



Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

June 2023

Program – Annual Picnic and Nature Walk at Wenonah Lake

Thursday, June 8, 2023 at 6:00 PM at Wenonah Lake (directions below)

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342

The June 8 meeting of the Gloucester County Nature Club will be our annual spring picnic. The picnic will be held this year at historic and lovely Wenonah Lake. This is a pot luck dinner of shared dishes. Attendees should bring a food item to share, and their own utensils, plates, and cups to cut down on the waste of disposables. Those who prefer to provide their own meals are welcome to do so. As with all club functions, the picnic is open to the public so why not bring a friend?



Wenonah Lake

After the picnic, we will enjoy a walk on the trails along the lake. Wenonah Lake was dammed in 1762 by Abraham Dilks to provide power for his grist mill that once stood on Maple St on the lake's southern end. The lake is one of the few remaining swimming lakes in South Jersey. The woodlands surrounding the lake are part of the Wenonah Conservation Area. After the picnic we will stroll the woodland trails to look at the plant life and look and listen for birds. The area is botanically rich and diverse, and a haven for wildlife, including many song birds and a resident pair of Barred Owls.

Directions:

Wenonah Lake is located at the northeast corner of N. Jefferson Ave. and Maple St. in Wenonah. From Mantua Ave., turn north onto N. Jefferson Ave. Continue past the 4-way stop at N. Jefferson Ave. and Maple St to enter the lake parking lot. Wenonah Lake can also be reached by traveling west on Maple St. from Rt.553 or by heading east on Ogden Road from Rt. 45 in Deptford.

Gloucester County Firefly Festival - June 24, 2023

The Firefly Festival sponsored by the Gloucester County Nature Club will be held on Saturday June 24th (rain date on June 25) at Tall Pines State Preserve from 7-9 pm. It is a free event, open to the public and is family friendly. Visitors walk along a trail where at various stations, interpreters have displays and discuss topics such as bioluminescence, the firefly life cycle and environmental concerns such as habitat protection and light pollution. For young people there are firefly-related crafts, games and storytelling. Visitors then proceed to the heart of the preserve to view the evening firefly display.

BIRD QUEST 2023 WRAP-UP: The 23rd edition of Bird Quest featured sunny skies and seasonable temperatures, both welcome changes from the Nor'easter storm on Bird Quest day last year! We had 114 registered participants across 41 teams. Of the 20 received checklists we ended up with a tie between Saw What Owls? (Erik, Mark, and Kellan Nelson) and DGP (Sharon, Bill, and Danny Ceravolo): each team reported 102 species seen or heard. The two teams each received our traditional goldfinch pins. We had a pleasant wrap-up lunch at Wheelabrator that featured numerous door prize give-aways.

There were 15 species found by 90% or more of the teams. Beyond the "usual suspects" of Mourning Doves and Northern Cardinals, it was nice to see American Goldfinch (the New Jersey state bird and our club mascot) and Baltimore Oriole on this short list.

Due to the stark differences in weather between this year and last, it may be more interesting to compare this year with 2021. Here are some notable changes in species seen by the teams roving around the county:

<u>Species</u>	<u>2021 % of teams found</u>	<u>2023 % of teams found</u>
Field Sparrow	38%	90%
Baltimore Oriole	50%	90%
Indigo Bunting	31%	65%
Black-throated Green Warbler	19%	45%
Hairy Woodpecker	69%	40%
Red-breasted Nuthatch	38%	10%
Blue-headed Vireo	38%	15%

There were 9 species not found in 2021 that were found by two or more teams this year: Eastern Screech Owl, Merlin, American Coot, Dunlin, Great Black-backed Gull, Cattle Egret, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Red-shouldered Hawk. Finally, Woody Woodpecker would be proud to see that Pileated Woodpecker, a species that wasn't on printed Bird Quest checklists, was found by 25% of our teams this year.

The coordinator (Scott Barnes) would like to thank the sponsors, the participants, those who attended the 10 training walks, and especially the volunteers that make this event tick. From the training walk leaders, to the day-of walk leaders, to those who donated door prizes and helped with various aspects of the Wheelabrator gathering: there are too many to name you all individually but your efforts were and are greatly appreciated.

Wheelabrator Butterfly Garden Maintenance

Join us on Friday June 9th 8:30-1:00 or any time you can spare during this timeframe. We are looking for volunteers to assist with the weeding and maintenance of the Wheelabrator garden. Several years ago a couple of us from Audubon Wildlife Society used to weed the garden here. It has been neglected since 2019 especially as several volunteers are now older and unable to assist. It is wildly overgrown but some good plants continue there.

On June 9th at 8:30 am, I will have someone to help (from Wheelabrator) with the invasive vines all over the fence and also to help with some larger tasks. If anyone from the club is willing to come and able to lend a hand—there is so much weeding to be done—and possibly to spread mulch, please let me know.

Plants to share for willing volunteers either from the garden there or my garden (host plants for butterflies and/or pollinator plants) may be offered for those who can work a couple hours.

If you cannot come during this time but would be willing to assist or weed in the future, please reach out as well. Thank you!

Chris Herz -
marwil132@verizon.net
856-534-5597

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 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 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 or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 20th 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. 16 videos are now available, including these recent additions:*

- *Getting to the Source of our Native Plants: Does Provenance Matter? (April 2023)*
- *Moths and Nocturnal Insects of Gloucester County (May 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 whenever permitted by speakers and their sponsoring organizations.