

Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public
May 2005

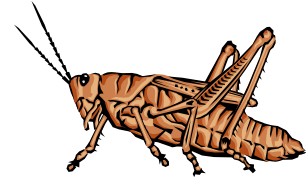
Program - Stories from Lilliput: Exploring the World of Insects and Annual Plant Sale

Thursday, May 12th at 7:00 PM at EIRC

Program Coordinator - Bob Cassel 478-2496

Presenter – Erik Mollenhauer

The 6th Gloucester County Bird Quest is around the corner. Songbirds are returning north. Why? For the insects. Most of these birds eat insects, and many songbirds are completely dependent on them. As a group, insects have been around for nearly 200 million years. They have been very, very successful. Scientists have identified more than a million insect species but believe there may be at least 30 million more (compare this to 9,700 bird species and 4,600 mammal species found worldwide). In fact, over half of all species on Earth are insects. If you are impressed by the scores of bird species that visit New Jersey this May, consider that over 15,000 species of insects have been found around New York City, or that one entomologist found almost 1,500 insect species in his 75 x 200 foot suburban New York garden. Join us for a creepy, crawly look at the diverse world of insects.



PLANT SALE! Our annual plant sale will be held just before the start of our May meeting at EIRC. **The sale will start at 6:00** and the proceeds will benefit the Nature Club and its programs. Arrive early to shop for some wonderful new specimens for your garden. Much of what is offered at the sale comes from our own gardens. As you make your way to your flower beds now that spring has finally arrived, keep an eye out for those perennials that need dividing, "volunteers" in not quite the right spots, seeds, trees and shrubs, too. Whatever you can share, bring it with you and be part of the plant sale. Questions? Call Karen at 468-6536.

Field Trip - Bird Quest - Saturday May 7 from 7:00 am – Noon

The 2005 (6th Annual!) Gloucester County Bird Quest will take place on Saturday May 7 from 7 AM to 12 NOON in Gloucester County. During this time, teams visit parks and natural sites in Gloucester County and find as many different bird species as they can. The purpose of the Quest is to discover natural areas of Gloucester County, to learn to identify birds by sight and sound, and to have fun with friends, colleagues and family. **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, posters and prizes.**

This year's Quest is being supported by many local environmental commissions, businesses, and industries. Participants are encouraged to form teams of friends and family or join one of the buses (see below).

Most people organize their own Quest team with colleagues, friends, and/or family. Last years Gloucester County Bird Quest attracted several hundred participants made up of teachers, school groups, scout troops, environmental commissions, families, friends... residents of Gloucester and neighboring counties. This year with support from Wheelabrator, LP of Gloucester County, the Club will operate two (free) guided buses for teachers and other persons unable to form their own team and who are willing to join a larger group. **We expect the buses to fill this year so please register early to guarantee a seat.** Last year's Quest attracted close to 300 participants, including teachers, school groups, scout troops, environmental commissions, families and residents of Gloucester and neighboring counties.

A county map and other materials are provided to registered teams. **A \$10 fee per participant covers the cost of lunch, T-shirt, posters, prizes etc.** To obtain more information, a team registration form, to join a team or ride a bus, contact Anne Rossell at 856-582-7000 x110, fax 856-582-4206 or email at anner@eirc.org. Forms are also available at the Nature Club's website: www.gcnatureclub.org. The club, through the help of many members, has set up an extensive training schedule for the weeks prior to Bird Quest.

There are still a few remaining trainings left before Bird Quest:

May 1 – Sunday 7:00 – 8:30 AM

Bird Quest Training

Flood Gate Road, Greenwich

Directions: Access from Rt 44 South of Gibbstown. Turn right onto Floodgate road (at the racetrack) and meet all the way down at the gate by the river.

Leader: Dick Ebert

CoLeader: Karen Kravchuck

May 1 – Sunday 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Bird Quest Training

Washington Lake Park, Washington Twp

Directions: Take Larson Lane off the North side of Chapel Hts. Rd (Rt 639), East of Gloucester Co. Community Church. Meet at the parking area (end of street).

Leader: Bob Duke

CoLeader: Doris and Dwight Weir

May 2 – Monday 6:00 – 7:00 AM

Bird Quest Training

Wheelabrator, 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: Bob Baruzzi

CoLeader: Deb Maka

May 3 – Tuesday 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Birding by Ear Part III

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

Directions: Located right on Delsea Dr. (47) in Washington Twp next to the Italian Bistro.

Leader: Erik Mollenhauer

CoLeader: Ed and Millie Cleary

May 4 – Wednesday 6:00 – 7:00 AM

Birding by Ear Part IV

Cere's Park, Mantua

Take the skills learned in the classroom out in the field.

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

Leader: Jayne Rhynard

CoLeader: Barry Bengel

May 5 – Thursday 6:00 – 7:30 AM

Bird Quest Training

Old Pine Farm, Deptford

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

Leader: Gale Cannon

CoLeader: Joan Tracy

The Raptor Project by Thomas Duke

The Pitman High School Auditorium was abuzz with the sights and sounds of the most beautiful birds-of-prey in North America. Jonathan Woods heads The Raptor Project and brought his "family" of eagles, hawks, owls and falcons for all to see. The auditorium was packed with adults and children who enjoyed the rare treat of seeing these birds up close. Everybody's favorite was the ever-patriotic bald eagle. The snowy owl couple wowed the crowd as both male and female actually flew in circles above the seats. The largest of the birds, the golden eagle also had a brief flight. All the raptors were well-behaved with a only a hint of being ornery. The flashes of cameras and the applause did not startle the birds, and they didn't seem to mind being so close to people. In fact, Mr. Woods walked into the audience and placed his Peregrine Falcon on this writer's head before calling the bird into flight!!! Mr. Woods spent time after the show, greeting those who wanted to meet him. Everybody got the opportunity to photograph the birds up close. The members of the GCNC wish Jonathan Woods a wonderful 2005 tour of the United States with his wonderful family of raptors. We can only hope he returns to South Jersey in the near future.



Conservation Corner – Updates on the Delaware by Loretta Dunne

Last May there were two issues relating to the Delaware River described in the newsletter. There have been some recent developments on both of them.

VX Nerve Gas Disposal

About 1200 tons of VX nerve gas is stored in the Newport Chemical Depot in Newport, Indiana. The Army has proposed destroying the chemicals at the storage site and trucking the remains of the process, about two million gallons of watery residue, to Dupont in Deepwater, NJ. Dupont would further treat the residue and then dispose of it in the Delaware River. The entire process would take about two years.

During the public hearings on the proposed plan, many environmental groups and citizens raised questions about the safety of the water. Subsequently, eight members of Congress from New Jersey and Delaware asked the Center for Disease Control to study the proposal.

The results of the study came back last week and the officials indicated that the plans should not go forward because of concerns for aquatic life and also because it is unclear that the Army could destroy the VX before it is shipped to Dupont. It is difficult to determine whether the VX in the wastewater had been destroyed or not; it is possible that trace elements might be in an organic layer on top of the mixture.

It is uncertain whether the Army and Dupont will pursue the disposal of the VX gas in the Delaware further. If they do go forward, the result of the testing will provide substantial fuel to fight the project.

LNG Terminal in Logan Township

The Liquefied Natural Gas terminal proposal in Logan Township was rejected again by the state of Delaware review board. BP now has plans to bypass the decision with a plan to build a berth next to the plant or a pier outside of Delaware's legal jurisdiction. The alternate plan would require the pipeline to be built to transfer the gas across the property of a coal-fired power plant and build into the wetlands, an option that was rejected earlier because it is considered riskier than the proposed pier.

But what about LNG itself? It is considered the cleanest of the fossil fuels and the best fuel to utilize in the short term instead of coal. But there are a number of concerns about it. Drilling for natural gas has often been done in environmentally sensitive areas and some of the methods used to extract the gas, such as coal-bed methane mining can be devastating to an area, destroying the land and contaminating the water. Environmentalists have fought to protect many areas of the west from such gas extraction. This information and more on LNG is from an article entitled Liquid Assets <http://www.grist.org/news/powers/2003/11/06/assets/index.html> by Amanda Griscom in the online journal, Grist Magazine.

Correction: In Last Month's Conservation Corner, we inadvertently misspelled the name of a local Community Supported Agricultural (CSA) farm. That farm is actually known as the **Muth Farm**, and it is located at 1639 Pitman Downer Road in Williamstown, NJ.

Other Nature Notes

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

Wild Birds Unlimited has recently entered into a discount agreement with the GCNC executive board and is pleased to now 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.

Also of Interest Locally:

For those that are not already aware, Scotland Run Park in Clayton hosts a **Bird Walk** on one Tuesday evening a month in the Spring and Summer, and on the first Saturday morning of the month in the Autumn and Winter. Bob Duke from the Nature Club and Park Naturalist Jill Taylor are the leaders. The next Bird Walk at Scotland Run will be **May 17th at 6PM.**

WORLD SERIES OF BIRDING: The Ruffs...Will The Third Time Be The Charm



For the third year in a row, the Gloucester County Nature Club will sponsor a team in the prestigious, New Jersey Audubon Society's *World Series of Birding* on May 14, 2005. The Ruffs will again compete in the Limited Geographic Area (LGA) competition, pitting their birding skills against other County only birding teams. The Ruffs will be searching the fields, wetlands, forests, lakes, rivers, streams and creeks of Gloucester County in an attempt to identify as many birds by sight & sound in a span of 24 hours. This year's team will again consist of Gale Cannon, Dick Ebert, Bob Baruzzi and Jeff Holt. The last two years, the Ruffs have placed fifth in the LGA competition. They think this year they can do better, but they need your help. While a competition, the World Series of Birding serves a more important purpose, to raise money and awareness for environmental causes. Each competing team raises money through pledges based on the number of birds correctly identified (e.g. \$1.00/species). Flat pledges are also welcome. Last year, over \$1800.00 was raised in pledges by the team which was given to the South Jersey Land Trust at the November, 2004 meeting. By your generosity, you can encourage the Ruffs to embrace sleep deprivation and forego creature comforts and push harder for that one last bird. Each additional bird identified will add to the amount we will again give to the South Jersey Land Trust.

If you would like further information on making a pledge, contact Marge Dolente at 384-6214. A pledge form is also available on the website at www.gcnatureclub.org. Club members are encouraged to collect pledges from family and friends on behalf of the team. Checks should be made payable to the Gloucester County Nature Club and mailed to Marge Dolente at 1001 Stonybrook Drive, Deptford, NJ 08096. Individuals can also help the team by providing them with information on the location of any unusual or nesting birds by calling Jeff Holt at 429-1802 (day) or 845-8925 (evening).

Looking Ahead:

Programs-

June - Club Picnic

Field Trips-

June - Amphibians in the Pinelands

Summer '05 - Several summer field trips to be announced soon

Club Notes:

- A vote on the club logo was held at the March meeting, and the winner is: **The current logo!** A slightly updated version of the current logo is currently in production, and will be unveiled soon.
- The May Executive Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday May 3rd at EIRC, right after the **Birding by Ear Part III** training session.

- If you'd like to receive the newsletter electronically or receive more info about the club please email Brian or Paula Hayes at pnbhayes@comcast.net or call 468-9272.
- 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. Also - if your email address changes, please inform Barry.

Election of Trustees

May is our Annual meeting to elect Trustees. Trustees are responsible for electing and providing direction for the Executive Committee members. When elected, Trustees serve a three-year term at which time the seat is up for election. All voting is final at the close of the May meeting with the results to be included in the June newsletter. You may use the ballot below to vote. Ballots will also be available at the May meeting. Voting must be received by 9:00 PM on May 12, 2005.

Gloucester County Nature Club 2005 Official Ballot

Board of Trustees (Term for 2005 – 2008)

Mark an X in the box to the left of the candidates of your choice.

(Please vote for no more than four (4) candidates)

Bonnie Dann

Bob Cassel

Erik Mollenhauer

Jackie Partridge

Write in (other than above)

Write in (other than above)
