



# Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

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

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

June 2016

## **Program - Annual Picnic at Alcyon Lake Park, Pitman, NJ and Allen Jackson from the NJ Bluebird Society**

**Thursday, June 9, 2016 at 6:00pm** (directions below)

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



## **Picnic**

**Note: Starting time for the picnic is 6:00pm**

The June 9 meeting of the Gloucester County Nature Club will be our annual spring picnic. The picnic will again be held this year at Alcyon Lake Park on the shores of historic and scenic Alcyon 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?

In the spring of 2015 the New Jersey Bluebird Society, with the assistance of some GCNC volunteers, erected 4 bluebird boxes at Alcyon Park. This past fall, the GCNC again joined with the New Jersey Bluebird Society on a service project at Alcyon Park. Our volunteers removed large numbers of invasive trees and shrubs from the meadow and natural area behind the picnic pavilion and then planted native species that will provide valuable food sources for wildlife.

New Jersey Bluebird Society president, Allen Jackson, who initiated the above joint projects, will be our guest and will speak to us about the eastern bluebird, bluebird trails and the work of the New Jersey Bluebird Society. Our early evening nature walk will give us and Allen the opportunity to see the results of and discuss the joint service projects at Alcyon Park and perhaps to spot a bluebird or other wildlife as well.



**Directions:** Directions to Alcyon Lake Park:

**From points south:** From Broadway in Pitman, turn west onto W. Holly Ave. Go 6/10 of a mile, passing Alcyon Lake on your left. Turn left onto Carr Ave. and proceed to the park entrance. Stay on the main road which ends near the pavilion.

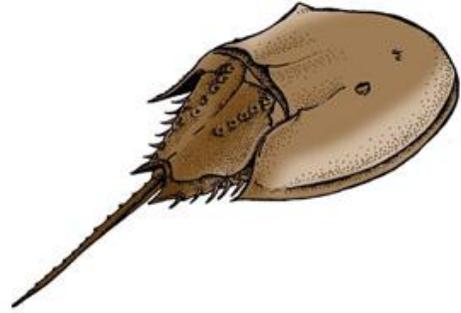
**From points north:** From Woodbury-Glassboro Rd. (Rt. 553) turn west onto Lambs Rd. and continue for 1.6 miles. Turn east (left) onto W. Holly Ave. and go 3/10 of a mile to Carr Ave. Turn right onto Carr Ave. and proceed to park entrance. Stay on the main road which ends near the pavilion.

## **Field Trip – Horseshoe Crab Walk**

**Saturday, June 4, 2016 at 7:00pm**

**Trip Leaders: Paula and Brian Hayes (Paula’s cell for day of the walk questions 609-221-5195)**

Join us for a walk along the beach in the Villas, a Bay Shore community near Cape May. On this night, beaches all around the Delaware Bay host spawning horseshoe crabs as they have for many millions of years. We will begin our walk as the tide begins to rise and the sun sinks low in the sky. The horseshoe crabs time their egg laying for the high tide on new and full moons in May and June, this allows them to lay their eggs high on the beach. It is believed the crabs seek these conditions to make the climb up the beach easier and to lay their eggs above the rising tide on subsequent nights. As the tide rises up the Bay Shore beaches we will begin to see the male crabs gather along the edge of the surf awaiting the larger females. The males “cruise” along the surf waiting to latch onto a female (using a special claw) for a ride up the beach. The female will crawl up the beach to lay her eggs while the males, in tow, fertilize the eggs. We will walk about 2 miles along the beach, bring appropriate footwear or plan to go barefoot. We will stop often to see what treasures the tide brings in. Though the wind usually keeps the mosquitoes away you may want to bring bug spray. You may also want to bring a camera or binoculars. This walk is open to all but will have special appeal to families. If you are bringing children it is likely they will get wet and sandy “walking,” please plan for this eventuality and bring a towel and change of clothes for your child so they don’t need to ride home wet.



**Directions:** Meet at the beach on Walnut Avenue. Park near the intersection of Walnut Avenue and Delaware Avenue in the Villas (Lower Township). If you need an address for your GPS use 301 Walnut Ave, Lower Township, NJ 08251, this is the last house on the beach.

## **Field Trip – Duke Farms**

**Sunday, June 12, 2016 at 9:00am**

**Trip Leaders: Jayne Rhynard & Erik Mollenhauer**

J.B. Duke transformed 2,000+ acres into an extraordinary landscape with 9 lakes, restored buildings (one with 1,500 orchids) and 18 miles of paved, gravel and mown-grass trails and paths through a variety of habitats. Over 330 species of birds have been sighted. It is a model of environmental stewardship to inspire people to build a sustainable future. Join us at Timberline Shopping Center in Mantua (Santini’s, Mandarin Court across from Target) at 9:00am to carpool. Accompany us on foot at a leisurely pace or bring your own bike or use one of Duke Farms’ to explore on your own. We will leave no later than 9:15 from the parking lot so we can arrive about 11:00am.

**Directions:** NJ-55 N to Rt. 42 N to I-295 N towards Trenton; continue onto I-95 S; take Exit 8B for County Rd 583 N/Princeton Pike; continue and merge onto County Road 615/Mercer 615/Princeton Pike. Continue on County Road 615; turn left onto NJ-27 S; Take the 1st right onto US-206 N/Bayard Ln; Continue to follow US-206 N; make slight right toward Dukes Parkway W and then continue straight on Dukes Parkway W; turn left. (approx 1 ½ hr).

Address for GPS: 1112 Dukes Parkway West, Hillsborough, N.J.

Website: [www.dukefarms.org](http://www.dukefarms.org).

## **Summer Field Trips**

### **Field Trip – Family Fun Stream Walk #1 at Pitman Memorial School**

**Tuesday June 28, 2016 at 6:30pm. All ages are welcome!**

**Trip Leaders: Maria Keefe & Paula Hayes cell 609-221-5195 Email: pnbhayes@gmail.com**

This stream walk is an old favorite, we do this one most years and it is always filled with a surprise or two. We'll explore what is in, on, under and around the creek as we walk in the water. We'll look for fish, frogs, turtles, mussels, animal prints, flowers, birds and more. Wear appropriate water shoes or old sneakers to walk in the water, shoes that offer some protection are best (not flip flops). We will get wet!! You may want to bring insect repellent.

**Directions:** From Lambs Road turn onto Hudson Avenue (near Total Turf Experience). Turn into Pitman Memorial School parking lot on the right.

### **Field Trip – Tall Pines Walk**

**Wednesday July 6, 2016 at 7:00pm.**

**Trip Leader: Paula Hayes**

Come enjoy Gloucester County's newest park. We will take a casual walk through New Jersey's first Nature Preserve. Tall Pines State Preserve straddles Mantua and Deptford Townships, was once the Eagle's Nest Golf Course, and up until recently was slated to become a housing development. This park is still a bit rugged but we will explore lovely rolling hills, beautiful meadows, a meandering creek, ponds, and wooded areas while looking for interesting flora and fauna. Wear a sturdy pair of walking shoes and bring binoculars if you have them.

**Directions:** For GPS use 244 Barkbridge Rd, Deptford Township. This park is new enough that there isn't a sign marking it yet. We will meet in the parking lot off Barkbridge Rd. The lot is about 200 feet from the Woodbury Glassboro Rd (route 553) intersection. Coming from Rt. 55, exit onto Woodbury Glassboro Rd. (Rt. 553) towards Wenonah/Woodbury. After about 1.5 miles turn left on Barkbridge road; the entrance to the parking lot is a dirt driveway on your left.

### **Field Trip – Riverwinds Beachcombing**

**Monday July 11, 2016 at 6:00pm.**

**Trip Leaders: Maria Keefe (609-315-4579) & Paula Hayes**

Join us at Riverwinds as we walk along the Delaware River. Bring your sense of adventure and join us for a fun walk outdoors. Planes will be taking off and landing, taking people to their own adventures as we comb the sandy beach to see what we can discover.

We will stop to look at anything interesting we find and some may dip their toes in the Delaware River. The walk will last an hour or so. Dress in layers according to the weather and bring water, snacks, and insect repellent as needed.

**Directions:** From Exit 21 on I-295, take Delaware Avenue west. In about 0.4 mile, cross Grove Street. Continue on what is then called Riverwinds Drive. Follow the road all the way to the end and meet in the parking lot to the right of the Riverwinds restaurant by the water.

**Field Trip – Parvin State Park**  
**Sunday August 14, 2016 at 10:00am**  
**Trip Leader: Rich Dilks (856-468-6342)**

We will be walking 2 to 3 miles on some of the woodland trails in the 400 forested acres of the park that have been designated a natural area. The trails at Parvin are wide, well maintained and easily walkable. Parvin State Park consists of 1,952 acres in eastern Salem County at the very western border of the pinelands. Much of the habitat is transitional between pinelands and inner coastal plain deciduous forest, with a mixture of hardwood forest, pine woodlands and stands of Atlantic white cedar in the lower wet areas. Forty species of trees, 60 species of woody shrubs and over 200 species of wildflowers can be found at Parvin. The park also had an interesting history in the last century. In the 1930's it was a CCC camp. Later during WWII it was a day camp for the children of interred Japanese Americans who worked at Seabrook Farms. In 1944 it became a POW camp for German prisoners.

Bring binoculars or a camera. Insect repellent and good walking shoes are advised.

**Directions:** Take Rt. 55 to exit 35B, then take Garden Rd. (Rt. 674) west about 3 miles to Parvin Mill Rd. (Rt. 645). Turn left on Parvin Mill Rd. (Three roads cross at the intersection. Parvin Mill Rd. is the second of the two roads on the left that meet at that point.). Go about three miles to the Parvin State Park sign. Turn right on Almond Rd. (Rt. 540). Continue past the park main entrance for about 2/3 of a mile to the Second Landing parking area on your left.

**Field Trip – Family Fun Stream Walk #2 in Ceres Park, Mantua Township**  
**Tuesday August 16, 2016 at 6:30pm. All ages are welcome!**  
**Trip Leaders: Maria Keefe & Paula Hayes cell 609-221-5195 Email: pnbhayes@gmail.com**

This park is a great one for summer hikes since its tall trees provide lots of shade. We will hike to the other end of this park and check out a new part of the stream this year. We'll explore what is in, on, under and around the creek as we walk in the water. We'll look for fish, frogs, turtles, mussels, animal prints, flowers, birds and more. Wear appropriate water shoes or old sneakers to walk IN the water, shoes that offer some protection are best (not flip flops). The walk to the stream is a bit longer than some of our past stream walks, but it's a beautiful spot. We will get wet!! You may want to bring insect repellent.

**Directions:** From Rt 322 take Lambs Rd (635) to Pitman-Barnsboro Rd (553Alt). Turn left onto Rt553A. Watch for Ceres Park sign on your left after crossing over Rt 55. We'll meet in the gravel parking lot.

**MEETUP:** In order to reach members with the most up to date field trip information we are asking everyone who is able to sign up for the Gloucester County Nature Club Meetup site. By accessing the site at [www.meetup.com/Gloucester-County-Nature-Club/](http://www.meetup.com/Gloucester-County-Nature-Club/) or using the QR Code to the right, you will be directed to the site. Once you are signed up on the site you will receive up-to-date information on upcoming trips, meetings, events, and fun walks. If you attend field trips you should consider joining Meetup even if you receive the newsletter electronically.



## **Bird Quest 2016 – “Hope” is the thing with feathers...**

“Hope” is the thing with feathers,  
That perches in the soul  
And sings the tune without the words  
And never stops – at all.

By Emily Dickinson

May 7<sup>nd</sup>, 2016 was a great day for birds and thankfully there were more sightings of birds than there was of the sun. The gloomy weather didn't keep away the birds or the people who participated in the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Gloucester County Bird Quest.

The event draws people from across the county and beyond to look for as many different species of birds within Gloucester County as possible from 7am to noon. By 12:30pm everyone met at Scotland Run Lake Park for food, t-shirts, prizes and more importantly – to share their fun.

I heard teams talking about the scarlet tanager (a bright red bird with black wings that generally is only found at the top of large trees in a forest) they saw up close; or the bald eagle female sitting on a nest while the male eagle flew in with a fish to feed the young; or the pileated woodpecker (largest woodpecker in NJ – think Woody the Woodpecker – that was new to the count this year) that flew over them while they were looking for more common birds. I heard excitement, I heard compassion, and I heard a caring for the natural places we have in Gloucester County that still harbor these things with feathers. These natural places are havens of hope for our children and grandchildren into the future. I was so glad to see many children at the event. I hope in 17+ years there will still be sightings of bald eagles, scarlet tanagers, blue-winged warblers, and pileated woodpeckers in Gloucester County and NJ. That is our hope and that is why we continue to have events like Bird Quest.

This year, the winning team was the Wenonah Warblers who saw an astounding 109 species of birds that morning. That is a tremendous effort which shows their dedication and their bird knowledge. That is only two bird species off of the Bird Quest record of 111 species seen in the five hours. Way to go Wenonah Warblers.

Collectively, all the participants of Bird Quest, we saw 151 species of birds that morning. That is a great number for 5 hours in Gloucester County. We had lots of write-ins and many good looks at special birds. What else could you ask for on Bird Quest?

I encourage everyone to go out and enjoy this wonderful phenomenon we have in the Eastern US of migration, beautiful song birds, beautiful bird songs, and “Hope” those things with feathers...

You can find a final checklist of all the birds seen on Bird Quest on our website on the Bird Quest page.

Thank you to all the sponsors – specifically Wheelabrator which paid for the buses, and the educational materials - and to all the volunteers who make this event a success: the On-site committee, the bus leaders, the walk leaders, the training leaders, Karen Allen and Ron Kegel for the additional door prizes donated, the Bird Quest Committee, and any others who have made a donation or contributed to the success of the event. A HUGE THANK YOU!

Save the date: May 6, 2017 our 18th annual Gloucester County Bird Quest. We welcome any suggestions, improvements, and all offers of help. Contact me if you would like to be a part of the planning for future Bird Quests. [bhayes@eirc.org](mailto:bhayes@eirc.org) 856.582.7000 x110

## **Conservation Corner** by Suzan Delozier

### MONARCHS NEED NECTAR PLANTS, TOO

In any year there are several generations of monarchs traveling north. Generation 1, which is the offspring of monarchs that overwintered in Mexico, flies north from Mexico to Texas and Oklahoma. It will take 3 to 4 additional generations to reach the northern US and Canada. The last generation makes the long trek to Mexico in the fall. During the southern migration, the butterflies need access to autumnal nectar plants. Think about adding asters (*Symphotrichum*), joe pye weed (*Eupatorium*), black-eyed and brown-eyed Susans (*Rubeckia*), and goldenrods (*Solidago*) to your garden. And, by the way, goldenrods do not cause allergies. For a more complete list of plants see <http://pollinator.org/PDFs/Monarchs/monarchfuelingyellow.pdf>. Also [http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/Monarch\\_Butterfly/migration/index.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/Monarch_Butterfly/migration/index.shtml) is a great source for more information on monarch migration.

### LAND PRESERVATION FUNDS FOR NJ

In November 2014, voters approved the open space and farmland funding bill. More recently, the NJ Legislature passed a bill to allocate those funds. It is up to Governor Christie to sign the bill. Earlier this year, he pocket vetoed a similar bill despite the approval of 65% of the voters. Our friends at South Jersey Land and Water Trust ask for help in convincing the governor to honor the choice of NJ voters. This bill also guarantees that the designated funds will not be used for other purposes. Tell the governor that you support land preservation by signing the following petition.

<http://www.greenactions.org/tell-christie-sign-open-space-bill?sc=openspace.SJLWT>

### BEE PETITION

Friends of the Earth advises that the EPA is reviewing 4 of the 5 most widely used neonicotinoid pesticides that are killing bees. Let the EPA know that it should protect bees, which are responsible for one in three bites of food that we humans eat, by signing the following petition. See the December 2015 GCNC newsletter for more info.



[http://www.signforgood.com/savethebees/?code=FriendsoftheEarth&als\\_redirect\\_encode=base64url&redirect=aHR0cHM6Ly9vcmcuc2Fsc2FsYWJzLmNvbS9vLzQ1NS9wL3NhbHNhL2RvbmF0aW9uL2NvbW1vbi9wdWJsaWMvP2RvbmF0ZV9wYWdlX0tFWT0xMzY3Mg](http://www.signforgood.com/savethebees/?code=FriendsoftheEarth&als_redirect_encode=base64url&redirect=aHR0cHM6Ly9vcmcuc2Fsc2FsYWJzLmNvbS9vLzQ1NS9wL3NhbHNhL2RvbmF0aW9uL2NvbW1vbi9wdWJsaWMvP2RvbmF0ZV9wYWdlX0tFWT0xMzY3Mg)

### THE RESILIENCY OF THE PINELANDS

Aren't the Pinelands resilient? Didn't the Pines survive the Industrial Revolution? Weren't the entire Pinelands clear cut possibly 3 times since the arrival of Europeans? And haven't they recovered each time? Many people offer these statements as proof that the Pinelands do not need stronger protection and that the Motorized Access Plan recently offered and then rescinded by the NJ DEP was unnecessary. The MAP would have designated areas in the Pines that are critical habitat and should be restricted to hikers, bicyclers and/or horseback riders.

On March 28, 2016, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance's Director of Conservation Sciences wrote an editorial for the Burlington County Times that attempted to answer the above questions. According to the editorial, comparing the effects of local industry to the effects of motorized disturbances is a false

comparison – industry extracts a resource until it is no longer profitable to do so and then leaves, which is very different from repetitive year-round motor vehicle disturbance that does not allow the earth to recover. The wet or muddy areas, which are often targeted by dirt-bikers and others, are particularly slow to recover. Further, the assumption that the Pinelands has somehow recovered back to its original pre-industrial condition cannot be proven since we do not know what was lost when the forest transitioned from its natural state to its industrial state. During and after industry, species that colonize in disturbed sites will be favored. Also, it is often said that Mother Nature causes more damage than motor vehicle use. Again frequency of impact comes into play since storms hit a few times a year and in random locations allowing any one place to recover. This is very different than repeated motorized disturbance which disproportionately targets wetlands and the same areas over and over again.

The editorial also talked about the many different eco-systems in the Pinelands – wetlands, uplands, ephemeral pools – which do not respond to disturbances in the same manner. There are many habitats in the Pines each with its own plant and animal species. The MAP would have addressed the needs of each of these eco-systems.

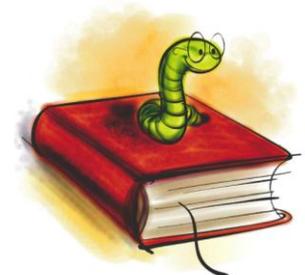
### A WEBSITE DEDICATED TO FORESTS

American Forests is an organization dedicated to protecting and restoring forests not only in wild places but in urban environments. Its website is [www.americanforests.org/](http://www.americanforests.org/) and contains mounds of information on the relationship between forests and life on our planet. It has a question and answer page about tree care, a carbon footprint calculator, and an action center to enable citizens to become involved. And if someone says to you that planting trees does not benefit people and the planet consider these few points.

- A tree can absorb as much as 48 pounds of carbon dioxide per year, and can sequester one ton of carbon dioxide by the time it reaches 40 years old.
- One large tree can provide a supply of oxygen for two people.
- The net cooling effect of a young, healthy tree is equivalent to ten room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day.
- In one day, one large tree can lift up to 100 gallons of water out of the ground and discharge it into the air, thus providing a critical link in our weather patterns.

And there are many more such facts on the website. THINK GREEN – PLANT A TREE!

**Wednesday, August 10, 6:30pm: Book Club** – Mark your calendar for a casual summer evening's get together to discuss a nature-themed book. We have a couple of suggested books for your beach-reading pleasure: *The Tiger: A True Story About Vengeance and Survival* by John Valliant or the classic *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson. No homework, just some pleasant company, wine, cheese and snacks while we chat about what we read. We can sit outside or be indoors depending on the weather. This will be held at my home or at another location depending on the response. Please RSVP to [jayne\\_rhynard@campbellsoup.com](mailto:jayne_rhynard@campbellsoup.com) by Monday, August 1. We will send you a confirmation email with the location. Read about these books at <http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/7624594-the-tiger> and [http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/27333.Silent\\_Spring?from\\_search=true&search\\_version=service](http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/27333.Silent_Spring?from_search=true&search_version=service)  
Leader: Jayne Rhynard



## Nature Notes

### Events by other Organizations: June 2016

- June 5 (Sunday), 11:00am to 4:00pm - **WaterFest!** at Scotland Run Park. Free. Environmental exhibits, crafts, canoeing/kayaking, live animal shows and more.
- June 5 (Sunday), 10:00am to 4:00pm - **19th Annual Barnegat Bay Festival** at Wanamaker Complex in Island Heights, NJ. Free. This year's festival theme is "From Pinelands to Tidelands." From water-based activities like the canoe eco-tour to hands-on children's activities like the aquatic touch tank and seining, attendees will have the chance to explore the valuable natural resources of the Barnegat estuary. See <http://bbp.ocean.edu/pages/266.asp> for details.

**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.

- Dragonfly Walk: Saturday 6/11 10:00am
- Evening Bird Walk: Tuesday 6/14 at 6:00pm.
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 6/15 at 10:00am
- Evening Canoeing and Kayaking: Tuesday 6/21 at 6:00pm.
- Nature Explorers: Wednesday and Thursday 6/22, 6/23, 6/29, and 6/30 at 10:00am

### 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.



### 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 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 [sharkeyes@comcast.net](mailto:sharkeyes@comcast.net) or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.