

Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

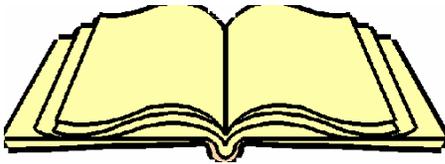
Nature Club meetings are open to the public

February 2004

Program—Book and Dessert Night—Thurs., Feb. 12th at 7:00 at EIRC

Program Coordinator- Bob Cassel 478-2496

BYOB—Bring Your Own Book, or other piece of nature writing. In keeping with our social format for February meetings we will feature a book and dessert theme. We are asking each club member to come to the meeting with a dessert and a piece of literature (book, poem, newspaper article, etc) related to nature to share with the group. Our time will be spent eating and socializing. The books/literature will be displayed around the room with name cards so everyone can browse the combined wealth of literature. Share your favorites with the group if you wish. If there is time we will also feature our updated website this evening.



Field Trip – Feeder Trip- Saturday, February 14th

Field Trip Coordinator- Kris Mollenhauer 589-4387

We are very excited to bring back this club tradition of feeder visits. The Feeder Trip is self guiding- you read the list of generous club members who have agreed to open their houses and plan your morning according to what interests you. You can spend as much time as you want at each location or try to hit all of them; just be sure to follow all traffic laws. Please note there are two time slots and we ask you to respect our volunteers and only visit during the listed times. They have all agreed to list their phone numbers as well, please only use those phone numbers the day of the trip for questions on directions. If you have other questions or need more specific directions before February 14th please call Paula at 856-468-9272.



These Homes are open 9:00- 10:30

Tyler Lake, Home of Jayne Rhynard

185 Tyler Lake Road, Sewell 856-256-1840

Directions- From Rt. 55 take the Pitman exit for Rt. 553(S) and turn towards Pitman on Rt. 553(S). Make a right on Lambs Road. Go to light at Broadway and make a right onto Broadway. Pass Ceres Park and make a left onto Tyler Lake Road- proceed to the end of the street. If you come to Tyler Rd. you missed Tyler Lake Road. You may park in the driveway or along the street by the fenced field. Please watch for the neighbor's friendly dog who sometimes wanders into the street.

Comments-The gazebo offers the best viewing area but there are also many birds in the brush and woods behind the barn. Visitors to this yard are hairy, downy, and red-bellied

woodpecker, yellowbellied sapsucker, eastern phoebe, wild turkey, blue heron, sharp-shinned, coopers, and red tailed hawks. Deer are also often found in yard.

Home of Elaine Goodman

414 S. Marion Avenue, Wenonah 856-464-0223

Directions-From Woodbury-Glassboro Road (Rt. 553S) coming from Glassboro turn left onto Barkbridge Road (From Woodbury turn right onto Barkbridge Road). Follow Barkbridge Road as it takes a sharp left turn. 414 Marion is the first house after the turn on the left. There is a fire hydrant in front of this red brick house with red-colored shutters.

Comments-This yard includes everything a bird could want. There are berry bushes and shrubs for cover, many nectar plants, no pesticides, a stream running through it, and dead trees for woodpeckers. Visitors to this two acre yard include great blue herons, goldfinches, wood ducks, indigo buntings, scarlet tanagers, and many others.

Home of Bonnie/ Rich Dann

473 East Barber Ave., Woodbury 856-845-4650

Directions- From Glassboro/ Woodbury Road (Rt. 553) at the Evergreen Circle turn onto Evergreen Avenue. Follow Evergreen Avenue to Barber Avenue and make a right at the Mobil station. The light tan house with brown trim and a Welcome flag on the front porch is the 13th from the corner.

Comments-Birds that visit the feeders at this house are tufted titmouse, chickadees, cardinals, blue jays, sparrows, and finches. A newly installed feeder in this yard also keeps the squirrels away so the feeder can enjoy the feeders in peace.

McGregor Home

437 Heritage Road, Barnsboro 856-478-4281

Directions- Heritage Road runs between Main Street near Daminger's store in Mantua and Rt. 45. Their house is located on Heritage Road between Jackson Road and Rt. 45. The house is hidden by large spruce trees and has a split rail fence in front and down the driveway.

Comments-this house features a window feeder where you can be just inches from the many birds that visit. They also have a suet feeder that has many woodpecker visitors.

Chimney House, Home of Bob and Carol Cassel

407 Heritage Road, Sewell 856-478-2496

Directions-Heritage Road runs between Main Street near Daminger's store in Mantua and Rt. 45. Their house is located on Heritage Road 6/10 of a mile from Rt. 45. It is a stone home hidden by the trees. The drive way is at the top of a hill.

Comments-This yard features a crazy scratching fox sparrow, a red bellied woodpecker who puts down bully blue jays, red tailed hawks and occasionally a sharp-shinned hawk.



These Homes are open 11:00- 12:30

Home of Mimi Glass

135 Washington Avenue, Pitman

Directions- This house is on Washington Avenue off Broadway Avenue in Pitman. The house is between Oakcrest and Highland. (Please note Washington Avenue is one way beyond Mimi's house.) The brick house has a large window in the front, a ramp, and is on the right at the end of the block just before the stop sign.

Comments- Mimi's yard features a wonderful garden filled with many native plants. The birds know this and that's one of the reasons so many are found here. Some visitors include cardinals, juncos, mourning doves, and sparrows.

Home of Waltraut and Heidi Kelley

337 Breakneck Road, Sewell

856-223-1787

Directions- 2 miles from the Barnsboro Inn on Breakneck Road heading toward Clearview School. The house is on the left, their mailbox is the second one after the Lantern Way development. You can't see the houses from the road.

Comments- This yard features room to hike, 12 acres that you are welcome to explore on your own. The feeders feature hairy, downy, and red-bellied woodpecker and many other species. The yard is wooded with many beech trees.

Home of Betty London

239 Clems Run Road, Mullica Hill

856-478-2267

Directions- Coming from Glassboro on Rt. 322 west go to the 2nd light past Rt. 55 and make a soft left on Harrisonville Road behind the Wawa. Go to the 2nd intersection which is Clems Run and make a right. Travel about ½ mile and on the right is 239 a red brick rancher with blue shutters and an American flag in the yard. The house is next to a horse pasture.

Comments- This yard contains a pond, wooded area, overgrown pasture, several feeders, and good views of it all from inside. Visitors include 3 varieties of woodpecker, Carolina wrens, great blue herons, juncos, chickadees, wood ducks, mallards, finches, sparrows, red tailed hawks, and even eagle.

Home of Ed and Millie Cleary

1874 McKee Avenue, Deptford

856-228-6890

Directions- Take Rt. 41 North heading towards the Deptford Mall. Go past the Home Depot and turn left at McKee (across from the Post Office). 1874 is 3/10 mile on the right. McKee is a dead end street. Their house is the next to the last on the street.

Comments- This wildlife haven is surrounded by commercial uses properties and within view of the Deptford Mall. Despite this they get many exciting birds in their yard. This home features a wildlife mural in case the activity outside is slow.

Palmyra Cove Field Trip Report by Karen Kravchuck

It was cold out that morning. No, I mean it was REALLY cold out that morning! The sun was shining, though, and the wind wasn't so bad. So there we were, nearly



30 of us, inside the wonderfully warm Environmental Discovery Center at the Palmyra Cove Nature Park.

With our gloves and earmuffs off for the moment, we were welcomed by Jim of the EDC, who gave us the lowdown on this park at the foot of the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge — 350 acres, eight miles of well-marked trails, woodlands, wetlands and a tidal cove along the Delaware River. Jim invited us to spend some time in the EDC, a new facility with some terrific interactive displays where you can, among other things, test your skills at identifying animal tracks and native plant species, watch a model tidal basin flood and drain as you hear how the changing water levels affect the ecosystem there and even be in control of raising and lowering a somewhat smaller version of the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge. Also included are a topnotch staff, some really cool programs, bathrooms and a great view of the river — all the important stuff.

But for now we were ready to venture outside, so on again went the gloves and the earmuffs and out we went. We embarked on the Cove Trail, which follows the bank of the river out to the Palmyra Cove. We quickly spotted cardinals, white-throated sparrows and golden-crowned kinglets in the thicket. Thanks to Brian, Paula and Bob Baruzzi, there was usually something interesting to get a closer look at through the scope: buffleheads diving for lunch and cormorants perching on light poles on the Pennsylvania side of the river. The banks of the Delaware were iced over and the cracks and creaks and crackles and groans of the ice flows as they headed up river at an amazingly fast pace were much louder than I would have expected.

As we came to the juncture of two trails, some of our group headed back to enjoy the Discovery Center while the rest continued on. We met some other birders who showed us where they had just been watching an owl. Oh, so quietly our small group made its way to the spot and, sure enough, there it was about half way up the tree, perched close to the trunk — a long-eared owl. This was huge for me — my first owl spotting. It was so big, just sitting there lazily opening one eye halfway— not disturbed so much as just making sure nothing was going on it didn't know about. I was surprised at how close we were able to get. I had a hard time walking away — I just wanted to lean against a tree and keep watching the owl through my binocs. I'm not sure what else we saw on the way back. My mind was on that owl. I do know we heard the plaintive FEE-BEE FEE-BAY of a chickadee calling, maybe for help keeping warm, but that's about it.

When we returned to the Discovery Center, Jim had hot coffee and tea waiting for us. We sat warming up and enjoying the river view, thinking and talking about what we had seen. I was thinking that I just might have to come back and join in the Owl Prowl offered evenings year-round at the Discovery Center or even ask Brian and Paula if I can tag along on their “get up in the middle of the night to go owling” portion of Bird Quest. Oh, no! I think I'm hooked!

Once again, the Nature Club has introduced me to a great new place and once again has given me the opportunity to experience something I'll never forget.

It may have been a REALLY cold morning, but it was a REALLY cool day.

Great Backyard Bird Count- February 13-16th

Our feeder trip has been timed to coincide with the Great Backyard Bird Count. We hope our feeder hosts and members will join the over 46,000 people who participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count in 2003 and become a “citizen-



scientists.” The GBBC is a three-day weekend event that you can take part in from the comfort of your living room. To take part you count all the birds you see on any and/or all of the days. You can count the birds at your feeder (this is what most participants do) or a local park, etc. Directions and more info can be found at www.birdsource.org. You then enter your results at the same website. The data each individual counter enters is then available on the website so you can examine it for trends in different parts of the country or from year to year in your area. The data is also used by the scientists at Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. This is a fun way to census the winter birds in your area.

A Win for Land Preservation in New Jersey

by Brian Hayes

These days it is easy to become disheartened about conservation efforts with set backs to clean air and water and constant pressure to exploit our national forests, monuments, and park lands. In a world where fossil fuel interests override environmental protections under the guise of national security and the environment is besieged on all sides by watered down EPA regulations there has recently been a ray of hope right here in Southern New Jersey.

The New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF) has purchased 9,400 acres, that's 14 square miles, of critical land in Burlington County near the village of Chatsworth. Known as the DeMarco tract, this transaction which is less than a month old has been in all the papers as a big win for land conservation. Besides being touted as the largest private land conservation deal in New Jersey history this land is important because it connects five State-owned properties: Brendan Byrne (Lebanon), Wharton, Bass River, and Penn State Forests and Greenwood Wildlife Management Area in the Pine Barrens: known as an ecological region of international significance.

On Saturday, January 11, 2004, I had the opportunity to take a tour of the property that is closed to the general public until sometime in 2005, when NJCF will have completed an inventory of the property. With thousands of acres of wetlands including over 600 acres of white cedar forest there is exceptional habitat for endangered native species like bald eagles or the Pine Barrens tree frog. The day was frigid so I didn't expect to see much wildlife. I did see some beautiful wetland habitat and the animals that inhabit those areas like harrier hawks and great blue herons. We were only there for a couple of hours and we only saw a small fraction of the land now preserved but it was clear to me this was an incredible victory for the environment. I'm buoyed by the promise of what this land transaction holds for the besieged Pine Barrens habitat.

We can all help in this exciting victory since only about half of the money needed has been raised to pay off this \$12 million transaction. To find out more about this property and the efforts to preserve the land or to make a donation you can check the NJCF website at www.njconservation.org or call 1-888-LAND-SAVE. We will be collecting money at the February Meeting to present to the NJCF in support of this effort.

BirdQuest

The 2004 Gloucester County Bird Quest will take place on Saturday, May 1, 2004 from 7:00 am to 12 noon in Gloucester County. During this time, teams of people will visit parks and natural sites in the county to find as many different kinds of bird species as possible. The purpose of



Bird Quest is to discover the natural areas of Gloucester County while trying to identify birds with friends and family. The event is designed to be educational rather than competitive. At the end of the event all participants will gather at Atkinson Memorial Park to share their results and for lunch, t-shirts and prizes. Put the date on your calendar now so you can participate.

In this its fifth year we hope that the Quest will continue to grow. Last year we had over 200 participants. In order for this event to happen we will need many volunteers who are willing to help both before the actual event and the day of the event. If you'd like to volunteer to help out please call Erik Mollenhauer at 856-582-7000 ext. 128.

A training schedule and registration form will be in the next newsletter. We hope you will join us in May and for some of the very popular trainings held before the event.

Raptor Festival

The 2004 Cumberland County Winter Raptor Festival will be held on February 7th from 7:00 AM to 8:30PM. The event will include exhibits, speakers (Steve Eisenhauer, Pat & Clay Sutton, David Mizrahi, Karen Williams, Jane Morton Galetto, and Pete Dunne), boat trips, and viewing sites. Many club members attended this terrific event in past years and have enjoyed multiple sightings of eagles, red tailed hawks, northern harriers, and many other raptors. The event is centered in Mauricetown at the Fire Hall where you will pay a fee and receive maps and directions to multiple viewing sites throughout the county. The sites are all staffed by naturalists from the area. It is a fun event and well worth the drive. For more information and/or directions call 856-453-2177.



Snowy Owl Came to Camden to have Dinner

by Bob Cassel

A number of years ago a snowy owl visited the South Jersey Port Authority area in Camden. The Port Authority lies along the Delaware River from where the Battleship New Jersey is moored to include the old New York shipyard. Ed Montgomery, a longtime Port Authority employee, alerted club member Ed Komczyk who enjoyed seeing this beautiful owl from a vantage point now closed to the public. Many club members were able to enjoy the owl in broad daylight as it perched on a dirt pile where it could observe the movement of moles and voles. A big warehouse stood nearby that undoubtedly was a haven for rats. May the invitation for dinner again be extended to any hungry snowy owl; come to southern New Jersey to enjoy our hospitality.



Website Changes

If you are a regular user of our website we are happy to announce we have rolled out a new version of the web site. We have changed the look and feel of the site but most of the old features are still in place. We will be soliciting feed back on the site and how we can make it better so feel free to comment and look for new pages and information from your suggestions. If you have not visited our site, this would be an excellent time to visit and see what you are missing:

www.gcnatureclub.org



GLOUCESTER COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION CONFERENCE

Date: Saturday, February 28, 2004
Time: 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM (registration: 8:30 – 9:00 AM)
Location: Washington Township Municipal Building
Hosted by: The Gloucester County Nature Club and the
 Washington Township Environmental Commission
Purpose: To encourage a dialogue between local
 environmental commissions about common issues and concerns.

Program:

8:30 – 9:00 AM Registration
 9:00 – 9:15 AM Welcome and Introductions
 9:15 – 10:30 AM Environmental Commission statements (5 minutes each)
 10:30 – 10:45 AM Break
 10:45 – 11:30 AM Key Note Speaker – Joe Orlins from Rowan University
 Topic: Stormwater regulations and regional storm water
 management planning
 11:30 – NOON “Rapid fire group discussions”
 12:00 – 12:15 PM Closing comments
 12:15 – 1:00 PM Networking reception

Who may attend: Members of local environmental commissions, the
 Gloucester County Nature Club, and members of the public

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED There is no fee, but pre-registration is required. Pre-
 registration is requested by February 21, 2004. To pre-register, complete the following form and
 mail it to: Deborah Maka, GCNC Vice-president, 619 Quincy Court, Glassboro, NJ 08028 or e-
 mail to deborahann@backpacker.com OR fax to Anne Rossell at (856) 582-4206. Please
 register each participant individually. Contact Deborah Maka at (856) 863-0330 with any
 questions.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ E-mail: _____

Commission or organization you are representing:

List 3 topics you are interested in discussing:

Looking Ahead:

Programs-

- February 28th Gloucester County Environmental Commission Conference
- March 11th - Pelagic Birding in the Mid-Atlantic Region

Field Trips-

- February 7th-Raptor Festival- Cumberland County
- February 13-16th- Great Backyard Bird Count
- March 13th -Turkey Point
- April 25- Wichecheoke Creek for Biking and Warblers (near Stockton, NJ)
- May 1st - The 5th Annual Gloucester County Bird Quest
- June 12th - Fort Dix for Bobolinks

Club Notes:

- Executive Meeting-Sunday, February 8th at 7:00 PM at the Hayes's House 413 N. Stockton Ave, call 468-9272 for directions. The meeting is open to all members.
- If you'd like to receive the newsletter electronically or receive more info about the club please email Brian or Paula at pnbhayes@aol.com or call 468-9272.
- 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.

Gloucester County Nature Club
c/o EIRC
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