



Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public.

December 2017

Program - Birds of New Jersey's Winter Landscape

Thursday, Dec. 14, 2017 at 7:00pm at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Wenonah, NJ (directions below)

Presenter: Dale Rosselet, Vice President for Education, New Jersey Audubon

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342

Learn about the common and not-so-common avian visitors to New Jersey during the winter months and how to provide for their needs – one yard at a time. Many birds visit our state only during the winter months and this is an excellent time to begin birdwatching. Numbers of birds can be attracted to feeding stations which allows for close-up views and less foliage makes it easier to actually see the birds in their natural habitat. This presentation will improve your skills for identifying and appreciating our winter visitors. With the GCNC hosting the Audubon Christmas Bird Count for the Northwestern Gloucester County Count Circle on Saturday, Dec. 16, this is a great way to refresh your knowledge of the birds you will find in our New Jersey winter landscape.



Dale Rosselet is NJ Audubon's Vice President for Education and oversees the organization's education programs, center operations and eco-travel program. She has extensive experience leading field trips and conducting workshops and has led eco-tours for NJ Audubon for over 20 years. Dale is a New Jersey native, having grown up near the Great Swamp in northern New Jersey and now resides in Cape May County. In addition to tours for NJ Audubon, she has done extensive traveling throughout the Caribbean and Central America, and birded in Israel and Kenya. Dale has co-authored several NJ Audubon publications including *Wild Journeys: Migration in New Jersey* and two teacher education curriculum guides *Bridges to the Natural World* and *New Jersey WATERS: Watershed Approach to Teaching the Ecology of Regional Systems*. She co-authored, with her husband Kevin Karlson, *Birding by Impression: A Different Approach to Knowing and Identifying Birds*.

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 – Northwestern Gloucester County Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 16, 2017

Compiler: Ron Kegel

Please join us for this year's annual Bird Count. We will be touring the western portion of the county attempting to see and hear all the birds we can. It is a wonderful opportunity to get outside and see nature at its finest. A great way to learn new birds, socialize with different people, and help a citizens science endeavor.

On Saturday, December 16, the Northwestern Gloucester County Christmas Bird Count will take place. 13 area leaders and their colleagues will venture out, some starting in the wee hours for owls and other nocturnal things, in an attempt to count all birds they can identify through sight and sound. One may help for as long as you would like; all day, half day, a few hours, or maybe even only owling as some do - if your group does it. Participation time it may be arranged with your leader. Experience is not necessary. There should be enough "seasoned" birders in the group to assist you in identifying. In fact, I know most birders are thrilled to share their experiences and knowledge! This is how most of us learn!

Yes it can be cold, but that is part of the uniqueness. Flannel lined jeans are definitely advised. A good lunch, warm gloves or mittens and a pair of binoculars are helpful. Experience is not necessary! We have experienced birders waiting to help and teach.

This year again we will be doing the 'feeder watch' if you can't join us yet you are in the count circle. This way of counting has certainly added to our results in the past.

Come one, come all! We would love to have you and would cherish the help.

Compiler, Ron Kegel

I can be reached at:

609-617-0635 cell

856-881-9262 land line

ronaldk52@comcast.net

Contact me if you have any questions!



Events by other Organizations: December 2017

Saturday, December 2, 10:00am – 1:00pm - **December Workday at Oldmans Creek Preserve:** Sponsored by the South Jersey Land & Water Trust - Join the Friends of Oldmans Creek volunteers for our monthly workday. This workday will focus on the barn, house, and grounds. We will remove trash and debris and work on cleaning the home. If you are unable to volunteer your time, but want to help SJLWT, please consider making a financial donation or donating something from our Wish List. Thanks in advance for your generosity and hard work! Please wear things you don't mind getting dirty, and bring drinking water. Work gloves will be provided.

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 Walk: Saturday 12/2 at 9:00am - Join other bird watchers for a brisk morning walk to discover the beautiful birds of Scotland Run Park.
- Nature Tots: Tuesdays at 9:00am:
 - 12/5 – Holiday Walk
 - 12/12 -- Evergreens
 - 12/19 – Lakeside Tour
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 12/9 at 10:00am
- Nature Explorers: Saturday 12/16 at 10:00am – Trim a Tree for Wildlife

Natural Events for the month of December

- Geminid meteor shower – peaks on 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..

Conservation Corner by Suzan Delozier

FOUR PESTICIDES OF CONCERN

In 1994, Monsanto introduced the first genetically modified (GM) soybeans into the US market. This was followed a few years later with Monsanto's introduction of genetically modified corn. These genetically altered seeds were marketed by Monsanto as "Roundup Ready" meaning that Monsanto's herbicide Roundup could not kill these plants but it would kill anything else it was sprayed on. (It was the introduction of GM corn that resulted in the mass destruction of milkweed needed by monarchs.) Now, with years behind us of spraying Roundup on endless fields of soy and corn by farmers and on endless numbers of yards by homeowners, we have created what are known as superweeds – weeds that are resistant to Roundup. It has also become increasingly difficult to grow organic plants as contamination by pesticides and GMO pollen has become a problem.

Last fall, the EPA gave Monsanto the OK to market its newest herbicide formulation containing the chemical dicamba to be used with Monsanto's newest genetically modified seed line "Xtend". Xtend seeds are resistant to dicamba and glyphosate (Roundup's main ingredient). Farmers in the South and Midwest who do not use Xtend products have reported massive damage to their fields due to dicamba drift. It should be noted that dicamba has been on the market for 45 years and has always had a problem with drift. The marketing of seeds resistant to dicamba *and* Roundup makes one wonder if a new generation of superweeds is close at hand. Environmentalists are deeply concerned about the effect of dicamba on wildlife habitat, nectar and milkweed plants and the ability of dicamba to get into surface water. Dicamba is also linked to increased cancers among farmers and field workers.

Last winter, the EPA also expanded use of Dow's herbicide Enlist Duo which contains glyphosate and 2,4-D, (an ingredient in Agent Orange) for application on Dow's GM soy and corn. Its use is now permitted in 19 states. Enlist Duo has the propensity to drift to nearby fields and communities. 2,4-D is linked to multiple cancers, interference with fetal and child development and reduced fertility.

In July of this year, legislation was introduced in Congress to ban Dow's insecticide chlorpyrifos used in the production of fruits and vegetables throughout the US. Chlorpyrifos is known to damage the human nervous system and to be especially harmful to developing brains of young children. Minute amounts of chlorpyrifos can cause death in fish, amphibians, birds, small mammals and bees. It can persist in the soil for years and spread long distances through drifting and in surface water. You may sign the American Bird Conservancy's petition to ban chlorpyrifos at <https://abcbirds.org/action/petition-chlorpyrifos?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=da5d033a-f057-4dd1-bbe1-c5874f8f3308>

Sources: The Pesticide Action Network www.panna.org, Earthjustice www.earthjustice.org, American Bird Conservancy www.abcbirds.org, Reuters article <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-arkansas-dicamba/two-states-ban-dicamba-weed-killer-after-drift-complaints-idUSKBN19S2UE>, NY Times article <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/15/health/pesticides-epa-chlorpyrifos-scott-pruitt.html>

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT UPDATE

Defenders of Wildlife reports in its fall issue of *Defenders* that due to decades of effort, five of our major predators are on the path to recovery. These successes wouldn't have been achievable without the Endangered Species Act. They are gray wolves, grizzly bears, Florida panthers, California sea otters, and black-footed ferrets.

The Center for Biological Diversity reports that the Trump administration has declined to list 25 species, from turtles and snakes to toads and woodpeckers, as endangered. Of particular concern to environmentalists is the denial of endangered status for Arctic walrus. Pacific walrus live in Arctic waters off Alaska and need sea ice for giving birth, nursing and resting. Without strong action to reduce carbon pollution and with business as usual, summer ice will disappear in the next 20 years due to global warming. For more info see http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2017/25-species-10-04-2017.php.

MANATEES ON THE MOVE

In November, manatees begin moving from the Mid-Atlantic coasts to the warm waters of Florida. Manatees, also known as sea cows, weigh up to 1200 pounds, grow 10 feet long, and live 40 years. Though they generally move about 5 miles per hour, they can have short bursts of 15 miles per hour. Each day they eat 120 pounds of food (they tend to be vegetarian) and need water temperatures above 60 degrees F. Manatees are distant relatives of elephants and possess a trunk, tough skin, bristle-like hair and toenails on their flippers. They can rest underwater for 20 minutes but generally need to surface for air every 3-5 minutes. They are gentle animals who are often injured or killed by motorboats. Source: the Ocean Conservancy www.oceanconservancy.org

MONARCH UPDATE

Journey South reported on October 30 that there was a "massive arrival" of monarchs at the monarch's wintering site in Mexico. The monarch arrival is just in time for the Mexican celebration of the Day of the Dead on November 2nd — according to traditional beliefs, monarchs are the souls of ancestors returning to Earth for their annual visit. The fall migration will continue well into November. See <https://learner.org/jnorth/monarchs/news/fall-2017/110917-monarch-butterfly-overwintering-season-begins>.

Looking Ahead:

Listed below are the remaining programs we have lined up for the 2017-2018 season. Meeting dates are the **second** Thursday of the month.

January 11, 2018: **Biking across the Eastern Continental Divide: Pittsburgh to Washington DC** - Scott Barnes, Kris and Erik Mollenhauer

February 8, 2018: **Annual Pot Luck Dinner plus Members' Show & Tell and Story Sharing**

March 8, 2018: **Salt Marshes of Delaware Bay** - Zach Nickerson, The American Littoral Society

April 12, 2018: **Exploring the Birds of Ecuador** - Marilyn Henry and Jeff Mollenhauer.

May 10, 2018. **Annual Plant Sale** followed by **Program: Pollinators and the Plants They Pollinate** - Joe Kiefer, Triple Oaks Nursery

June 10, 2018: **GCNC Annual Picnic** at The Village Dock Campground, Franklinville, NJ, followed by **Program: The Plight of the Bobwhite and Our Efforts to Save It** - South Jersey Quail Project

2017-2018 GCNC Field Trips

Listed below are the remaining field trips we have lined up for the new 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.

January 20, 2018 - **Birding Along the Delaware River**

February 2018 - **Hike in Franklinville**

March 2018 - **Hike in Wissahickon**

April 2018- **Bird Quest Trainings**

May 5, 2018 - **Bird Quest**

June 15, 2018 - **Horseshoe Crab Walk**

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 609-617-6693 (cell).
- 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 Sunday December 10th at the home of Bonnie Dann. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.

Please remember to help out the Gloucester County Nature Club while Holiday Shopping online!



Shopping at Amazon can also benefit the Gloucester County Nature Club at **NO extra cost** to you!

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. You can choose from nearly one million organizations to support.

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