Trail that begins just north of the parking lot and follows the perimeter of the lake. It crosses several footbridges and ends at the dam on Maple Street. It is a good trail for observing waterfowl and song- birds. Be on the lookout for Spring migrants!

Directions: Meet in the parking lot.

Leaders: Paula & Brian Hayes

April 24 (Saturday) 7:30 - 9 AM

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 may 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 the parking lot.

Leaders: Kris Mollenhauer & Gale Cannon

April 29 (Thursday) 6:00 PM to Dusk

RiverWinds Park — 1000 RiverWinds Drive, Thorofare, NJ 08086

Riverside shrubs and forested areas along the Delaware River make for great birding here. Look for migrating warblers, scarlet tanagers, hawks and maybe a bald eagle!

Directions: Turn onto RiverWinds Drive. Meet at the parking lot past the Community Center and before the restaurant (Stay to the right of the Community Center.)

Leaders: Gary Lizzi & Lloyd Shaw

“Lights Out” to Help Migrating Birds

In the wake of a mass-collision event involving over 1,000 migrating birds in downtown Philadelphia last October 2nd, conservation groups and property owners have joined forces to prevent a similar event from occurring this spring. From April 1st through May 31st (and again from August 15th to November 15th) iconic buildings including One Liberty Place, BNY Mellon Center, and the Comcast Technology Center will be dimming both exterior and interior lights between midnight and 6 AM each day. The idea is to not only to prevent birds from directly colliding with glass surfaces, but also to reduce skyglow that can disorient migrants during their nightly journeys. Homeowners can help also by turning off floodlights and decorative lighting during these two peak migration periods each year. For more information, see the [Bird Safe Philly website](#).

The Big Year Eco-Challenge

On January 1, a number of Nature Club members and other volunteers began a new project, "The Big Year Eco-Challenge". Over the course of this calendar year, they will survey (as time permits) five local parks and natural areas to identify as many species of plants and animals as they can find: Tall Pines State Preserve, Ceres Park, RiverWinds, Piney Hollow and Elephant Swamp Trail.

BYEC March Update - The Subtle Sounds of Springtails and Spiders

February was all about springtails on the snow, but March started off with springtails on the water surface of ponds and puddles. So many in fact that on one occasion, I could actually hear the sounds of thousands of tiny [springtails](#) jumping on the water as I approached for a close up photo (it sounds a bit like Rice Krispies in milk). Mites and spiders have also been very active this month and I have very much enjoyed finding some large fishing spiders and wolf spiders and the smaller jumping spiders are always a favorite (especially the [Bold Jumping Spider](#) with its iridescent green chelicerae).

By far my favorite spider observation of the month were the [Drumming Sword Wolf Spiders](#) though. Males the size of a half dollar coin crawl through the leaf litter drumming on dry leaves with their front legs, which makes a short, buzzy sound that is audible to the human ear. I was able to capture the sounds using my phone and submit an audio recording of the encounter along with the photos. Although many male wolf and jumping spiders perform this drumming behavior to attract females, it is rare that is audible to the human ear. I was surprised to find that my audio recording appears to be the first audio recording submitted to iNaturalist! Interestingly, once I learned to recognize the sound this spider makes, they are numerous and easy to find in the appropriate habitat. I have now seen/heard them drumming along the Elephant Swamp Trail, in Ceres Park, and in the woods along Cartwheel Branch in Harrison Township.

-- Jeffrey Mollenhauer



Bold Jumping Spider



Drumming Sword Wolf Spider on dry leaves.

Monthly Summaries of BYEC findings can be found on the [BYEC webpage](#) on the GCNC website.

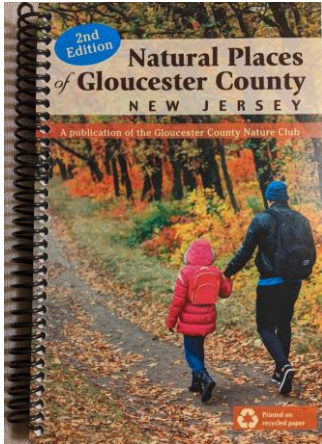
Club Notes:

- 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 online via videoconference on Monday April 5th. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.

Looking Ahead

For the month of May, the club plans another Special Live Online Program; this one will be on native plants of South Jersey, and will be held on Thursday May 13 at 7:00pm. Details will be provided in next month's newsletter.

Natural Places of Gloucester County NJ - Second Edition now available!



Our wildly popular ***Natural Places of Gloucester County NJ*** book is back as a 2nd Edition with a new fresh look, updated information, and new locations. Great for getting out of the house exploring the outdoors while still staying socially distanced and safe. Just what you need to stuff stockings and find places full of natural beauty tucked away in our county.

The Natural Places Guide is one of the many ways the Nature Club provides valuable detailed information, not available elsewhere, about the plants, trees, birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians at over 35 local Natural Places. Each site description includes directions, address and parking information plus a map of the site to make visiting easy and enjoyable. For the Second Edition, information for existing sites has been brought up-to-date. Several new sites have also been added, including: Tall Pines State Preserve, Andoloro WMA, and Tranquility Trails.

Copies of ***Natural Places of Gloucester County NJ*** are now available for purchase at local retailers including:

- Bob's Little Sport Shop - 316-318 Delsea Drive North, Glassboro, NJ 08028
- Damingers Natural Pet Foods - 641 Main St, Sewell (Mantua Township), NJ 08080
- Triple Oaks Nursery & Herb Garden - 2359 Delsea Drive, Franklinville, NJ 08322
- Wild Birds Unlimited Cherry Hill - 1619 N Kings Hwy, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034
- Words Matter - 52 S. Broadway, Pitman, NJ 08071
- The Yellow Garage Antiques = 66 South Main St., Mullica Hill, NJ 08062

The book is also available through the club's online store. To access the online store, [click here](#).

Please remember to help out the Gloucester County Nature Club while shopping online!



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us have been shopping online a lot more lately. Don't forget that shopping at Amazon can also benefit the Gloucester County Nature Club at **NO extra cost** to you!

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. You can choose from nearly one million organizations to support.

The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. The purchase price is the amount paid for the item minus any rebates and excluding shipping & handling, gift-wrapping fees, taxes, or service charges. You may even use your existing Amazon.com account for your purchases.

To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile.