



# Gloucester County Nature Club

## Monthly Newsletter

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

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

May 2013

### **SPECIAL LOCATION**

**Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Wenonah, NJ** (directions below)

**Thursday May 9, 2013**

**Reminder:** Starting time for the plant sale is **6:00 PM**, for the program **7:00 PM**.

**Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks (856-468-6342)**

**6:00 PM: 2013 GCNC Annual Plant Sale**

**7:00 PM: The Fossils at Inversand and the KT Boundary Mass Extinction**

**Presenter: Dr. Kenneth Lacovara, Associate Professor, Department of Biodiversity, Earth & Environmental Science, Drexel University**

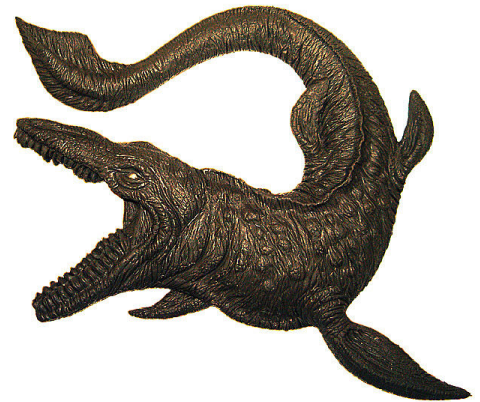
*The earth is not a mere fragment of dead history, stratum upon stratum like the leaves of a book... but living poetry like the leaves of a tree, which precede flowers and fruit.*

~Henry David Thoreau

*Extinction is the rule. Survival is the exception.*

~Carl Sagan

It is 65 million years ago, near the end of the Cretaceous Period. The climate is much warmer than today and sea levels are higher. Most of Gloucester County is a shallow sea and North America's shoreline lies just east of where the Delaware River now flows. Dinosaurs are the dominant land animals and have been so for over 150 million years. Cretaceous birds share the sky with Pterosaurs. Reptilian Mosasaurs and Plesiosaurs swim the oceans. Then in a geological instant, all that changed. The non-avian Dinosaurs, the great flying and marine reptiles and nearly 50% of all species went extinct in the second greatest mass extinction in the history of life on Earth.



Now at Inversand, startling evidence of that cataclysm is coming to light in the excavations headed by paleontologist Dr. Kenneth Lacovara, whom we are pleased to welcome as our May speaker. The Inversand green sand marl (glauconite) pit mine in Mantua Township, has been for paleontologists since the 1920's a doorway into that vanished world of the Cretaceous and Paleogene. Dr. Lacovara's current excavations at Inversand are yielding crucial evidence in our understanding of that mass extinction event 65 million years ago that forever changed the course of life on our planet. Dr. Lacovara will take us on a

journey to that ancient sea bed and to that cataclysmic event that was a “very bad day for life on Earth”. Dr. Lacovara has called Inversand a World Heritage Site, one of the most important paleontological locations on Earth and strongly advocates its preservation for both scientific study and public education.

**Field Trip to Inversand.** Dr. Lacovara has kindly invited GCNC members to a personal tour of the paleontological excavations at the Inversand site. The tour will be held on an early evening in mid-summer. Look for the date, time and details to be posted in the newsletter and on our web site once arrangements have been made.

Dr. Lacovara received his B.A. in Physical Geography from Rowan University and went on for his M.A. in Coastal Geomorphology at the University of Maryland and his Ph.D. in, Geology from the University of Delaware. He has done extensive field work in Egypt, southern-most South America and China as well as New Jersey. He has co-authored descriptions of two new dinosaurs, a teleost fish and a necrocarcinid crab among other species. Dr. Lacovara also studies Mesozoic Era paleoenvironments where high CO<sub>2</sub> levels resulted in extensive global warming with the goal that “by understanding paleoecological change during previous episodes of global warming, we enhance our ability to understand current changes related to the ongoing climate crisis.”

**ANNUAL PLANT SALE!** It’s that time again! Spring is here and it's time to be in our gardens, getting them ready for the warm weather season. This means it is also time for the Club’s annual plant sale. Hopefully, once again, we’ll have a wonderful combination of nursery grown plants and plants from our very own gardens.

Here’s where your part of this comes in. As you are in your gardens in the next couple of weeks keep an eye out for plants you can share. Maybe it could be some of those perennials you have been meaning to divide or a volunteer shrub or tree that just has to be moved. Even some extra seeds that you collected in the fall would be great. Just pot them up or pack them up and bring them with you. Please mark them carefully, though, so we keep the mystery plants to a minimum.

The Plant Sale will be held just before the May meeting. It will start at **6:00 PM at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church**. It is open to the public so please tell family and friends.

**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).

### **Family Fun Walk at Ceres Park, Mantua Township**

**Sunday, May 26, 2013 at 11:00 AM**

**Trip Leader:** Maria Keefe (cell/text: 609-315-4759 or [mariakeefe19@comcast.net](mailto:mariakeefe19@comcast.net))

Come join us for a walk at Ceres Park, Mantua Twp on Sunday, May 26 at 11:00 AM. We will take a nice walk in the woods on the holiday weekend and you will still have time to be home in time for your holiday plans. All ages are welcome. These walks are for anyone that enjoys seeing the wonder of the natural world through a child’s eye. You don’t need children to join these walks with active, excitable, and enthusiastic children... Bring a baby in a backpack, a toddler in tow, grade schoolers, parents, or grandparents along for a walk. We will walk at child’s pace stopping to look at anything interesting we find. The walk will last an hour or so. Dress according to the weather, and insect repellent is probably a good idea. Bring your sense of adventure and join us for a morning outdoors.



**Directions:** *Coming from Pitman*, access from Route 553Alt (Pitman-Barnsboro Rd.). Watch for Ceres Park sign on left side of road, just after Route 55. Meet in the parking lot.

*Coming from Woodbury* (From the intersection of Route 45 (Broad Street) and Cooper Street), go south on Route 45 for 4.2 miles. Turn left (from right hand lane) onto Route 553Alt (Main Street) in Mantua. Go south on Route 553Alt for 3.6 miles. The park entrance will be on the right, just north of Route 55. Meet in the parking lot.

## Nature Notes

### **Events by other Organizations: May 2013**

- May 19 (Sunday), 2:00 PM – **Herbivory: what's eating what?** Sponsored by the Old Pine Farm Natural Lands Trust. Free. Experience a casual stroll on the trails of the land trust with a knowledgeable leader to observe the plants, animals, natural features and processes, and just plain magic that make this place very special. Meet in the parking area at the end of Rankin Avenue in Blackwood Terrace. Please check at [www.oldpinefarm.org/](http://www.oldpinefarm.org/) for changes to the schedule and directions. Or just use your favorite mapping program or your GPS by typing in "400 Rankin Ave, Deptford, NJ." Further details available by calling Carl Ford at 856-579-4441. We will do this on the third Sunday of each month, with a different focus each month.

**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.

- Volunteer Meeting: Friday 5/3 (Workshop) at 9:00 AM
- Bird Walk: Tuesday 5/14 at 6:00 PM
- Nature Tots: Wednesdays 5/8 at 10:00 AM
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 5/11 at 10:00 AM
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 5/22 at 2:30 PM
- Wild Workshop: Friday 5/3, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Stream Watch Workshops: Friday 5/10 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM
- Canoeing / Kayaking: Saturday 5/18 at 11:00 AM.

### **Natural Events for the month of May**

- Jack in the pulpit, pink lady's-slipper, and mayapple bloom by mid-May in the County's remnant woodlands.
- Early spring flowers such as spring beauty fade rapidly, as trees leaf out and shade the forest floor.
- Princess tree, or Paulownia (named after an 18th-Century Russian princess) blooms with large clusters of pale purple flowers. It's an invasive species but still very pretty.
- By late May, monarch butterflies arrive from the south and begin laying their eggs on newly emerged plants of common milkweed.
- Young rabbits, gray squirrels, and other small mammals are leaving their home nests. Drive carefully.
- Horseshoe crabs spawn on Delaware Bayshore beaches from late May to early June.
- Red knots arrive for their stop-over at the Delaware Bay area to double their weight on horseshoe crab eggs in preparation for their nonstop journey to Arctic breeding grounds.

## **Looking Ahead:**

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

June 13, 2013: **Annual Picnic** at Wenonah Lake

## **GCNC Summer Field Trips**

Date TBD - **Field Trip to Inversand** - Dr. Kenneth Lacovara

The date of the above trip as well as a listing of additional Summer field trips should be provided in the next newsletter. If you would be able and willing to lead a Summer field trip, please contact Karl Anderson at [karlanderson6@aol.com](mailto:karlanderson6@aol.com) or (856) 845-7075.

## **Club Notes:**

- If you'd like to receive the newsletter electronically or receive more info about the club please email Karen Kravchuck at [president@gcnatureclub.org](mailto:president@gcnatureclub.org) or call 856-468-6536.
- 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 [newsletter@gcnatureclub.org](mailto:newsletter@gcnatureclub.org) or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.
- The May Executive Committee meeting will be held on May 5<sup>th</sup> at the home of Barry Bengel. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.

## **Gloucester County Bird Quest: Saturday May 4, 2013**

The Gloucester County Nature Club and co-sponsors invite people of all ages to participate in the **2013 (14th annual) Gloucester County Bird Quest. This year Bird Quest** will take place on **Sat. May 4, 2013 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).**

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, 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 lead 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.
  - **7:00-8:30: 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 into the parking lot at that intersection – it should be open. We have permission from the landowner to be there -- please do not park at Hutchinson Cabinets.
  - **9:00-10:30: Chestnut Branch Park:** From Route 45 take 553A (Alternate) towards Sewell one and one half miles. The Park will be on your left. From Route 55 take exit 53 towards Wenonah. At the fourth light make a left towards Barnsboro. At the second light make a right onto Route 553A. The park will be on your right in about one mile. Park in the lower right gravel parking lot (you can cross over the walking path to get to the gravel lot).
  - **11:00-12:00: 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 hundreds of 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!**

Our theme this year is "Hungry Birds" and will be featured in a T-shirt by Gariel Graphics. **The \$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](http://www.gcnatureclub.org). For more information, join a team or reserve a seat on the bus, contact Brian Hayes at [bhayes@eirc.org](mailto:bhayes@eirc.org) or 856.582.7000 x110.

**Native Plant Supplier:** Bonnie Weiskittel has found a nursery specializing in native plants which also conducts workshops on gardening with native plants and various other topics. *Edge of the Woods Nursery* is located on Rt 100 north of Fogelsville, PA (near Allentown), but well worth the drive. The main website is <http://www.edgeofthewoodsnursery.com>, and the list of workshops is at <http://e2.ma/message/43vte/o7rgbf> .