



# Gloucester County Nature Club

## Monthly Newsletter

[www.gcnatureclub.org](http://www.gcnatureclub.org)

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

February 2010

**6:00 PM Traditional Pot Luck Dinner followed at 7:00 PM by programs:  
Cargo For Conservation and The GCNC - Images From Our Past (sideshow)**

**Presenters: Members of the GCNC**

**Thursday, February 11, 2010**

**Location:** The Holy Nativity Lutheran Church

3 Lenape Trail, Wenonah, NJ (see directions below)

**Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks 856-468-6342**

For many years our February gathering has brought us together for the traditional Pot Luck Dinner. In that spirit we will again share a meal and celebrate winter with the pleasure of good fellowship and good food. Please bring either an entrée or dessert and a plate and utensils for yourself. Also please note the dinner begins at 6:00 P.M.

Following our dinner will be a two-part program presented by various members of our club. **Cargo For Conservation** is a program developed by the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service that uses USF&W confiscated animal parts and products to educate the public about the threat to wildlife from the illicit and destructive trade in exotic animals. The USF&W has stated that "today, nearly a third of the world's wildlife is in danger of extinction, and a major cause, second only to habitat loss, is the illegal smuggling trade. Profit margins are high and the risk of getting caught is low--giving animal poachers plenty of room to move. Many of these animals being taken from the wild are now worth more dead than alive. And to collectors, often the more endangered a species is, the more valuable it is on the black market. The illegal trade in endangered species is estimated to be worth more than \$5 billion per year in the U.S." The Cargo For Conservation biofacts used tonight come to us from the generosity of Bob and Carol Cassel, who have donated them to the nature club for future use in educational programs and displays.

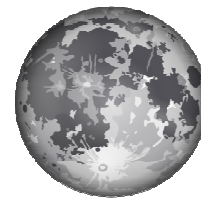


Our evening will conclude with a special slideshow compilation, **The GCNC- Images From Our Past**, put together by Deb Maka, of photos from our club's long history. This year marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the GCNC and this visual retrospective will be an entertaining and enlightening way to explore, remember or discover the club's history and achievements.

The Gloucester County Nature Club extends it's sincere thanks to the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church for opening its doors to us and generously offering use of it's facilities for tonight's dinner and program.

**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 – Moonlit Walk at Alcyon Park  
Sunday February 28th, 7:00-8:00 PM at Alcyon Park, Pitman  
Rain date Monday March 1<sup>st</sup>  
Trip Leader: Kris Mollenhauer**



The light of the full moon will transform Alcyon Park into a magical place. Although the moon is over 238 thousand miles away - it will seem much closer tonight. Join us just after sunset as the full moon begins to rise. We will search the night sky for constellations and planets. Facts and folktales about the moon will be told. The second moon of the year was known as the Baby Bear Moon to the Native American people of the Potawatomi tribe. This is a good trip for children and families. We will take a walk around the park, which is a distance of .8 miles. Please dress warm. If the sky is overcast we will postpone the trip to March 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Location:** Alcyon Park, Pitman (located on West Holly Ave.) We will begin in the UPPER parking lot near the playground.

**Field Trip Report: Gloucester County Christmas Bird Count**

Thanks to everyone that participated in the Audubon Christmas Count, or even thought about going out the day of the blizzard, December 19! The species count was extremely low with a total of 53 species viewed or heard, only about 55-60% of varieties normally tallied. Highlights included a Barred-owl, Pine Siskins, Purple Finch, and Chipping Sparrows. Thank you also to the “feeder watchers” who turned in their list for the day. This was a very memorable (or forgettable, I’m not sure) count with many stories and anecdotes. Next year the count will be on December 18, Saturday and I can almost guarantee a better day weather wise!

Ron Kegel, Compiler

**Family Fun Walk**

**Friday, February 12, 2010 at 10:00AM at Timber Creek Park, Gloucester Township**  
**Trip Leader: Maria Keefe (856) 627-7010      Email: [walkingwith4boyz@comcast.net](mailto:walkingwith4boyz@comcast.net)**

Bring your Valentine for a winter walk on Friday, February 12, 2010 at 10:00AM at the Timber Creek Park, Gloucester Township. **\*\*Note that there are two parks with the same name, see the directions\*\*** We will walk at a toddler's pace exploring as we go. Dress in layers according to the weather. Bring your own backpack and/or a stroller that can be pushed on unpaved paths. All ages welcome.

**Directions:** Entrance to park is on Chews Landing Road, Gloucester Township. From the Deptford Mall head south on Almonesson Road toward Deptford Center Road. Turn left at Deptford Center Road. Turn left at Hurffville Rd/ Rt 41 (signs for Runnemede/Haddonfield/State Hwy 41N). Continue to follow Hurffville Road. Continue on Clements Bridge Road. Slight right at W Evesham Rd. Turn right at South Black Horse Pike/Rt 168. Turn left at Chews Landing Road.

**The East Coast Vulture Festival 2010 Is Coming**  
**Saturday March 6, 2010**  
**Wenonah, NJ**



**Featuring programs from:**

- *The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia*
- *One Heart Drumming Group*
- *Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge*

The 200 Black and Turkey Vultures are in their winter roost. The time is approaching for us to come together for the fifth year of this annual celebration and homage to these amazing birds, sponsored by the Gloucester County Nature Club and the Wenonah Environmental Commission. This year the festival is proud again to partner with **The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia** and to bring you programs from **Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge** and **One Heart** drumming group presenting American Indian songs and stories. It will be an afternoon and evening of fun, education, wildlife encounters, music, dance, good company and a great time for all.

**Vulture Day Children's Fair** will again be held at the Wenonah Community Center (the historic railroad station) 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M. This family oriented event will transform the Community Center into a "children's vulturefest" with hands-on vulture arts & crafts, games, educational and vulture art displays, and guided walks to observe the vultures and their roost. The **Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge** will be present with a special not-to-be-missed exhibit, hosted by Refuge naturalists that will include live birds and reptiles. This event is FREE and open to the public.

**The East Coast Vulture Festival 2010 Evening Roost** will be held at Wenonah School from 6:30 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. with the formal program starting promptly at 7:00 P.M. The highlights of this year's festival will begin with the special program *Animals With Bad Reputations* presented by **The Academy of Natural Sciences** and featuring live animals including a skunk, snake and alligator and very possibly a live Turkey Vulture. Come see and learn about these fascinating animals and why their bad reputations are so undeserved. The program will also feature a performance by **One Heart** drumming group of traditional American Indian songs, dances and stories. The evening will also include a return live performance by singer/songwriter, Jim Six, a comic vulture skit and the awarding of the 2010 VEE Grants. Fruit, coffee and elegant desserts were served. Tickets are ordered in advance. The price is \$18 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under.

**For more information on the festival, go to our web site at [www.EastCoastVulturefestival.org](http://www.EastCoastVulturefestival.org).**

Proceeds from the festival go to support environmental education through the festival's VEE (Vulturefest Environmental Education) Grant Program.

**Other Nature Notes**

**Raptor Census: Calling all experienced birders.**

I'd like to start a census of the Raptor in our area but I need your help. I'm hoping this will be an annual winter census of raptors in Gloucester County. This has been done in Salem County since 1983. Our census would be conducted on the first Sunday of February, which is roughly midway between the beginning of winter and the beginning of spring. Additionally, there is significantly less traffic on the roads Sunday morning than on a Saturday. This year's date [2010] is February 7th. If anyone has questions or is interested in participating you can contact me through email at [turkey.vulture2@verizon.net](mailto:turkey.vulture2@verizon.net). -- Jack Mahon

**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](mailto:sillybird348@comcast.net).



**Events by other Organizations: February 2010**

- February 6 (Saturday) - **Cumberland County Winter Eagle Festival**. 7:00 A.M – 5:00 P.M. Exhibits and programs at the Mauricetown Fire Hall, Noble Street, Mauricetown, plus field trips to surrounding areas. \$Fee. For info: phone 856-453-2177 or 856-866 – M-O-R-E.
- February 6 (Saturday) – **Chili Bowl Fundraiser (after the Eagle Festival)**. \$Fee. Sponsored by the Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River. For info: phone 856-305-3238.
- February 6 (Saturday) – **6th annual Five-Mile Hike on the Wenonah Trail**. Starts 1:00 P.M. Sponsored by the Wenonah Environmental Commission. For info: <http://www.wenonahenvironmentalcommission.org>.
- February 13 (Saturday) – Birding at Forsythe NWR (Brigantine). Leader: Barbara Jones. Sponsored by the by the Burlington County Natural Sciences Club. For info: <http://oldsquaw.tripod.com/>.
- February 20 (Saturday) – Winter waterfowl at Barnegat Light. Leader: John Courtney. Sponsored by the Audubon Wildlife Society. For info: <http://www.audubonwildlifesociety.org/>.
- February 20 (Saturday) – Birding Amico Island. 8:30 A.M – 3:30 P.M. Leader: Lloyd Shaw. \$Fee. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. For info: phone 609-261-2495.
- February 21 (Sunday) – Maple Sugaring at the Rancocas Nature Center. 1:30 – 3:30 P.M. \$Fee. For info: phone 609-261-2495.

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 2/6 at 8:00 AM
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 2/17 at 2:30 PM
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 2/10 at 10:00 AM
- Family Nature Adventure: Saturday 2/13 at 10:00 AM. Get rid of the winter blues.

### **Natural Events for the month of February**

- Skunk cabbage flowers are emerging from the ground, in wetlands throughout the County. As they grow they generate heat, which melts the frozen ground around them.
- Alder catkins are swelling and will open on the first warm days.
- Melting snow may reveal the trackways of meadow voles, dug along the interface between the frozen ground and snow cover.
- Broom crowberry in bloom in the Pinelands.
- Mourning cloak butterflies emerge from hibernation on warm days.
- Killdeer and great blue herons return from the south as waterways thaw and snow cover melts.
- Chipmunks reappear around bird feeders.
- Best time for viewing tundra swans at Whitesbog and other Pinelands ponds.

### **Looking Ahead:**

#### **Upcoming GCNC Programs**

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

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

May 13, 2010: **Hummingbird Gardening** – Ward Dasey

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 rest of the year. 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](mailto:karlanderson6@aol.com) or (856) 845-7075.

March 20 (Saturday): **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](mailto: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](mailto:sharkeyes@comcast.net) or GCNC Newsletter, PO Box 563, Sewell, NJ 08080 by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.
- The February Executive Committee meeting will be held on February 7<sup>th</sup> at the home of Estelle Resnik-Ostroff. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.