



Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

December 2012

Program - The Art and Craft of Terrariums (A Terrarium Workshop will immediately follow our program.)

Thursday, December 13

*****SPECIAL LOCATION*****

Triple Oaks Nursery, 2359 Delsea Drive, Franklinville, NJ (directions below)

Presenter: Lorraine Kiefer horticulturalist and owner of Triple Oaks Nursery & Herb Garden

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342



The Gloucester County Nature Club is meeting at Triple Oaks Nursery this month for a very special program on terrariums. Horticulturalist, plant expert, author and Triple Oaks owner, Lorraine Kiefer will present a lecture/demonstration on how to create and maintain a terrarium. Using attractive native species* such as Teaberry, Partridgeberry and Striped Wintergreen. Lorraine will show us how to create a miniature landscape in a glass bowl that can provide beauty and interest throughout the seasons. After the demonstration, Lorraine will conduct a terrarium workshop for those club members who pre-registered to make a terrarium. Light refreshments will be served and attendees will have the opportunity to browse Triple Oak's charming gift shop and nursery area. As with all our meetings, it is free and the public is welcome.

A Note on The History of Terrariums

The art of the terrarium is generally credited to a man called Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward in his book called "On the Growth of Plants in Closely Glazed Cases", published in 1842. Ward wanted to watch an insect chrysalis transform into an insect so he placed it, along with some mold in a capped wide-mouthed glass bottle. He observed this bottle on a regular basis and noted how, because of the sun, moisture would be drawn to the top of the bottle during the day then circulate back down to the mold and soil in the evening. But his big surprise came when quite unexpectedly a seedling fern and a sprout of grass bloomed inside the bottle. During the Victorian Era and predominantly in England terrariums or "Wardian Cases" became very popular and many people kept them in their homes.

*Note: All plants used by Triple Oaks in this demonstration and workshop are propagated and grown by licensed suppliers. Native plants such as these should NEVER be collected from the wild. Doing so only reduces the populations of these plants which are already under threat from habitat loss and degradation.

Directions: From northern and central Gloucester County, take Route 55 South, proceed to Exit 43 (Clayton/Franklinville), take a LEFT at the stop at the top of the ramp onto Little Mill Road. Follow Little Mill Road for 0.6 mile, then make a RIGHT at the traffic light onto Rt 47 (Delsea Drive). Triple Oaks is about 1.7 miles on the right, 1/4 mile south of the traffic light at the center of Franklinville.

Field Trip – Audubon Christmas Bird Count

Saturday December 15, 2012 5:00 A.M. if... 'til Sunset)

Trip Coordinator/Compiler: Ron Kegel 856-881-9262 e-mail: ronaldk52@comcast.net

The annual Northwestern Gloucester County Audubon Christmas Bird Count is coming up on Saturday, December 15th. Please join us for a great day of birding. Once again groups will be heading out into the count circle trying to see and hear as many birds as possible. The count circle (15 miles wide) is divided into sections and each section has an area leader. The area leader is responsible for canvassing the area, coordinating the participants within their area, and reporting what the results are.

The day can start with 'owling' if you wish or for those not quite as keen on that early a start, anytime thereafter. One can volunteer for as long as you wish. Merely let the section leader know how long you would like to participate so details can be worked out please. For those new to the count, you may contact a leader if you wish. If you need to find a group to go out with, I can help with this too. Warm clothing, a lunch (and snacks), binoculars, and a birding guide would likely be in order. Some folks say "Well I don't know the birds that well!" This is a great opportunity to learn. Your leader and other members can help walk you through it. It's a wonderful time to see and learn the winter birds, maybe beyond what we see at our feeders!

This year again we will be trying to get as many folks feeder watching too! This portion of the count has been very successful and is great for those folks unable to get out and beat the bushes or only have a short time by which to devote. If you are in the count circle and can spare some time we would appreciate your input. You may either see me at the meeting or I can mail you a copy of the form and technique if you wish, please help.

I'm kind of happy to announce Audubon has changed 2 things this year (as noted in the American Birds publication). #1) There is no \$5.00 fee to participate. For years we have been paying an entrance fee to help defer cost to get results published. This leads me to #2), which is that we will no longer be getting a paper copy of the results. All results will now need to be ascertained through the internet/Audubon website. It eliminates need to produce more paper, but there is something about having that hard copy to view (old school compiler I guess).

Again, we hope you will join us. Event goes on rain or shine (unless we have a blizzard like we had a couple years ago, then there will be discussion). Kirk and Donna Strohmeier have extended an invitation to meet at their home again after the count so please join us there. Feel free to contact me at 856-881-9262 or ronaldk51@comcast.net, if you have questions. Join us please, I don't think you will be disappointed. And it's free!



Family Fun Walk at Chestnut Branch Park, Mantua

Sunday, December 9, 2012, 11:00 AM

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

Sunday, December 9 at 11am. Bring the kids out for a walk at Chestnut Branch Park in the cold fresh air.

Bring your baby in a backpack, your toddler in tow or your grandmom along for a walk. We will walk at a toddlers pace stopping to look at anything interesting we find. Walk will an hour or so. Families with kids, seniors and all are welcome. Dress in layers according to the weather. Bring your own backpack and/or a stroller that is able to be pushed on unpaved paths

Directions: From the intersection of Rt 45 (Broad Street) and Cooper Street in Woodbury, go south on Rt 45 for 4.2 miles. Turn left (from right hand lane) onto Rt 553Alt (Main Street) in Mantua. Go south on Rt 553Alt for 1.6 miles. The park entrance will be on the left. There is a large paved parking area. Meet at the wildflower garden.

Conservation Corner – Combining Holiday Giving and Conservation by Jayne Rhynard

The holiday season, no matter what holiday you celebrate, is generally thought of as a season to GIVE – conserving is not top of mind. But the word give is contained in the word conserving so please consider these ideas to celebrate a wonderful holiday and both give and also be conserving:

Give gifts that can help the environment:

- Compost bin
- Pressure cooker or toaster oven
- Ceramic coffee mug for the office
- Bird feeder
- Water efficient shower fixture
- Native wildflower seeds

Give the gift of time:

- Promise to babysit
- Shovel a driveway
- Walk a dog
- Plant a garden

Give the gift of the joy of giving to a child:

- Ask your child to pick 3 toys that they don't play with very much for donating and together deliver them to a homeless shelter or other charity. Volunteers who witnessed children bringing toys to give to the less fortunate say it's a wonderful experience for everyone.

Give the gift of Nature:

- A peaceful walk through nature will be remembered and valued more than the football score. Go while everyone has lots of energy and before the holiday meal to pique appetites and provide topics for mealtime conversations.
- Start a tradition of giving back to the earth. Planting a small tree together on Christmas Day symbolizes the value of nature and offsets the 'taking' of the Christmas tree as well as gets everyone outdoors for a while.
- Do your own family Christmas Bird Count. Walk your yard, neighborhood or park. Identify and count the birds and afterwards together list the species seen and how many of each. There's always a surprising discovery, and even the youngest eyes are good at spotting the birds and contributing to the event.

Nature Notes

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 12/1, 1/5 and 2/2 at 8:00 AM
- Trim a Tree for Wildlife: Saturday 12/1 at 10:30 AM
- 4H Kids Nature Club: Saturday 12/1, 1/5 and 2/2 at 10:30 AM
- Evergreen Wreath Making: Wednesday 12/5 at 7:00 PM
- Volunteer Meetings: Fridays 12/7 and 2/1 at 9:00 AM
- Nature Explorers: Saturdays 12/8 and 2/9 at 10:00 AM
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 12/12, 1/16 and 2/13 at 10:00 AM
- Project Learning Tree Educator Workshop Friday 1/11 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 1/12 and 2/23 at 10:00 AM
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 1/23 and 2/20 at 2:30 PM

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:

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

January 10, 2013: **Orion The Hunter** - Erik Mollenhauer

February 14, 2013: **Valentine's Day Pot Luck Dinner** & program **Worship-worthy Chocolate** – Marie Hageman

March 14, 2013: **Pollinators: The Amazing Insects Among Us** – Susan E. Ellis (**schedule change!**)

April 11, 2013: **Birding South Carolina** – Jeff Mollenhauer

May 9, 2013: **The Fossils at Inversand and the KT Boundary Mass Extinction** - Dr. Kenneth Lacovara, Drexel University (**just added!**)

June 13, 2013: **Annual Picnic** (Location to be determined)

2012-2013 GCNC Field Trips

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

January 19 (Saturday) – **Looking for Wintering Waterfowl on the Delaware River.** Leader: Sandra Keller. Joint trip with the Audubon Wildlife Society.

February – **To be determined.**

March 23 (Saturday) – **Birding the Delaware Bayshore.** Leader: Joe Esterly

April 27 – **Birding at Long Bridge Park.** Leader: Bob Duke.

April (Dates to be determined) – **Bird Quest Training Sessions**

May 4 – **Bird Quest**

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 December Executive Committee meeting will be held on December 9th at the home of Karen Kravchuck. Please contact Karen for more information.