



# Gloucester County Nature Club

## Monthly Newsletter

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

Nature Club meetings are open to the public  
October 2003

### **Program-Unexpected Wildlife Refuge**-Thurs, Oct. 9 at 7:00 PM at EIRC, Sewell Program Coordinator- Bob Cassel 478-2496

Sarah Summerville will bring us the history of the Unexpected Wildlife Refuge. She will share the fascinating story of a couple who lived with wildlife on their 85 acre tract in the Pinelands. This oasis hosts a bounty of wildlife. The birdlife found on the refuge includes 150 species, with many nesting on the tract. There are 22 species of animals, and 32 "scarce plants" found on the grounds. And, for those of you familiar with the refuge there are the friendly beaver.

Our slide program will be brought to us by the director of the refuge, Sarah Summerville. Originally from Western Pennsylvania she graduated from Slippery Rock University with degrees in Environmental Studies, Cartography, and Geography. She spent 12 years in Atlantic City operating a surveying office. Sarah also worked as an environmental scientist for the city of Hammonton. Most recently, after the refuge's founder Hope Buyukmihci passed away in June of 2001, she took over as the director of the Unexpected Wildlife Refuge here in Gloucester County.



### **Field Trip- Supawana Meadows National Wildlife Refuge**- Sat., Oct. 18 at 8:00AM Field Trip Coordinator- Kris Mollenhauer 589-4387

Join us for a nature walk at this beautiful National Wildlife Refuge located in Salem County. The refuge has uplands and wetlands. It borders the Delaware Bay and has extensive salt marshes. Wildlife is plentiful so bring your binoculars. The walk will be around 1- 1 1/2 hours. You should be prepared for possible biting insects (long pants and/or repellent). You may want to bring a lunch and visit nearby Fort Mott afterwards for a picnic overlooking the Delaware. Meet at Timberland Plaza on Woodbury- Glassboro Road in Sewell at 8:00- AM.



### The Winged Migration of Cape May

By Margaret Colman

As a new resident of New Jersey this was my first outing with the Gloucester County Nature Club. I am a "transplant" from Maine. I try never to be late for hikes, but on this particular day I drove past the unmarked road to a dead end street, turned around and ended up at the upper parking lot where I first met club members David and Marie. So a little past 8:00 A.M. on Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>, we walked to the lower parking lot near Higbee

Beach, Cape May, and met the remainder of the group who waited patiently for us. Brian, our hike leader, led us through the dewy grass and we all got to view many sightings of very tired birds who had been traveling all night to their southern destinations, who had stopped to rest at one of the fragile resting spots at Cape May. As a newcomer, my eyes and ears were open as I tried to listen to the knowledge of the advanced birders identify birds that I had never seen before. I wanted to pick up points and bird identification hints, and to understand the concept of the hide-and-seek games that these birds can play on the human eye. Brian mentioned that this was the only place one could view the Connecticut Warbler this time of year. I was having difficulty identifying some of the species as it was a bright sunny morning. I understand from my bird friends in Maine that a dry cloudy day is best to spot such beauties. In the first hour we did see a Titmouse, Flycatcher, and Yellow Warbler. A few Monarch butterflies and multitudes of dragonflies. As we walked around the fields I felt myself dragging behind as I was catching my feet in those pesty vines that sometimes run zig-zag on the grassy trail. I believe they were Morning Glory vines that grow wild here in New Jersey, a plant that sells at gardening centers in Maine. These vines were a distraction to my "footing" as I kept catching my feet in them. This incident reminded me of the hiking group in Maine I used to belong to called the Penobscot Area Trekkers and Hikers (PATH). Some trails in Maine are composed of tree roots, boulders and rocks and we would sometimes tumble down a hiking trail falling over a loose boulder, rarely ever hurting ourselves, except maybe our pride. Besides there was always a bigger rock on the trail to "catch us". After lagging behind the group a bit on Sunday, it was not my pride this time—it was my sunglasses that fell off my face. After the walk through the wildlife management area Paula generously offered Marie, David, and I a ride back to the upper parking lot where we left our vehicles. I drove back down to the lower parking lot to look for my sun glasses and lo and behold Brian had confiscated them from the ground and was wearing them. I chuckled and thanked him for rescuing them. I was informed that the lower parking lot closest to the bird sanctuary fills up quite fast in the early morning hours when the bird sightings are more active. I am always reminding myself that the population here in "Jersey" is the largest population per square mile in the whole United States. Hush--lets not tell the winged population.



Our second stop was the Hawk Watch near the Cape May Lighthouse. Brian pointed out a distant Osprey flying just behind the lighthouse itself. Most of us got to see it disappear into the distant vast blue sky. I did not look for many birds there—I ate my lunch overlooking a white egret taking his morning bath. It reminded me to drink plenty of water for energy for our next venture on the list.

Our third stop was the Pavilion Circle Gardens, tucked away in a small neighborhood, located just down the street from the Lighthouse. Being accustomed to the Maine wilderness and woods all around me, I must say I was a little suspicious when we pulled up to park our cars on the side roads leading to the circle. People are not allowed to park on the circle itself. We were in the middle of a housing development. What would we see here. To my surprise, it was a delightful walk and the highlight of my trip with the Nature Club. It was my first learning experience with butterflies that are so delicate. We watched them feeding off the Butterfly Bushes planted around the circle. It

is hard to imagine that the Monarch Butterfly can travel over 80 miles in one migration day. At this rate of speed a car trip from New Jersey to Maine would not be considered very productive as the trip would probably take five or six days. Compared to the Monarch butterfly that weighs only 500 milligrams this feat is a wonder of nature. This reminds me of a bumper sticker commonly seen in Maine that reads: *Maine, Life in the Slow Lane*. I find myself lagging behind the group once again.

Companions of the Monarchs sighted at the Pavilion Circle Gardens were American Lady, White Cabbage (very delicate and smaller than Monarchs), Black Swallows, and a delightful treat from a male Eastern Tiger Swallowtail butterfly. He won the size category. A "standout" butterfly painted yellow and black by Mother Nature with bottom wings dipped in black with a splash of blue in the middle of his lower wings. He flew to the top of one of the trees to oversee the expedition of his fellow travelers. The sun was at its mid-day location and we were all drawn to the activities and tasks of the various species of butterflies on one of the last lazy days of summer. A perfect end-of-the-summer day, as we would say in Maine, with low humidity, blue sky and many sightings of butterflies everywhere we looked. We also saw a "tagged" Monarch at the Circle.



Everyone hesitated to leave. It was so nice here. Our last stop was at North Wildwood to visit the historic Hereford Inlet Lighthouse that is currently under renovation. A few milkweed plants greeted us near the entrance along with the various butterflies. Surrounding the lighthouse are flower and herb gardens and a walkway to a gazebo. A small path led to the Ocean and a beautiful view of the inlet. Nice benches here to have a picnic lunch or just to sit and enjoy the view. This view was a peaceful and quiet setting and to my surprise--no one was there. The view of the ocean here reminded me of a hike I lead once to Great Wass Island near Jonesport-Beals, Maine on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1998. The island is owned by the Nature Conservancy located in Downeast Maine. It is a mile walk from the parking lot through scrub pine trees overlooking a heath. In May blooming Northern Pitcher Plants can be seen along the path and bog bridges. Upon arrival through thick woods the path leads to the open sea. It is a great place to sit upon pink rolling rocks that flow into the ocean and eat lunch. On that particular day in 1998, we viewed an air show by two mature bald eagles. One baby lion seal pup was found laying on the rocks near the ocean, and Ida Ducks were swimming in the pools of water in the inlet. Occasionally we would see a King Fisher dive for herring. The Great Wass is a past memory of a nice easy hike in Maine.

The nature walk on Sunday reminds us that there is beauty anywhere we live. We just have to look for it, and bloom where we are planted. Thank you Gloucester County Nature Club for making me feel at home and not quite so homesick. I can just imagine how those Monarch Butterflies feel after the long trek to Mexico and a first-time visitor to a place they have never been before.

### **Conservation**

#### **Creating a Wildlife Friendly Back Yard**

As fall approaches, many gardeners will take time to "clean up" their yard. They will eagerly cut back flowers that are done blooming, rake leaves, and dispose of dead branches and yard debris. What many don't realize is that they are reducing habitat and food for the wildlife that lives in and will visit their yard between now and spring. If you

enjoy having wildlife in your yard you may want to reconsider that clean-up and wait until spring.



The flower heads you trim could provide seeds to goldfinches, sparrows, chipmunks, and others. Along with the leaves you rake you will be removing many invertebrates who seek the protection of leaf litter. This will remove two groups from your yard- the insects and other small creatures that live in the leaves and the predators who enjoy them as dinner. Many wrens, thrushes, and sparrows will not forage or find food in a lawn, they depend on this leaf litter. You will also be removing the many butterflies that over winter in our area as chrysalis. These beauties will not emerge in you yard in spring if they have been raked away. If you can't leave all the leaves in your yard, why not at least leave them in the flower beds, this way they will return nutrients to the soil, help protect you plants through the winter, and provide habitat to the creatures that live in and visit your yard.

Another great way to help the critters is to not mow a portion of your yard. I used to notice that after we mowed the birds and small mammals seemed to disappear from our yard. Now we try to leave some areas of our yard long at all times for the animals to forage and find protection in.

A final step you can take to provide animals with protection is to create a permanent or temporary brush pile in your yard. Simply pile branches, twigs, old shrubs, used Christmas trees, etc. in an area of your yard. Locating this near a feeding station for birds can increase the visitation to feeders significantly. Kris Mollenhauer was looking for ways to increase the number of birds that visited a feeding station at Pitman Memorial School her students monitored for Cornell's Feeder Watch Program, when she went through town gathering old Christmas trees. The morning after the trees were stacked outside the school they were filled with birds. These trees were easily removed later in the year. I suspect though, they will be back this January.

So, why not relax this fall and take comfort in the knowledge that by not doing the yard work until spring you are helping the wildlife in your neighborhood.

### **Gloucester County Household Waste Collection Days**

Here is your chance to clean out your garage and dispose of hazardous substances safely. On **October 3** the Gloucester County Solid Waste Complex in South Harrison Township on Monroeville Road (Rt. 694) will be accepting paints, stains, motor oil, antifreeze, fluorescent tubes & ballasts, lead acid & ni-cad batteries, solvents, pesticides, cleaners, kerosene, herbicides, gasoline, turpentine, varnish, fertilizers, rat poison, auto and floor care products, weed killers, lighter fluid, propane tanks, photographic & pool chemicals. These products do not belong in the regular trash and should never be poured down a household or a storm drain. Call 478-6045 ext. 14 for more information.

### **Speaker from Pinelands Preservation Alliance featured at Old Pine Farm Meeting**

The public is invited to attend the annual meeting of the trustees of Old Pine Farm Natural Lands Trust on Wednesday, October 15, in the Terrace Room at Auletto Caterers, 1849 Cooper Street, Deptford. Following the meeting the guest speaker, Margaret O'Gorman, Director of Development at the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, will talk about "Introduction to the Pinelands and Its Preservation." Also on the agenda will be a film about Big Timber Creek and Old Pine Farm by Adin Mickle from Boy Scout Troop

177 in Gloucester Township. Gathering and free refreshments at 6:30 p.m., the annual meeting at 7:00 p.m., and the speakers at 7:30 p.m. For more information or if you plan to attend, please RSVP by calling Lynne at (856) 374-0395.



**Reminder:**

The Gloucester County Nature Club's memberships run from September to September. If you haven't renewed your membership please do so as soon as possible by mailing your dues and membership form to Karen Kravchuck at 25 Barlow Ave., Sewell, NJ 08080. The membership form is below.

**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 discontinue on route.

<b><u>MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2003-2004</u></b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> New Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual (\$13)	<input type="checkbox"/> Family (\$15)
Name _____	
Street _____	
City/State/ZIP _____	
Phone _____	Email Address _____
<input type="checkbox"/> I'd like to receive the newsletter electronically at the email address listed above	
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 Individual <input type="checkbox"/> or Family <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name _____	
Street _____	
City/State/ZIP _____	
Phone _____	
A note will be sent informing them of your gift membership in the GCNC, thank you.	
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I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE WAIVER	
Signature _____	Date _____

### Job Opportunity

The Federation of Gloucester County Watersheds is looking for a person to serve as a part-time Outreach and Education Coordinator for its "Building Watershed Awareness" project, during 2003-2004. For a detailed description of responsibilities and applicant requirements go to the Federation website at [www.sjwatersheds.org](http://www.sjwatersheds.org).

### Looking Ahead:

#### Programs-

November 13<sup>th</sup> - Protecting Land in South Jersey: Preserving Oases Along The Flyway

December 11<sup>th</sup> - Mt. Royal Archeology Dig

#### Field Trips-

December 20<sup>th</sup> - Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count

### Club Notes:

-Executive Meeting- October 5 at 7:00 pm at Elaine Dzeima's Home- 43 Almonesson Road, Blackwood, call Elaine at 227-0839 for directions

-If you'd like to receive the newsletter electronically or receive more info about the club please email Brian or Paula at [pnbhayes@aol.com](mailto:pnbhayes@aol.com) or call 468-9272.

-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 Paula Hayes at [pnbhayes@aol.com](mailto:pnbhayes@aol.com) or 413 North Stockton Avenue; Wenonah, NJ 08090 by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

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