

Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

Nature Club meetings are open to the public
November 2002

Regular Meeting – Thursday, November 14th 7:00 pm, EIRC Building, 606 Delsea Drive, Sewell (next to Dairy Queen) Bob Cassel, Program Coordinator, 478-2496

American Indians in South Jersey: Their Highways, Homes & Hunting Grounds

Speaker: R. Alan Mounier, President of the Archaeological Society of New Jersey.

American Indian archaeological sites reveal the patterns of land use of the early inhabitants of Gloucester County. For example, Indians used stream corridors as travel paths and uplands for settlements. Their hunting grounds can be identified by the prevalence of particular types of artifacts. Tool-making differences shed light on the variety of peoples who occupied the areas we know today. Gloucester County and southern New Jersey are rich in Indian archaeological sites, but many of these sites are being destroyed by modern land uses and unregulated excavations. Join noted anthropologist, consulting archaeologist and author, R. Alan Mounier, in an exploration of these increasingly "rare and endangered" local treasures, the history they reveal, and the prehistoric relationship of humans and natural resources.

This program is being presented collaboratively with the Federation of Gloucester County Watersheds and the South Jersey Land Trust. A brief presentation on the past year's events and activities of all three organizations will precede the program.



Field Trip-Saturday, November 16th at 10 am, A Tour of MacArthur Forest

Kris Mollenhauer, Field Trip Coordinator, 478-4387

A Tour of MacArthur Forest

Trip leader: Kris Mollenhauer Co-leaders: Jackie and Dave Partridge

Join us for a tour of MacArthur Forest by Maggie Downham who is a member of the Newton Creek Watershed Association. Located in Haddon Township, MacArthur Forest is one of the last remaining old growth forests in the Eastern U.S with beech and oak trees over 200 years old. This ecosystem is part of a historic area that was a stop on the Underground Railroad. It is now threatened by a township plan to develop athletic fields. MacArthur Forest holds a rare example of the type of forests that once existed from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River, before Europeans settled here. Today, almost no old growth forest remains; in fact less than 0.5% of the forest that remains in the Eastern U.S. can be classified as old growth. Come hear the history of this special place and learn what efforts are underway to save it from development.

Call Kris to register at 589-4387

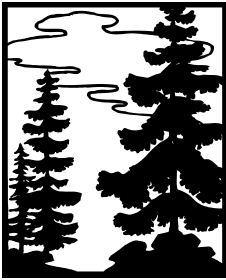
Elephant Swamp Trip

No elephants were sighted but we may have seen some footprints in Elephant Swamp on Saturday morning. Fourteen restless riders and a dozen walkers set out from opposite directions. If you've never traveled on an old railroad bed, it's like going through a tunnel but the walls are the forest and a circle of light is up ahead of you. Old Sam Peabody (White-throated sparrow) was calling and mixed flocks of chickadees and yellow-rumped warblers were foraging in the trees. Palm warblers hopped along the path where keen eyes spotted a colony of British Soldier lichens. We enjoyed our brunch and rest at Dodges Market in Elmer and were back on our return loop. It was a perfect, cool autumn day for this adventure and nice to spend some time enjoying the peace along this secluded trail. Thanks to club member Paula Dearlove who took charge of the hiker group.

Conservation Notes

Gloria Caccia, Environmental Coordinator, 582-0980

Will Thinning the Forests Prevent Fires? No says NRDC



The current administration has proposed thinning our forests to prevent forest fires. The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) in their fall issue of "On Earth" strongly feels that this is the wrong approach. The current administration's plan provides for not only clearing buildup of brush but also allowing timber companies into back country to cut large trees, the very ones which resist fire.

NRDC states: "According to the Forest Service's own research, this kind of thinning actually can elevate fire risk by increasing dead fuel, and letting in wind and sunlight that dry out the forest. NRDC supports removing brush in communities immediately next to high-risk fire areas- not in roadless forests far from people and homes."

The current administration also wants to "speed up the process of developing environmental assessments... We'll make sure that the people have their voice but aren't able to tie it all up." NRDC feels the administration's intention is to prevent the people from challenging the logging companies in court. NRDC is concerned that logging company operations will use this opportunity to continue logging or move into roadless areas "even if their environmental assessments are shoddy and even if their projects violate laws as important to healthy forests as the Endangered Species Acts.

NRDC is urging people to let their Senators and Representatives know that we do not support any legislation that rolls back environmental laws or stops people from having a say in the future of our forests.

Nine Actions for the Planet

1. Skip a car trip each week. The average American drives over 250 miles each week. Replace a 20 mile trip by combining errands, biking, carpooling, or telecommuting and you'll reduce your annual emissions by nearly 1000 pounds.
2. Replace one beef meal each week. Meat production is extremely resource intensive- livestock currently consume 70 percent of America's grain production! For every 1,000 people who take this action we will save 70,000 pounds of grain, 70,000 pounds of topsoil, and 40 million gallons of water per year.

3. Shift your shrimp consumption. Today, nearly 70 percent of the world's fisheries are fully fished or overfished, and about 60 billion pounds of fish, sharks, and seabirds die each year as "bycatch." For every person who stops eating shrimp 12 pounds of sea life per year can be saved.
4. Declare your independence from junk mail. For every 1,000 people who halve their personal bulk mail, we will save 170 trees, nearly 46,000 pounds of carbon dioxide, and 70,000 gallons of water each year. A visit to the Turn the Tide website listed below will help you accomplish this goal.
5. Replace four standard light bulbs with energy efficient compact fluorescent bulbs. A quick way to save a \$100. Replace four standard bulbs with low mercury CFL's, and your electricity bill will be reduced by \$100 over the lives of those bulbs! More importantly, you will stop the emission of thousand pounds of carbon dioxide.
6. Move the thermostat 3 degrees Fahrenheit. Just turning down thermostat 3 degrees in the winter and up 3 degrees in the summer you will cut nearly 1,100 pounds of carbon dioxide.
7. Eliminate lawn and garden pesticides. Americans directly apply 70 million pounds of pesticides to home lawns, in so doing, killing birds and other wildlife and polluting our water.
8. Install an efficient showerhead and low flow faucet aerators. Water is our most precious natural resources and is one of our most endangered resources.
9. Inspire two friends to try some of the above.



Taken From Turn the Tide at www.newdream.org

Another interesting website we used for last month's program on population growth and consumption rates is www.eia.doe.gov/ (this website talks a lot about energy use)

Sibley Column in Gloucester County Times

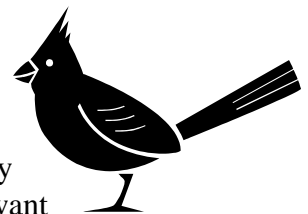
A new nature column written by famed bird artist and illustrator David Sibley is being featured in The Gloucester County Times every Friday. The column has been picked up on a trial basis so if you enjoy be sure to forward your comments to The Times.

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!!*

Looking Ahead

December's program and field trip will both feature Audubon's Christmas Bird Count. The Christmas Bird Count is a 100+ year tradition that takes place on a national and international basis each year. The count is taken during a 24 hour period and counts all the birds seen on that day within the 15 mile count circle. This year in Gloucester County our count takes place on Saturday, December 14th. For people who may want



to learn more about our winter birds, this is a good learning event. If you'd like to help with the count please call Bob Cassel at 478-2496 or Brian Hayes at 468-9272.

Crafters Wanted

We are looking to have a nature craft night for our February program. If you have a craft idea or would like to help us out with this new tradition please call Paula Hayes at 468-9272.

Club News

- Please contact our Community Events Coordinator, Maria Keefe, at Kityblu@juno.com or 856-627-7010 if you'd like to volunteer to help out at an event or know of an event we should attend
- Executive Committee Meeting: Sunday, November 10th at 7:00 pm at Gloria Caccia's House 161 Brookfield Avenue, Pitman, call 582-0980 for directions.
- The Nature Club is always looking for ideas for future programs and field trips. Please contact the program or field trip coordinators if you have ideas or would like to help.
- For information about the Nature Club call Brian Hayes at 856-468-9272.
- Information for the next newsletter should be sent to Paula Hayes at pnbhayes@aol.com or 413 North Stockton Avenue; Wenonah, NJ 08090 by the 15th of each month.
- "Talking birds" will be for sale at our November club meeting- these are small stuffed birds that accurately portray local birds and sing their songs
- A special thank you to Erik for the many years he served as the editor of the newsletter!

Gloucester County Nature Club
c/o EIRC
606 Delsea Dr.
Sewell NJ 08080