



New Jersey Pinelands Commission

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release:

New Jersey Pinelands Commission to host nine free webinars as part of the Pinelands Speaker Series

Beginning in early June, the New Jersey Pinelands Commission will host free Pinelands-themed webinars as part of the Pinelands Speaker Series.

“Based on the popularity of our past educational programs, we know how much the public loves the Pinelands and wants to learn more about the region’s resources,” said Nancy Wittenberg, the Commission’s Executive Director. “We’re proud to offer an outstanding lineup of presentations that will bring the Pinelands into people’s homes.”

All of the webinars will be livestreamed on the Commission’s YouTube channel (link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBgpC8sbR3Acrjo7ppxs3Uw>.) The Commission will send out weekly notices with links to the presentations, which will also be recorded and archived for later viewing.

Here is a schedule of the webinars:

June 4th at 10 a.m. - Becky Laboy - Unique Plants and Wildflowers of Barrens and Bogs

Sandy, dry, nutrient-poor soils and saturated, anaerobic substrates pose challenges to the growth and survival of plants. Yet, an array of uniquely beautiful native flowers, forbs, shrubs and trees thrive in these harsh conditions. Join Becky Laboy, Education Outreach Specialist with the Ocean County Soil Conservation District, on an exploration of plants and wildflowers of barrens and bogs.

June 11th at 10 a.m. - Dave Robinson - Pinelands Weather and Climate: Past, Present and Future

NJ State Climatologist Dave Robinson will focus on the weather and climate of the Pinelands, exploring events and issues on short to long time scales. He will bring the issue of global climate variability and change home to New Jersey, answering questions as to where we have been and where we may be headed. He will also discuss our capabilities to monitor NJ’s weather and climate.

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June 18th at 10 a.m. - Jen Bulava - Native or Alien: Plants and Fungi

Exotic plants and fungal blights continue to wreak havoc on our environment. Find out how they got here, why they are so destructive, and why we need to encourage native plants whenever possible. Burlington County Park Naturalist Jen Bulava will also provide information on how to identify the 20 most common invasive plants that are found in South Jersey.

June 25th at 10 a.m. - Paul Leakan - Bog Gardening in the Barrens

Paul Leakan, the Pinelands Commission's Communications Officer and a lifelong gardener, will delve into the "dirt-filled" details of building and maintaining a bog garden with native Pinelands plants. The Commission converted a raised bed of random, non-native plantings into an expansive bog garden of 100 percent native Pinelands plants in 2014, and the agency has experienced great success in growing numerous species. Attendees will learn how to create and care for a bog garden, as Leakan provides tips on soil, watering and plant selection.

July 2nd at 10 a.m. - Jen Bulava - Lich-en the Fungus Among Us

Burlington County Park Naturalist Jen Bulava will provide an overview of the important roles that lichens and fungi play in the environment (but not for identifying individual species). The three main types of fungi will be discussed, with a focus on mycorrhizal associations with plants. Discover the many ways that people and animals use lichens. Gain a better appreciation of the beneficial and amazing relationships within the fungi kingdom.

July 9th at 10 a.m. - Joel Mott - Pinelands History

Discover the Pinelands of today and then step back in time with Joel Mott, Public Programs Specialist with the Pinelands Commission, while learning how they evolved from the wild barrens of the past.

July 16th at 10 a.m. - Marilyn Sobel - Plants of the New Jersey Pine Barrens

Marilyn Sobel, a Research Scientist with the Pinelands Commission, will discuss the ecology of rare and unusual plants of the New Jersey Pinelands, including orchids, carnivorous plants, and locally restricted plants such as Knieskern's beaksedge. The talk will include potential threats to local populations and general habitat characteristics that are important elements of plant conservation.

July 23th at 10 a.m. - Karen Walzer & Becky Laboy - Combating Climate Change with a Jersey-Friendly Yard

As climate change manifests across the planet, you may be experiencing gardening challenges in your own backyard. This program offers ways to mitigate the downpours, as well as the droughts using the Jersey-Friendly Yards website, tools and resources. Karen Walzer, Public Outreach Coordinator for the Barnegat Bay Partnership and Becky Laboy, Education Outreach Specialist with Ocean County Soil Conservation District, will show you how to select appropriate plants for your sandy soil, turn your yard into a sponge, and provide habitat.

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July 30th at 10 a.m. - Tony McNichol - His Majesty's Infernal Nuisance: The Colonial Privateers of the Mullica

Tony McNichol, a Cultural Resource Planner for the Pinelands Commission, will discuss the critical role of privateering in the New Jersey colony prior to and during the Revolutionary War. Particular attention will be given to the patriot financiers and captains who defiantly established their homes and guerilla bases in the torturous bends of the Mullica River.

ATTENTION REPORTERS/EDITORS: High-resolution digital photos of the Pinelands and webinar presenters can be obtained by contacting Paul Leakan of the Pinelands Commission at info@pinelands.nj.gov.

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