



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

December 2007

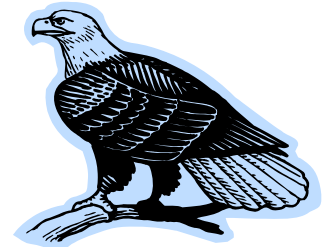
Program - Bald Eagles and The Challenge of Habitat Preservation (Combined meeting with the South Jersey Land & Water Trust)

Thursday, December 13th at 7:00 PM at EIRC, Sewell

Presenter: Larry J. Niles, Ph.D.

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks

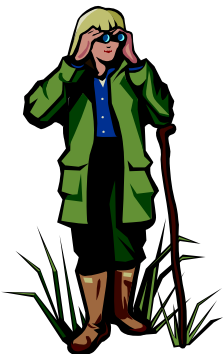
In 1782 when the Bald Eagle (whose zoological name, *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, literally means white-headed sea eagle) was chosen as the emblem of the nation, between one quarter and one half million Bald Eagles are estimated to have inhabited what would become the continental 48 states. By the 1960's fewer than 500 pairs survived. By the 1970's New Jersey was home to a single pair of Bald Eagles and they failed for 8 successive years to produce viable offspring. Habitat loss, pollution and the use of DDT and other pesticides had come very close to dooming the bald to extirpation from New Jersey.



Today, after 25 years of hard work by dedicated conservationists, Bald Eagle restoration is becoming a reality in New Jersey with over 50 nesting pairs and a population of approximately 200 birds. Dr. Larry Niles has played a central role in the hopeful and still unfinished story of the New Jersey's Bald Eagles. Beginning in 1982, Dr. Niles led the Bald Eagle recovery program as head of the N.J. Division of Fish and Wildlife's Endangered and Non-game Species program. Today as chief biologist for the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey, Dr. Niles continues his efforts on the eagles' behalf, identifying and working to preserve the habitat critical; to their long-term survival.

Field Trip – Audubon Christmas Bird Count **Saturday December 15th, Dawn 'til Dusk**

Coordinator: Ron Kegel



Looking for a holiday tradition that doesn't include going to the mall? The Christmas Bird Count may be for you. The Audubon Christmas Bird Count was started in 1900 and the Gloucester County Nature Club coordinates the Gloucester County count. Groups will divide up a 15 mile count circle and census all the birds seen. Many groups will begin or end their day searching for owls, and use the daylight hours to identify raptors, warblers, sparrows, great blue herons, and many other birds. We invite you to join us in this wonderful tradition by joining one of the groups. The starting and ending time for each group is decided by the team organizer(s); generally it is at least dawn to dusk but that will vary by team. The National Audubon Society requires a \$5 fee of all participants that is used for administrative costs. If you'd like to join the Count, please call Ron Kegel at 856-881-9262.

Note: Just because a team starts and ends at a certain time... Doesn't mean everyone on that team has to do the same. Some teams have participants who come for part of the day (morning or afternoon). Some team leaders prefer that participants stay the whole time. It really depends on the team; please check with the leaders for details.

Field Trip Report - Lichens of the Pine Barrens (November 10)

35 species of lichens were found during this trip, in about 2 1/2 hours. All of them were growing within about a one-mile radius of the Brendan Byrne State Forest office. Of particular interest were 15 species in the genus *Cladonia* (to which the well-known British soldier lichen belongs). Most were growing on soil or decaying wood, and they exhibited a dazzling variety of growth forms. Also noteworthy were members of the genus *Cladina*, (reindeer lichens) and of *Punctelia* and *Parmelia* (shield lichens). There were eight participants. The weather was cool and cloudy but not raining. The trip was led by Karl Anderson.

Conservation Corner – Conserving Energy by Loretta Dunne

New Jersey 15-Year Energy Master Plan

There are many steps that you can take personally to reduce your own inputs to global warming. It is also crucial that we expect the same from our elected officials – legislation is critical to the reduction of global warming. This fall, the Corzine administration is developing a 15-year energy master plan for the state. A draft plan is supposed to be released in December, with public hearings early next year and a final plan wrapped up in March. Environment New Jersey (www.environmentnj.org) urges that everyone contact Governor Corzine and ask that he include the following in the master plan:

- Reduce the state's energy consumption by 10 percent through high-performance homes, businesses, and appliances.
- Increase the amount of energy we get from renewable sources to 25 percent by 2025.
- Phase out New Jersey's outdated, inefficient and polluting power plants.
- Reject power companies' ambitions to build new nuclear power plants.
- Ensure that any power consumed in New Jersey meets increasingly strict global warming emissions standards.
- Prohibit the construction of new coal plants that do not capture and store their global warming emissions.

Contact Governor Corzine:

Office of the Governor

PO Box 001

Trenton, NJ 08625

609-292-6000

Via email: <http://www.state.nj.us/governor/govmail.html>

New Jersey Clean Energy Resources

The New Jersey clean energy resources website (<http://www.njcleanenergy.com/>) provides information about energy programs in the state. It includes details about the Clean Power Choice Program that allows you to select clean, renewable resources for your electricity. If you select a renewable source, there will be an additional charge added to your bill. The website details the options and their costs. It estimates that for the average New Jersey home (700 kWh per month), the Clean Power Choice Program could cost between \$4.94 and \$9.10 per month additional, depending on which product is selected; the Clean Power program can be terminated at any time.



If it is affordable for you, selecting one of the Clean Power Choice options is a good way to support the development of clean energy in our state.

You can also learn more by calling the New Jersey CleanPower Choice Program at 1-866-NJSMART.

The website also provides information about a number of rebate programs sponsored by the state to encourage the purchase of Energy Star products.

Other Nature Notes

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

Wild Birds Unlimited has a discount agreement with the GCNC executive board and is pleased to offer GCNC members an everyday 10% discount on all purchases excluding optics and food or sale items. Sharon Oakes, owner of Wild Birds Unlimited, appreciates the many volunteer contributions made by GCNC members and hopes members can benefit from this discount. Members are requested to identify themselves as GCNC members before their sales are finalized. Questions? Please call Sharon at 218-2973.



December Events by other Organizations

- December 1 (Saturday) - Field trip: Salem County Owl Prowl. 6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M. Leader: Frank Lenik. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. \$Fee. For info: <http://njudubon.org/centers/rancocas/>
- December 2 (Sunday) - Field Trip: Birding Gloucester County Natural Places. 8:00 A.M. to mid-afternoon. Leader: Lloyd Shaw. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. \$Fee. For info: <http://njudubon.org/centers/rancocas/>
- December 7 (Friday) - Morning Bird Walk at Rancocas Nature Center. Begins 8:00 A.M. \$Fee. For info: <http://njudubon.org/centers/rancocas/>
- December 16 (Sunday) - Pinelands Christmas Count. For info: compiler is Robert Confer, 609-859-2973, e-mail parula9@hotmail.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 Walks: Saturdays 12/1, 1/5, and 2/2 at 8 A.M.
- Afternoon Nature Strolls: Wednesdays 1/16 and 2/20 at 2:30 P.M.
- Evergreen Wreath Making: Thursday 12/12 at 7 P.M.
- Nature Tots: Wednesdays 12/12, 1/9, and 2/13 at 10 A.M.
- Scout Saturdays: Saturdays 12/8, 1/12, and 2/9 at 10 A.M.
- 4H Kids Nature Club Meeting: Saturday 12/1, 1/5, and 2/2 at 10:30 A.M.
- Trim a Tree for Wildlife: Saturday 12/1 at 10:30 A.M.
- Holiday Scavenger Hunt and Ornament Craft: Saturday 12/15 at 10 A.M.
- Cabin Fever Walk and Craft: Saturday 1/26 at 10 A.M.



Natural Events for the month of December

- Geminid meteor shower - December 13.
- Shortest day of the year is December 22.
- Bald eagles arrive from the north and winter in New Jersey.
- Raptor migration ends mid-month.
- Great horned owls are pairing up this month – listen for their calls
- Watch for late waterfowl migrants – shovelers, mergansers and goldeneyes.
- Take part in a local Christmas Count.

Looking Ahead:

2007-2008 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the interesting and diverse field trips we have lined up for this year:

- January 22, 2008 (Tuesday) - Full Moon Hike at Alcyon Park - Kris Mollenhauer
- February 16, 2008 (Saturday) - Long Beach Island - Karl Anderson and Gale Cannon
- March 15, 2008 (Saturday) - Ringing Rocks State Park, PA - Brian and Paula Hayes
- April 12, 2008 (Saturday) - Salem County Birding - Lloyd Shaw
- May 18, 2008 (Sunday) - Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve - Richard Dilks
- June 21, 2008 (Saturday) - Unexpected Refuge - Karl Anderson and Sarah Summerville

Upcoming GCNC Programs (All occur on Thursdays)

Here is the program list for the rest of this year:

- January 10, 2008 - Mammals of New Jersey
 - Presenter: Karl Anderson
- February 14, 2008 - Traditional Pot Luck Dinner & Craft Night
- March 13, 2008 - The Sport of Geocaching
 - Presenter: Joe Valentino
- April 10, 2008 - The Birds of Panama
 - Presenter: Jeff Holt
- May 8, 2008 - Horseshoe Crabs
 - Presenter: Sue Ann Slotterback from the Cape May Nature Center
- June 12, 2008 - Annual Picnic

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 January Executive Committee meeting will be held at the home of Bob & Carol Cassel on January 6. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.
- 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 6 Greenwood Drive, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15th of the preceding month.