

# The Green Way

## KINGSTON GREENWAYS ASSOCIATION

A NEW JERSEY NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

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

### January 20, 7:30 PM talk: Invasive Plants!

For the Kingston Greenways Association winter talk we will highlight an important concern for the Kingston Greenbelt and for the entire state. We have invited Michael Van Clef, Ph.D. of the Nature Conservancy to outline the effects of colonization by invasive plants and what steps can be taken to prevent further damage to our environment.

Mike was recently named to the New Jersey Invasive Species Council and has written on the effect of development on plant communities.

**WHEN: Thursday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 PM**

**WHERE: Kingston Firehouse**, 8 Heathcote Brook Road, Kingston

**COST: FREE!** Yes, bring neighbors, bring friends!

*Use of the firehouse provided by the Kingston Volunteer Fire Company.*



### Carter Brook Bridge at Cook Natural Area now Ready For Use

The KGA helped fund local boy scout John Mandell in his design and construction of a new bridge over Carter Brook. This new span, built as an eagle scout project, is at the eastern edge of the Cook Natural Area (park entrance at the intersection of Heathcote Brook Road and Ridge Road).



The bridge will now provide an easy connection for winter hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing between the Cook Natural Area fields and Middlesex County's "Heathcote Park Extension" fields. It will also provide a new link in the planned Kingston Greenbelt Trail.

The Kingston Fire Company assisted in this effort. Last spring members of the fire company, under chief George Luck III, used crowbars and come-along to retrieve the old bridge, which had washed down Carter Brook. This not only allowed for its disposal, but the bed of the old bridge was used during the construction of the new span.

### Christmas Bird Count a Great Success-

#### ***Fog is Better Than Snow!***

Karen Linder reports that 10 Kingston Greenways Association members and friends participated in the 105<sup>th</sup> Audubon Christmas Bird Count, on December 19<sup>th</sup>. The KGA is pleased to be able to assist the Washington Crossing Audubon Society in the Princeton-area segment of the Christmas Bird Count, and be part of the world's largest all-volunteer bird survey. We covered the Nursery lands, Quarry area and the DOT lands.

Although it was foggy in the morning, a total of 2,457 birds of 35 different species were sighted, including turkeys, hawks and harriers, goldfinches and kinglets. See the attached results for all the details. You can join us next December tramping around the Kingston greenbelt, helping the environment while discovering the variety of bird habitats in our area.

[Photo Credits: Lythrum Salicaria – NPS website, all others, C. Dieterich]



## Princeton Nurseries Land Transfers Begin



Representative Rush Holt joined Mayor Frank Gambatese, Assemblywoman Linda Greenstein, as well as New Jersey Secretary of Consumer Affairs Susan Bass Levin and representatives from Princeton University and the D&R Canal Commission in a ceremony on October 29<sup>th</sup> transferring the first of many parcels from Princeton University and Princeton Nurseries, Inc. ownership to South Brunswick and State of New Jersey ownership.

This first, 10-acre parcel near the Cook Natural Area created "the Mapleton Preserve at South Brunswick". Since then additional acreage has been transferred in a complex set of agreements including purchase by New Jersey Green Acres and transfers to both NJDEP and to South Brunswick Township.

A further ceremony is being planned for January. We will let the e-mail list know the time and date as soon as we know it, and will post the information to our website, [www.kingstongreenways.org](http://www.kingstongreenways.org), as well.

## Other News of the Greenbelt

On December 12<sup>th</sup>, the Rockingham Association held their first candlelit holiday open house at the new site on Laurel Avenue. Over 700 people came to see the mansion, learn about its history and listen to period music.

The main building is now open for tours daily except Monday and Tuesday. See [www.rockingham.net](http://www.rockingham.net) for the current schedule.

The restoration of the mansion is only the first phase in development of the site. A split, black locust 'worm fence' is being constructed by volunteers. Work on the fence has been halted for the winter, but volunteers are needed for spring construction. (Contact Charlie Dieterich if you are interested in helping with this) Also, a second phase of building construction will add additional structures to the farmstead. Look for these to be appear in the next few years.



## That's it for Now...

We hope to see you at the Winter Talk on January 20<sup>th</sup>, and at our spring cleanups, walks and other special events. See more photos of the Mapleton Preserve ceremonies, and keep in touch with Kingston Greenbelt issues via our website, [www.kingstongreenways.org](http://www.kingstongreenways.org). Send us your e-mail address to receive notifications of special events.

If you'd like to get more involved, let one of our trustees know. Best wishes for 2005.  
Charlie Dieterich, president



## **KGA Christmas Bird Count Results - 2004**

On December 19<sup>th</sup> 10 Kingston Greenways Association members and friends participated in the 105<sup>th</sup> Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Many thanks to our 2004 counters: Karen Linder, Anne Zeman, Mark Peel, Karl Eisenmann, Ellen Foos, Ludmilla Wightman, Doug Kiofsky, Lori and Scott Hartshorn, and Gwen Southgate.

We had a better day for counting than we did last year [no snow], but fog made identification difficult in the morning. Three groups counted from 7:30 am to noon, and one group of 4 continued counting from 1-3 in the afternoon. In all, about 11 miles was logged on foot between the four parties. The teams covered Princeton Nurseries, DOT land and the area around Trap Rock Quarry. It was an average count, with 2457 birds recorded during the day. Of these, 1097 were Canada geese (always the most frequently recorded bird in the Kingston segment of the count.) Only one "new" species was recorded this year (a lone bufflehead duck) on the Franklin side of town. This brought our species total for 2004 to 35 (down from a high count of 50 in 2001). Another unusual sighting was a flock of 9 turkeys, seen near Rt. 1 on the Princeton Nursery property.

Robin numbers [288] were helped by large flocks on the DOT lands, with only sporadic birds in between these sighting. Raptors were well represented, with 4 red-tailed hawks, two sharp-shinned hawks and 2 Northern harriers observed. Crow numbers [only 10] were low for the second year in a row [compare to 281 in 2002]. These birds are affected by West Nile Virus, but it is not clear if this is the cause for the low count. Personal highlights for me were observing a very cooperative golden crowned kinglet in beautiful light and watching a mixed flock of 11 house finches and 13 goldfinches eating bittersweet berries near the Seminary.

As always, we thank William Flemer III, Bill Flemer IV and Princeton Forrester Associates for generously granting us permission to bird on the Princeton and Mapleton Nurseries properties. The KGA is pleased to be able to assist the Washington Crossing Audubon Society in this Princeton-area segment of the Christmas Bird Count, and be part of the world's largest all-volunteer bird survey. This was the 105<sup>st</sup> CBC, which now involves about 55,000 counters. Results from local counts are compiled into the longest running database in ornithology, representing about one hundred years of unbroken data on trends of early-winter bird populations across the Americas.

To view a full record of results, see <http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/>. If you would like to join us next year, please call Karen Linder at 609-683-0483.

**Kingston Greenways Association Kingston segment - Audubon Christmas Bird Count Results**

Species	Previous year counts						
	2004 12/19/2004	2003 12/14/2003	2002 12/16/2002	2001 12/16/2001	2000 12/17/2000	1999 12/20/1999	1998 12/20/1998
Great Blue Heron	1			3		2	3
Turkey Vulture	4	1	12	25		7	8
Canada Goose	1097	351	1671	349	264	109	600
Mallard	23	26	2	10		4	22
Bufflehead	1						
Northern Harrier	2		1		1	1	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	1	4				
Red-tailed Hawk	6		10	5	5	7	6
Wild turkey	9			12			
Gull (sp.)	127	30	62	30			
Mourning Dove	78	13	85	27	30	36	350
Belted Kingfisher	1				1	2	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	10	5	3	10	5	12	7
Downy Woodpecker	3		9	15	3	3	7
N. Flicker	4	5	9	11	5	3	16
Blue Jay	3	25	43	62	8	49	15
Am. Crow	10	6	281	48	11	38	43
Chickadee (sp)	44	15	25	30	11	45	43
Tufted Titmouse	21	14	20	40	13	24	23
White-breasted Nuthatch	3	1	13	6		3	6
Carolina Wren	14	4	11	8	4	4	10
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1		5				2
Am. Robin	288	124	136	288	57	197	35
Gray catbird	1			1			
N. Mockingbird	12	6	28	19	6	10	17
Eur. Starling	343	250	125	213	56	426	70
Am. Tree Sparrow	10	10	63	4	1	32	23
Field Sparrow	1	6	9			2	1
Song Sparrow	8	3	9	6	3	44	20
White-throated Sparrow	83	45	68	66	24	43	123
White crowned sparrow	8		3	5	2	2	
Dark-eyed Junco	178	46	105	163	30	175	103
N. Cardinal	24	12	15	27	9	15	24
House Finch	23	26	3	27	13	1	1
Am. Goldfinch	13	5	3	26	9	25	24
accipiter (sp)	1		1				1
<b>Total counted*</b>	<b>2457</b>	1049	4519	1856	700	1403	1732
<b>Number of species*</b>	35	32	47	50	30	38	43

Due to space constraints, only species noted in the 2004 count are listed in this tabulation. Total counted for previous years includes species that are not included on this list