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For Immediate Release

Pinelands Summer Short Course to Feature 11 Presentations and Four Field Trips that Showcase the Pinelands' Natural, Cultural and Historic Treasures

NEW LISBON, N.J., May 23, 2024 – The eighth annual Pinelands Summer Short Course will feature 11 educational presentations and four guided field trips, including a course on the hidden kingdom of fungi and a course with live reptiles.

Registration is now open for the event, which will be held at [Stockton University's Kramer Hall](#) in downtown Hammonton from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Friday, June 28, 2024.

The event is co-sponsored by the [New Jersey Pinelands Commission](#) and [Stockton University](#).

“From fungi to guided hikes, this year’s Pinelands Summer Short Course offers a diverse lineup of presentations that will educate and inspire,” said Susan R. Grogan, the Pinelands Commission Executive Director.

“Spend the day with us! This fun-filled and education-packed day is dedicated to the New Jersey Pinelands. Classroom sessions, hands-on art projects, and field trips will keep your mind and body actively learning while your appreciation for the Pines grows,” said Mariah Duffey, assistant director of Stockton’s Office of Continuing Studies & Adult Education.

Educators can earn four professional development credits for attending the event. To register, please log on to: <https://www.stockton.edu/continuing-studies/pinelandsshortcourse.html>.

Here is a full description of each course offering:

Classroom Programs at Kramer Hall:

An Introduction to the Hidden Kingdom of Fungi, with a Special Focus on Pine Barrens Species

Join us on a virtual fungi foray through the NJ Pine Barrens, uncovering the myriad roles fungi play in this environment, from functioning as nutrient cyclers, to acting as pathogens, to

forming mycorrhizal mutualistic associations with trees and plants. Whether you're already a fungi enthusiast or just a curious beginner, this program offers something for everyone interested in the fascinating world of fungi and the Pine Barrens ecosystem. **Presented by Keara R. Giannotti, Naturalist, and Executive Director Camp Creek Run, a 50-acre camp and nature preserve in Marlton, NJ, and a member of the NJ Mycological Association**

Reptiles of New Jersey

New Jersey is home to a wide variety of reptilian residents. From turtles, to lizards, to snakes, New Jersey has them all. Attendees will learn about the common species that they are likely to encounter and learn how to keep those species and themselves safe during interactions. There will also be an opportunity to see a live Wildlife Ambassador or two! **Presented by Staff of Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge**

Drop Out Zone

New Jersey is situated perfectly along the Atlantic Flyway – a pathway that hundreds of species of birds follow during both northward and southward journeys to and from their wintering and breeding grounds. New Jersey is blessed to be both centralized to this pathway while inherent with a broad array of landscape diversity. In combination, these two factors make the state a prime “stopover” area for birds to refuel their tanks during their long peregrinations. This presentation is designed for adult audiences that want to become more familiar with New Jersey’s many natural areas, avian biology and behavior and how a states geology can drive its natural heritage. **Presented by Blaine Rothausser, Senior Ecologist, GZA, GeoEnvironmental, Inc.**

Habitats for Birds and Wildlife

Join us for a collaborative session about creating a yard habitat that is friendly to birds and other wildlife. We will explore many different ways to provide food, shelter, and water to birds throughout the seasons, which will naturally support other aspects of wildlife, particularly pollinators and beneficial insects. **Presented by Kara Guerrieri, the owner of House Finch Suburban Nature Store, an avid birder and suburban nature enthusiast.**

Orchids of the Pinelands and Why the Smithsonian is Interested

The Pinelands is home to more than two dozen species of wild orchids. Although some are flamboyant, many are small and inconspicuous. This presentation will employ the magic of macro-photography to provide close-up views of all of them. In addition, attendees will learn about the amazing life histories of some of these fascinating plants as well as why the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center has chosen the Pinelands as an important study site. **Presented by Robert Sprague, President, Native Orchid Conference**

Nature Printing Workshop

Nature printing is a simple, direct-printing process that stirs our kinship with the earth and charges our creative energies. Try this intriguing, ancient art and science and follow in the footsteps of Leonardo da Vinci, Ben Franklin and many historic nature printers! **Presenter Laura Bethmann, artist and author of Hand Printing from Nature,** will discuss, demonstrate and

guide class participants in making basic nature prints from leaves. We will use printmaking inks and simple tools to print their beautiful forms and textures on paper. (Recommended: participants bring a bib apron to wear for this class.)

Climate Change-Makers! Using Art & Poetry to Raise Awareness of Climate Change

Discussing climate change often evokes many different thoughts and emotions that can be hard to express. This class introduces this science concept and a framework for participants to express those thoughts and emotions regarding climate change through ephemeral art and various types of poetry. Participants will become acquainted with their senses outdoors and will develop an increased knowledge, appreciation, and respect for the environment through the opportunity to create ephemeral art and express the process through poetry with an emphasis on Climate Change. **Presented by Lois E. Lyons, NJ School of Conservation**

Pinelands Flora and Fauna

This lively presentation includes sights and sounds while taking the audience on an insightful walk in the woods, familiarizing them with the flora and fauna of the New Jersey Pinelands. **Presented by Joel Mott, Principal Public Programs Specialist, NJ Pinelands Commission**

Pine Barrens to Pinelands

Discover the Pinelands of today and learn how they evolved from the Pine Barrens of the past. **Presented by Joel Mott, Principal Public Programs Specialist, NJ Pinelands Commission**

Agriculture in the Pinelands

This presentation will provide a unique perspective on the cultivation of native Pine Barrens plants, while examining the development of cultural practices over the past 100 years. Attendees will also learn about the current challenges of farming, including how issues such as groundwater quality, soil health, climate change and invasive species affect the survival of these important agricultural industries. **Presented by Peter Oudemans, Professor and Director, Rutgers University, Phillip E. Marucci Center for Blueberry and Cranberry Research and Extension**

Seven Bridges Road: From the Past to the Future

The essence of this presentation is focused on the natural and human history of Seven Bridges Road (formally Great Bay Boulevard) and includes the Sheepshead Meadows and the adjacent islands (Seven Islands, Story Island Complex). It begins with the geology of the region and the earliest inhabitants, the Lenni-Lenape. It extends to the future with treatment of the effects of climate change and sea level rise. **Presented by Kenneth W. Able**

Half day, outdoor field trips:

Nature Walk Around Hammonton Lake Park

Nestled in the middle of suburbia, Hammonton Lake Park is an island of mixed pine and oak

upland forest surrounded by Atlantic white cedar wetlands. An Ocean County Parks Naturalist will lead the walk around the trails of Hammonton Lake and will discuss topics such as forest fire, Pine Barrens ecology, and the plants and wildlife, including birds that you will find in the area. Attendees will walk approximately 2.5 miles. Wear appropriate footwear, dress for the weather and bug spray with DEET is highly recommended. Bring binoculars if you have them. Transportation is provided. **Guided by Josh Gant, Ocean County Parks**

Walking Through History on the 1808 Trail

This course will feature a guided hike along the same road the loggers of the 1700's traveled when they timbered out the majestic cedar trees in Mordecai's Swamp. The walk is approximately 5 miles or less over 13 footbridges and through the middle of an old-age swamp. Attendees should wear sturdy shoes (no sandals or flip flops) and bring water, a snack and bug repellent. Participants will drive on their own to Batsto, where they will meet with the guide at the parking area in front of the Visitor Center. **Presented by Rosemarie Mason and Diane Mason, South Jersey Outdoor Club**

Mullica River Paddle Exploration

Goshen Pond in the Mullica River is teeming with life in June. Professional guides will point out the amazing flora and fauna and provide insight into the unique ecology of the Pinelands during a short, guided kayak paddle on calm waters. Boats, life jackets, and transportation will be provided. Participants should bring water, sunscreen, bug repellent, and a dry bag for any items they need to protect/keep dry. Transportation is provided. Meet in front of Kramer Hall. **Guided by Jeff Larson and Monica Cahill, Pinelands Adventures**

A Walking Tour of Batsto Village

Batsto's Historian will lead a walking tour of the Village. The tour will meet and conclude at the Wharton State Forest State Visitor Center at Batsto Village. Topics will include the notable people who lived in the village, and the ways in which humans interacted with the natural resources of the Pinelands through different eras of Batsto's history. The tour will also include a stop at the blacksmith/wheelwright shop for a demonstration. Participants will drive on their own to Batsto, where they will meet with the guide at the parking area in front of the Visitor Center. **Led by John Hebble, Historian, Batsto Village**

***** ATTENTION EDITORS/REPORTERS:** Digital photos of the Pinelands can be obtained via e-mail by contacting Paul Leakan at Info@pinelands.nj.gov, including the photos below.



Above: The 8th annual Pinelands Summer Short Course includes a new course on the Hidden Kingdom of Fungi, with a focus on Pine Barrens species. Photo/Paul Leakan, Pinelands Commission



Above: The 8th annual Pinelands Summer Short Course features a new course on Reptiles of New Jersey and will include live reptiles. Photo/Paul Leakan, Pinelands Commission



Above: The 8th annual Pinelands Summer Short Course includes a hands-on Nature Printing Workshop.
Photo/Paul Leakan, Pinelands Commission



Above: The 8th annual Pinelands Summer Short Course includes a guided hike of the 1808 Trail in Wharton State Forest.
Photo/Paul Leakan, Pinelands Commission

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