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For Immediate Release

Pinelands Short Course to feature 38 educational presentations *28th annual event to be held on March 11, 2017*

NEW LISBON, N.J., January 12, 2017 – The 28th annual Pinelands Short Course will feature 38 presentations, including 20 new programs that will explore the region's unique history, ecology, culture and music.

Registration is now open for the daylong event, which will be held at Stockton University in Galloway Township, Atlantic County, on March 11, 2017. The event will be held at Stockton for the fourth straight year.

“The Pinelands Short Course has educated more than 1,400 people about the Pinelands during the past three years alone,” said Nancy Wittenberg, the Commission’s Executive Director. “With more total courses than last year and an impressive variety of presentations, we’re hopeful that this year’s event will be our best yet.”

“Stockton is a leader in environmental studies and in stewardship of natural resources - wonders we are conscious of every day on the Galloway campus in the Pinelands National Reserve,” said President Harvey Kesselman. “The university is very pleased to host the Pinelands Short Course and to have Stockton forest expert Dr. George Zimmermann, entomologist Dr. Jamie Cromartie, river expert Dr. Claude Epstein, Professor Emeritus, and birding expert John Rokita share their knowledge with the public.”

This year’s event will feature a new, guided tour of the Mullica River watershed. Attendees will be taken on a 2½-hour van tour that will include stops at various watershed habitats. The Short Course will also offer three on-campus field courses, including a program in which attendees will venture outside to learn how to identify different bird species, a tour of Stockton’s ecologically-based management of forests on its campus, and a new course that will examine biodiversity hotspots on the school’s campus.

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Other new courses for this year include the following: coyotes in New Jersey; the fungi kingdom and its importance to the Pinelands; raptors and reptiles in the Pinelands (with live animals); the life story of 1st Lt. Jeremiah Leeds, a typical “Piney” who once owned almost all of what is now Atlantic City; interactions between mites and Eastern fence lizards; an overview of the ecosystem services that insects provide in the Pinelands; techniques to identify more than 440 birds in New Jersey; improving soil for native gardening; the geologic and land use history of Pinelands rivers; a virtual field trip of the rivers and streams in the Barnegat Bay watershed; the history and ecology of the Maurice River; the Lenape and their use of the region’s environment in everyday life; a Pinelands overview; honey bee rescue; Pinelands forest monitoring and management; the Pine Barrens Byway; geologic time, people and industries in the Pinelands; and Double Trouble State Park.

The event will also feature numerous popular presentations from the past, including threatened and endangered snakes in the Pinelands (with live animals); the Jersey Devil and origins of New Jersey; the secret world of plants and pollinators; Pinelands frogs and toads; a pictorial journey through the Pinelands; sights and sounds of the Pinelands; wilderness survival skills; climate change; the wild turkey and its reintroduction in New Jersey; moths of New Jersey; using benthic invertebrates as indicators of water quality; Batsto through the years; ghost towns of the Pinelands; former Coast Guard Station 119; a live dulcimer performance; and a live musical performance about the folklore and history of the Pinelands.

As part of the Short Course, area high school students participated in the first-ever contest to create a poster with a Pinelands Wildlife theme. All posters will be on display at the event, and the winning poster will be used to advertise next year’s Short Course.

Pinelands-themed food, coffee and other refreshments will be available for purchase at Stockton’s Campus Center.

Participants should register early to help ensure that they receive their first course selections. The Pinelands Short Course is registered with the New Jersey Department of Education, and professional development credits are available to New Jersey teachers who attend. Discounted registration fees are offered to senior citizens and students. The Short Course brochure and registration form includes complete, detailed descriptions of every program.

To request the brochure/registration form, please call (609) 894-7300, ext. 125. The form is also available online and can be downloaded and printed from the Pinelands Commission’s Web site. The address is: www.nj.gov/pinelands.

To register online, go to: <http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=107&pageID=470>

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***** ATTENTION EDITORS/REPORTERS:** Digital photos of previous Short Course presentations and images related to this year’s Short Course topics, including the photos on the following pages, can be obtained via e-mail by contacting Paul Leakan at (609) 894-7300, ext. 124.

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Above: Lou Gambale of the National Wild Turkey Foundation delivered a presentation focusing on the wild turkey and its reintroduction in New Jersey during last year's Pinelands Short Course. The presentation will be offered once again at this year's event. Photo/Paul Leakan

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Above: The Greater Pinelands Dulcimer Society played numerous “old time music” songs during last year’s Pinelands Short Course. The Society will perform once again during this year’s Short Course.

Photo/Paul Leakan

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