



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

May 2010

Program – Hummingbirds and Hummingbird Gardening & 2010 Annual Plant Sale
Thursday, May 13th at 6:00 PM at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Wenonah NJ
(directions below)

Presenter: Ward Dasey, Palmyra Cove Nature Park

Program Coordinator: Rich Dilks (856) 468-6342

Reminder: Starting time for the plant sale is **6:00 PM**, for the program **7:00 PM**.

Small, superlative being

You are a miracle

And you blaze.

~ Pablo Neruda.



Native only to the New World, Hummingbirds are among the most diminutive of birds. (The Bee Hummingbird, found in Cuba, is, at 2 inches in length, the world's smallest bird.) These amazing birds can hover in mid air, beat their wings up to 90 times a second and even fly backwards. Comprising the family Trochilidae, most of the many species of Hummingbirds live in the Neotropics. Of the species found in North America, only the Ruby-throated summers and breeds in the Northeast. (The cold tolerant Rufous Hummingbird may winter in the Southeast and is extending its winter range north.) Although Hummingbirds consume insects and spiders (especially when feeding young) for protein and other nutrients absent from nectar, their long thin beak and grooved tongue are designed for nectar feeding. They seek out the nectars with the highest sugar content and can consume several times their weight in nectar in a single day. Because these amazing birds have an intimate and complex relationship to flowering plants, the loss of natural meadows, feeding and breeding habitats for Hummingbirds, makes their survival among us all the more difficult. By the creation of Hummingbird or nectar gardens, and by incorporating appropriate plants into our gardens and landscape, we can do much to compensate for this loss and give Hummingbirds and butterflies as well places to live, feed and reproduce while giving ourselves the pleasure of their presence among us.

Our presenter tonight is Ward Dasey of the Palmyra Cove Nature Park. Ward is a naturalist and gardener who has designed and created the beautiful and extensive nectar gardens at Palmyra Cove. Ward, through experimentation found nectar producing plants that were suited to the soil and moisture conditions at Palmyra Cove and resistant to deer browsing as well. He then gathered fellow gardeners together to create this wildlife sustaining place of beauty. Tonight Ward will tell us about Hummingbirds, these marvels of the bird world, and how we in our gardens and yards can create a place for them.

Directions: The Holy Nativity Lutheran Church is located just off Route 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).

ANNUAL PLANT SALE! It's that time again! Spring is here and it's time to be in our gardens, getting them ready for the warm weather season. This means it is also time for the Club's annual plant sale. Hopefully, once again, we'll have a wonderful combination of nursery grown plants and plants from our very own gardens.



Here's where your part of this comes in. As you are in your gardens in the next couple of weeks keep an eye out for plants you can share. Maybe it could be some of those perennials you have been meaning to divide or a volunteer shrub or tree that just has to be moved. Even some extra seeds that you collected in the fall would be great. Just pot them up or pack them up and bring them with you. Please mark them carefully, though, so we keep the mystery plants to a minimum.

The Plant Sale will be held just before the May meeting. It will start at 6:00 PM at the Holy Nativity Church. It is open to the public so please tell family and friends.

Field Trip – Spring Wildflowers of the Piedmont at Ridley Creek State Park, PA
Sunday, May 9th, 9:20 AM to mid-afternoon
Trip Leader: Rich Dilks



The piedmont of eastern North America is an area of rolling hills and complex geology. It is the physiographic province that occurs between the inner coastal plain and the Appalachian mountains in a belt that runs northeast to southwest from central New Jersey to eastern Alabama. The name literally means “foot of the mountain” or foot hills and can be considered a half way house between the Atlantic coastal plain to its east and the mountains to its west. The plant communities of the piedmont reflect this transition and contain both plant familiar to the inner coastal plain and those found in the Appalachians. Today we will visit Ridley Creek State Park in the rolling piedmont of upper Delaware County. The park consists of over 2,600 acres of hills, woodlands and meadows along the banks of Ridley Creek and contains 12 miles of trails. We will be looking at the mid to late spring flora and hope to see such flowering plants as

Jacob's Ladder, Wild Leeks, Green Dragon, Wild Ginger, Blue Cohosh, and numerous others in this botanically rich area. Among the ferns we'll see will be Cinnamon Fern, Christmas Fern, Northern Maidenhair and Silvery Spleenwort. In addition to the wildflowers, this is a good area for birding, so feel free to bring binoculars. Another point of interest in the park is Hunting Hill, a mansion built in 1914 around an 1789 stone farm house. It is now the park headquarters. If there is time and the inclination, a side trip to nearby Tyler Arboretum can be included. The Arboretum includes some good woodland wildflower areas and also contains Pink Hill, the only serpentine barrens still extant in Delaware County. Admission to Ridley Creek SP is free but there is a \$9 admission fee for the Tyler Arboretum.

Directions: Those who wish to car pool will meet at Timberline Shopping Center on Rt 553 in Sewell at 8:30 A.M. If you wish to go directly to the park, we will meet at 9:20 at the upper parking lot next to the park headquarters (Hunting Hill mansion) and the formal garden. There are numerous picnic facilities in the park for those who plan to pack lunch.

From Timberline we will make our way to I-295 south then on to Commodore Barry Bridge. On crossing into Pa., take I-95 south for about 1 mile to Exit 3A and take Rt. 322 west. After about 1 mile, make a right at the first exit on Rt. 322 (RT. 452) and then bear right (north) on Rt. 452. (Rt. 452 is Market St. then becomes Pennell Rd.). Continue north on Rt. 452 for approximately 5 miles, crossing Rt. 1. Continue one half mile beyond Rt. 1 to the traffic light where Rt. 452 intersects with Rt. 352 (Middletown Rd.) at Lima, Pa. Turn left onto Rt. 352 and continue about 2 miles then turn right onto Gradyville Rd. Continue a little over a mile. The park entrance will be on your right. Continue into the park about 1200 feet, then turn right, following signs to the park office. We will meet in the upper lot by the mansion and formal garden. Travel time from Timberline is about 50 min.

Family Fun Walk

Tuesday, May 25, 2010 at 10:00AM at Wheelabrator Refuge, Westville

Trip Leader: Maria Keefe (856) 627-7010

Email: walkingwith4boyz@comcast.net



Join us at Wheelabrator Refuge in Westville on Tuesday, May 25th at 10am for a family friendly nature walk. 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 is able to be pushed on unpaved paths. All ages welcome.

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

Conservation Corner – “Green” Spring Cleaning by Jayne Rhynard

It's Spring Cleaning time! There are now many commercial cleaning products offering alternatives to chemicals in home cleaning products. If you choose to use those beware of “greenwashing”. This is the term applied to manufacturers making “green” claims that are misleading or untrue. Watch out for environmental claims that are so broad or undefined that it is likely that their meaning will be misunderstood. For instance, “all natural” isn't necessarily green. Another consumer tip is to look for endorsement or certification by third parties for legitimate eco-labeling.

There are many websites and other resources that tell how to use kitchen staples like vinegar, [baking soda](#), and good old hot water to make things sparkling clean for less. price). And don't forget how once-a-year jobs like [vacuuming the refrigerator coils](#) can make your home more efficient. Avoid disposables, use a sturdy mop, natural sponge or washrags for scrubbing. Here are two simple recipes for common cleaning challenges.

All-Purpose Cleaner

1/2 tsp washing soda or 2 1/2 tsp of borax

A dab of liquid soap

2 cups hot tap water

Combine the ingredients in a spray bottle and shake until the washing soda has dissolved. Apply and wipe off with a sponge or rag.

Mold Killer

2 teaspoons tea tree oil

2 cups water

Combine in a spray bottle, shake to blend, and spray on problem areas. Do not rinse.

Obvious, but true, is that the quickest way to cut your cleaning time is to simply have less stuff to clean! Separate items that someone else could give a second life. Try donating to Habitat for Humanity. Goodwill is quick and easy or try offering items for sale or barter on Craigslist or check out what that collection of comic books will go for on eBay. Your house will be less cluttered; someone else can skip buying new; and less goes in the landfill. For those things you just can't bring yourself to part with, repurpose -- could you stack up old books to make a stylish side table? Add some green to green; houseplants—such as Boston ferns, English ivy, and rubber plants can help clean your indoor air by absorbing toxic chemicals.

Other Nature Notes

Events by other Organizations: May 2010

- May 8 (Saturday) - Ferns and Flowers at Crosswicks Creek. 9:00 AM – mid-afternoon. Leader: Karl Anderson. \$Fee. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. For info: phone 609-261-2495, or contact Karl at 856-845-7075.
- May 9 (Sunday) – Short Walk at Maria Barnaby Greenwald Park, Cherry Hill. 8:15 AM – late morning. Leader: Sandra Keller. \$Fee. Sponsored by the Rancocas Nature Center. For info: phone 609-261-2495.
- May 15 (Saturday) – Beginning Birding for Adults. 9:00 AM – noon. \$Fee. Sponsored by the Palmyra Cove Nature Park. For info: <http://palmyracove.org/>
- May 22 (Saturday) – Burlington Birding Bonanza. 8:00 AM –all day. Sponsored by the Burlington County Parks Department. Meets at Boundary Creek Park. Pre-registration required. For info: <http://www.co.burlington.nj.us/>and go to the Parks Department home page.

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: Tuesday 5/11 at 6:00 PM
- Afternoon Nature Stroll: Wednesday 5/19 at 2:30 PM
- Nature Tots: Wednesday 5/12 at 10:00 AM
- Scout Saturday: Saturday 5/8 at 10:00 AM
- Canoeing/Kayaking: Saturday 5/15 at 1:00 AM
- Wonders Of Wetlands (WOW) Workshop: Friday 5/21 from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Gloucester County Water Fest; Sunday 6/6 from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Natural Events for the month of May

- Jack in the pulpit, pink lady's-slipper, and mayapple bloom by mid-May in the County's remnant woodlands.
- Early spring flowers such as spring beauty fade rapidly, as trees leaf out and shade the forest floor.
- Princess tree, or Paulownia (named after an 18th-Century Russian princess) blooms with large clusters of pale purple flowers. It's an invasive species but still very pretty.
- By late May, monarch butterflies arrive from the south and begin laying their eggs on newly emerged plants of common milkweed.

- Young rabbits, gray squirrels, and other small mammals are leaving their home nests. Drive carefully.
- Horseshoe crabs spawn on Delaware Bayshore beaches from late May to early June.
- Red knots arrive for their stop-over at the Delaware Bay area to double their weight on horseshoe crab eggs in preparation for their nonstop journey to Arctic breeding grounds.

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.



Looking Ahead:

Upcoming GCNC Programs

June 10, 2010: **Annual Picnic** (Scotland Run Park) and **Awakening Spirits: The Art of Tracking** – Bill Marple, Instructor, Tom Brown Tracker School

Upcoming 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 or (856) 845-7075.

June 12 (Saturday): **Brendan Byrne State Forest** - Karl Anderson

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 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 May Executive Committee meeting will be held on May 10th (Monday) at the home of Estelle Ostroff. Please contact Karen Kravchuck for more information.

Election of Trustees - The May Nature Club meeting is when we annually hold elections for our Board of Trustees. The Trustees hold the ultimate governing power of the Club. The Trustees elect the members of the Executive Committee (president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and chairpersons of the standing committees). The Trustees' other primary responsibility is to provide direction to the Executive Committee because our by-laws specify that the Board of Trustees authorizes power to the Executive Committee for the day-to-day operations of the Club.

Trustees meet annually at a joint meeting with the Executive Committee in June. There are a total of 12 members of the Board of Trustees. Elected Trustees agree to serve a 3 year term and one third of the Trustees are elected by the Club's membership at the May meeting. The current Trustees are as follows:

2007 – 2010 term: Barry Bengel, Elaine Dzeima, Paula Hayes, Dave Partridge

2008 – 2011 term: Erik Mollenhauer, Robert Cassel, Bonnie Dann, Jackie Partridge

2009 – 2012 term: Brian Hayes, Karen Kravchuck, Kris Mollenhauer, Carol Cassel

We will be electing Trustees for the term of 2010-2013. If you are interested in running for election, please contact Karen Kravchuck at 856-468-6536 or at blackbirdsinging@hotmail.com.

Gloucester County Nature Club 2010 Official Ballot

Board of Trustees (Term for 2010 – 2013)

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

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

Barry Bengel

Elaine Dzeima

Paula Hayes

Dave Partridge
