



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

June 2007

****Note the time and location change for this meeting****

June Program - Picnic at Scotland Run Park (Clayton) - June 14th, 6:00 PM



The June 14th meeting of the Gloucester County Nature Club will be our annual spring picnic. The picnic will be held at the Scotland Run Park in Clayton. Attendees should bring a food item to share, and their own utensils, plates, and cups to cut down on the waste of disposables. Bring your binoculars as well because after dinner we will take a walk through the varied habitats of the park looking for birds, wildflowers and other items of interest. As with all club functions, the picnic is open to the public so why not bring a friend? We hope you will join us for the picnic.

Directions: From Delsea Drive (Rt. 47) in Clayton turn east on Academy Street (Rt. 619). Continue for about 2.2 miles. After crossing over Fries Mills Road, the main park entrance will be just ahead on the left. There is a large paved parking area. Meet under the pavilion.

Field Trip – Chestnut Branch
Saturday, June 16th, 9:00-11:30 AM

Trip Leader: Kristina Mollenhauer (856) 589-4387

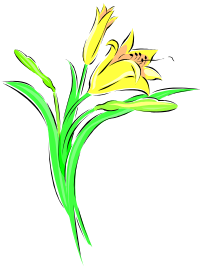
The Chestnut Branch is seven miles long and flows from Glassboro through Pitman to Mantua where it joins the main branch at the border of Mantua Township and Wenonah Borough. Did you know that the name Mantua comes from “Manta,” meaning “frog,” the name for the Native American group that lived in the area at the time of European arrival? The Mantaes were a sub-tribe of the Lenape Indians and had a large village near Mount Royal, in East Greenwich Township. Another village was located at Hurffville in Washington Township. Come travel downstream with us as we explore the flora and fauna of this area as well as the current surroundings and past history. Our journey will start near the headwaters and we will travel by car to two more locations along the stream as it heads for Mantua Creek. Total walking distance will be about 3 miles.



Directions: We will begin at Rowan University in Parking Lot A. If you are traveling South on Rt. #322 from Richwood, Lot A is the first lot on the left after you cross the railroad tracks. Bring binoculars and field guides.

Annual Plant Sale a Success!

Somewhere along the line the threat of rain seems to have become a traditional part of the Nature Club's Annual Plant Sale. But once again the rain held off and once again the Plant Sale was a great success - as a fund raiser for the club and as a convenient one stop shopping spot for plants for your garden. Plant donations are always the key to the success of our sale. A wonderful array of nursery plants were generously donated for the third year by the folks at Dean's Evergreens in Monroeville. A "hearty thanks" to George, Brian and Bridget there from all of us. And thanks to Ron Kegel for the careful selection of those plants - to bring us native plants for easy care, plants to attract the birds and butterflies and some incredible showy beauties.



Lorraine Kiefer, who was our speaker for the evening helped us to "Garden Naturally" with her thoughtful donation of native plants from her own Triple Oaks Nursery in Franklinville.

The other plants that make the sale such a hit are those donated by our members from their own gardens. Those of us who are gardeners know that one of the great joys of gardening is sharing what we grow. At the Plant Sale we get to share AND help raise some funds for the Club.

Our Plant Sale - like a lot of things in this club - is a team effort. Thanks to all who contributed - Millie and Rich, our cashiers, Kris, Erik and Ed our plant movers and to Karl, who always seems to have the information we need about these plants. Thanks, also to all of the member contributors who carefully marked their plants. There were only a few "mystery plants" this year.

It looked like everyone found at least a couple of things to fill those special spots in their gardens. Many of us found LOTS of plants to fill those spots. Good luck with them all. And remember, as you enjoy your gardens this growing season - keep an eye out for plants to share next year!

Field Trip Report: Wenonah Conservation Area (May 19) – by Rich Dilks

The morning was cool and the skies were clear and sunny as we gathered at Wenonah Lake to begin a leisurely four mile and nearly five hour walk to explore the woodlands of the 135 acre Wenonah Conservation Area. We began by walking the Loop Trail around Wenonah Lake, originally a mill pond created over 200 years ago. We noted the primeval looking Cinnamon Ferns and Sweet Bay Magnolias on the lake shore. We noticed the differences in leaf and bark of some of the 11 species of Oaks in the Conservation Area. A highlight of the day occurred when walking the trail on the west shore of the lake, we stopped and there on a nearby tree branch in a bright patch of sunlight were a pair of Scarlet Tanagers. We continued our walk through Wenonah's ring of green observing the "living fossil" fern allies Field Horsetail, Shining Clubmoss and Tree Clubmoss. Some of the unusual trees we encountered were a grove of Kentucky Coffeetrees, a small Pawpaw patch, a Fringetree in flower, Tulip Poplars that stand 80 feet tall, Umbrella Magnolia and the only recognized native stand of Shingle Oak in the State of New Jersey. From the bridge over Mantua Creek, we looked out on the marsh and saw a beaver lodge, now almost obscured from view by tall grasses. We enjoyed Pinxter Flower in bloom, Rattlesnake Weed (a native woodland Hawkweed with red veined basal leaves), Downy Rattlesnake Plantain (actually an Orchid) and saw Pink Ladies' Slipper blooming at two locations in the Conservation Area. We also visited some of Wenonah's historical sites in the Conservation Area- Clay Hill, (the sight of an old railroad trestle circa 1863), the small stone ornamental pool on the Garden Trail and the dam ruin at the now vanished Green's Lake. We ended our walk at the restored Japanese Teahouse at the north end of Comey's Lake where we sat sipping cold drinks in a delightful woodland setting.

Bird Quest '07 results

If you missed Bird Quest '07 you missed a great day. The weather was perfect: Sunny and in 70's with a mild breeze. This was our 8th annual Bird Quest. We had just over 200 people canvas the County and join us back at Atkinson Park for lunch, prizes, and conversation. It was great to see everyone and hear the wonderful stories shared by everyone at the event.

A grand total of 131 species were in seen in the five hours of Bird Quest. The 16 trainings in the three weeks leading up to Bird Quest helped people learn the birds by sight and sound. In addition, trainees visited many of the wonderful natural places in Gloucester County and the amazing variety of birds that can be found in those areas. All the training locations and many more natural places can be found in the book Natural Places of Gloucester County for sale by the Nature Club.

A big thank you goes out to everyone that helped out with the event and all those who participated in the event. Congratulations to our winners, "Give a Hoot II" lead by Gary Lizzi who saw 99 species in five hours.

Each year Bird Quest is made possible by a group of sponsors including Wheelabrator which pays for the two buses, Gariel Graphics who prints all the t-shirts and fliers, and Sharon Oakes of Wild Birds Unlimited who donated most of the prizes.

Big Day results

On May 12, the Gloucester County Nature Club's "Big Day" birding team of Lloyd Shaw, Gary Lizzi, and Gale Cannon found 122 species of birds in Gloucester County, in an 18-hour birding marathon that began at 2:00 AM and ended around 8:30 PM, when a sudden thunderstorm put an end to the count. Avian highlights included nineteen species of warblers, including Kentucky, mourning, hooded, prothonotary, and worm-eating. A highlight of the day for all three birders was being serenaded by barred owls, great horned owls, and whippoorwills during a 4:00 AM, 2-mile walk into the center of Glassboro WMA. And even though the County's farmlands are rapidly being developed into homesites, some of our farm country birds were still present - we saw bobolink, eastern meadowlark, eastern bluebird, savannah sparrow, horned lark, and kestrel. So far, the "Big Day" has raised over \$1500.00. Many thanks to all those who pledged or donated to the Unexpected Wildlife Refuge or the South Jersey Land and Water Trust! For a list of the birds seen or heard on May 12, phone Gale Cannon at 856-845-7075.



Summer Field Trips!

Triple Oaks Nursery Tour

Thursday, June 28, 6:00 PM

Leader: Lorraine Kiefer

Lorraine will lead a tour to the display gardens along Little Ease Run, pointing out many kinds of plants that do well locally - some native, some just good choices for southern New Jersey. There should also be some birds, perhaps including wood duck, mallard, green and great blue herons, nesting bluebirds, and many other songbirds. Participants will be presented with a 10 percent discount card to use after the trip for nursery purchases. Refreshments will be provided after the tour.

Directions: Triple Oaks Nursery is on the west side of Route 47, about 0.25 mile south of the intersection of Routes 604 and 47 in the center of Franklinville.

Hard-Core Botany at Peaslee WMA

Saturday, July 21, 10:00 AM to Mid-afternoon

Leaders: Karl Anderson (PBC) and Linda Kelly (TBS)

A joint botany trip with the Philadelphia Botanical Club and the Torrey Botanical Society (of New York). We will visit Coastal Plain Intermittent Ponds (CPIPs) and other plant communities of this large and relatively unexplored area. We should see such species as *Saccharum giganteum* (sugarcane plumegrass), *Lobelia canbyi* (Canby's lobelia), and *Panicum hemitomom* (maidencane).

Directions: Meet at the WAWA store in Millville, about 1/4 mile west of Route 55. From there we will drive about nine miles east to the Peaslee WMA. Dress to suit the weather. Be prepared for heat, ticks, chiggers, mosquitoes, greenbrier tangles, and wet walking. There are no rest rooms. Bring lunch and beverage. For more information phone (856) 845-7075.

Martha and Vicinity

Saturday, August 4, 10:00 AM to Mid-afternoon

Leader: Karl Anderson

Joint trip with the Torrey Botanical Society, to the site of a Pine Barrens "lost town" and the 18th-century Martha Furnace. We should see a good variety of Pine Barrens specialty plants, including white-fringed orchid, bladderworts (perhaps including the rare but very inconspicuous reversed bladderwort), curly-grass fern, and pitcher plants. We will also learn something about the bog iron industry.

Directions: Meet at the parking lot by Harrisville Lake, on Route 679 about 11.5 miles south of Chatsworth. From western Gloucester County, perhaps the best route is Atlantic City Expressway to Route 54 (Exit 28); Route 54 north to Hammonton; Route 542 (watch for signs to Batsto) east from Hammonton for about twelve miles to junction with Route 563 in Green Bank; north on 563 to its junction with Route 679, and south on Route 679 for about one mile to Harrisville Lake (on the east side of the road). Dress to suit the weather. Be prepared for car pooling, and wet walking. Bring lunch, beverage, insect repellent. For more information phone (856) 845-7075.

Washington Lake Park

Saturday, August 18, 9:00 AM to Lunchtime

Leader: Karl Anderson

A morning trip to a local park to look at plants, wildflowers, birds, dragonflies, and anything else that presents itself to view.

Directions: See your copy of Natural Places of Gloucester County. If you can't find it, well, the main entrance to the park is on Hurffville - Cross Keys Road (Route 654) about 1.2 miles southeast of the intersection of this road with Route 47. The park entrance will be on the south side of the road. Meet in Parking Lot E. Bring beverage; lunch is optional; there are ample picnic facilities.

Conservation Corner – The Beluga Whales of Alaska by Loretta Dunne

The National Marine Fisheries Service formally proposed to list the Cook Inlet beluga whale as "endangered" under the Endangered Species Act.

According to the Center for Biological Diversity (<http://www.biologicaldiversity.org>):

Once numbering more than a thousand, the geographically isolated and genetically distinct beluga whales in Cook Inlet, Alaska, used to be seen readily from the windows of shops and restaurants in downtown Anchorage and all along the shores of adjacent Cook Inlet. The population declined precipitously in the 1990s in the face of a multitude of threats, including unsustainable subsistence harvest and increasing industrial development in the Inlet. In 1999 the Center petitioned to protect the species under the Endangered Species Act.

In response, the Fisheries Service declared the population "depleted" under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and curtailed the hunt, but refused to protect the whales under the more powerful Endangered Species Act.

The Fisheries Service predicted the Cook Inlet beluga whale population would rebound once hunting was restricted. Unfortunately the population has not recovered but continues to decline. Fewer than 300 individual whales likely remain today.

In 2006 the Center and its allies once again petitioned the Fisheries Service to protect the Cook Inlet beluga whale under the Endangered Species Act, prompting the current listing proposal.

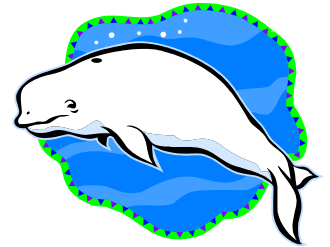
The comment period is now open for the listing of the Beluga Whale. Please write a letter, supporting the listing and requesting that action be taken before it is too late to protect this species and its habitat.

Submit letters to:

Kaja Brix, Assistant Regional Administrator National Marine Fisheries Service Alaska Region
Attn: Ellen Sebastian
P. O. Box 21668
Juneau, AK 99802

Email: CIB-ESA-Endangered@noaa.gov

While you are at it, you might also want to consider becoming part of the Center for Biological Diversity. They are a group that is working diligently to protect all species, so that we can continue enjoying the diversity that makes our earth so amazing.



Other Nature Notes

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

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

Seeds for Success

The Gloucester County 4-H sponsors a Seeds For Success program that supports local farmers and provides summer jobs for teenagers. This year, about 30 students will be employed by the program. Seeds for Success operates three produce stands that sell all local produce. The stands are open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 10 AM – 5PM, starting the week of July 10th.

Locations:

- Glassboro – On High Street, near the Fire Station
- Paulsboro – Near the Rita's Water Ice store on Broad Street
- Woodbury – On Broad Street, in front of the High School and next to the Post Office

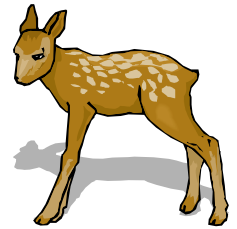
Please go out and support this worthwhile effort!

June Events by other Organizations

- June 2 (Saturday) - **Field Trip: Dragonflies at Scotland Run.** Leader: Chip Krilowicz. Sponsored by: Audubon Wildlife Society. For info: www.audubonwildlifesociety.org.
- June 2 (Saturday) - **Spring Flowers Family Hike.** Sponsored by Palmyra Cove Nature Center. Fee. For info: www.palmyracove.org or call (856) 829-1900.
- June 3 (Sunday) - **10th Annual Gloucester County Water Fest.** Scotland Run Park from 11 am - 4 pm. Free. For info: Call (856) 881-0845
- June 7 (Thursday) - **Presentation - Turn Your Backyard Into a Wildlife Retreat Using Native Plants and Feeders to Attract Birds and Butterflies.** 7pm – 8 pm. Sponsored by the Washington Township Environmental Commission. For info: Contact Christina Christine, Gloucester County Soil Conservation District at (856) 589-5250.
- June 16 (Saturday) - **Beginning Birding for Adults.** Sponsored by Palmyra Cove Nature Center. Fee. For info: www.palmyracove.org or call (856) 829-1900.
- June 17 (Sunday) - **Field Trip: Plants of D & R State Park, Bordentown.** Leaders: Charles and Mary Leck. Sponsored by Torrey Botanical Society. For info: www.torreybotanical.org or call (732) 821-8310
- June 23 (Saturday) - **Field Trip: Pine Barrens.** Leader: Mary Belko. Sponsored by: Audubon Wildlife Society. For info: www.audubonwildlifesociety.org.

Natural Events for the month of June

- Horseshoe crabs spawn on Delaware bayshore beaches from late May through early June.
- White-tailed deer are giving birth. The young fawns lie down and "freeze" when threatened.
- Longest day of the year is June 21.
- Pond turtles are digging nests and laying eggs, which will hatch in 80 to 90 days.
- Mountain laurel in bloom.
- Herons can be found roosting with young in marshes at the shore.
- During courtship, a cedar waxwing pair may repeatedly pass a flower petal or insect back and forth.
- Wood duck and mallard ducklings hatch and venture forth.
- Canada geese begin molting.



Looking Ahead:

2007-2008 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the interesting and diverse field trips we have lined up for next year:

- July 21, 2007 (Saturday) - CIPs at Peaslee WMA. - Karl Anderson
- August 4, 2007 (Saturday) - Martha Furnace Botany and History - Karl Anderson
- September 15, 2007 (Saturday) - Birding at Palmyra Cove - Gary Lizzi
- October 6, 2007 (Saturday) - Franklin Parker Preserve - Emile DeVito
- October 14, 2007 (Sunday) - Birding at Tinicum - Jeff Holt
- November 3, 2007 (Saturday) - Voices from the Land: Art in Natural Landscapes - Erik Mollenhauer
- December – Christmas Bird Count
- January 22, 2008 (Tuesday) - Full Moon Hike at Alcyon Park - Kris Mollenhauer
- February 16, 2008 (Saturday) - Long Beach Island - Karl Anderson and Gale Cannon
- March 15, 2008 (Saturday) - Ringing Rocks State Park, PA - Brian and Paula Hayes
- April 12, 2008 (Saturday) - Salem County Birding - Lloyd Shaw
- May 18, 2008 (Sunday) - Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve - Richard Dilks
- June 21, 2008 (Saturday) - Unexpected Refuge - Karl Anderson and Sarah Summerville

Club Notes:

- Congratulations to Barry Bengel, Elaine Dzeima, Paula Hayes, on their re-election as trustees at last month's meeting. And congratulations to Dave Partridge for being elected as a first-term trustee.
- If you'd like to receive the newsletter electronically or receive more info about the club please email Deb Maka at deborah71@msn.com or call 863-0330.
- 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.