



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

October 2015

Program - Reptiles and Amphibians of Southern New Jersey

Thursday, October 8, 2015 at 7:00pm at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Wenonah, NJ (directions below)

Presenter: Ned Gilmore, Collections Manager, Vertebrate Zoology - The Academy of Natural Sciences

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342

Southern New Jersey, with its diverse habitats of deciduous woodlands, oak-pine forest, freshwater wetlands, marshes and its marine and estuary environments, is home to a large and diverse population of reptiles and amphibians. New Jersey is home to 44 species of reptiles. That includes 19 species of turtles, from the common but beautiful eastern painted turtle to the rare and endangered bog turtle and Atlantic leatherneck. We have the northern fence lizard and 2 species of skinks. Our snakes include the common eastern garter snake and the eastern hognose, who strikes in defense but almost never bites, and when all else fails, plays dead. South Jersey is home to the delicate and arboreal smooth green snake and in the pinelands you will find South Jersey's only pit viper, the endangered timber rattlesnake.



Unlike all other classes of vertebrates, all amphibians are carnivores. 16 species of salamanders and 16 species of frogs and toads are native to New Jersey. Our salamanders range from South Jersey's beautiful and endangered eastern tiger salamander to the more common redback salamander one can often find hiding under a woodland log. Our frogs include the well-known northern spring peeper, whose chorus from ponds and wetlands in April heralds the coming of spring, and the diminutive and endangered Pine Barrens tree frog. Frogs, like birds can be identified by their calls. The wood

frog sounds a bit like a quacking duck while the carpenter frog's call sounds like a carpenter hitting nails with a hammer. Tonight we welcome The Academy of Natural Sciences' Ned Gilmore, who will tell us about this diverse array of wildlife that surrounds us, their places and roles in the habitats where they live and how human activity is affecting the future for these animals.

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 – Family Moonlit Hike and Campfire at Scotland Run Park **Saturday, October 24, 2015 at 6:30 pm**

Trip Leader: Maria Keefe (cell/text: 609-315-4759 or mariakeefe19@comcast.net)



We are hoping the weather will cooperate for a moonlight walk. Join us as we experience the magic of walking in the woods by the light of the moon. We explore the music of the night as our eyes give way to our other senses and we share the night with owls, raccoons, and flying squirrels. Come out and see tree silhouettes, moon shadows and the stillness of the woods in autumn. The walk is short but will include uneven and sloping wooded trails so sturdy walking shoes are recommended. The walk will last about one hour which will give us time for some stories as well. We will end with a campfire complements of the Scotland Run staff. This

event will be cancelled in the event of rain. To really enjoy the splendor of the night keep your flashlights off and in your pocket. This event is open to all ages. To reserve your spot for this special event please register by calling Scotland Run at 856-881-0845 or emailing ltaylor@co.gloucester.nj.us.



Directions: Take exit 45 off route 55 to Centerton - Clayton. Make a left onto Buck Road (Rt. 553). Make a right at the first traffic light onto Academy Road (Rt. 610). Take Academy Road for 2 miles crossing over route 47 and Fries Mill Road. Just beyond Fries Mill Road turn right into the Nature Center. Address for GPS: 980 East Academy Street, Clayton NJ

Field Trip Report – Biking Through Elephant Swamp by Barry Bengel



On a nearly perfect day for bike riding, seven GCNC members and guests started in Aura and took a ride south on the Elk Township bicycle trail. The group rode approximately ten miles round trip past corn fields, swamps and woodlands... including the oddly mysterious Elephant Swamp. The biking trail is an old rail bed that is level, with a smooth grade, and gravel surface. We stopped at several places along the way to look at interesting plants, trees, and even a good old-fashioned swimming hole. The group rode south to Elmer and enjoyed a delicious lunch at Dodge's Market. After lunch, the group took the return ride back to their cars in Elk Township.

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: October 2015

- October 18 (Sunday), 2:00pm – **Walk in the Wild: Light**. Sponsored by the Old Pine Farm Natural Lands Trust. Free. Experience a casual stroll on the trails of the land trust with a knowledgeable leader to observe the plants, animals, natural features and processes, and just plain magic that make this place very special. We will do this on the third Sunday of each month, with a different focus each month. Please check at www.oldpinefarm.org for changes to the schedule and directions. Meet in the parking area at the end of Rankin Avenue in Blackwood Terrace. Or just use your favorite mapping program or your GPS by typing in "400 Rankin Ave, Deptford, NJ." Further details available by calling Carl Ford at 856-579-4441. No reservations necessary -- just show up!

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 Walks: Saturday 10/3 and 11/7 at 8:00am. A beautiful time of year for a leisurely morning walk. Bring your binoculars and discover the many species of birds that call Scotland Run Park home.
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 10/14 and 11/18 at 10:00am
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 10/17 and 11/14 at 10:00am. A great way for scouts to earn their naturalist and forestry badges.
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 10/21 and 11/25 at 2:30pm
- Volunteer Training Classes! Become a Naturalist Volunteer and help the environment by sharing your love of Nature with others. Saturday 10/3, 10/17, 10/24 from 9:00am – 12:00 noon (unless otherwise noted)
 - Saturday 10/3 - Bird Walk and Insects (Bird walk starts at 8:00am)
 - Saturday 10/17 - Plants and Habitats
 - Saturday 10/24 - Watersheds and Lake Study
- Nature Explorers (Family Adventure programs)
 - Saturday 10/24 at 10:00am - Lake Study: Meet the Aquatic residents of Wilson Lake.
 - Saturday 10/31, Special times: 10:00am and 5:00pm - Scary Nature Walk. What scares you? Find out about toadstools, spiders, snakes and other “scary” Nature stuff. Wear a costume if you like. But be prepared for a walk in the woods.

Natural Events for the month of October

- Pine Barrens gentian in bloom in the Pinelands.
- Goldenrods, asters, bonesets, and blazing star in bloom.
- Cranberry harvest in the Pinelands.
- Autumn colors peak in late October.
- The greatest variety of raptor migration comes in mid-October, with golden eagles, red-shouldered hawks and more.



- Fox sparrows, one of the largest sparrows, are often seen under seed feeders during their autumn migration
- Wood ducks are migrating south
- Green-winged teals, one of the smallest dabbling ducks, are passing through the area as they migrate to the shore.

Looking Ahead:

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

November 12, 2015: **Spring Wildflowers of the Great Smoky Mountains** - Rich Dilks (Joint meeting w/ SJLWT)

December 10 2015: **Yellowstone** – Karl Anderson

January 14, 2016: **If You Plant It, They Will Come** - Ron and Linda Kegel

February 11, 2016: **Pot Luck Dinner (6:00pm) & Bag it, a documentary film (7:00pm)** - Interactive member activity

March 10, 2016: **A Journey Through Time and Space: Following the Ancient Song-lines of Ireland** - Erik Mollenhauer & Brian Hayes

April 14, 2016: **A Panama Adventure** - Barbara Bassett

May 12, 2016: **Annual Plant Sale (6:00pm) and Program: The Horseshoe Crab Lab 6:30pm** - Sue Slotterback, The Wetlands Institute

June 9, 2016: **Thursday, June 9, 2016 Annual Picnic (6:00pm) at Alcyon Park, Pitman, NJ followed by program: Bluebirds** - Allen Jackson, President, New Jersey Bluebird Society

2015-2016 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the field trips we have lined up for the rest of this 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.

October 25, 2015 - **Mad Hatters Tree Party**

November - **Hike and Tour at Saddler's Woods**

December 19, 2015 - **Christmas Bird Count** (Ron Kegel)

January - **Winter Birding Trip**

February - **Hike at Palmyra Cove**

March - TBA

April - **Bird Quest Trainings**

May 7, 1016 - **Bird Quest**

June - **Duke Farms**

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 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 or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15th of the preceding month.
- The October Executive Committee meeting will be held on Sunday October 4th at the home of Elaine Dzeima. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.

Reminder - Membership Dues

October 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 October 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 2015-2016

- 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.