



# Gloucester County Nature Club Monthly Newsletter

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

Nature Club meetings are open to the public

January 2024

**Program: Beyond Honeybees: Beetles, Butterflies, Bumblebees and Other Pollinators**

**Presenter: Dr. Daniel Duran, Assistant Professor, Rowan U; Naturalist, Scotland Run Park**

**Thursday, January 11 2024 at 7:00 pm at the Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Wenonah, NJ (directions below)**

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

Although birds, bats, and other creatures are also pollinators, insects are the animals that do the bulk of the pollination that affects our daily lives. When one thinks of pollinators, European honeybees probably come to mind. Yet many other insects- native bees, moths, beetles, wasps, and more are essential to the pollination and survival of thousands of species of plants. Native pollinators also play a critical role in the production of certain fruits, vegetables, and forage crop such as alfalfa, melons, cranberries, blueberries, soybeans, and sunflowers. Native bees, including the blue orchard bee and numerous bumble bees and other native bees, are significant pollinators, and on a bee-per-bee basis, can be more effective than honey bees.



Daniel P. Duran, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Department of Environmental Science at Rowan University, as well as the naturalist for Scotland Run Park, a 1300-acre nature preserve at the edge of the New Jersey Pine Barrens. He has published research papers on agricultural entomology, biodiversity, and molecular phylogenetics. Duran has described 10 new species of insects previously unknown to science. He earned a B.S. in environmental science from Stockton University, an M.S. in entomology from the University of Missouri and a Ph.D. in evolution and ecology from Vanderbilt University. In between his degrees, he has also worked for the Natural History Museum, London, UK and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama. Duran is a co-author of the book "A Field Guide to the Tiger Beetles of the United States and Canada, 2nd Edition."

**Directions:** The Holy Nativity Lutheran Church is located just off Rt. 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 Trips:** There are currently no field trips scheduled for January, however, you will be notified if a trip is added.

The following program is presented by Scotland Run Park:

## **Nature at Night**

Nature at Night is the newest program at Scotland Run Park, held on a Thursday night, once a month, from 7-8pm. Nature at Night is like a nature special that the public can come to! There will be presentations full of beautiful images as well as real animals on display. This program is free but due to limited space registration is required. *Call 856-251-6710 to register...*

### **January 18 (Registration opens 1/11)**

Join Michael McGraw, Senior Wildlife Biologist at Resource Environmental Solutions LLC, for a journey through the Wonderful World of Reptiles. Come see live reptiles native to the area and learn more about these cold-blooded critters!

### **February 15 (Registration opens 2/8)**

Can you recognize the venomous Timber rattlesnake? Are you familiar with the Northern Pinesnake, a threatened species that helps us protect remaining areas of the Pinelands? Are you aware that there is no such thing as a "gardener snake?" Have you ever met a Musk Turtle, which are aquatic animals that are terrible swimmers? Do you brake for N. Diamondback Terrapins when they are crossing roads? Join Matt Bealor to learn about the amazing diversity of reptiles found in south Jersey and meet many of them by getting up close and personal with several species.

### **March 21 (Registration opens 3/14)**

Join Senior Zoologist Bill Pitts of NJ Fish & Wildlife's Endangered & Nongame Species Program to find out more about some of the rare species you can find throughout the diverse ecosystems of South Jersey.

### **April 18 (Registration opens 4/11)**

Dr. Alicia Shenko, associate professor, Delaware Valley University's Department of Animal Biotechnology and Conservation explores the fascinating world of hidden (and not so hidden) mammals that live in your backyard, and common ways you can easily observe their secret movements!

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

- Earthworms burrow below frost line and become dormant.
- Newly fallen snow makes it easy to find and study animal tracks.
- First mating season for gray squirrels.
- Look for flocks of robins eating holly berries in your backyard.
- Great horned owls, America's earliest nesting owl, may be on eggs by the end of the month.
- As days lengthen, tufted titmice and cardinals start singing.

### **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 609-617-6693 (cell).
- 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 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.

- The club would like to welcome the following new members who have joined in the last month:
  1. Brian Waters of Westville
  2. Barbara & Dave Mennel of Pitman
  3. Marna Lampe of Pitman
  4. Linda Shusterman of Deptford



**YOUTUBE CHANNEL:** We are continuing to post recordings of recent club programs for the convenience of members and the public. To find the club's channel, use [this link](#) or search for the club's full name within YouTube. 19 videos are now available, including these recent additions:

- [An Introduction to Pinelands Ecology](#) (October 2023)
- [Bird Coloration: The Hows and Whys](#) (November 2023)



The November video is the first to feature improved audio thanks to a body-worn microphone that the club has recently purchased. This video also has hand-edited closed captions.

Be sure to subscribe to the club's channel and "like" the videos so they will get recommended to more people! We will continue recording programs whenever permitted by speakers and their sponsoring organizations.