

# The Green Way

## KINGSTON GREENWAYS ASSOCIATION

A NEW JERSEY NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

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

April 2009 No. 13

If you haven't renewed, now is the time!

If you're not yet a member, now is the time! <http://kingstongreenways.org/forme.html>

If you haven't signed up to receive The Green Way electronically, now is the time!

Please email [tari@kingstongreenways.org](mailto:tari@kingstongreenways.org) to get on the e-list.

### Kingston Greenways Association's Annual Meeting and Program

"Bats of New Jersey--Please Don't Let Us Be Misunderstood!"

THURSDAY, APRIL 16TH, 7:30 PM

Join us for a brief business meeting followed by a fascinating presentation about a species that often gets a bad rap when it *should* get a good service medal!

Rick Dutko's interest in bats has taken him into the homes and attics of hundreds of New Jerseyans who have had these unexpected nocturnal visitors, into the depths of mines and caves in New Jersey (where he discovered the presence of the federally endangered Indiana bat), and to bat research symposia in Florida, Massachusetts, and Texas.



His slide program shows his passion for these misunderstood mammals, and a reflection of his personal experiences and challenges protecting New Jersey's nine native bat species.

Rick has worked for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for over twenty years, fifteen of which

were as a nongame zoologist for the Natural Heritage Program within the Division of Parks & Forestry. He also worked briefly for the Endangered and Nongame Species Program within the Division of Fish, Game & Wildlife, where his interest in bats began. Intrigued by the public's general misconceptions about bats, Rick soon became a self-educated bat enthusiast, spending much of his personal time pursuing his newfound hobby. Since that time, he has become an advocate in educating the public about the benefits of bats, and dispelling those myths about bats that still persist today.

*The meeting will be held in the Kingston firehouse at 6 Heathcote Road, just off Route 27 in the heart of Kingston. It is free and open to all. Refreshments will be served.*

### **Earth Day Cleanup: Sunday, April 19, 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM**

Help clean up Kingston! Each year, in conjunction with Earth Day, KGA holds a roadside cleanup. This year we will be cleaning up along Ridge Road, Division Street and Mapleton Road. If we have enough people, a group will also clean up near Rockingham. Gather at the Cook Natural Area Parking Lot (at the junction of Heathcote Brook Road and Ridge Road) at 10:30 AM. South Brunswick Township supplies the bags, gloves and safety vests. Boots, hats and long pants are suggested attire. For more information, call 609-924-3399.

*Fortify yourself before--or reward yourself afterward—at the Annual Pancake Breakfast at the Kingston firehouse. Members of the Kingston Volunteer Fire Company will be serving pancakes, sausage, orange juice, coffee, and tea from 8 AM to 1 PM.*

### **Friends of Princeton Nursery Lands and D&R Canal State Park Arbor Day Walk and Song Celebration: Saturday, April 25, 1:00 to 3:30 PM**

Join Stephanie Fox, the naturalist at the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park, for a leisurely walk along the nursery roads in the Mapleton Preserve (formerly Princeton Nurseries). She will be identifying the trees and shrubs found within the property, and will explore their uses through time, from folk remedies to modern day supplements. The walk will begin at the D&R Canal State Park's Kingston office located at 145 Mapleton Road in Kingston. Following the walk, from about 2:30 to 3:30 PM, Lori Pantaleo (vocals), Doug Miller (accordion), and Bill Flemer (guitar) will perform tree-themed songs. A tree will be planted in the Flemer Arboretum during this hour, and refreshments will be available. Each participant will receive a baby tree to take home.

*This event is free and open to all. For more information, contact either Stephanie Fox at [dnrnaturalist@verizon.net](mailto:dnrnaturalist@verizon.net) or Karen Linder at 609-683-0483. Pre-registration is required. Inclement weather cancels.*

### **East Coast Greenway's Hands Along the Canal: Saturday, May 9, 10 AM**

Devoted Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park users and friends, show your support for our 175-year old canal. This bold undertaking will attempt to line hand-holding participants along the historic towpath. Bicyclists, walkers, horses, dogs, fishermen, and canoeists are all encouraged to attend. The Kingston Lock is a great place for you to show your support of the Canal in Kingston. As there is limited parking at the entrances to the D&R, we encourage you to walk down. Parking will be available at Mapleton Preserve, where you can access a trail and walk over. Leave plenty of travel time in order to be in position along the D&R at 10 am. Registration is crucial so that we can keep track of where everyone will enter the park. Please visit <http://handsalongthecanal.com/> to sign up.

### **Trails Day: Sunday, June 7, 10 AM**

We will make improvements on the Cook Preserve Trail and boardwalk. Please gather at the Cook Natural Area Parking Lot (at the junction of Heathcote and Ridge Road in Kingston) for an hour or

two of trail maintenance, in observance of National Trails Day. Participants are invited to bring their own loppers and clippers. For further details, contact David Southgate at 609-924-3399.



### **Stream Evaluation Workshop - Saturday, July 11, 1 PM**

With nets and magnifying lenses, D&R Canal State Park Naturalist Stephanie Fox will introduce us to a teeming, fascinating world of water critters, and teach us how they can be indicators of water quality. It will be a cool way to spend a hot summer day! This activity is appropriate for all ages. Please meet at the D&R Canal State Park headquarters at 145 Mapleton Road in Kingston. Contact Stephanie Fox at [dnrnaturalist@verizon.net](mailto:dnrnaturalist@verizon.net) or Karen Linder at 609-683-0483.

### **Insect Songs (Cooperatively offered by KGA and D&R Greenway Land Trust) – August 7, 6:30 PM**

Wil Hershberger, photographer, recordist and co-author of The Songs of Insects, will teach us about the common crickets, katydids, and cicadas of eastern and central North America, when and where to search for them, and how to identify them by their appearance and by their songs. He will discuss the best ways to locate, capture, and keep insects, along with basic techniques for photographing them and recording their songs. We will hone the fine art of insect song appreciation, where the cacophony of confusing insect sounds magically transforms into a delicate concert of creatures dear to the heart. The one-hour program will be followed by an insect walk in the D&R Greenway Meadows.



**Wil Hershberger**



**Short-Horned Grasshopper**

This KGA event will take place at D&R Greenway, 1 Preservation Place, Princeton NJ 08540. The program is appropriate for age 8 and older. A fee of \$7.50 for members, \$10 for non-members, \$5 for students will apply for this program: there is no charge for children under age twelve. **Pre-registration is required**; please visit <http://www.musicofnature.com/songsofinsects/about.html> for more information; to reserve your spot, complete the form enclosed, and mail with payment to KGA, PO Box 391, Kingston NJ 08528-0391.

**Fall Foliage Walk** - Sunday, October 18 or 25. Stay tuned for details...

## RECENT EVENTS

**Audubon Christmas Bird Count--** It was a great day for the Christmas Bird Count—the weather was quite pleasant compared to the raw and windy rain we experienced last year. In total, we found 39 species and 1953 birds, a lower average than usual, as we had fewer counters than most years. Of note was the large number of black vultures (35), which outnumbered turkey vultures this year (34). Many were in mixed flocks. The black vulture is a southern bird that is extending its range into this area. There appears to be a roost of them in Kingston, the only such roost in the Princeton counting circle.

As this is our 11<sup>th</sup> year participating in the count, we did not find any new species, but were excited to find white-crowned sparrows on the DOT property – a relatively rare find. There were many yellow-rumped warblers in a few spots in the Princeton Nursery property that provided great sightings, and there were lots of hungry robins eating holly berries at the entrance to the nursery. Raptors were well represented, including 10 red tailed hawks, with nice views of a sharp-shinned hawk, three Cooper's hawks, and a northern harrier.

Many thanks to this year's counters, Anne Zeman, Mark Peel, Gwen Southgate, Ed Metcalfe, Tari Pantaleo and Karen Linder. If you want to join us for the 2009 count (likely to be on Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>), call Karen for more information at 609-683-0483. It is a great way to hone your skills and to get into the great outdoors! As always, we are grateful to Princeton Forrester Associates and to Mapleton Nurseries for allowing us to bird on their sections of the Princeton Nursery lands.

### **National Day of Service Cleanup-- Monday, January 19, 2009, 2 to 4 PM**

Despite a blanket of white that obscured much of the litter we hoped to collect along Mapleton Road and on the Nursery Lands, a rugged crew of thirty-one people filled many bags of garbage. The falling snow, the beautiful winter scenery, our camaraderie, and the satisfaction of a job well done were our rewards!





## **COMMUNITY S.O.S! Laurel Avenue School**

A group of citizens and representatives of various community groups in the village of Kingston is mounting an effort to save the Laurel Avenue School. It consists of an older two-story building dating to about 1920, and a one-story brick wing built in the late 1940's. Originally a two-room

school, it served as an elementary school into the early 1990's. It then housed a county education program for five years, remained empty for several more, was leased for a year by a local group, and since August of 2008, has been vacant. In 2004, the four acres on which the school is situated were preserved as Green Acres. The owner of the structure, Franklin Township, recently decided that the school should be razed because of the cost of numerous necessary repairs to the roof, heating system, fire alarm system, and walls, as well as replacement of windows, flooring, and ceilings.

Many of us believe that the school is worth saving because it is an historic structure that served generations of local children--but even more, because it could provide **a much-needed community center for the village**. The township has given us a few months to come up with a proposal for the renovation, occupancy and future management of the site. Our broad goal is to assess and prioritize the work that needs to be undertaken, raise funds through grants and donations for the renovation, find a long-term tenant, and create a non-profit organization that would ultimately manage the property and act as a liaison between the tenant and those in the community who wish to use it on evenings and weekends (such as KGA!). If you are interested in joining this effort, please contact us through the KGA web site (put "LAS" in the subject field), or call 609-750-1821.

## **Call for Trustees**

KGA is looking for individuals who would like to serve as trustees. If you'd like to join us, or just want more information, please send us an email! New terms begin in May.

[tari@kingstongreenways.org](mailto:tari@kingstongreenways.org)

## **Web Site**

Check often for news, photos, the Nature Gallery, coming events, NJ Wild blog, and our excellent Links page. We are excited about our slate of activities for 2009, and hope you will share as many of them with us as you can!

Tari Pantaleo  
President  
Kingston Greenways Association

***Continue on to pages 7 and 8 for the 2008 Christmas Bird Count Results.***

Kingston Greenways Association  
Audubon Christmas Bird Count Results

Previous year  
counts

Species	2008 14-Dec	2007 12/16	2006 12/17	2005 12/18	2004 12/19	2003 12/14	2002 12/16	2001 12/16	2000 12/17	1999 12/20	1998 12/20
Snow Goose	10						1300	5			
Canada Goose	636	501	2011	2085	1097	351	1671	349	264	109	600
Mute Swan		2								3	
Wood Duck	4							20			
Gadwall			5								
American Black Duck			7					3			6
Mallard		8	33	14	23	26	2	10		4	22
Duck (sp)				22			30				
Green-winged Teal			2								
Ring-necked Duck			9					2			
Bufflehead					1						
Hooded Merganser	2	4	6								
Common Merganser				7							
Ruddy Duck			3							1	1
Wild Turkey		11			9			12			
Great Blue Heron	2	4	2	1	1			3		2	3
Black Vulture	35						3	1			1
Turkey Vulture	34	1	36	4	4	1	12	25		7	8
Osprey											1
Bald Eagle			1	1							
Northern Harrier	1				2		1		1	1	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	1		1	2	1	4				
Cooper's Hawk	3		1	3			1				1
Accipiter (sp)					1		1				1
Red-tailed Hawk	10	2	4	6	6		10	5	5	7	6
buteo sp			1								
Rough-legged Hawk								1			
American Kestrel								1			2
American Coot			8								
Killdeer								5			
American Woodcock						1		1			
Ring-billed Gull			6	5			142	27	30		
Herring Gull	28	24	44	2			112	121	68	37	20
Gull (sp)	84	85	17	520	127	30	62	30			
Great Black-backed Gull							1				
Rock Pigeon				36		2	4	1			
Mourning Dove	11	9	21	46	78	13	85	27	30	36	350
Eastern Screech Owl			1								
Great Horned Owl			1	1				2	1	1	0
Belted Kingfisher	3	2	2		1			1	2	2	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	4	9	19	7	10	5	3	10	5	12	7
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				2					1		
Downy Woodpecker	8	10	16	14	3		9	15	3	3	7
Hairy Woodpecker			2	4			1	1	1		1
Northern Flicker	12	10	20	14	4	5	9	11	5	3	16
Blue Jay	7	34	85	75	3	25	43	62	8	49	15
American Crow	85	29	23	25	10	6	281	48	11	38	43

Fish Crow								1			2
Carolina Chickadee		4						13	3		
Black-capped Chickadee		2						4	65		
Chickadee sp	62	30	62	86	44	15	25	30	11	45	43
Tufted Titmouse	32	28	86	34	21	14	20	40	13	24	23
Red-breasted Nuthatch		1		4			5				
White-breasted Nuthatch	5	2	15	11	3	1	13	6		3	6
Brown Creeper		1						1			1
Carolina Wren	16	6	19	11	14	4	11	8	4	4	10
Wren (sp)				1							1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	3			2	1		5				2
Ruby-crowned Kinglet											1
Eastern Bluebird	6	10					3	15			
Hermit Thrush			1	1			1		1	1	1
American Robin	388	44	318	161	288	124	136	288	57	197	35
Gray Catbird			1	3	1			1			
Northern Mockingbird	32	6	19	23	12	6	28	19	6	10	17
Brown Thrasher				1							
European Starling	73	75	264	130	343	250	125	213	56	426	70
American Pipit		13									
Cedar Waxwing		31	62	86		1	16	4		16	12
Yellow-rumped Warbler	40	13	19	14		3	4	34	27	6	57
Eastern Towhee			2					2			
American Tree Sparrow			14	3	10	10	63	4	1	32	23
Chipping Sparrow			1				2			8	0
Field Sparrow	7	7		2	1	6	9			2	1
Vesper Sparrow							1				
Savannah Sparrow		1	2				1			9	0
Fox Sparrow		1						2			
Song Sparrow	10	8	16	11	8	3	9	6	3	44	20
Sparrow SP			14	4			45				
Swamp Sparrow							2				
White-throated Sparrow	144	127	195	240	83	45	68	66	24	43	123
White-crowned Sparrow	4			2	8		3	5	2	2	
Dark-eyed Junco	61	65	70	220	178	46	105	163	30	175	103
Northern Cardinal	51	32	64	58	24	12	15	27	9	15	24
Red-wing blkbird		17									
Common Grackle		2	28								
Cowbird		4		1							
Purple Finch	1		4	4							
House Finch	14	9	11	21	23	26	3	27	13	1	1
American Goldfinch	24	17	10	15	13	5	3	26	9	25	24
House Sparrow			1			5		3			20
<b>Total counted</b>	<b>1953</b>	<b>1302</b>	3684	4044	2457	650	4519	1856	700	1403	1732
<b>Number of species</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>44</b>	50	46	35	32	47	50	30	38	43