Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

September 2016

Program - Night Hunters of the Sky

Thursday, September 8, 2016 at 7:00pm at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Wenonah, NJ
Presenter: Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge
Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342

Join us for a presentation with live owls. The Gloucester County Nature Club begins its new program season with a presentation for all ages from Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge. Night Hunters of the Sky will take you into the nocturnal world of these handsome, fascinating and elusive birds.

Owls have superb hearing skills to help them locate tiny prey in tall grass or other camouflage. Many species have asymmetrical ears, with one ear located higher on the bird's head than the other. This helps them pinpoint sounds. Their mostly flat faces also help, because they feature a slight curve that helps funnel sounds to the ears. They also have specialized feathers that allow them to fly silently and ambush their prey. Unlike many bird species, female owls are often larger and more colorful than the males. Owls can also be quite expressive. In addition to their characteristic hoots, owls can hiss, whistle, growl, rattle and screech. Some species have tufts of feathers on their heads, commonly called ear tufts. However, these tufts are not part of the owl's ears and instead may be used to signal mood or help the bird blend into its surroundings. Owls have excellent eyesight, but they do not have round eyeballs like many animals. Instead, their eyes are long tubes supported by bony sockets. They cannot move their eyes from side to side, but they can rotate their heads up to 270 degrees to give them an excellent range of vision.

Over 200 species of owls inhabit every continent except Antarctica. They are found in a huge range of habitats from rainforests to grasslands to wooded areas to tundra. 19 owl species are native to North America and 8 occur in New Jersey.

Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge in Medford, NJ is dedicated to the preservation of New Jersey's wildlife and habitats through education, conservation and rehabilitation. The Refuge sits on 171 wooded acres on the edge of the New Jersey Pinelands. The Refuge includes the Woodford Nature Center, an outdoor housing area with more than 60 native residents, and a wildlife rehabilitation hospital. The overall mission of the Refuge is to serve as a community resource on the importance of protecting and enhancing healthy ecosystems for all.

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).

Field Trip – Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge

Sunday, September 11th from 12:00pm until 2:30pm

Trip Leader: Maria Keefe

Lunch will be provided at noon. No charge to club members or guests for this event! After lunch and a brief overview of the mission and history of the refuge, we will take a one-mile guided hike to explore the flora and fauna of the Woodford Cedar Run 171-acre Pinelands site, learning about the characteristics that make upland and wetland habitats so diverse. We will then take a guided tour of the wildlife housing area to meet resident wildlife (e.g., fox, raccoon, bald eagle, hawk, owl, vulture, etc.) and to learn about the wildlife rehabilitation hospital, which cares for or injured and orphaned animals. There will be time at the end of the program to visit the Nature Center as well.

YOU MUST REGISTER for this event on the Gloucester County Nature Club Meetup site by September 9. No Meetup? Then call or email Trip Leader Maria Keefe (cell/text: 609-315-4759 or mariakeefe19@comcast.net.

You can visit the Woodford Cedar Run website for more information. http://www.cedarrun.org/ The refuge has entrances at 388 Jackson Road, Medford, NJ or at 4 Sawmill Road, Medford NJ. Please note that online map sites and GPS may not provide a correct location. The refuge suggests using the directions posted on its website.

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/ 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.

Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: September 2016

- September 18 (Sunday) - **Autumn with the Animals.** At Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge (4 Sawmill Road, Medford NJ) from Noon to 4:00pm. Autumn with the Animals remains a much-anticipated fall family tradition here in Southern New Jersey. Children and adults of all ages enjoy our wildlife programs, live music, nature hikes, child friendly games, crafts, food and fun! We look upon this day as a way for our members and friends to reconnect with each other and the environment. For additional information and directions, visit www.cedarrun.org.

- September 24 (Saturday) - **Hoot, Waddle & Stroll 5K Trail Run & 1 Mile Walk.** 9:00am. This will be a fun, family fundraising event on September 24 at Woodford Run Wildlife Refuge (4 Sawmill Road, Medford NJ). The 3rd Annual Hoot, Waddle and Stroll 5K Trail Run & 1-Mile Stroll is a fun-filled, family-oriented event to support Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge. Cedar Run Refuge, located in the Pinelands of Medford Township, cares for nearly 4,000 animals annually and is also dedicated to educating children about the importance of conserving our shared habitats. Cedar Run also aims to promote outdoor health and wellness for all ages. For details, visit www.cedarrun.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 Walk: Saturday 9/3 at 9:00am.
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 9/10 at 10:00am

- Nature Explorers: Saturday 9/17 at 10:00am.
- Nature Tots: Tuesdays at 10:00am:
  - 9/13 - Insect Safari
  - 9/20 - Lake Study
  - 9//27- No Pick Scavenger Hunt

Natural Events for the month of September

- The last brood of monarch butterflies emerges and flies south to Mexico.
- Black gum foliage turns red - first tree to get its autumn color.
- Wild grapes ripen - not all of them are sour.
- Turtle eggs hatch and hatchlings emerge and head for the nearest water.
- Robins begin to join together in large flocks
- Most hummingbirds depart by the end of the month
- Bats busy feeding – building fat reserves for hibernation and migration.
- Broad-winged hawk migration peaks in mid-month - plan a visit to a hawk lookout.

Conservation Corner by Suzan Delozier

Hello to all our members and friends. Hope everyone has had a safe and enjoyable summer. Since monarch butterflies are near and dear to my heart I'd like to start the Conservation Corner with a personal report on the monarchs in our yard. Over the first few weeks of summer, we saw 6 monarchs in the garden (4 were solitary butterflies) and, over the following weeks, found 20 caterpillars on our milkweed (most were on swamp milkweed). I retrieved the caterpillars and have been rearing them on the porch. As of August 13th, I have released 9 butterflies. The number of monarchs reported by Journey North and other websites is low, perhaps as low as 2013 the all-time worst year for monarchs. An ice storm in Mexico just as migration started is the likely cause.

If you have seen monarch butterflies or caterpillars and would like to share your sightings, you can email your info to me at mddsgp@comcast.net. I'll put together our sightings and report our numbers in a future newsletter.

Monarch caterpillars will "j-hang" for about 24 hours before pupating into a chrysalis. Above, a j-hanger and two chrysalides in a rearing tower on our front porch.

After 10 to 12 days as a chrysalis, a beautiful butterfly will emerge.

TROPICAL MILKWEED

Tropical milkweed (Asclepias curassavica) is a non-native milkweed that has rapidly gained popularity due to its attractive flower and the fact that it is a magnet for egg-laying monarchs. It is also the center of a milkweed controversy because its year-round persistence in warmer climates can cause monarchs to skip migration and breed throughout the winter in the U.S. These patches of year-round tropical milkweed foster the existence of the protozoan parasite Ophryocystis elektroscirrha (OE). This increases the probability that winter-breeding monarchs, who use these patches generation after generation, will become infected and pass the infection to migrating butterflies. However, a post from Pat Sutton (www.patandclaysutton.com) and a fact sheet from Monarch Joint Venture state that tropical milkweed may be grown in NJ because it does not survive our winters thus eliminating the threat of OE. The Xerces Society (xerces.org/milkweed-faq/), while siting the above fact sheet from Monarch Joint Venture, recommends planting only native milkweeds. See http://monarchjointventure.org/news-events/news/qa-about-research-related-to-tropical-milkweed-and-monarch-parasites for more on this controversy.

Last year I had tropical milkweed in my garden. I found eggs and larva into October which meant that monarchs were interrupting migration to lay eggs on the tropical milkweed. These eggs and larva resulted in butterflies well into November giving these butterflies a poor chance of survival. Included in the controversy above is the possibility that tropical milkweed, which can stay green longer than native milkweed, may cause migrating monarchs to break migration to lay eggs. I believe that it is a good idea to cut down tropical milkweed by mid-September so as not to hinder southern migration here in NJ. Any caterpillars found on the tropical milkweed may be carefully moved to common or swamp milkweed. Monarch Joint Venture does recommend that tropical milkweed gradually be replaced by our native common and swamp milkweeds to reduce the chance of tropical milkweed escaping into the wild.

** The tropical milkweed controversy is complex and under investigation. However, there is no question that monarchs need autumnal nectar plants such as aster, goldenrod, and joe-pye weed. See http://pollinator.org/PDFs/Monarchs/monarchfuelingyellow.pdf for a list of nectar plants. **

HEALTHY OCEANS

Twenty years ago the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act was passed. According to The Sierra Club this law is responsible for keeping US fish populations healthy and balanced and has been credited with bringing two-thirds of overfished populations back from collapse. Also, unintended bycatch (turtles, dolphins, seabirds etc.) has significantly decreased. US fisheries are some of the best managed in the world, however there is talk in Congress not to reauthorize this Act. Sign a petition https://www.addup.org/campaigns/stop-congress-from-gutting-fish-protections/petition/stop-congress-from-gutting-fish-protections?promoid=70131000001iOY3AAM&utm_medium=email&utm_source=sierraclub&utm_campaign=sierrarise&&utm_content=fish telling Congress to reauthorize the Magnuson-Stevens Act – what is good for the fish is good for our economy and environment.

GOOD NEWS FOR NJ OPEN SPACE

Governor Christie and the legislature came to an agreement to fund open space preservation projects. In 2014 voters approved a constitutional amendment to dedicate 4% of corporate taxes to open space preservation, with an increase to 6% in 2019. Although $100 million has been raised, not a penny has been spent on the preservation of green space, farmland, or historical sites. Instead, Christie used the money for general expenses such as employee salaries. Last May, Christie vetoed a bill which would have started funding open space projects. As the legislature was about to override his veto, Christie agreed to immediately start the funding if Blue Acres was included in the legislation. Blue Acres is a program that purchases flood-prone properties. According to www.njleg.state.nj.us, bill S2456 was signed into law in June.

STATE OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS

The first-ever conservation assessment of all 1,154 North American birds was released earlier this year. The assessment was compiled by experts from Canada, the United States and Mexico, but could not have been possible without the input of citizen scientists generating data through projects such as eBird, Christmas Bird Counts, and Project Feeder Watch. (ebird.org is a website supported by Audubon and Cornell Lab of Ornithology, where birders can enter their bird lists) More than 350 birds are transnational and require the 3 nations to work together to preserve these birds. Some of the results of the assessment follow.

Looking Ahead:

Listed below are the programs we have lined up for the new season. Meeting dates are the **second** Thursday of the month.

September 8, 2016: **Night Hunters of the Sky** - Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge

October 13, 2016 **Forest Tales: A Timeless Connection of People and Trees -** Erik Mollenhauer and "Otzi" the Iceman

November 10, 2016: **Protecting South Jersey's Waters: The Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer** - Richard Bizub, Dir. For Water Programs, Pinelands Preservation Alliance

December 8 2016: **An Amazon Expedition with EarthWatch** – Larry Lyons

January 12, 2017: **A Practical Guide to Plant Propagation** - Ron Kegel

February 9, 2017: **Pot Luck Dinner (6:00pm) & Program:Adventures in Paddling for Clean Water and a Healthy Ocean** - Margo Pellegrino

March 9, 2017: **Vulture Culture: A Face Only a Mother Could Love -** Jane Morton Galetto, President, Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River

April 13, 2017: **Birds of Gloucester County and Tips on Photographing Them** - Dennis DiMarco & Marilyn Henry

May 11, 2017: **Annual Plant Sale (6:00pm) and Program: The Horseshoe Crab Lab (6:45pm)** - A Green Legacy: John Burroughs and the Catskill Mts - Erik Mollenhauer

June 8, 2017: **Annual Picnic (6:00pm) at Alcyon Park, Pitman, NJ followed by program: Surfskis, Outrigger Canoes, Kayaks, Lifejackets, Rescue Throw bags, Paddles - Up Close & Personal -** Glen Forest Green, P.E., U.S. Canoe Assoc. Safety Committee Chairman

2016-2017 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the field trips we have lined up for the new season. Changes and additions are not impossible. If you would be able and willing to lead an additional field trip, please contact Paula Hayes at pnbhayes@gmail.com.

September 11, 2016 - **Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge**

October 2016 - **Blue Hole**

October 23, 2016 - **The Mad Hatter's Tree Party**

November 6, 2016 - **Drum Circle at Tall Pines**

December 17, 2016 - **Christmas Bird Count**

January 2017 - **Winter Ducks**

February 11, 2017 - **Scotland Run Full Moon Hike**

March 2017 - **TBD**

April 2017 - **BirdQuest Training Sessions**

May 6, 2017 - **BirdQuest**

June 2017 - **Horseshoe Crab Walk**

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 15th of the preceding month.
- The September Executive Committee meeting will be held on Sunday September 4th at the home of Bonnie Dann. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.

Remember to help out the Gloucester County Nature Club

amazonsmile
You Shop. Amazon Gives.

Shopping at Amazon can also benefit the Gloucester County Nature Club at **NO extra cost** to you!

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. You can choose from nearly one million organizations to support.

The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. The purchase price is the amount paid for the item minus any rebates and excluding shipping & handling, gift-wrapping fees, taxes, or service charges. You may even use your existing Amazon.com account for your purchases.

To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile.

A lovely little story: http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/14/fashion/modern-love-how-a-bird-feeder-revived-my-marriage.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=mini-moth&region=top-stories-below&WT.nav=top-stories-below

Reminder - Membership Dues

September brings with it membership renewals. This year we will be keeping the price the same as last year. Please remember that your dues are the only costs associated with being a club member, we do not charge for any of our programs or field trips. Many organizations charge their members for each walk or activity they attend. We believe that the club is still an excellent value and hope the added cost will not deter any of our members. It is much cheaper for us to send the newsletter electronically to our members and as a result those members who choose to receive the newsletter electronically will receive a discount on their membership. The dues are $20 for electronic mailings and $25 for regular mail delivery. Please fill out the membership form at the end of this newsletter and bring it along with your dues to the September Meeting, or send your renewal form and a check payable to "Gloucester County Nature Club" to: GCNC Membership, P.O. Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080.

You may also sign up and pay your membership dues electronically via PayPal. Just go to http://gcnatureclub.org/membership.php and fill out the online form.

WAIVER

Gloucester County Nature Club and/or its leaders, officers, members or representatives shall not be liable for any injuries, loss or damage to person and/or property, direct or consequential, arising out of any trips and/or activities of the Gloucester County Nature Club. The assumption of risk, which is inherent in this type of outdoor activity, is implied on the part of each person who attends any Gloucester County Nature Club trip, and every person participating in any of said trips and/or activities assumes all risk and liability in connection therewith.

Everyone participating in any activity of the Gloucester County Nature Club will be required to read the release of liability, protecting the Gloucester County Nature Club and/or its leaders, officers, members and representatives from liability.

Gloucester County Nature Club and/or its leaders, officers, members and representatives are not in any way responsible for the personal safety of the attendees. When walking along a road, keep to the left, facing oncoming traffic and walk in a single file. When walking along trails, do not follow too closely or move too fast for your safety and for the safety of others (avoid collisions and/or whipped branches). FOLLOW THE LEADER: If you forge ahead, you may find yourself alone. Responsible adults must accompany children under the age of 16. If you expect to drop out of the group early, please inform the leader. Report to one or more of the hikers if you intend to discontinue on the route.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2016-2017

__ New Member __ Renewal

__ Paper Membership ($25) - regular mail

__ Electronic Membership ($20) - newsletter via email; ***please provide email address below

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ ***Email Address: _____

Please note any special knowledge you would be willing to share: _____

_____

Would you be willing to serve on a committee? If so, which committee(s): _____

_____

Are there other ways you could participate? If so, how?

_____

- -

Would you like to give a gift membership? If so, indicate Paper ____ or Electronic ____

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

A note will be sent informing them of your gift membership in the GCNC, thank you.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE WAIVER

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please mail completed form with payment to GCNC, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 or bring to a meeting.