

Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

www.gcnatureclub.org

Nature Club meetings are open to the public
June 2004

****Note the time and location change for this meeting****

June Program—Picnic at Washington Lake Park- June 10th at 6:00 PM

The June 10th meeting of the Gloucester County Nature Club will be our annual spring picnic. The picnic will be held at the Washington Lake Park. Attendees should bring a food item to share, and their own utensils, plates, and cups to cut down on the waste of disposables. Bring your binoculars as well because after dinner we will take a walk through the varied habitats of the park looking for birds, wildflowers and other items of interest. As with all club functions the picnic is open to the public so why not bring a friend? We you will join us for the picnic.



Field Trip— Brightview Farm, Saturday June 12, 8:30 AM to Noon

Trip Leader: Bob Duke

Co-leader: Kris Mollenhauer

Meet at Timberline Shopping Center on Woodbury Glassboro Rd in Sewell to carpool north for an hour to the Fort Dix (or follow the directions below to meet us there) area to search the hay meadows for Bobolinks, Dickcissels, Meadowlarks and Bluebirds. The Bobolink is not your typical backyard bird. This black bird has a yellow head and white back that looks like a dandelion gone to seed. It has the most unusual call - it sounds like the whistles and beeps of the little robot R2D2 in the movie Star Wars. This call is often given in flight. Check out this website for further description: www.delawarevalleybirding.com/place007.htm. If you would rather travel on your own you can meet us there at 9:15 by following these directions -

Directions to Brightview Farm: From Route 295 North exit onto Route 38 East. Continue for about 8 miles and then turn left onto Route 206 North. From the intersection of Route 206 and 537 (Monmouth Road) proceed east on 537, through Jobstown and straight across Route 68 (traffic light) to Route 545 (Wrightstown-Georgetown Road). Turn left onto 545 and look for the signed lane (Brightview Farm) about a half-mile on the right. Turn into the lane; a large beautiful restored farmhouse will be on your left and a horse barn on your right. Proceed straight-ahead with woods on your right and pasture on your left. There is usually a sign in book at the first gravel intersection in a box on the fence. Please sign in and report sightings.



Bird Quest

Bird Quest 2004, our fifth annual, was a perfect day to be outside. Those people who were concerned the birds would not be back from South and Central America, because Bird Quest was early this year, need not have worried. No one was disappointed with the results. We

had 250 people participate in the event which included three buses. From the feedback we have received, everyone had a terrific day!

A grand total of 129 different species were seen during Bird Quest. Each of the 15 training sessions held in the three weeks prior to Bird Quest helped a core group of people become more adept at bird identification by both site and sound. From the information learned at the trainings about birds, bird songs, bird habitat and locations in Gloucester County the teams canvassed the county searching for each new species. There were some great stories shared over the lunch provided (courtesy of Shop Rite) at Atkinson Park.



Thanks to all who participated and congratulations to our winners. The winning team, led by Dick Ebert, and included Loretta Dunne, Jonathon Stillwell, Andrew Campbell, and Walt Spain, *saw 73 species of birds in five hours.*

Again a special note of thanks to our on site crew: Bob Bevilaqua, Ed and Millie Cleary, Joan Tracy, and Elaine Dzeima, our training instructors, our photographer, and our sponsors. You have made it look so easy. Each year the BirdQuest is made possible by a large group of sponsors. ShopRite Supermarkets has provided food for the quest each year since the beginning and we thank them for their support. In addition, the last three years Wheelabrator of Gloucester County provides the funding for two of the buses we use. We would like to encourage club members to take time to write a thank you note to either of the above to let them know how important they are to our organization. The addresses are-

Mr. Fred Lodini, Plant Manager
Wheelabrator Gloucester
600 US 130
Westville, NJ 08093

Mr. Tim Vogel
ShopRite Supermarkets/ Wakefern Corp.
33 Northfield Ave.
P.O. Box 7812
Edison, NJ 08818-7812

May 15, 2004 – The 21st World Series of Birding

Congratulations to our Word Series of Birding (WSB) team (Jeff Holt - Captain, Bob Baruzzi, Gale Cannon, and Dick Ebert) with a hard fought 119 species. This was good enough to earn them 5th place in the Limited Geographic Area category. And this was only our second year! It was a very hot day and all WSB numbers were down at least 5% - 9% which makes our team's results better than most. The WSB is a 24 hour event in which the participants try to find different species of birds within New Jersey. Our team is entered in the limited geographical area competition and didn't leave the confines of Gloucester County for that 24 hour period.

Now is your turn, support them by giving your donations and fulfilling your pledges. In the next few weeks Marge Dolente will be contacting all those who made pledges. It isn't too late to give, contact the Nature Club if you wish to show your support for this outstanding effort.

Your contribution will go to the South Jersey Land Trust to be used here in Gloucester County for land acquisition. You can contribute any amount, all contributions are welcome.

Please send your pledge(s) to Marge Dolente, 1001 Stonybrook Drive, Deptford, NJ 08096. The results of our competitive efforts and your pledges will be posted on the website and in the next newsletter.



Will Endangered Northwestern Salmon Continue to be Protected?

by Paula Hayes

The Bush administration is proposing a change to the way it counts the 15 species of salmon currently listed as threatened or endangered. Currently hatchery raised salmon are not included in numbers that determine the health of each individual salmon species. The stimulus for this proposed change came from a lawsuit filed by builders, farmers, hydroelectricity producers, and other pro-development groups. Resulting from that lawsuit a federal judge found the government made a mistake by counting only wild salmon when it listed Coho salmon for protection. The federal government then decided not to appeal that court decision from 2001 and has now decided to broaden the judge's decision by using it to guide all decisions about whether or not to remove any species from protection.

Hatchery fish are raised in concrete pools and then put into rivers each year by the millions. These fish though similar to wild salmon do not behave like wild salmon. The hatchery fish's feeding and migration patterns are different than that of wild salmon. The hatchery fishes' survival rate is much lower than wild salmon and many experts on salmon feel this new policy will only mask the problem while wild populations decline and possibly become extinct. At this time scientists believe four out of five salmon in Northwestern Rivers are hatchery fish. This proposal will allow hatcheries to be considered an extension of natural habitat even though research has shown that salmon raised in this habitat are not the same as wild salmon. This policy would allow the government to declare salmon species recovered without actually increasing the number of salmon in the rivers.

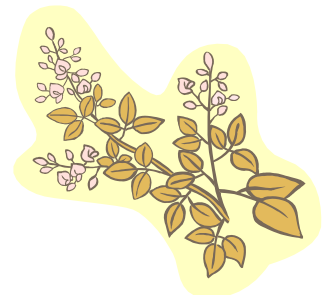


The U.S. government asked six of the world's leading experts on salmon ecology to comment on its salmon recovery plan. As happens too frequently these days when scientists disagree with bureaucrats, the scientists' opinions and their peer-reviewed research was just dismissed. The scientists were told that their conclusions about hatchery fish were inappropriate for official government reports. These scientists who disagreed with the administration's policy recently published an article in the journal Science in late March speaking out about how their reports, that fish produced in hatcheries cannot be counted on to save wild salmon, were ignored.

This policy will represent a drastic change in the \$700 million dollar-a-year effort to enforce the Endangered Species Act and protect Pacific salmon. It will impact on many other species that are covered under the Endangered Species Act. Many groups are attempting to mobilize and stop this policy from going into effect later this year. If you'd like to speak out on this topic you can do so by writing to D Robert Lohn, Northwest Regional Administrator for the National Marine Fisheries Service at 7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Seattle, WA 98115-0070.

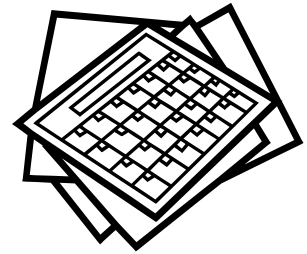
Plant Sale

The Nature Club held its annual plant sale on May 14 at EIRC. We were fortunate enough to have a beautiful clear night that brought many of members out. We would like to express a huge thank you to Medford Nurseries who provided much of the nursery stock that was sold and the many club members who brought things from their own gardens. Without them this sale would not be possible. The plant sale provides funds to the club for things such as insurance, speaker's fees, and other expenses.



Looking Ahead: **Summer Field Trip Schedule**

In the next few weeks our field trip committee will meet and plan our summer field trip schedule. We will do a newsletter at the end of this month with a schedule so you can join us for some of these local favorites. These trips are usually during the week and close to home to accommodate everyone's busy summer schedule. If you'd like to help with a trip please contact Kris Mollenhauer at 589-4687. We hope to see you this summer!



September 2004 Program- Cape May, A Journey Through the Looking Glass

Our September program will feature Kevin T. Karlson, a professional wildlife photographer and avid birder from Cape May County. Kevin's work is widely published in numerous birding magazines and journals, as well as in field guides, calendars, and CD ROM's. Kevin recently contributed over 800 photographs to a major revision of the CD ROM "The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Guide to Birds of North America." Kevin has traveled the world photographing birds but still finds his home Cape May among his favorite places to work. This program will feature slides and include plenty of Natural History illustrating the magic of Cape May.

Board of Trustees

Elections for the Gloucester County Nature Club's Board of Trustees were held at our May meeting. The trustees are elected for a three year term and are responsible for appointing the executive committee and guiding the direction of the club. We are pleased to announce the newly elected trustees- Barry Bengel, Elaine Dzeima, Paula Hayes, and Deb Maka who will serve the term from 2004 through 2007

Club Notes:

- As summer approaches we are still looking for members to help out at community events. If you are interested in volunteering for a few hours please call one of our Community Events Coordinators - Jackie Partridge 848-4852, Bonnie Dann 845-4650, or Elaine Dzeima 227-0839
- 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.
- The Nature Club is in need of a Conservation Chairperson and a Secretary, if you are interested in either of these positions or helping out in any other way please contact any executive member.