

The Green Way

KINGSTON GREENWAYS ASSOCIATION

A NEW JERSEY NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

www.kingstongreenways.org

Fall 2015 No. 26

COMING EVENTS

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Sunday, December 20, 2015, 7:30 AM - 5 PM



Photo by Brenda J. Jones

The Kingston segment of this year's Audubon Christmas Bird Count begins at 7:30 AM (to catch the early birds!) and goes until noon. After a break for lunch at Main Street Cafe, we will continue with the count in the afternoon. You can join us for morning, afternoon, or both. We would particularly appreciate the help of experienced birders for this event, but novices are also welcome.

If you are interested, please call Karen Linder at 609-683-0483.

RECENT EVENTS

FALL FOLIAGE WALK

October 17, 2015

Looking at lichens—photos by Greg Dobbs





View from the new trail—photo by Greg Dobbs



Photo by Elena Shiba

This year's walk was an informal ramble along the new trail through the Cook Natural Area, blazed by KGA volunteers on National Trails Day in June. This pathway through two short wooded sections and along field borders (freshly cut for our walk by the D&R Canal State Park maintenance crew) offers pleasant views of hillside, fields and forest.

Where the new trail rejoins the existing one, we carried on (carefully) over the Carter Brook Bridge, currently obstructed by a fallen tree, with some damage to the bridge. (Plans are underway to make repairs next spring.)

We then passed through Heathcote Meadows (a nod to Middlesex County Parks for cutting a path through for us!) and down Sassman Lane, to return to our starting point

TRAILS DAY

June 6, 2015

We celebrated Trails Day by opening up a new trail in the Cook Natural Area. This is a drier path, replacing the trail that formerly included the boardwalk, which became impossible to maintain due to wetness and aggressive vegetation. The new trail starts off a few hundred feet in from the Cook Area parking lot located at the intersection of Ridge and Heathcote Roads. It first leads through a short wooded section, then crosses a field, passes through another shaded segment, and emerges to a path that skirts the trees along the upland edge of a large field.



Our volunteers exhibited great energy, enthusiasm, and esprit de corps, and we owe them our warmest thanks. They cut down small trees and cleared brush, leveled the path through the wooded sections, dug postholes for the trail markers, and dragged sixteen-foot, HEAVY boardwalk sections to their new locations to make a drier, easier passage. And one volunteer single-handedly rescued the old stone bridge from an inundation of weeds!

There was however, a strange and disturbing coda to our Trails Day session. Two days after the work was done, it was discovered that the four boardwalk sections we had laboriously dragged and settled into their new locations had been removed, as had the four marker posts that had been placed. Just as shocking, “No Trespassing” signs had been posted along the trail! The D&R Canal Park staff (who had given approval for the new trail’s construction) were immediately notified, and investigations initiated by them and by the park police.

The Park’s Regional boundary marking crew has now completed posting the boundary of the Cook Preserve - both the Natural Area and the agricultural fields, which are farmed under a lease agreement with the state.

Although it is still unknown who is responsible for these actions, what is certain is that the Cook Natural Area *IS* public land, and the new trail is accessible to all. What has additionally been reaffirmed is that hunting is prohibited in all of the Cook Preserve. This was the express wish of Grace Cook, who gave the land to be preserved and enjoyed. If you see hunting activity in the Cook Natural Preserve, please call the Park Police at 1-877-927-6337, and/or the D&R Canal State Park at 609-924-5705.

ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM:
"Life With the Hives -- Not Always the Bees' Knees!"
May 20, 2015



We learned fascinating facts about the world of bees and the ancient craft of beekeeping from our speaker Dennis Rittenhouse, the Small Bee Steward.

The Small Bee Steward practices chemical-free honey bee husbandry in battle to protect his hives from pests, pathogens, parasites, and predators. To learn more, please visit Dennis Rittenhouse's web site at <http://www.themallbesteward.com/>

Photo of honey bee on hellebore by Kristi Meehan

For instance:

- **To stay warm in winter, bees cluster together in the top of the hive, where it's the warmest, near their food stores. They keep warm by rotating positions in the cluster, the outsiders flexing their muscles to create heat for the insiders, while they all slowly rotate positions.
- **Honey has antibiotic properties, unlike sugar, which provides food for decay-causing microbes.
- **A queen bee lays 1500 to 2000 eggs a day.
- **If a queen bee dies or is removed from a hive, worker bees create a new queen.
- **In the US and around the globe, bees are threatened by loss of foraging habitat and by the use of pesticides, especially those called neonicotinoids. Another danger to bees is the Varroa mite.



We welcome participation from our members and friends, whether it be building trails, picking up litter, attending walks and programs, keeping us informed, or sharing suggestions. Please feel free to get in touch with me at tari@kingstongreenways.org.

With best wishes for late autumn and the winter season,

Tari Pantaleo
President, Kingston Greenways Association