



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

June 2011

Program – Annual Picnic and Nature Walk at Wenonah Lake

Thursday, June 9 at 6:00 PM at Wenonah Lake (directions below)

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342



The June 9 meeting of the Gloucester County Nature Club will be our annual spring picnic. The picnic will be held this year at the Wenonah Lake. Attendees should bring a food item to share, and their own utensils, plates, and cups to cut down on the waste of disposables. 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.

After the picnic, we will enjoy a walk on the trail along the lake. The woodlands surrounding the lake are part of the Wenonah Conservation Area. The area is botanically rich and diverse, and a haven for wildlife. We are likely to see a Belted Kingfisher patrolling the lake and hear the song of a Wood Thrush on our walk and may even hear the hoot of one of the lake's resident Barred Owls.

Directions: Directions to Wenonah Lake are from our normal meeting place at Holy Nativity Church: From the traffic light next to the church, proceed north on Rt 553 (Woodbury-Glassboro Rd.) for approximately 9/10 mile to E. Maple Ave on the left. Turn left onto E. Maple Ave and follow for approximately 1.1 miles to the Wenonah Lake parking lot on the right. Wenonah Lake is located at the northeast corner of N. Jefferson Ave. and Maple St.

Field Trip: Kayaking and Birding at Scotland Run Park

Saturday June 18, 8:00 AM to Noon

Trip Leader: Jay Hoffecker

Meet at the beach on Wilson Lake, across the street from the ranger headquarters. Seventeen canoes and kayaks have been reserved for use by club members at no charge. Those who have their own canoes or kayaks and prefer to use them, meet at the boat ramp (entrance on Fries Mill Road about 0.3 miles north of Route 610). With luck we might see bald eagle, osprey, beaver, and possibly river otter.



Directions: See your guide to the Natural Places of Gloucester County. Or, from the intersection of Route 322 eastbound and Route 47 in Glassboro, go east on Route 322 for about 3.0 miles to Fries Mill Road. Go south on Fries Mill road for 2.6 miles to County Route 610 (Clayton-Williamstown Road). Turn left. Park entrance and meeting place will be on the left, ranger headquarters on the right.

Bird Quest 2011 (12 years) – A note from Brian Hayes

The weather was amazing for the 12th Annual Bird Quest with a moderate breeze under mostly sunny skies. We had another fantastic Bird Quest!!

Our winning team, the Stro-birds, saw 80 species with the 2nd place teams in a tie right behind them at 71 each. To take nothing away from the winning team the 2nd place teams included the Girl Scout Bus and the Counting Crows (who never left the confines of Clayton). The combined participants saw 124 species in Gloucester County in the 5 morning hours. This is an impressive number as we see more and more of our habitat in Gloucester County lost.

Woodford Cedar Run Refuge once again provided some fun and focused educational time with live birds back at Washington Lake. The weather was perfect, the new location was inspiring, and the chance to connect with friends and see great birds was invigorating. Bird Quest 2011 was a wonderful day.

Everyone received our Bird Quest t-shirt which focused on our theme of preserving natural places in Gloucester County. Without our natural places there would be no place for the birds. Like most people in Gloucester County and probably the country, I enjoy seeing the birds, the turtles, the grasshoppers, and butterflies. I'm reminded of a time when I explored the world with fresh eyes and everything was new to me. How wonderful to investigate the secrets of a decaying log or explore a sunny meadow for the first time. A stream beckons for children of all ages to come and discover lessons of life and the world. Bird Quest provides the excuse to listen to the call of the stream or enjoy the meadow's warm embrace.

A friend of mine said to me at the event – "I look forward to Bird Quest each year because it is the only time I see orioles. Many people I work with have never seen one." I thought this was incredibly sad to only see orioles once a year but truly tragic to have never seen an oriole. I didn't know what to say to that other than to agree with him. "You are very lucky – they are very beautiful." I leave the conversation wondering: How can I get more people to see these wonderful birds – these flying gems? For I hope that if they see the birds then like me they will want to protect them. To do that, we need to save the natural places like Maple Ridge. There is a stream out there calling your name. Will you answer the call and will you protect it?

All proceeds from BQ this year will be donated to the efforts to save Maple Ridge.

I look forward to seeing everyone next year – May 6, 2012 at the next Bird Quest.

Thank you to all the sponsors and to all the people who helped to make this event a success. You know who you are! If you would like to be a part of the planning committee please contact Brian Hayes at pnbhayes@comcast.net or call 856.468.9272.

Kid's Corner - Make a Container Garden* by Deb Maka

What you need:

- 1 empty jar with lid
- tiny stones (enough to cover the bottom of the jar)
- potting soil (about a handful)
- plants (small enough to fit in the jar)
- water

What you do:

1. Place the stones in the bottom of the jar
2. Add a thick layer of potting soil
3. Carefully put your plants in the soil
4. Water the plants
5. Put the lid on the jar and place in the sun
6. You do not have to water your plants very often. Water them when the soil gets almost dry.

* adapted from the National Wildlife Federation website (<http://www.nwf.org/Get-Outside/Be-Out-There/Activities/Garden/Make-a-Container-Garden.aspx>)

Other Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: June 2011

- Saturday mornings, 7:30 to about 9:00 AM, **Bird Walks**. Joe Esterly is doing bird walks at Scotland Run Park, weather permitting. Walks meet at the nature center parking lot. For information phone Joe at 856-629-7626, or e-mail jde9773@aol.com.
- June 5 (Sunday) **Gloucester County Water Fest**. 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM at Scotland Run Park. Rain or shine. Get up close to a bald eagle. Paddle a kayak. Get your face painted. All at Water Fest, And IT'S FREE!!! The Water Fest is a fun, educational experience for the entire family. During Jonathan Wood's Raptor Show, you'll see live hawks, falcons, eagles and other birds of prey. Shows are at 12 noon, 1:30 PM and 3:00 PM.
- June 11 (Saturday) – **Birding and Botany of the Pinelands**. Leader: John Courtney. Sponsored by the Audubon Wildlife Society. For info: www.audubonwildlifesociety.org/
- June 18 (Saturday) – Meets 7:00 AM. **Birding the Elk Township Walking Trail**. Leader: Lloyd Shaw. \$Fee. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. For info: phone 609-261-2495, Tuesday – Saturday.
- June 19 (Sunday), 2:00 PM – **Walk in the Wild**. 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. For more information call Carl Ford at 856-579-4441. We will do this on the third Sunday of each month, with a different focus each month.
- June 25 (Saturday) **NJCF Franklin Parker Preserve Wildflower Walk** – 1:00 PM. Leader: Mike Hogan. Sponsored by the South Jersey Land and Water Trust. Free for SJLWT members, \$3 for non-members. To RSVP and for directions, please contact Mike at 609-476-2086 or hoganphoto@verizon.net, or see www.sjlandwater.org/.

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.

- Bird Walks: Tuesdays 6/14, 7/12, and 8/9 at 6:00 PM
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 6/8 at 10:00 AM
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 6/15 at 2:30 PM
- Canoe/Kayak Wilson Lake: Tuesday 6/21 at 6:00 PM and Thursday 6/30 at 10:00 AM

Natural Events for the month of June

- During courtship, a cedar waxwing pair may repeatedly pass a flower petal or insect back and forth.
- 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.
- Wood duck and mallard ducklings hatch and venture forth.
- Canada geese begin molting.

Looking Ahead:

Listed below are the field trips we have lined up for the summer. Changes and additions are not impossible. If you would be able and willing to lead an additional field trip, please contact Karl Anderson at karlanderson6@aol.com or 856-845-7075.

2011 Summer Field Trips

July 10 (Sunday) – **Flora and Fauna at Cedar Lake Wildlife Management Area**, 9:30 - Noon.
Leader: Karl Anderson.

August 13 (Saturday) – **Butterfly Walk at the Riverwinds Scenic Trail**, 9:30 -Noon.
Leader: Chris Herz.

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 856-468-6536.
- The Nature Club is always looking for ideas for future programs and field trips. Please contact the program coordinator or field 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.

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

Wild Birds Unlimited offers an everyday 10% discount (for non bird food items) to GCNC members! *Due to the current volatile market for bird food, the 10% discount for these items has had to be discontinued.* However, members will still receive credit for their purchases towards the Frequent Seed Shopper Program. WBU offers the GCNC discount on all other items in the store. Members are requested to identify themselves as GNNC members before their sales are finalized. Questions? Please contact Sharon at 856-218-2973 or sillybird348@comcast.net.



Bird Quiz

Do you know your birds? Do you know your bird facts? Test out your knowledge of birds and use these answers to astound your friends. The answers to these questions can be any bird in the world so they are not limited to the United States or North America. **Answers follow on page 6.**

Submitted by Brian Hayes, Questions and answers from Diane Link who researched them from the Bird Almanac by David M Bird.

1. What is the fastest flying bird in the world and how fast is it? (It's also the fastest creature on the planet.)
2. What is the slowest flying bird and how slow is it?
3. What bird can stay submerged underwater for the longest time? How long can it stay down?
4. What bird has the heaviest weight carrying capability?
5. What bird has the keenest sense of hearing?
6. Name the smallest bird in the world.
7. Who produces the largest egg?
8. What bird produces the largest egg per percent of its body?
9. Which bird has the largest wingspan and how large is it?
10. What bird has the largest tail feathers and how long are they?
11. What bird has the most amount of feathers?
12. What bird has the smallest amount of feathers?

Answers:

1. The Peregrine Falcon which can dive in speeds in excess of 200 mph.
2. The Woodcock which can fly as slow as 5 mph.
3. The Emperor Penguin which can stay submerged for 18 minutes.
4. The Pallas Fish Eagle which can lift over 13 pounds of fish.
5. The Barn owl.
6. The Bee Hummingbird at 2¼ inches long and weighing about 1.6 grams.
7. The Ostrich which measures about 7 inches by 4.5 inches.
8. The Kiwi lays an egg up to 20% of a female's body weight.
9. The Wandering Albatross has a wingspan up to 12 feet wide.
10. The Crested Argus Pheasant has tail feathers measuring 5½ feet long.
11. Tundra Swans have over 25,000 feathers to help keep them warm in the arctic.
12. The Ruby-Throated Hummingbird has less than 1,000 feathers.