

Whitesbog Preservation Trust

NEWSLETTER

2nd Quarter

www.whitesbog.org

2012

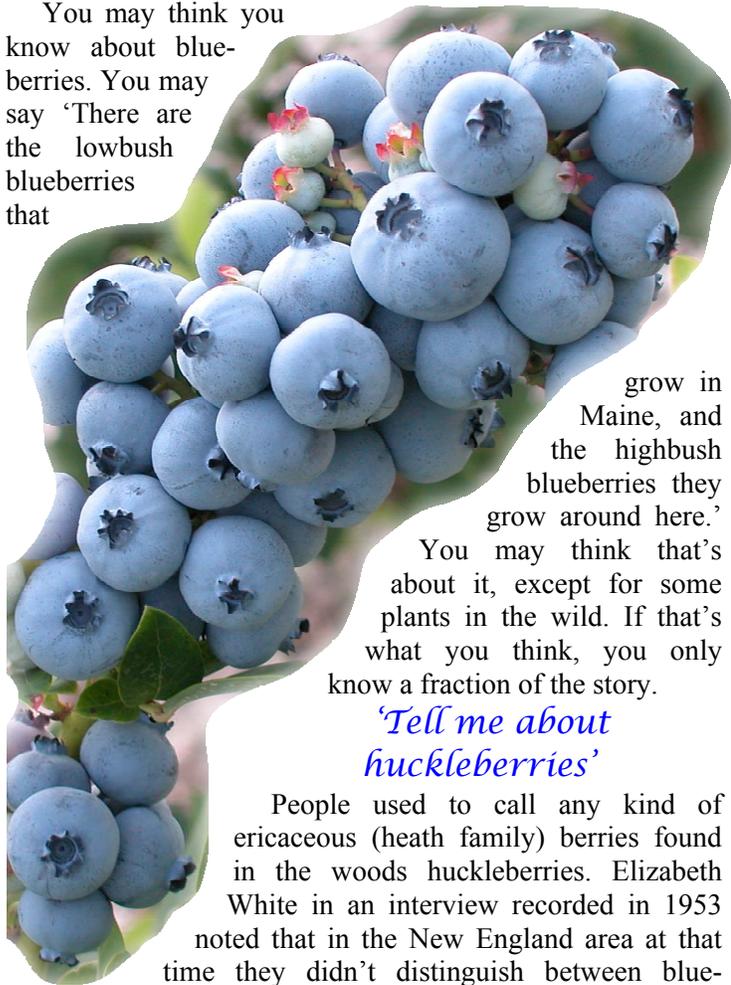
Birthplace of the Highbush Blueberry - Historic Center for Cranberry Innovation

BLUEBERRY BASICS 101

A blueberry is a blueberry is a blueberry; or is it?

by Mark Ehlenfeldt

You may think you know about blueberries. You may say ‘There are the lowbush blueberries that



grow in Maine, and the highbush blueberries they grow around here.’

You may think that’s about it, except for some plants in the wild. If that’s what you think, you only know a fraction of the story.

‘Tell me about huckleberries’

People used to call any kind of ericaceous (heath family) berries found in the woods huckleberries. Elizabeth White in an interview recorded in 1953 noted that in the New England area at that time they didn’t distinguish between blueberries and huckleberries, although in most other places they did. What is a huckleberry? Technically, it’s a plant of the genus *Gaylussacia*; closely related to blueberries, but notably different in having relatively uniformly smaller berries than highbush blueberry, having glandular hairs on their leaves that impart a tacky feeling to their leaves, and having ten seed with a notably crackly seed coat when eaten.

There are several species of huckleberry found in New Jersey, but really only two that cover a significant area. *Gaylussacia baccata*, the black huckleberry, and

Gaylussacia frondosa, the blue huckleberry. Both are thigh-high to waist-high, but *G. frondosa* may reach up to 6 feet under ideal conditions. Both of these are widely distributed and often commingled over a geographical area, and both are rhizomatous (although this is usually not casually apparent), and both resprout readily after fires. *G. baccata* has small, red-tinged flowers, *frondosa* has equally small, white or cream-colored flowers. *Gaylussacia dumosa*, the dwarf huckleberry is also found in New Jersey, but is much less common. Its berries are much smaller than those of *baccata* or *frondosa*, but it is delightfully more ornamental than the other two, with bright green, semi-glossy leaves, and relatively large, white, balloon-like flowers borne on leaved rachises that protrude at nearly right angles from the upright stems.



G. baccata flowers



G. dumosa flowers

Wild blueberries in New Jersey

Blueberry taxonomy is in a state of flux. There are many obsolete names used in older literature and by writers not well-versed in the current taxonomy; there are also newer classifications used by some writers that aren’t well-supported by published taxonomic monographs. I will use what I believe to be the best-supported treatment, that of *Vaccinium* taxonomist Dr. Sam Vander Kloet of Acadia University, New Brunswick, Canada¹. Although, it is the most authoritative treatment, it too is not without its dissenters.

(continued on page 2)



V. corymbosum forma *caesariense* flowers

(from page 1)

I will only mention the most common of the wild blueberries in New Jersey. Of course there is the **wild highbush blueberry**, *V. corymbosum*. This is the progenitor of the domesticated blueberry. These plants are tetraploid,

that is, they have four sets of chromosomes. These plants can be found in many places in the wild, and are crown-forming; thus large old plants are often found in hummocky swamps where the water supply is regular, and where fires seldom wipe out mature stands. They are only a few generations removed from our cultivated blueberry and in many cases if you find a tetraploid highbush in the wild, they may be feral blueberries derived from seeds dropped by birds. There are also two diploid highbush blueberries found in the wild. By current taxonomy, they are both also called *V. corymbosum*, but each used to have its own species name. If they are blue-fruited, they are a type previously called *V. caesariense*, but now more properly called ***V. corymbosum* forma *caesariense***, and commonly termed the New Jersey highbush blueberry. If black-fruited, they are a type previously known as *V. atrococcum*; now properly called ***V. corymbosum* forma *atrococcum***, and commonly called the black highbush blueberry. If you look across the woods in early spring and see a haze of pale white flowers with occasional hints of pink, it's usually these two forms. What's distinctive about them? First, flower size. The flowers are small, and urn-shaped, with recurved petal tips, narrow corolla openings, and generally protruding stigmas. They bloom earlier than tetraploid highbush. Their fruit are usually small too. Forma *atrococcum* types possess a set of fruit quality traits that can be summarized as dark, sweet, soft, and early ripening. Forma *atrococcum* plants also have



V. pallidum flowers

noticeably hairy leaves. Forma *caesariense* types are more like domesticated highbush having later-ripening, blue fruit. What else can we find in the wild in New Jersey? Two low-growing types: ***V. angustifolium*, the lowbush blueberry**, a tetraploid

and *V. pallidum*, the hillside blue-berry or the dryland

blueberry, which is primarily diploid, but also has tetraploid populations. Wild lowbush is a local version of the Maine blueberry, and is rhizomatous, with single genetic clones often forming extended colonies. Lowbush is more common in northern New Jersey, but in southern New Jersey, it's found in greater abundance at Whitesbog than at many other places. Lowbush is less common as you go south, presumably because it doesn't tolerate hot summers very well. *V. pallidum* is found in dry, often elevated areas. It usually has waxy foliage and blue, waxy berries. Like lowbush, it is rhizomatous. Its flowers are pale green, often streaked with pink when first open, maturing to a cream color.

And the not so wild blueberries found in your grocery store

First, let's talk a little more about **lowbush blueberries**. They are often called "wild", and they are wild in the sense that they are wild plants that have been brought under cultivation, but at the same time, they are intensively managed and cultivated. Because lowbush blueberry barrens are natural plantings, they are a mix of clones, and as such when they are harvested they present a mix of ripeness, firmness, sweetness, and flavor. They are relatively small in both plant and berry size. You can get them fresh in New England, but in most other parts of the country, you'll see them as a processed berry in pie-fillings, jellies, and jams, or dehydrated berries for muffin mixes, cereals, trail mixes, etc.

Next, there's the domesticated **highbush blueberry**; the tamed version of the wild tetraploid *V. corymbosum*, developed originally right here at Whitesbog. Researchers specifically call this the **northern highbush blueberry**. These are the local blueberries of June and July, and are the berries you find most often in the grocery store. I think you know all about them, so I won't say much more other than they're good for you, they taste good, and you should eat lots of them.

A variant of the highbush blueberry is the **southern highbush blueberry**. Southern highbush blueberries got their start in 1948 when Dr. Ralph Sharpe of the University of Florida began crossing *V. darrowii*, a low-growing, evergreen, southern species with no chilling requirement, onto northern highbush varieties to produce blueberry types that flowered and fruited more reliably under the more moderate winter conditions of southern regions. Today most southern highbush varieties typically have about 15 to 25% of their genes derived from *V. darrowii*. While the flavor of most northern highbush is considered a mix of sugar, acid, and a limited range of volatiles, *V. darrowii* brings a range of volatiles to the mix, and southern highbush can be bursting with exotic flavors. *V. darrowii* can also bring considerable firmness, and a real sense of crispness to berries. *V. darrowii*, via southern highbush, is also being incorporated into newer northern varieties. So, if you eat a blueberry that knocks your socks off, especially if it is pre-New Jersey

season (January to June), it just might be southern highbush.

Rabbiteye blueberry is a type of blueberry grown in the south. It goes by various taxonomic names, but the most correct is *V. corymbosum forma ashei*. Sometimes you may see it called *V. ashei*, sometimes *V. virgatum*, but both of these are less correct. Rabbiteye blueberries are hexaploid, vigorous, heat-tolerant, and relatively late-ripening. Rabbiteye bushes can be really tall, up to about 12 feet, but they are usually managed for machine harvesting to about seven feet. Rabbiteye foliage is waxy to the point of being lighter green, and the leaves are characteristically flat with little texture. Rabbiteye plants often bear their fruit in elongated



A rabbiteye blueberry plant

“stringers”, but not universally so. Rabbiteye berries have a tiny stem scar, and a flat, relatively unadorned, calyx scar. Rabbiteye fruit has malic acid as its predominant organic acid. When compared to highbush, which has citric acid as its main organic acid, rabbiteye has a “flatter” flavor, whereas highbush benefits from the brightness of citric acid. Although it sounds like it should be a “given” that highbush is better tasting, what you like depends upon what you grew up eating, much like preferences in comfort food. Rabbiteye

fruit is also relatively seedy and has gritty stone cells (much like some pears). All that being said, some newer rabbiteyes, especially some out of North Carolina, are remarkably good. Would you know if you’ve eaten rabbiteye fruit? You might or you might not. You might just think they were undistinguished highbush. Not much rabbiteye fruit gets to New Jersey, because the rabbiteye grown in the south compete with our highbush season timewise.

To be accurate and complete we need to mention one final type. In Minnesota, they developed a type of blueberry that would tolerate extremely cold weather, primarily by surviving under the snow cover. They bred them by crossing highbush (*V. corymbosum*) with lowbush (*V. angustifolium*) to produce a type called a **half-high blueberry**. As the name implies they are shorter than highbush, often about knee-high to thigh-high. This height allows their flower buds to survive by merit of being below the snow level, but they also take advantage of the extreme cold hardiness contributed by the lowbush parentage. Half-highs are grown primarily for home or farm market production in colder climates, but their quality is very good, and the fruit are generally indistinguishable from highbush fruit.

Now you know the basics of blueberry types. Within each of these types are numerous named varieties that can offer an array of choices for eating. In truth, you usually find only a few varieties over the course of the season in your grocery store, and most of them will be northern highbush or southern highbush. The varieties found in stores tend to be the varieties that are the most productive and reliable, and not always the best flavored. There are, however, many fantastic (if less productive) varieties that can be grown in your own backyard. But that’s a topic we need to save for ‘BLUEBERRY BASICS 102’. ■

References

¹ Vander Kloet, S. P. 1988. The Genus *Vaccinium* in North America, Agriculture Canada Publication 1828, Canadian Government Publishing Centre, Ottawa, Canada, 201 p.



Rabbiteye blueberry fruit

WHITESBOG EVENT SCHEDULE

For more information call (609) 893-4646, e-mail us at WhitesbogPreservationTrust@comcast.net or visit us on the web at www.whitesbog.org.

June

23 BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

\$8/carload. Celebrate all things blueberry at this old-fashioned festival. Great family fun. Enjoy blueberry picking, live country music, lots of children's activities, exhibits, great food, historical presentations and tours, pinelands artists and crafters, our famous blueberry pie eating contest and lots more.

30 Moonlight Walk 7 p.m.

Fish Moon. Listen to the night sounds of the Pines, learn about Whitesbog and experience the seasonal changes of the Pinelands. Walks are 3 to 5 miles long, and led by experienced leaders. \$5 donation per person, reservations requested.

July

7 WPT Volunteer Workday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Have fun with friends, working in the gardens, repairing trails, restocking the General Store and working around the Village. Lunch provided.

7 Whitesbog Village Tour 1 p.m.

Stroll the Historic Village, learn about Whitesbog's history, and visit Suningive, Elizabeth White's historic home, the worker's cottages and other buildings of Whitesbog's heritage. \$5 donation/person, reservations requested.

The Birthplace of the Blueberry TBA

Living History Tour with Elizabeth C. White & the cast of characters that assisted her in cultivating the first highbush Blueberry. Please call for dates.

15 Blueberry Tasting 1 p.m.

\$5 donation/person, reservations required. Learn all about Whitesbog's role blueberry cultivation from **Mark Ehlenfeldt**, Blueberry Geneticist with the UDSA. Sample unique and hard to find varieties and special baked goods.

22 Quarterly Lecture Series 1 p.m.

\$5 members, \$7 non-members, by reservation. 'Whitesbog's Villages of Florence and Rome', presenter: Rick Prickett. Learn all about the men and women that provided the energy, expertise & labor to pioneer the cranberry industry and helped Whitesbog become New Jersey's premier 19th Century Cranberry farm.

August

4 WPT Volunteer Workday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

(See July 7).

4 Whitesbog Village Tour 1 p.m.

\$5 donation per person. (See July 7).

4 Moonlight Walk 7 p.m.

Sturgeon Moon. \$5 donation/person, *reservations requested*. (See June 30 listing for details).

September

1 Moonlight Walk 7 p.m.

Harvest Moon. \$5 donation per person, reservations requested. (See June 30 listing for details).

8 WPT Volunteer Workday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

(See July 7).

8 Whitesbog Village Tour 1 p.m.

\$5 donation per person. (See July 7).

Cranberry Industry Lecture and Living History Tour TBA

\$10 donation/person, reservations are required.

View a modern wet-harvest (weather & harvest schedule permitting) and learn about the history and cultivation of cranberries in NJ. Tour historic Whitesbog village with Whitesbog's 'Cranberry King', Joseph J. White, his daughter, Elizabeth, and Charles Beckwith, played by historical interpreters.

22 Whitesbog Celebrates 30 years

Join the Whitesbog Preservation Trust in honoring the organization's founders. Call for information.

29 Moonlight Walk 7 p.m.

Blue Moon. \$5 donation per person, reservations requested. (See June 30 listing for details).

October

6 WPT Volunteer Workday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

(See July 7).

6 Whitesbog Village Tour 1 p.m.

\$5 donation per person. (See July 7).

14 Pinelands Discovery Fest 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

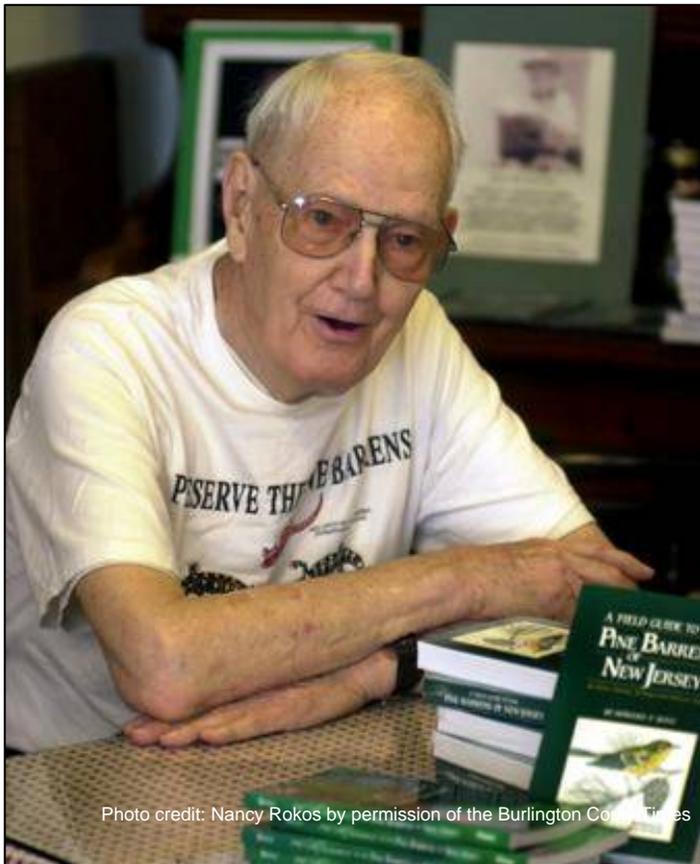
Celebrate the history, ecology & unique culture of the Pinelands! Parking fee charged.

Cranberry Industry Lecture TBA

and Living History Tour Same as above. \$10 donation/person, reservations are required.

27 Moonlight Walk 7 p.m.

Hunter's Moon. \$5 donation per person, reservations requested. (See June 30 listing for details).



Remembering Howard Boyd

1914 - 2011

by Ted Gordon

Pine Barrens Botanist, Historian, Photographer

It was the summer of 1968 that we met by chance on the edge of the West Plains near Coyle field. While photographing buck-moth caterpillars, I noticed a crouching figure nearby that I presumed was a piney gatherer. This notion was quickly dispelled when he introduced himself in a clear Bostonian accent as Howard Boyd, an entomologist and an administrator with the Boy Scouts of America. He said that he had been coming to the Pine Barrens for many years, especially to study tiger beetles. Little did I suspect that this encounter was the beginning of an enduring friendship that would last until Howard's recent death on December 20, 2011, at the age of 97.

Having produced several fine 16 mm nature films (e.g., *A Place in the Sun* and *Life on a Coastal Plain*), the Boyds were popular touring lecturers in the Audubon Society's Wildlife Film series during 1966 to 1976. When Howard and his talented wife Doris moved to Tabernacle, NJ, in 1969, our lives became frequently intertwined in exploration and preservation of the Pine Barrens. As members and officers of the Burlington County Natural Sciences Club, Howard and I led or participated in many field excursions into the Barrens, exchanging ideas and sharing our independent research. On

three occasions in the 1970s, the two of us set out on day-long surveys determined that we would be able to rediscover an occurrence of the long-lost post-oak locust, *Dendrotettix quercus*, swarms of which had devastated oak forests in the vicinities of Bamber, Ridgeway, and Mt. Misery during the early 1900s. Although unsuccessful in finding any specimens of this destructive grasshopper, we both remembered these excursions in later years as fine opportunities to becoming better acquainted.

Similarly, our paths crossed frequently at Whitesbog in the 1970s, where I was conducting extensive botanical surveys and was engaged as a botanical consultant by Dr. Eugene Vivian (Glassboro State College, now Rowan), Director of the Conservation and Environmental Studies Center (CESC). I clearly recall Howard's delight when he accepted Vivian's offer to be a nature study instructor in the program. The "boy scout" eternally flowed in Howard's veins, and he derived immense joy from passing on to youngsters his vast knowledge of the natural world. When Vivian retired in 1984, Howard continued to serve as an instructor for several more years under Garry Patterson, director of the same program, but under a new name, the Pinelands Institute for Natural and Environmental Studies (P.I.N.E.S.).

Howard, among others, convinced his Audubon Society colleagues to establish in 1977 the Rancocas Nature Center in Westhampton, under the capable directorship of Karl Anderson. Howard also supported Anderson's brilliant idea of holding an annual Audubon Society's Pine Barrens Weekend, a three-day event each June, at a church camp on Mt. Misery. Fondly edged in my memory are our thirteen years of involvement (1981-1993) as lecturers and trip leaders at this popular annual event. The comradeship was incredible, and we both looked forward to learning from each other and other leaders, especially during the Saturday evening informal "wrap-up" session that reported the finds of the day.

As a scientist, Howard P. Boyd, a former president of the American Entomological Society (1977-1981), was first and foremost an entomologist, but an entomologist with a strong background in multiple facets of Pine Barrens ecology. His field of expertise was tiger beetles. On unannounced visits to his home, I invariably found him engaged in his entomological studies or devotedly editing the society's Entomological News. He served as editor for almost 30 years. Among his scientific publications that may be of interest to the layman are "Collecting tiger beetles in the Pine Barrens of New Jersey," *Cicindela* 5:1-12, 1973; (co-authored with Philip E. Marucci); "Arthropods of the Pine Barrens," in (Foreman, R.T.T., ed.), *Pine Barrens: Ecosystem and Landscape*, Academic Press, 1984 (co-authored with Philip E. Marucci); "Host plants of cranberry tipworm," *Cranberries: The National Magazine* 48:6-9; and

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“Arthropods taken in pitfall traps in the Pine Barrens of New Jersey,” *Entomological News* 106:45-56; 1995.

When Howard came to my home in 1990 to deliver a copy of his manuscript, *A Field Guide to the Pine Barrens of New Jersey*, that he wanted me to review (particularly the section dealing with the plants), I was at first pleasantly surprised that he had chosen me. Then suddenly it occurred to me that he had referred to me as “My Botanist” for many years now, and we had cultivated a strong friendship and a mutual respect for one another’s abilities. He indicated that the guide offers nothing that is really new, but is packed with a gamut of information that will answer just about any question that a Pine Barrens novice might have. I soon discovered how right he was and told him that I had no doubt that his guide would be in demand for years to come. Twenty-one years have passed since its publication and the book’s popularity has not waned.

A second book titled *A Pine Barrens Odyssey* followed in 1997. It is a pleasant read that takes the reader on a journey of the Pines through the four seasons. This was followed in 2001 by *Wildflowers of the Pine Barrens of New Jersey*, a beautifully illustrated volume of 130 photos (with descriptions) featuring primarily Howard’s photos of common as well as rare species. About a year before its publication, Howard asked me to show him a site of one of our rarest plants, the southern yellow orchid. It was subsequently depicted in the book. Howard’s final book, *The Ecological Pine Barrens of New Jersey*, was published in 2008, when he was 94 years old. Once again Howard asked me to conduct a review. In the Preface he states, “I claim no original authorship for the material within this offering.” His aim was to assemble in a single volume “the most important subject matter” on all aspects of the ecology of the Barrens, eliminating the necessity to consult other references. He believed the book could serve “as an introductory text for courses at the upper high school and early collegiate levels.” This book was not an easy one to write, and I marvel that Howard, at such an advanced age, had the fortitude and prowess to pull it off. Hopefully, an instructor or two will test its efficacy in the classroom.

In many ways Howard Boyd was a remarkable man who led a very productive life. Those of you who were fortunate to have him as a teacher can attest to that. He left behind a legacy of four books that reveal his broad spectrum of interests and knowledge. His outstanding field guide will, no doubt, stand the test of time. It was a privilege to have Howard as a friend for more than 40 years, to have walked with him the trails of our beloved Pine Barrens on many occasions.

Allow me to share his generous tribute that he wrote on the title page of my copy of his *The Ecological Pine Barrens of New Jersey*.

“Many thanks for your review and valuable suggestions on the section dealing with Pine Barrens flora. Of all our Pine Barrens associates, I know of no one more knowledgeable and authoritative than you.

Much appreciation and kind personal regards.”

I shall always cherish these kind words and Howard’s memory. You will be missed, my friend. Farewell! ■

Bob Aaronson Saves the Day ... Just in Time for the Blueberry Festival!



The Trust is the proud owner of a brand new John Deere Select Series X320 Tractor with a 48" cutting deck. Robert H. Aaronson was here for volunteer workday on Saturday and witnessed Bernie Knapp cutting grass with our 1910-issue Lawnboy (well maybe not quite that old, but old) and decided we needed a newer model. That same afternoon, Bob went out and purchased the new tractor for the Trust. Before the tractor arrived the following Tuesday, Bob had added to the purchase a new self-propelled, 6 HP, auto-choke, 4-in-1 Honda walk-behind mower, and arrived with it in his truck just in time for a demonstration of the tractor by John Deere’s Jeff Boldizar. On-site for the tractor’s arrival were Whitesbog members: Bernie Knapp, John Nallinger, Ernest Winberly, the Trust’s Executive Director, Susan Phillips, and the very generous and much appreciated, Bob Aaronson. Bernie put the Tractor right to work and had half of the Festival’s midway cut by 2 p.m. A very special thank you to Bob for his very timely donation and Bernie for his time & enthusiasm! ■

The Whitesbog Preservation Trust has received a General Operating Support grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State, for fiscal year 2012.

Funding for the 2012 Blueberry Festival is made possible, in part, by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts through a 2012 grant to the Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

The Whitesbog Preservation Trust also received a 2011 Institutional and Financial Stabilization Grant for History & Humanities Organizations from the New Jersey Cultural Trust. ■

2012 Board of Trustees Meetings

Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. (except as noted)
April 29, May 23, July 25, Sept. 26, Oct. 24
Annual Membership Meeting, April 29, 10:00 a.m.

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Newsletter

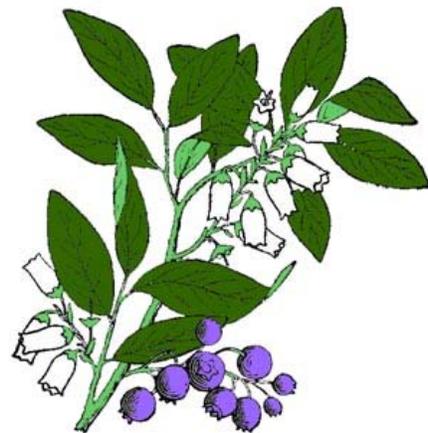
Mark Ehlenfeldt & Susan Phillips – Editors

Committees – 2012

Buildings & Restoration – Rick Prickett
Finance – Mark Ehlenfeldt
Fund Development – Susan Phillips
General Store – Steve Young
Marketing & Public Relations – Mark Ehlenfeldt
Interpretative Educ. & Archives – Ted Gordon
Landscape and Garden – Mark Szutarski
Membership & Nominating – Stephanie Schrader
Personnel – Rick Prickett

If you are interested in attending the meeting of any
Committee, please call the Trust office for the
scheduled meeting time.

The Mission of the Trust is to
restore, protect and enhance the
land, historic sites, and structures
at Whitesbog,
and to provide educational
materials and interpretive
programs that engage visitors in
the history, culture, and natural
environment of Whitesbog.



Join the Trust !

Membership Levels:

\$1,000 & up _____	Partner
\$ 500 _____	Benefactor
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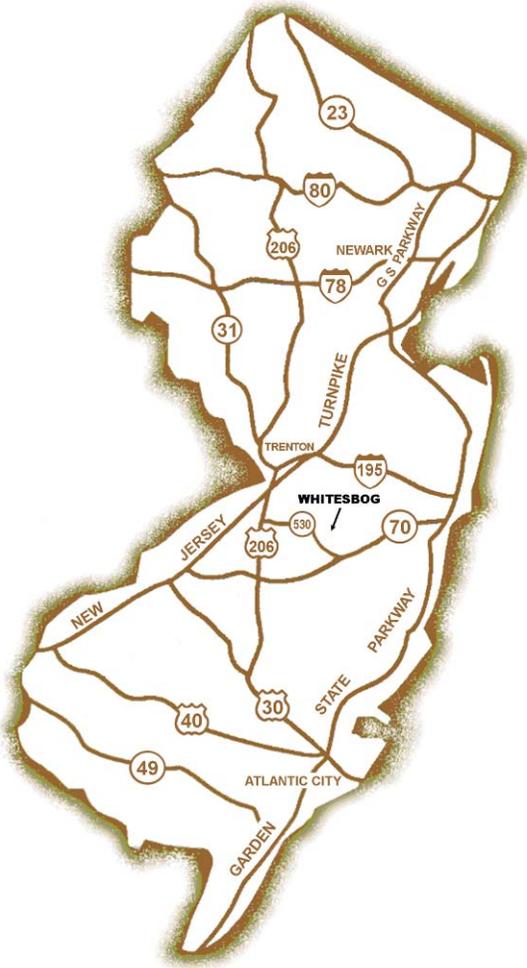
Telephone: _____

Email: _____

_____ Please contact me. I am interested in
volunteer opportunities at Historic
Whitesbog Village.

Please complete and return with your membership
check to the Whitesbog Preservation Trust, 120-34
Whitesbog Road, Browns Mills, NJ 08015. Make
check payable to Whitesbog Preservation Trust.
Memberships are valid from September 1st to
August 31st of any given year.

Whitesbog Preservation Trust is a non-profit, tax
exempt organization. Donations are tax deductible
to the fullest extent of the law. Thank you for
joining the Whitesbog Preservation Trust.



Driving Directions:

From NJ Turnpike

Take Exit 7 to Rt. 206 South to intersection of Rt. 206, Rt. 38 and Rt. 530. (Landmarks - Vincentown Diner and White Dotte)
 Turn East onto Rt. 530 and follow to mile marker 13. (Landmarks – You will go through the towns of Pemberton & Browns Mills, passing Burlington County College on the right.)
 Turn left onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot on the left.

From PA Turnpike

Travel to NJ Turnpike North and follow above instructions.

From 206 South

Travel North to circle intersection with Rt. 70.
 Travel East on Rt. 70 to Rt. 530. (Rt. 530 is between mile markers 33 & 34.)
 Travel West on Rt. 530 for one mile to mile marker 13.
 Turn right onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot is on the left.

From 206 North

Travel South to intersection of Rt. 206, Rt. 38 and Rt. 530.
 Turn East onto Rt. 530 and follow to mile marker 13.
 Turn left onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot is on the left.

From Philadelphia

From Ben Franklin Bridge, take Rt. 38 East, crossing over Rt. 206 and onto Rt. 530 East.
 Travel East onto Rt. 530 and follow to mile marker 13.
 Turn left onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot is on the left.

The General Store is across from parking lot. Trust Offices are approximately 1/8 of a mile down the crossroad to the right (at Suningive).

Visit our website: WWW.WHITESBOG.ORG or call: 609.893.4646



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