



State of New Jersey
 THE PINELANDS COMMISSION
 PO Box 359
 NEW LISBON, NJ 08064
 (609) 894-7300
 www.nj.gov/pinelands



MIKIE SHERRILL
 Governor
 DR. DALE G. CALDWELL
 Lt. Governor

General Information: Info@pinelands.nj.gov
 Application Specific Information: AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov

LAURA E. MATOS
 Chair
 SUSAN R. GROGAN
 Executive Director

New Jersey Pinelands Commission to host five free presentations at its office during this year's Pinelands Speaker Series
 (June 1, 2026)

NEW LISBON, N.J. – The Pinelands Commission will host free presentations on ticks, a newly discovered plant species that is unique to New Jersey, owls of New Jersey, Eastern box turtles, and frog diversity and adaption during this year's Pinelands Speaker Series.

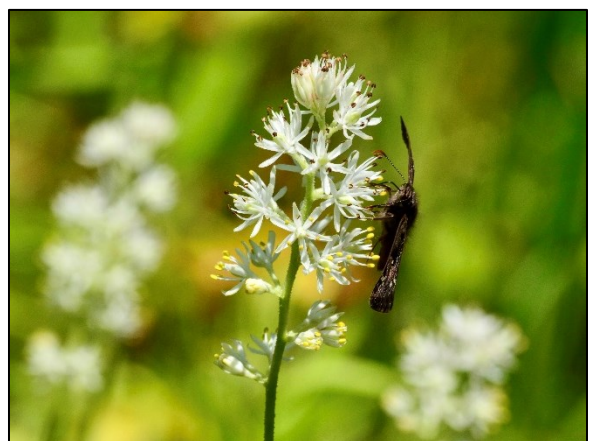
The five presentations will be held in the agency's [Richard J. Sullivan Center for Environmental Policy & Education on 15 Springfield Road in Pemberton Township, NJ](#), starting this month.

The first program, entitled "**The Tick BEC: Biology, Ecology and Control,**" will be held at 2 p.m. on **Thursday, June 18, 2026**. Presenter Zackary J. Sieb, a Tick Biologist with the Monmouth County Office of Mosquito Control Tick-Borne Diseases Program, will focus on New Jersey's resident ticks and how we interact with them. Mr. Sieb will delve into tick biology and ecology and detail how researchers have attempted to reduce tick bites and tick-borne illnesses. He will discuss why ticks are important, along with providing information on tick anatomy and tick identification. **To register to attend, please click [here](#).**

The second program, entitled "**A Unique Species of *Triantha (Tofieldiaceae)* Endemic to New Jersey, U.S.A. Deserves a Name,**" will be held at 2 p.m. on **Thursday, July 9, 2026**. The genus *Triantha* consists of four species, with two, *Triantha glutinosa* and *Triantha racemosa*, found in eastern North America. *Triantha glutinosa* has a distribution across Canada and into the northeastern U.S. *Triantha racemosa* primarily occurs on the Gulf Coast and the southeastern U.S., extending north to isolated populations in New Jersey. More recently, New Jersey plants have been considered to be



Above: The first program will highlight the resident ticks of New Jersey, such as this Lone Star tick that is clinging to a leaf in the Pinelands.



Above: The second program will focus on the newly discovered species of *Triantha* that is endemic to New Jersey.

a possible hybrid. Analyses of genetic, morphologic, and biogeographic data have resulted in the designation of NJ populations as *Triantha xnovacaesariensis*, a distinct species endemic to the NJ Pine Barrens. Presenter Sasha Eisenman, chair and associate professor of horticulture in the Department of Architecture and Environmental Design at Temple University's Tyler School of Art and Architecture, will discuss his research confirming this species as unique to New Jersey. Attendees will have an opportunity to see the plants first-hand. **To register to attend, please click [here](#).**

The third program, entitled **Owls of New Jersey**, will be held at 2 p.m. on **Thursday, July 23, 2026**. Owls are among the most elusive and least-observed birds in New Jersey. Their nocturnal activity, secretive behavior, and cryptic appearance make them difficult to detect and study. Yet eight owl species can be found in New Jersey, including both migratory and year-round resident species, spanning from the soda can-sized Northern Saw-whet Owl to the formidable Snowy Owl with its 5-foot wingspan. Presenter Tyler Christensen, a Research Scientist with the Pinelands Commission, will explore the natural history and conservation of New Jersey's owls, with a focus on recent research that uses GPS tracking technologies and is reshaping our understanding of their movements and revealing previously undocumented long-distance migrations. **To register to attend, please click [here](#).**



Above: The third program will focus on the owls of New Jersey, such as this native barred owl.



Above: The fourth program will focus on the secret lives of Eastern box turtles.

The fourth program will focus on **Eastern box turtles** and will be held at 2 p.m. on August 6, 2026. Presenter Patrick Burritt, a Research Scientist with the Pinelands Commission, will discuss the secret lives of eastern box turtles, while delving into their life history, behaviors, activity range, and habitat use, along with providing details about ongoing research and unique stories from the field after 5 years of radio tracking this fascinating species. **To register to attend, please click [here](#).**

The fifth program, entitled “**Exploring Frog Diversity and Adaptation,**” will be held at 2 p.m. on **Thursday, September 3, 2026.** If you asked someone to describe a frog, they might say it’s green, slimy, lives in a pond, and spends the spring and summer croaking “ribbit.” While there’s a kernel of truth to some of those ideas, frogs are far more diverse, fascinating, and complex than most people realize. Presenter Christine Healy, a Research Scientist with the Pinelands Commission, will discuss the incredible adaptations frogs have developed around the world. Attendees will follow the remarkable transformation from tadpole to adult frog, tackle the “frog vs. toad” question, meet the species that call New Jersey home, and uncover plenty of surprising facts along the way. **To register to attend, please click [here](#).**



Above: The fifth program will explore frog diversity and adaptation. A native southern leopard frog is shown above.

***** REPORTERS/EDITORS:** High-resolution copies of the photos above can be obtained by contacting Paul Leakan at Paul.Leakan@pinelands.nj.gov.

####