



Eastern Painted Turtle -photo by Jonathan Michalik

The Green Way

September 2008 No. 12

KINGSTON GREENWAYS ASSOCIATION

A NEW JERSEY NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

www.kingstongreenways.org

Coming up!

Kingston Greenways Association's Annual Fall Foliage Walk Sunday, October 19th at 2:00 p.m.

The Kingston Greenways Association will be holding our annual Fall Foliage Walk on Sunday, October 19th at 2:00 p.m. at the Mapleton Preserve/D&R Canal State Park, 145 Mapleton Road in Kingston. This year, our leader for the walk is nurseryman Bill Flemer IV.

Bill is a member of the Flemer family that founded Princeton Nurseries, so he has an intimate knowledge of the wholesale nursery business that once thrived at this site. This is your chance to learn about the trees at the Princeton Nurseries Kingston site from a true expert! Meet at the Main Office for the Mapleton Preserve/D & R Canal State Park, 145 Mapleton Road in Kingston.



The leisurely walk will take about 2 hours, with plenty of time to chat, bird watch, botanize, and appreciate the autumn weather. If desired, bring binoculars or tree identification books. Don't forget to wear sensible shoes, and dress for the weather (whatever it is) -- the event will be held rain or shine. **It's free, and all are welcome.**

Audubon Christmas Bird Count Sunday, December 14th

If you want to join us for the 2008 count (expected to be on December 14th), call Karen for more information at 609-683-0483. It is a great way to hone your birding skills and to get into the great outdoors! We bird in open space areas of Kingston you may not have visited before, including the Princeton Nurseries property, Cook Preserve, Rail Trail, Heathcote Meadows and NJDOT property.

PAST EVENTS

Month by Month... It has been a busy spring and summer. Kingston Greenways has sponsored an event or program every month since March, when Jeff Hall presented his excellent slide show and talk "Desert Dreams: A Quest through the American Southwest."

In April, we drew a record crowd for an **outdoor wildlife demonstration by the Mercer County Wildlife Center**, a state and federally licensed facility that cares for injured, ill, and displaced native wildlife. The KGA program featured four birds that serve as animal ambassadors for the Center. Shown right is the presenter, Nancy Derrico, with a barred owl.

Also in April, we held our **annual Earth Day cleanup**. We had only seven volunteers, but they cleared a prodigious amount of trash from the roadside and woods along Heathcote and Ridge Roads.



*Nancy Derrico and barred owl
Photo by Tari Pantaleo*



We hope to double the size of the Earth Day Cleanup Crew next year. Please let us know if you would like to participate.

Many thanks to our 2008 Earth Day Cleanup crew –Flannery Miller, John Butcher, David and Gwen Southgate, Zoya Pugh (in photo), Tari Pantaleo and Karen Linder

In May, we held our **Annual Meeting, with Michelle Ruggiero** from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife presenting "**Know the Bear Facts.**" In one jam-packed hour, she educated us about the natural history and biology of black bears in the Garden State and the results of past and current research. She also gave us practical information on coexisting with black bears, such as steps one should follow in order to ensure that bears do not become a nuisance animal in the neighborhood.

In retrospect, this program was very timely! In the last few months, black bears have appeared on Mountain Avenue in Princeton, in the Sourland Mountains in Hopewell, on Dey Road in Plainsboro, on Beekman Road in South Brunswick, and in the woods bordering Bank of America on Route 27 in Kingston!

KGA volunteers for National Trails Day... On the sweltering Sunday of June 1st, three determined volunteers first bent, then drove in rebar to anchor sections of the **boardwalk in the Cook Natural Area**. This will help prevent portions of the boardwalk from floating away during flooding. Also, overgrowth was cut back along the trail segment between the old stone bridge and the Rail Trail.

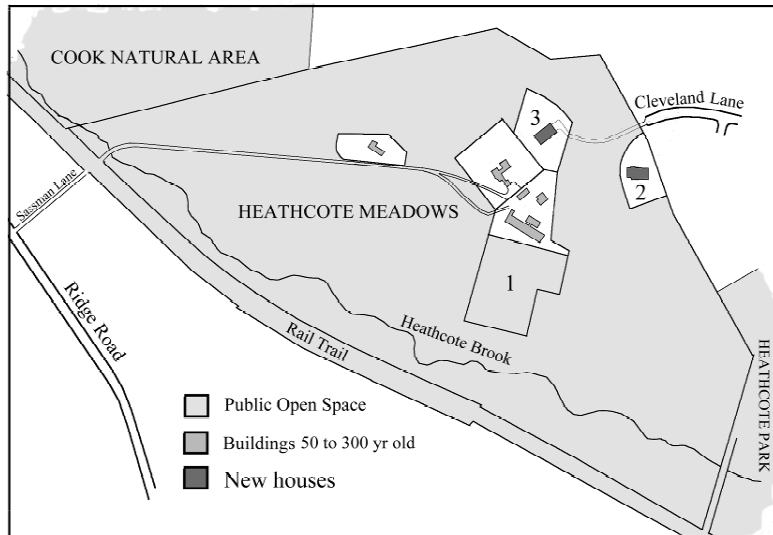
Due to enthusiasm over last year's visit, KGA hosted another **walk in the Griggstown Grasslands** in July. Over twenty participants enjoyed discovering or revisiting this magnificent nearby open space, and learning about its wild inhabitants, both of the plant and animal worlds.

Finally, in August, we took an **early evening walk in the Heathcote Park Extension**, and were treated to the sight of countless goldfinches, feasting on thistle seed in the meadow.



Good news on park addition...

After much negotiation, Middlesex County, with the strong encouragement of KGA, has purchased



an extra tract of land for the County Park (now known as Heathcote Meadows). This tract, marked "1" on the map, will open up one side of the park, which otherwise would be almost cut in two by the private land.

We applaud the efforts of Rick Lear, our liaison with Middlesex County, and officials of the County and Township for their efforts in successfully facilitating this purchase.

Not such good news for us is the failure, to date, of prolonged attempts to also purchase the lot marked "3".

Unfortunately, a large house can be

built on this lot; it, together with its driveway, would further add to the impact of the house on lot "2," which now detracts greatly from the historic and bucolic atmosphere of this corner of the park. The Planning Board has approved the subdivision for the lot marked "2," but the owner is still willing to negotiate. We need to convince the Township and County of the importance of purchasing this lot.

Web site attractions...

We strive to keep kingstongreenways.org current and informative. New features on the homepage include a link to KGA member Carolyn Edelmann's blog, NJ Wild, and a gallery that will change every two months. Photographer Brenda Jones' work comprised the inaugural gallery; viewers may currently enjoy the nature photos of Jonathan Michalik, whose exquisite image of a painted turtle appears at the top of this newsletter. This fall, look for the paintings of local artist Johanna Wirtz.

Tari Pantaleo,
President, Kingston Greenways Association