



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

Nature Club meetings are open to the public
May 2003

****Note this month's meeting is on Wednesday****

**Program-Beekeeping & Plant Sale –Weds., May 7 at 7:00- EIRC, Sewell
Program Coordinator, Bob Cassel 478-2496**

Our presenter, David Garrett, raises bees in the Millville area. He will discuss the basics of keeping bees and the importance of honeybees to our food supply. You will learn why bees are necessary for pollination and seed production. Empty hives, bee keeping equipment, and pictures are some of the materials David will share with the Club. Additionally, he hopes to bring an observation hive so people can see the inner workings of a colony. Join the Club as we hear the entertaining stories of our presenter and time permitting a question and answer session. David will have some of his own honey available for purchase. Please note this meeting will be held on a Wednesday evening.

Our annual plant sale will be held just before the start of our May meeting at EIRC. **The sale will start at 6:30** and the proceeds will benefit the nature club and its programs. Arrive early to shop for some wonderful new specimens for your garden. Much of what is offered at the sale comes from our own gardens. As you make your way to your flower beds now that spring has finally arrived, keep an eye out for those perennials that need dividing, "volunteers" in not quite the right spots, seeds, trees and shrubs, too. Whatever you can share, bring it with you and be part of the plant sale. Questions? Call Karen at 468-6536.



Field Trip- Bird Quest- Saturday, May 3 from 7:00 am - Noon

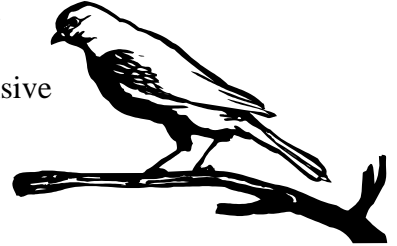
The 2003 Gloucester County Bird Quest will take place on Saturday May 3 from 7 AM to 12 NOON in Gloucester County. During this time, people will visit parks and natural sites in Gloucester County to find as many bird species as they can. The purpose of the Bird Quest is to draw attention to the remaining natural areas of Gloucester County, to learn how to identify birds by sight and sound, and to have fun with friends, colleagues and family. The Quest is an educational event; novices are encouraged to participate. At 12 noon, all participants gather at Atkinson Memorial Park on Delsea Drive to report results and for a free lunch, t-shirts, and prizes. This year's Quest is being supported by many local environmental commissions, businesses, and industries. Participants are encouraged to form teams of friends and family or join one of the buses (see below).

With cosponsor support, two buses will be provided for individuals to ride on, at no cost. The buses will stop at selected sites to look for birds. Last year's bus riders were treated to some wonderful looks at birds and we expect the same to happen again.

We expect the buses to fill this year so please register early to guarantee a seat. Last year's Quest attracted close to 300 participants, including teachers, school groups, scout troops, environmental commissions, families and residents of Gloucester and neighboring counties.

A county map and other materials are provided to each registered team. There is an \$8 registration fee per participant. To obtain more information, a team registration form, to join a team or ride a bus, contact Anne Rossell at 856-582-7000 x110, fax 856-582-4206 or email at anner@eirc.org. The forms are also available at the Nature Club's new website: www.gcnatureclub.org

The club, through the help of many members, has set up an extensive training schedule for the weeks prior to Bird Quest. There are still a few remaining trainings before Bird Quest.



BirdQuest 2003 Training Sessions

April 27 – Sunday 8:00 – 9:00 AM

BirdQuest Training

Floodgate Road

Directions: Access from Rt. 44 South of Gibbstown. Turn right onto Floodgate road (at the racetrack) and meet all the way down at the gate by the river.

Leader: Dr. Ebert

Co Leader: Loretta Dunn and Jonathon Stillwell

April 27 – Sunday 6:00 – 7:00 PM

BirdQuest Training

Washington Lake Park - Backend

Directions: Take Larson Lane off the North side of Chapel Hts. Rd(639), East of Gloucester Co. Community Church. Meet at the parking area (end of street).

Leader: Ron Kegel

Co Leader: Marge Dolente & Paula Dearlove

April 28 – Monday 6:00 – 7:00 AM

BirdQuest Training

West Deptford Scenic Park, West Deptford

Directions: From 130/295 take exit 21 Delaware St (640) west. Meet in parking lot about 300 yards north of the intersection of Grove St. and Delaware St (640).

Leader: Jeff Holt

Co Leader: Deb Maka

April 29 – Tuesday 6:00 – 7:00 PM

Birding by Ear Part II

EIRC Building, 606 Delsea Drive

This classroom training session is the second of three trainings with a focus on identifying bird song and calls. *Directions: On Delsea Dr. (47) in Washington Twp. Located next to the Dairy Queen and the Italian Bistro.*

Leader: Erik Mollenhauer

Co Leader: Marie Hageman

April 30 – Wednesday 6:00 – 7:00 AM

Birding by Ear Part III

Lake Narraticon, Swedesboro

The last of the Birding by ear series, this session applies the knowledge gained through classroom and independent study. A great time to ask questions about bird song.

Directions: Access from Park Ave. in Swedesboro.

Leader: Bob and Carol Cassel

Co Leader: Ed and Millie Cleary

May 1 – Thursday 6:00 – 7:00 PM

BirdQuest Training

Wheelabrator, Westville

Directions: Access from 130, opposite Hazel Ave in Westville, just south of Big Timber Creek. Meet in parking lot on the right just before the guard station.

Leader: Bob Duke

Co Leader: Karen Kravchuck

Trip Report: Susquehanna State Park April 12

by Karl Anderson

Blue skies and pleasant temperatures after a week of cold, rainy weather would have made this an enjoyable trip, even had nothing been seen. But as it was, Dutchman's breeches, yellow corydalis, cut-leaved toothwort, trout lily, spring beauty, bloodroot, spicebush, trailing arbutus, spring cress, and harbinger-of-spring were found in bloom, along with such adventives as hairy bittercress, common chickweed, purple dead-nettle, and ivy-leaved speedwell. Virginia bluebell, trillium, early saxifrage, and blue cohosh were in bud. The distinctive leaves of crane fly orchid were noted in some abundance on a beech-forested slope. Birds seen included bald eagle, black vulture, osprey, eastern phoebe, and red-necked grebe. Ribbon snake, pickerel frog, and red-backed salamander were also seen.

Book Review

by Erik Mollenhauer

The Forgotten Pollinators written by Stephen Buchmann and Gary Nabhan

c1996 Island Press, Washington, DC ISBN 1-55963-352-2

Great truths are sometimes in such plain view as to be invisible, in this case, that a majority of flowering plants must have insects and other pollinators to reproduce. Yet the evidence is overwhelming that wild pollinators are declining around the world. In this book, one of the world's leading authorities on bees and pollination teams up with an award-winning author to explore the vital but little-appreciated relationship between plants and the animals they depend on for reproduction. Millions of years of coevolution

have fine-tuned the relations between particular plants and their special pollinators. The shapes and colors of the flowers, their scent, their location on the stalks, the season and daily schedule of their pollen and nectar offerings and other qualities we admire but seldom understand, are adjusted precisely to attract particular insects, and those specialists in turn whether beetles, butterflies, bees or some other group, are genetically adapted to respond to certain kinds of flowers. No phenomenon in nature illustrates more vividly the principle that conservation measures must be directed at ecosystems, not just individual species.

The authors show that protecting plants without their pollinators is pointless.

Back When... (Another article in a series about the club's past) by Bob Cassel

The Nature Club had a fine field trip coordinator named George Hitchner. George arranged for a weekend trip to Maryland in the spring of a year when warblers were far more abundant than they are today. I recall that prothonotory warblers were easy to locate in the damp woods he took us to. On another occasion, Eve Cassel suggested a trip to a Mickleton vineyard operated by one of her former students. The premise was to learn about the culture of grapes. Sure enough the property raised several types of grapes. The surprise came when the owner invited us to his backyard to sample the various wines and some fresh bread from his bakery. As I stood looking down on the members enjoying the

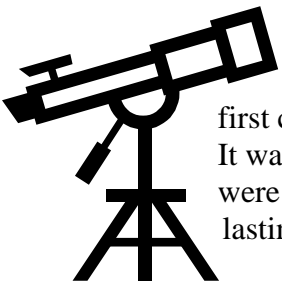


wine I saw George, never a big talker, carrying on a joint conversation. The wine had brought out the best in our members. So much so that a woman with whom I was standing said to me, "I'm a teetotaler, but I'm going down there and try that wine!"

At one time the club's President, Will Middleton, arranged for a nationally known ornithologist to speak at Glassboro State College. It was advertised and the club filled the old auditorium known as Tohill Hall. Of course, television was not a major entertainment medium as it is today.

One spring while at Shenk's Ferry Wildflower Preserve on the Susquehanna River we met a gentleman who identified all the flowers located in that beautiful spot. He lined us up with another wildflower expert who led us to a plot in Mt. Gretna, PA where we saw the beautiful fringed gentian. He told us that he cared for the plot each year by mowing the area so the gentians would not be overcome by the weeds. We then followed him to US 322 west of Ephrata where he found so much trailing arbutus that it had to be mowed along the highway each year. I'm happy to report that the DOT has now fenced the area. Not far from there he showed us the yellow lady slipper and more fringed gentians.

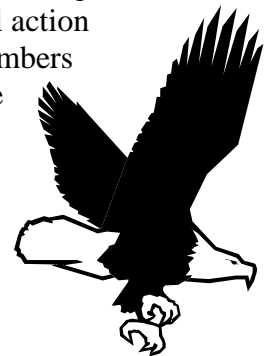
Sometimes when you learn of a rare bird in a nearby area you must act quickly to see it. We were on a field trip with Will Middleton one fall in Mt. Royal when he casually mentioned that a redshank was visiting Edward Forsythe Wildlife Refuge. I said to my wife, "It's 4:30 pm, do you want to rush down to Brigantine and hope we might find it where Will said he had seen it?" She gave the affirmative and we hauled down there arriving just as twilight did. There were two cars on the dike. A man returning to the second car said the bird wasn't there. I returned to our car and reported the news to my wife. She said, "You're not going to give up on his story, what about the first car, what's going on there?" I hung my head back and went back to the first car. The owner, a lovely lady birder, had a Celestron spotting scope on the redshank. It was standing on one leg to prove its species, and the long rays of a beautiful sunset were reflecting off that leg! I called my wife and she also had a good look and thereby a lasting memory back when...



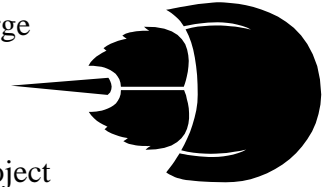
Update on the The World Series of Birding

On May 10, 2003, the Gloucester County Nature Club will compete in the New Jersey Audubon Society's prestigious World Series of Birding for the first time. The team will consist of Jeff Holt, Gale Cannon, Dick Ebert, and Bob Duke. The object of the WSB is to identify, by sight or sound, as many species of birds as possible within 24 hours. Our team, The Gloucester County Ruffs, will compete in the Limited Geographic Area (LGA) part of the World Series of Birding, they will spend their entire 24 hours in Gloucester County.

While the World Series of Birding is a competition, it also serves another, more important, purpose. Each competing team raises money through pledges based on the number of birds correctly identified by the team. The money raised by the Ruffs will go to The Natural Resource Defense Council. NRDC is an effective environmental action organization. They use law, science, and the support of more than 1 million members and online activists to protect the planet's wildlife and wild places and to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all living things. NRDC works to support many environmental causes through policy initiatives, lawsuits, and lobbying.



Individuals may help the team by providing them information on the location of unusual or nesting birds by calling Jeff Holt at 429-1802 (day) or 845-8925 (evening) or by making a pledge. If you'd like more information on making a pledge you may contact Marge Dolente at 384-6214 or visit www.gcnatureclub.org for a pledge form. Club members may also choose to collect pledges from friends and family on behalf of the team. You can do this by downloading the form from the website. Checks should be made out to the Gloucester County Nature Club. Donations should be sent to Marge Dolente at 59B S. Evergreen, Woodbury, NJ 08096.



Opportunities to Volunteer to Help Census Horseshoe Crab Eggs

Would you like to join one of the small teams the Discovery Bayshore Project (formerly the Schooner Project) is coordinating to census horseshoe crab eggs on Fortesque Beach? There will be about 15 counts throughout May and early June. They are scheduled according to the tides so many will be between 9:00 pm- midnight. The counts are used to develop an ongoing database of crab populations. If you'd like to volunteer contact Lindsay Smith at 856-785-2060 or at ajmeerwald@snip.net- write Lindsay in the subject line.

Newsletter Information

If you'd like to be on the list to receive it electronically please email me at pnbhayes@aol.com.

Is this your last newsletter? If you received a reminder for your dues with one of your recent newsletters this may be your last mailing. Dues are paid on an annual basis each September, \$13 individual and \$15 for a family membership. The dues cover mailings as well as speaker/ program fees, and other expenses. We do not charge for field trips or other events. We encourage you to continue your membership.

Election of Trustees

May is our Annual meeting to elect Trustees. Trustees are responsible for electing and providing direction for the Executive Committee members. When elected, Trustees serve a three-year term at which time the seat is up for election. All voting is final at the close of the May meeting with the results to be included in the June newsletter. You may use the ballot below to vote. Ballots will also be available at the May meeting. Voting must be received by 9:00 PM on May 7, 2003.

Gloucester County Nature Club 2003 Official Ballot

Board of Trustees (Term for 2003 – 2006)

Mark an X in the Box to the left of the candidates of your choice.

(Please vote for no more than four (4) candidates)

Kris Mollenhauer

Brian Hayes

Carol Cassel

Karen Kravchuck

Write in (other than above)

Write in (other than above)



Looking Ahead- (Please note some date changes)

Thursday, May 7th - Plant Sale & Program on Beekeeping

Saturday, May 3rd - Bird Quest

Saturday, May 10th - Pitman's Arbor Day- Alcyon Park

Saturday, May 17th Deptford Day- 10 am – 4 pm

Sunday, June 1st - Water Fest at Scotland Run 11am- 4 pm

Thursday, June 12th - Picnic at Redbank Battlefield

Club Notes:

- Executive Committee Meeting: April 29th at 7:00 pm, at EIRC, the meeting will follow The Birding by Ear Training
- The Nature Club is always looking for ideas for future programs and field trips. Please contact the program or trip coordinators if you have ideas or would like to help.
- As spring approaches we will be looking for members willing to help out at a community event. If you are interested in volunteering for a few hours please give one of our Community Events Coordinators a call- Jackie Partridge 848-4852, Bonnie Dann 845-4650, or Elaine Dzeima 227-0839
- For information about the Nature Club call Brian Hayes at 856-468-9272.
- Information for the next newsletter should be sent to Paula Hayes at pnbhayes@aol.com or 413 North Stockton Avenue; Wenonah, NJ 08090 by the 15th of each month.

Gloucester County Nature Club
c/o EIRC
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Sewell NJ 08080