

General Recommendations and observations:

1. Your camera is a tool. It is an extension of your eyes and mind. In the best of all possible situations, the image you have taken is a reflection of your mind's eye.
2. A photograph is a record of the ephemeral, the effects of light on forms.
3. Why are you taking the photograph? Ask yourself this most important question, and you will find your subject. Your metering choices will be directed by your answers. Vary your perspectives when taking photographs. Change your point of view. Vary your meter settings in pursuit of realizing the vision of your mind's eye. Read your camera manual. Keep it in your bag at all times for reference.
4. Every great place has signature colors, textures, and effects that are woven through the landscape down to the macro level. I recommend recording these details- as studies preparatory to finding your own photographic voice. It's like building a sketchbook. If I mix my metaphors, it's only because you will use all your senses, and borrow technique from multiple disciplines in your photographic journeys in the Pinelands.
5. When you go out in the field, let someone know where you are going. Leave a note, call or text someone. Better yet, partner up. Pack a first aid kit, sunscreen; bring water, and a towel. Bring a good stick or a monopod. Our lakes are not natural. A tangle of submerged trunks lies just beneath the surface. Bogs are deceptive. Footholds are slippery and precarious.
6. If you do have a partner, and they assist you, develop a system when transferring lens, filters, memory cards, etc, particularly near water. We say "thank you" to signal we have a good hold on the equipment.
7. You should GPS or map out your best locations, until you are familiar with them.
8. Leave no trace or tread lightly. This is very important when photographing plants. When "prepping plants" for photographing, remember that you can often edit out distracting elements with photo editing software. I am very careful about giving out locations for threatened or endangered species. If you enjoy photographing plants, take the time to learn about them. Awareness through education will help ensure the protection of our natural resources in the Pinelands. This is a fascinating and rewarding field of study.
9. If you are taking pictures, this is a pastime or an artistic calling. Don't corner an animal. Some animals will attack defensively when picked up or cornered. Be careful during the animal's mating season. Be very careful of young animals. Be respectful of nesting birds and the nest itself. Why? Animals get stressed easily, and some animals have protective coverings that can be thinned or damaged with handling, like butterflies and fish. Some animals are poisonous and not just rattlesnakes. Check out references regarding poisonous caterpillars.
10. Computer searches are a wonderful thing. I recommend you do it often. Your smart phone can be an invaluable resource in the field. Don't rely on one source. Cross reference. Here are some websites that I have found informative and helpful. A special thanks to Mike Baker and his informative website.

Without this link in my early days, I would have been lost in a mire of misunderstanding.

11. I am indebted to many individuals and some organizations who have been informative and supportive. Ask questions. Go to lectures and go on tours. Most of all volunteer. It's a great community of people who support a great place, the New Jersey Pinelands.

Pinelands Books recommended to me that I have found invaluable:

Wildflowers of the Pine Barrens of New Jersey, Howard P. Boyd, Plexus Publishing Inc., Medford, NJ, 2001

A Field Guide to the Pine Barrens of New Jersey, Howard P. Boyd, Plexus Publishing Inc., Medford, NJ , 1991

Illustrated Companion to Gleason and Cronquist's Manual, Illustrations of the Vascular Plants of Northeastern United States and Adjacent Canada, Noel H. Holmgren , The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx NY 1998

Manual of Vascular Plants of Northeastern United States and Adjacent Canada, Second Edition, Henry A. Gleason, Arthur Cronquist, New York Botanical Garden Press, Bronx NY 1991

A Pine Barrens Odyssey, Howard P. Boyd, Plexus Publishing Inc., Medford, NJ 1997

Pine Barrens Ecosystem and Landscape, edited by Richard T.T. Forman, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1998

Websites:

www.njodes.com

www.allaboutbirds.org/guide

www.buguide.net

www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/ensp/fieldguide_herps

www.butterfliesandmoths.org

plants.usda.gov/java

www.pinelandsalliance.org

www.conservewildlifenj.org

www.state.nj.us/pinelands

www.cumauriceriver.org

www.mikebaker.com

My Websites:

www.njpineways.com

www.facebook.com/njpineways

njpineways.wordpress.com