

Gloucester County Nature Club

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

October 2002

**REGULAR MEETING – Thursday, Oct. 10, 2002 7:00 pm, EIRC Building, 606 Delsea Dr. Sewell
(next to Dairy Queen)**

Bob Cassel, Program Coordinator, 478-2496

EXPLORING THE GALAPAGOS: The Significance of Islands

Many of the world's most unique life-forms occur on islands. Islands are laboratories of evolution. Ten years ago, three mature Nature Club members toured the Galapagos Islands of Ecuador. The isolation of these islands and the beauty of Ecuador is revealed tonight by the camera work of Bob Cassel. While these volcanic islands resemble Hawaii, there is nothing quite like approaching a nesting Blue-footed Booby, completely unafraid of humans. But... as isolated bits of ecosystem, islands are also hotbeds of extinction. For the past 30 years ecologists used their studies of islands to unravel a dark story of worldwide ecosystem decay. The implications of their findings are more urgent than ever, for the world, and for the residents of New Jersey. Join us as we explore the beauty of the Galapagos and the significance of island biogeography.

FIELD TRIP – Saturday, Oct. 19 – Elephant Swamp 8:15 am (bikers), 9:15 am (walkers)

Kris Mollenhauer, Field Trip Coordinator, 589-4387

Autumn in the Elephant Swamp

Leader: Kris Mollenhauer (biking group) Co-leader: Paula Dearlove (walking group)

Do you like exploring forgotten places in Gloucester County? Join us at the peak of fall color for a bike ride or walk past corn fields, swamps and woodlands... including the oddly mysterious Elephant Swamp. The walking/biking trail is an old rail bed with (for the most part) level, smooth grade and surface. The field trip will comprise two groups, one of bikers and one of walkers. Both groups will join up at 12 noon for picnic lunch. Bikers will do a total of four hours biking (ten miles round trip)... two hours before lunch and two after lunch. Biking will begin at 10 AM, lunch from noon to 1PM, return biking from 1-3PM. Walkers will do a total of one hour walking, round trip. Walkers will begin at 11 AM and meet up with the bikers at noon for lunch. Bikers and walkers need to bring water, snacks, brownbag lunch (or money to buy a lunch), bike lock for bikes. Bikers must arrange for transport of their bikes.

Walkers and bikers MUST pre-register for this trip by calling Kris Mollenhauer at 589-4387. Leave the name and return phone number of people registering, as well as whether you plan to walk or bike.

Bikers: Meet at the Elk Twp Municipal Building at 8:15 AM. You can get there from Rt 55 (Ferrell Exit... first exit south of Rt 322). Go NW on Ellis Mill Rd to first crossroad. Turn left on Porchtown Rd (Rt 667). Go one-plus mile and turn right onto Rt 619-623 (Whig Lane). Munic bldg is on your left. **Walkers:** Meet at Rotary (sports) Field in Elmer at 9:15 AM. This is located on the north side of Rt 40; the Elmer Diner is on one side of it, Elmer Lake is on the other side. Drive back along dirt road to the rear of the complex where you see a blue cinder block (State Champions) building. Parking on left.



THANKS!!!! A big thanks to Lorraine Kieffer for providing a wonderful tour for 30 Nature Club members of her Triple Oaks Nursery in Franklinville, on September 21. The tour started in the herb garden, continued along a beautiful stretch of the upper Maurice River and swamp, continued through grassland, meadow and a bog garden full of varieties of pitcher plants, ending in Lorraine's backyard canopy of oak trees. Triple Oaks has many varieties of perennials. Fall is the best time to plant asters, phlox, sedum and many other varieties that are good nectar sources for butterflies. Lorraine and her staff were excellent sources of information.



Looking Ahead

November: Tour of MacArthur Woods, Haddon Twp.

December: Christmas Bird Count

News from Supawna Meadows National Wildlife Refuge

This past spring and summer, a number of Nature Club members volunteered time to assist the staff of Supawna Meadows Refuge (197 Lighthouse Rd, Pennsville); 856-935-1487. Thanks to Bob and Carol Cassel who helped monitor songbird nestboxes. There were successful nests in 70% of the refuge boxes this year. Tree swallows fledged 66 young from 15 nests and house wrens fledged 18 young from four nests. Also, this summer and fall, Supawna staff and volunteers completed the first section of the first universally accessible trail on the refuge. Thanks to Dave and Jacky Partridge, and Deb Maka who worked along with other volunteers. Also, Kris Mollenhauer spent three very early mornings walking, driving and canoeing the refuge to do a breeding bird survey of the refuge. She found 66 species including several of concern: marsh wren, wood thrush, yellow-breasted chat, swamp sparrow and hooded warbler.



Environmental Info/Nature Notes

Gloria Caccia, Environmental Coordinator, 582-0980

The Woolly Bear (Isabella Tiger Moth)

The Isabella Tiger Moth is most often recognized in its caterpillar stage as the 1-2 inch long Woolly Bear. The fat caterpillar is a furry, dark brown to black, with long, stiff hairs, and an orange to light brown middle band. The adult moth is a buffy, strawcolored moth about two inches across the wings. Woolly Bear caterpillars overwinter as a caterpillar, resuming their eating in the spring. In April or May they pupate in a cocoon for about two weeks. The adult female moth that emerges lays up to 1,000 eggs on a variety of plants: plantain and red maple are favorites but they will also feed on clover, dandelion, grasses and others. The eggs hatch, pupate, and new adults emerge. *It is this second generation that overwinters as the Woolly Bear caterpillar that we see hurrying about in*

the fall.

The autumn caterpillar is searching for an overwintering place protected from predators and sudden temperature changes: under loose bark, leaves, logs boards, woodpiles and debris. They are often seen at this time crossing roads and paths and can be picked up without harm to caterpillar or human. They curl into a ball when disturbed, probably as a defensive behavior. They are very “slippery” in this balled position and will slide off your hand as if it were on a surface of ice.

There is an old saying about the amount of orange band on the Woolly Bear and the severity of winter: the more black there is, the worse winter will be. Actually the amount of black relates to age: young caterpillars have more black than older caterpillars.

Ecological Decline Far Worse Than Official Estimates

The real level of world inequality and environmental degradation may be far worse than official estimates according to a leaked document prepared for the world’s richest countries (for last month’s Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development pre-Johannesburg meeting on sustainable development and was leaked to the Guardian paper of London). The report includes new estimates that the world lost almost 10% of its forests in the last 10 years, that CO2 emissions leading to global warming are expected to rise by 33% in rich countries and 100% in the rest of the world in the next 18 years; and that more than 30% more fresh water will be needed by 2020. The paper’s calculations suggest the many conventions, treaties and intergovernmental agreements signed in the past decade have had little or no effect on stopping the rush for timber and mineral resources in the developing world and that extinction of species is now reaching 11% of birds, 18-24% of mammals, 5% of fish and 8% of plants. Over the next 18 years, says the report, global energy use is expected to expand by more than 50% and by more than 100% in China, east Asia and the former Soviet Union. In terms of foreign investment, 80% of global finance went to rich countries in 2000, with the entire African continent receiving less than 1% of direct foreign investment.

The longer I live the more my mind dwells upon the beauty and the wonder of the world... I have loved the feel of the grass under my feet, and the sound of the running streams by my side. The hum of the wind in the treetops has always been good music to me, and the face of the fields has often comforted me more than the faces of men. I am in love with this world.

--- JOHN BURROUGHS, *The Summit of the Years*

TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!!!

*A reminder that it is now time to renew your membership in Gloucester County Nature Club. Individual member is \$13; family is \$15. Checks should be made out to **Gloucester County Nature Club** and returned to Karen Kravchuck, Treasurer, 25 Barlow Ave, Sewell, NJ 08080-1007. Your dues pay for print/mail costs to send the newsletter to your house and for speaker fees; we cannot afford to mail you the newsletter if you don’t renew!!*

**Community Events**

Please contact our Community Events Coordinator, Maria Keefe, at Kityblu@juno.com or 856-627-7010.

Executive Committee Meeting: Sunday, Oct. 6 at 7 PM at the home of Bob and Carol Cassel, 407 Heritage Rd, Sewell. Call 478-2496 for directions.

Club News: The Nature Club is always looking for ideas for future programs and field trips. Please contact the program and/or field trip coordinators with your ideas. For information about the Gloucester Co. Nature Club, call Brian Hayes, President 468-9272.

Please Note change: Information for next month's newsletter should be sent, by the 15th of each month to:

Paula Hayes, 413 Stockton Ave, Wenonah, NJ 08090, 468-9272

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c/o EIRC
606 Delsea Dr.
Sewell NJ 08080