



# Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

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

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

May 2023

**Thursday, May 11, 2023 - Annual Plant Sale & Program**

**6:00pm - GCNC Annual Plant Sale**

**7:00pm - Program: Moths & Nocturnal Insects of Gloucester County**

**Presenter: Jeff Mollenhauer**

**Thursday, May 11, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Wenonah, NJ (directions below)**

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342

After the conclusion of the Big Year Eco-Challenge in 2021, our presenter Jeff Mollenhauer, was lured into the "dark side" of iNaturalist...nocturnal insects! Jeff and Jon Stippick spent much of 2022 using UV lights to attract moths and other nocturnal insects to sheets at night where they could photograph them and record their observations to iNaturalist. The results of their efforts more than doubled the number of Lepidoptera (888 species) and beetles (456 species) recorded on iNaturalist in Gloucester County prior to 2022! During the presentation, Jeff will share photos and highlights of their journey to document the night life of Gloucester County. You will be stunned at the beauty of these insects that we rarely see as they are active largely at night and we are too often oblivious to their presence.



**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).

## **Annual Plant Sale!**

Gardeners get ready! Once again it is time for the annual Nature Club Plant Sale, held just before the start of the regular May meeting.

For those gardeners new to the plant sale let me explain that this is a member participation event - but don't worry, this is the stuff we live for.

First, we hope that you will find lots of "just the right plants" there to fill out your garden at home - and buy them. The proceeds go to the club and its programs. We also hope that you will help to supply some of those "just the right plants" for other members to find.

As you are out in your gardens this, spring please keep an eye out for plants you can share — perennials that need dividing, "volunteers" in the wrong spot, extra seeds you have collected, shrubs – whatever you think someone would enjoy in their garden.



Don't worry about the selling – we will take care of that – just pot them up and bring them along with you —clearly marked, please. We try to keep the “Mystery Plants” to a minimum! Much of what we sell comes right from our own members.

**BIRD QUEST IS COMING SOON: Saturday May 6, 2023**

The club invites people of all ages to participate in the **23rd Annual Gloucester County Bird Quest** taking place on **Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> from 7 AM to 12 noon** throughout Gloucester County. After a bit of a washout last year, we will plan once again for a full-featured event including: **T-shirts, expert-led walks, and an in-person outdoor gathering with lunch.**



What exactly is Bird Quest? It is several things:

- A way to discover the unique birds that live in and pass through our county.
- A way to discover local parks and natural areas.
- 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 where 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. During the noon hour, all participants gather at an outdoor pavilion at the WIN/Wheelabrator Wildlife Refuge in Westville for lunch, t-shirts, story swapping, and door prizes.



**How you can participate:** There are some options:

- You can form a team, plan your route, and record the bird species you see or hear between 7 AM and noon.
- For some variety join our guided walks in various natural places in Gloucester County led 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.
  - 7:00-9:15: Tall Pines State Preserve: From the intersection of Rt 553 (Woodbury-Glassboro Rd) and Mantua Ave in Wenonah (and Holy Nativity Lutheran Church), travel south on Rt 553 to the next traffic light at Bark Bridge Rd. Turn right onto Bark Bridge Rd. then in 200ft turn left into the parking lot to meet there. There are no restrooms at Tall Pines.
  - 9:30-11:00: Riverwinds: From Route 44 in West Deptford take Delaware St which becomes Riverwinds Drive upon entering the Riverwinds Complex. Drive past the community center, stay to the left, and park in the parking lot just before the Riverwinds restaurant entrance.

- 11:15-12:15: WIN/Wheelabrator Wildlife Refuge in Westville (also the picnic location): Access from Rt 130 – opposite Hazel Ave in Westville, just south of Big Timber Creek. Turn into the Butterfly Garden Parking area to park for the Pavilion and meeting area.
- Team leaders should be sure to enter the species found at [birdquest.gcnatureclub.org](http://birdquest.gcnatureclub.org) by 12:30 PM. We prefer not to collect paper checklists.

**How to register:** Registration will take place online, not using paper forms and checks. The cost is \$15 per person, payable by credit/debit card. Each participant will receive a 2023 “Birds On The Move” 100% Cotton T-shirt as shown above, available in both youth and adult sizes. We ask that team leaders strive to enter one “order” with the names and shirt sizes for their team. The website [birdquest.gcnatureclub.org](http://birdquest.gcnatureclub.org) is open now! The deadline to register is **Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>**. Shirts will need to be picked up at WIN/Wheelabrator on May 6<sup>th</sup>, or at the regular May club meeting in Wenonah on Thursday, May 11<sup>th</sup>.

#### **How to get ready for May 6<sup>th</sup>:**

- Join one or more of the 10 free, friendly training sessions; the remaining schedule is elsewhere in this newsletter and on [Meetup](#).
- At the Bird Quest website [birdquest.gcnatureclub.org](http://birdquest.gcnatureclub.org) you will be able to find the rules, our traditional paper checklists (for use in the field), and general info about the event.
- The club’s “Natural Places” book can guide you to 35 publicly-accessible natural areas around the county, many of which are good bird habitats. Check [the club’s website](#) to find a copy for sale near you.

If you have questions, please contact event coordinator Scott Barnes via email at [birdquest@gcnatureclub.org](mailto:birdquest@gcnatureclub.org) or by leaving a message at 856-468-4174. Messages will generally be returned during non-business hours.

Happy spring birding!

## **Save the Date!**

### **Saturday May 6, 2023 - Gloucester County Bird Quest**

The 23rd Annual Gloucester County Bird Quest will be held on the first Saturday in May. The theme this year will be "Birds on the Move" in recognition of humanity's increasing knowledge and appreciation of bird migration. The basic schedule will be the same as last year, only this time without a windy rainstorm (we hope): birding from 7 AM to noon, followed by a lunch gathering at Wheelabrator (WIN) Wildlife Refuge in Westville. There will be a new T-shirt design as well. We'll put full info including registration details in the April newsletter.

### **June 24, 2023 - Gloucester County Firefly Festival**

This year's Gloucester County Firefly Festival will be held at Tall Pines Preserve on Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 pm. The details will be in the May and June newsletters.

## Events by other organizations

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.

### Bi-Monthly Bird Walks at Scotland Run Park

Come search for the many birds that visit or inhabit Scotland Run Park! Volunteer birders from the Gloucester County Nature Club will be leading two walks a month in May, June, September, and October. The walks are free of charge and will take place on the **first and third Wednesdays** (previously Thursdays) of the month from 8:00 am to 9:30 a.m. Participants are encouraged to bring binoculars. Rain cancels the walk. Meet at the Nature Center Parking Lot.

### Spring Paddles at Scotland Run Park

On April 6, Scotland Run's highly anticipated Spring Paddles program starts for the season! Spring paddles will be held on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month from 9:30am-11:30am, April through June. This is a perfect opportunity for you to get outside and enjoy all of what Wilson Lake has to offer. This program is free and allows you to use our kayaks/canoes for a guided tour of Wilson Lake. The tour consists of light educational components and will be led by county employees. Registration is required, and we ask that you register for the specific boat you'd need. We offer double kayaks, canoes, and single kayaks. You can register for the event at the link below:

<https://secure.rec1.com/NJ/gloucester-county-nj/catalog>

For more information on Spring Paddles call 856-251-6710.

## Nature Notes

### 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.

### **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](mailto: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](mailto:sharkeyes@comcast.net) or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.

**YOUTUBE CHANNEL:** We are now posting recordings of recent club programs for the convenience of members and the public. To find the club's channel, use [this link](#) or search for the club's full name within YouTube. 15 videos are now available, including these recent additions:



- [Hiking the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu \(January 2023\)](#)
- [Getting to the Source of our Native Plants: Does Provenance Matter? \(April 2023\)](#)

Be sure to subscribe to the club's channel and "like" the videos so they will get recommended to more people! We will continue recording programs during this club year whenever permitted by speakers and their sponsoring organizations.

## **Remaining Bird Quest Training Sessions 2023**

**May 3 (Wednesday) 8 – 9:30 AM**

**Scotland Run Park**

**980 E. Academy St., Clayton, NJ 08312**

Scotland Run Park, the largest of the county parks, spans over 1000 acres and includes the 80 acre Wilson Lake. 143 species of birds have been recorded here, including 25 species of warblers. This is a great place and the right time to enjoy the spring migration!

*Directions: Take exit 45 off route 55 to Centerton - Clayton. Make a left onto Buck Road (Rt. 553). Make a right at the first traffic light onto Academy Road (Rt. 610). Take Academy Road for 2 miles crossing over route 47 and Fries Mill Road. Just beyond Fries Mill Road turn right into the Nature Center parking lot. Address for GPS: 980 East Academy Street, Clayton NJ.*

Leaders: Marilyn Henry & Marie Hageman

**May 4 (Thursday) 6 PM - 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. Drive past the community center and park in the parking lot just before the RiverWinds restaurant.*

Leaders: Gary Lizzi & Lloyd Shaw

**\*\*\* THERE ARE 2 BQ TRAINING SESSIONS FOR RIVERWINDS \*\*\***  
**MAY 4 at 6 PM and MAY 5 at 6 AM**

**\*\*\* The meeting places are different \*\*\***

**May 5 (Friday) 6 - 7:30 AM**

**RiverWinds Park — As Different as Night and Day???**

**1000 RiverWinds Drive, Thorofare, NJ 08086**

Yes, we had a training session here last evening, but here is a chance to compare what you might find at the same spot, but at a different time of day!

Look for scarlet tanager, magnolia warbler, Blackburnian warbler, ovenbird, black-throated green warbler and many other migrants.

*Directions; Turn onto RiverWinds Drive. Go approx. 1000 ft. to meet in the Riverwinds Nature Trail parking lot.*

Leaders: Dan & Danny Ceravolo

**And if you haven't had enough birding so far this weekend...**

**May 7 (Sunday) 7:30 - 9 AM (Rescheduled from Saturday April 29)**

**Washington Lake Park**

**626 Hurffville - Crosskeys 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. Many migrants begin nesting in the woods, especially near the streams, and the bluebirds are active around their boxes. More than 20 species of warblers have been identified here. This event is being jointly held with the Washington Township Environmental Commission.

*Directions: Meet at parking lot E by the amphitheater, accessible from either entrance.*

Leaders: Marie Hageman & Jayne Rhynard