



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

November 2009

Program – The Pedricktown Marsh: An Ecological Treasure in Gloucester County.
Thursday, November 12th at 7:00 PM at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church,
Wenonah, NJ (Annual joint meeting with South Jersey Land & Water Trust)

Presenters: Mike Hogan, SJLWT Habitat Assessment Coordinator, and other members of the South Jersey Land & Water Trust

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks (856) 468-6342

At our November gathering we welcome the South Jersey Land & Water Trust to the annual joint meeting of our two organizations. The November program will be a special presentation by the SJL&WT about one of its most important projects: the preservation and protecting of the Pedricktown Marsh, a natural jewel and ecologically significant wetland area right here in Gloucester County. The Pedricktown Marsh is a large saltwater, tidal marsh located on the lower portion of the Oldmans Creek, which forms the border between Gloucester and Salem Counties. This expansive area of open wetlands contains stands of wild rice, cattails, and arum and provides habitat for migratory shorebirds, waterfowl and raptors. It is also a well known endangered species location and is designated as an “Important Bird Area” by the New Jersey Audubon Society. The marsh has been documented as a migratory stop off location for the Ruff, a shorebird native to Eurasia and rarely seen in North America. In addition, according to a recently authored NJ Audubon site report, the marsh “provides nesting habitat for the state-endangered Northern Harrier, Least Bittern, Peregrine Falcon and Bald Eagle. The tidal wetlands host significant numbers of breeding American Black Ducks, Northern Pintails, Marsh Wrens, Virginia Rails and Mallards. Northern Pintails, Green-winged Teal and American Black Ducks utilize critical habitat areas throughout the winter and into the spring as they prepare for their northward migration. The area is also important for migratory birds and raptors.”



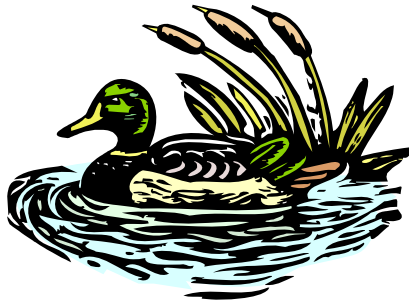
Noted New Jersey naturalist and nature photographer, Mike Hogan will tell us about the natural history and biological diversity of the Pedricktown Marsh and members of the SJL&WT will inform us of their efforts to preserve this sensitive and biologically rich wetland. Join us and learn about this special place so close to home and about the SJL&WT’s excellent work to protect it.

Directions: The Holy Nativity Lutheran Church is located just off Rte 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 – Brigantine Unit, Forsythe NWR, Oceanville NJ

Saturday, November 14th, 9:00 AM to early afternoon

Trip Leaders: Karl Anderson & Gale Cannon



We will be looking for shorebirds, gulls, snow geese and other waterfowl, and raptors including northern harrier, peregrine, and bald eagle, on the eight-mile drive around the refuge dikes. Weather permitting, we might also “beat the bushes” for passerine birds.

Directions: See your road maps to get to the refuge. Travel time from Woodbury via the Atlantic City Expressway, the Garden State Parkway, and Great Creek Road is about one hour and 15 minutes.

We will meet in the refuge parking area at 9:00 AM. Bring lunch and beverage. Have binoculars, and bring your ‘scope’ if you have one. There will be very little walking. There is a \$4.00 per car entry fee, unless driver or passenger has a Senior or other type of access pass.

This trip may be cancelled for bad weather. If the weather looks doubtful, please contact the leaders at 856-845-7075 the evening before the trip, or before 7:30 AM on the morning of the trip.

Family Fun Walk

Friday, November 6 at 10:00 AM at Old Pine Farm Natural Lands Trust, Deptford

Trip Leader: Maria Keefe (856) 627-7010 Email: walkingwith4boyz@comcast.net

Join us on Friday, November 6, 2009 at 10 am at the Old Pine Farm Natural Lands Trust in Deptford. Bring your baby in a backpack, your toddler in tow or your grandmom along for a walk. We will walk at a toddler's pace exploring as we go. Bring your own backpack and/or a stroller that is able to be pushed on unpaved paths. Everyone welcome.

Old Pine Farm Natural Lands Trust is one of the few remaining natural and protected areas along the highly-developed tidal portion of Big Timber Creek. It is located in the Blackwood Terrace section of Deptford. It offers a variety of terrain, including a meadow, woodlands and wetlands, while being surrounded on three sides by many acres of fresh water in Big Timber Creek. There are several trails to walk and a picnic table near the creek.



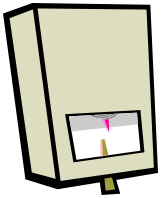
Directions: From Woodbury: Drive east on Cooper Street towards Blackwood. Cross Delsea Drive. At the next traffic light, go straight. At the fork, bear right to go down Good Intent Road. As you go through the second traffic light you have crossed Route 41. The fourth street on your left is Rankin Avenue. Make a left turn (you cannot make a right) and drive to the end of the street where you will see a parking lot.

From Pitman/Glassboro/Clayton: Drive North on Delsea Drive towards the Deptford Mall. At the Five Points intersection, go straight which puts you on Route 41. At the second traffic light you are at the intersection of Route 41 and Good Intent Road. Make a right turn. The fourth street on your left is Rankin Avenue. Make a left turn and go to the end of the street where you will see a parking lot.

Future Walks: Wednesday, December 30, 2009; Monday, January 18, 2010; Friday, February 12, 2010

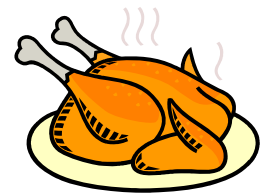
Conservation Corner – November Conservation tips by Jayne Rhynard

November means the onset of colder weather and turkey! Consider these simple green tips:



- Programmable thermostats, while not a sexy electronics item, are an affordable and easy way to save on your heating bills. Consider trying out what dropping your thermostat temperature a degree or two feels like. You don't have to commit to it and you might not notice a big difference.

- Use low technology draft dodgers at the doors of less frequently used rooms or entries to help keep heat in and keep drafts out.
- Replace drafty or energy inefficient windows by 12/31/10 with efficient ones qualifying for the tax credit (up to \$1,500). Some doors and even some garage doors are also eligible.
- Who doesn't love Thanksgiving! For a greener Big Meal consider these food strategies:
 - Purchase your turkey (and other meal ingredients) from local farms/farm markets or get an organic or heritage turkey.
 - Don't forget to use reusable bags or bring your own when grocery shopping.
 - Cloth napkins are elegant - use your nice linens and conserve.
 - If you go out and celebrate holiday events with a beer, order one on tap – they have a lesser environmental impact than bottles or cans.



Other Nature Notes

Project FeederWatch

Embrace the winter. Count feeder birds for science!

Ithaca, NY—What happens in the backyard should not stay in the backyard—at least when it comes to bird feeders. By sharing information about which birds visit their feeders between November and April, backyard bird watchers can help scientists track changes in bird numbers and movements from year to year, through Project FeederWatch, a citizen-science program from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada.

Project FeederWatch begins on November 14 and runs through early April. Taking part is easy. Anyone can count the numbers and kinds of birds at their feeders and enter their information on the FeederWatch website. Participants submitted nearly 117,000 checklists last season. Since 1987, more than 40,000 people from the United States and Canada have taken part in the project.

“To get the most complete picture of bird movements, we always need new sets of eyes to tell us what species are showing up at backyard feeders,” says David Bonter, leader of Project FeederWatch. “Participants always tell us how much fun it is and how good it feels to contribute to our understanding of birds by submitting their sightings.”

Project FeederWatch is for people of all ages and skill levels. To learn more and to sign up, visit www.feederwatch.org or call the Cornell Lab toll-free at (866) 982-2473. In return for the \$15 fee (\$12 for Cornell Lab members) participants receive the FeederWatcher’s Handbook, an identification poster of the most common feeder birds, a calendar, complete instructions, and Winter Bird Highlights, an annual summary of FeederWatch findings.



Wild Birds Unlimited offers an everyday 10% discount to GCNC members!

Wild Birds Unlimited offers an everyday 10% discount (for non bird food items) to GCNC members! *Due to the current volatile market for bird food, the 10% discount for these items has had to be discontinued.* However, members will still receive credit for their purchases towards the Frequent Seed Shopper Program. WBU offers the GCNC discount on all other items in the store. Members are requested to identify themselves as GNNC members before their sales are finalized. Questions? Please contact Sharon at 218-2973 or sillybird348@comcast.net.



Events by other Organizations: November 2009

- November 10 (Tuesday) – **Late Fall Birding and Nature Walk at Boundary Creek NRA, Moorestown.** 9:00 – 11:00 AM. Sponsored by the Burlington County Parks Department. For info: http://www.co.burlington.nj.us/departments/resource_conservation/parks/
- November 14 (Saturday) – **Birding Camden County.** 9:00 AM to early afternoon. Leader: Susan Setterberg. Sponsored by the Burlington County Natural Sciences Club. For info: <http://oldsquaw.tripod.com/>.
- November 14 (Saturday) – **Taylor's Refuge and Amico Island.** 8:45 AM to early afternoon. Leader: Lloyd Shaw. \$Fee. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. For info: phone 609-261-2495.
- November 21 (Saturday) – **John Heinz NWR (Tinicum) Birding for Early Winter Ducks and Eagles.** Leader: Lloyd Shaw. Sponsored by the Audubon Wildlife Society. For info: <http://www.audubonwildlifesociety.org/>.
- November 21 (Saturday) – **Birding Money Island.** Starts 9:00 AM. Sponsored by the Salem County Nature Club. For info: <http://salemcountynatureclubnews.blogspot.com/>

The following events take place at the Scotland Run Nature Center in Clayton. For details and to register, call the center at (856) 881-0845. All events are free.

- Bird Walk: Saturday 11/7 at 8:00 AM
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 11/4 at 2:30 PM
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 11/18 at 10:00 AM
- Family Nature Adventure: Saturday 11/21 at 10:00 AM
 - Turkey Time – We'll search for turkeys and other wildlife along the nature trail.

Natural Events for the month of November

- Persimmons ripen - they are delicious when fully soft-ripe, astringent when unripe.
- Witch hazel in bloom.
- Woodchucks and chipmunks go into hibernation.
- Bats seek their hibernating sites in caves and abandoned mines.
- American tree sparrow, sometimes called the "winter chippy", is a regular winter bird feeder visitor.

Looking Ahead:

Upcoming GCNC Programs

December 10, 2009: **The Maurice River: A River Worth Protecting** – Renee Brecht, Associate Director of Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River

January 14, 2010: **Turtles** – Cindy Pierson, the "Turtle Lady"

February 11, 2010: **Pot Luck Dinner and Cargo for Conservation**

March 11, 2010: **Gaviotas** – Hollister Knowlton

April 8, 2010: **Hawks of Southern New Jersey** – Don Freiday, NJ Audubon Society

May 13, 2010: TBD

June 10, 2010: **Annual Picnic** (location TBD) and **Awakening Spirits: The Art of Tracking** – Bill Marple, Instructor, Tom Brown Tracker School

2009-2010 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the field trips we have lined up for the next season. Changes and additions are not impossible. If you would be able and willing to lead a field trip, please contact Karl Anderson at karlanderson6@aol.com or (856) 845-7075.

December 19 (Saturday): **Audubon Christmas Bird Count** – Ron Kegel

January 16 (Saturday): **Eagles and Gulls at Conowingo Dam** – Jonathan Stillwell

February 28 (Sunday) (Rain date February 29): **Full Moon Hike at Alcyon Park** – Kris Mollenhauer

March (date TBD): **Manasquan Reservoir** – Jonathan Weir

April 17 (Saturday): **Bike the Glassboro Woods Trail** – Brian and Paula Hayes

May 9 (Sunday): **Wildflowers at Ridley Creek State Park** – Richard Dilks

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 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 November Executive Committee meeting will be held on November 8th at the Wenonah Community Center. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.