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New Jersey Pinelands Commission Continues to Expand its Schedule of Free, Educational Webinars

(Updated on October 2, 2020)

The New Jersey Pinelands Commission has expanded its schedule of free, educational webinar presentations through the month of November.

The Commission has hosted 17 webinars since early June. The newly added lineup for November includes presentations on the history of glass making in South Jersey, tiger beetles and their use as a model for biodiversity science, and an overview on the invasive spotted lanternfly.

All of the webinars will be livestreamed on the Commission's [YouTube channel](#). The Commission will send out weekly notices with direct links to the presentations, which will also be recorded and archived for later viewing.

Here is the updated schedule of webinars as of October 2, 2020:

■ October 8th at 10 a.m.- John Volpa, Director of Education for Pinelands Adventures

Legendary Still Family of the Pines

If you've seen the 2019 Oscar nominated film *Harriet*, which chronicles the life of Harriet Tubman, then you were introduced to one of the Still brothers, William, an Underground Railroad station agent in Philadelphia. You may not know that William's older brother, James, was known as the Black Doctor of the Pines. Travel back through time to discover some of the medicinal plants Dr. Still used in his practice. Along the way, you'll be enthralled hearing the amazing story of their parents' bondage, then freedom, to create this family's genuine American story, which is unique because it's set in West Jersey. Presenter John Volpa, the Director of Education for Pinelands Adventures, will explain why West Jersey had an early Underground Railroad network, how basic education can make a huge difference in one's life and which plants were commonly used by herbalists like Dr. Still.

■ October 15th at 10 a.m. - Dr. Amy Howell, Associate Research Scientist at Rutgers University's Marucci Center for Blueberry and Cranberry Research

The Latest Research on the Healthy Berries Grown in the Pinelands

Presenter Amy Howell, an Associate Research Scientist at Rutgers University's Marucci Center for Blueberry and Cranberry Research, will discuss the latest research on the health-promoting properties

(MORE)

of blueberries and cranberries. Dr. Howell has been studying the medicinal properties of these native berries for 27 years at Rutgers, and she will share results from exciting new studies that support the wide-ranging health benefits of these berries, from cranberries' effects on the prevention of urinary tract infections, stomach ulcers and heart health, to blueberries' abilities to promote a healthy brain and help manage blood sugar and heart disease risk. She will also discuss how these berries are helping to prevent infections and avoid the need for antibiotics, which will help antibiotic resistance from spiraling out of control. Lastly, Dr. Howell will provide tips on purchasing the freshest and best forms of these berries to obtain maximum health benefits.

■ **October 22nd at 10 a.m. - Rosemarie Mason and Diane Mason, Outdoor Club of South Jersey**

Batona Trail Virtual Hike

Presenters Rosemarie Mason and Diane Mason of the Outdoor Club of South Jersey will take viewers on a virtual hike of the Batona Trail in the Pinelands. The presenters will provide a brief description of the Batona, which is a condensed form of "BACK TO NATURE," and where to access the trail as it traverses 52.7 miles through the beautiful and wild Pinelands. The presentation includes over 100 slides of the trail from its southern beginning at Bass River State Forest to its northern terminus at Ong's Hat. Along the way, the presenters will discuss some of the highlights of the trail, such as the ghost town of Martha, Batsto Village, Tea Time and Apple Pie Hill, Pakim Pond and Ong's Hat.

■ **October 29th at 10 a.m. - Erin Kiefer-Rounds, Education Coordinator at the Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge**

Nocturnal Food Webs

Presenter Erin Kiefer-Rounds, the Education Coordinator at the Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge, will delve into the everyday struggle for survival in the forests of New Jersey. Participants will discover who is eating whom and how each animal fits perfectly within the nocturnal food chain. During the webinar, participants will "meet" three of Cedar Run's non-releasable animals.

■ **November 5th at 10 a.m. – Kristin Qualls, Director of Exhibitions & Collections, Museum of American Glass at Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center**

Connecting Past to Present: Preserving the South Jersey Glass Tradition

Glass making in America started and remains in South Jersey. From the natural resources to the influence of immigration patterns, from reflection of important historical events to the impact of business practices, from production ware to unique pieces of art, the South Jersey glass tradition lives on. Join Kristin Qualls for an exploration of hand-made glass in South Jersey from its colonial origins to today's contemporary art.

■ **November 12th at 10 a.m. Daniel P. Duran, Ph.D. Assistant Professor and Naturalist in the Department of Environmental Science Rowan University**

Tiger Beetles as Models for Biodiversity Science

Tiger beetles (*Coleoptera: Cicindelidae*) are one of the most popular groups of insects, and have been

(MORE)

extensively studied with respect to their distributions, ecology, and physiology. More recently, phylogeographic and phylogenomic data have been used to address questions about taxonomically problematic groups and to more rigorously evaluate species delineations. Presenter Daniel Duran, Ph.D. Assistant Professor and Naturalist in the Department of Environmental Science at Rowan University, will discuss how this ecologically important group of insects has the potential to serve as a model system for future work in the field of biodiversity science.

■ **November 19th at 10 a.m. Steven Rettke, Rutgers Cooperative Extension**

The Spotted Lanternfly

The spotted lanternfly has found its way into New Jersey, raising concerns about damages wrought by the invasive insect. Presenter Steven Rettke of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension will discuss the spotted lanternfly's life cycle, including the egg, nymph and adult stages. Rettke will also provide information about the insect's distribution and spread throughout the northeastern United States since 2014. He will also provide details about the typical host plant that the insect feeds on, while evaluating insecticides and the use of Tree of Heaven as trap trees.

Please check www.nj.gov/pinelands for possible future additions to the Commission's lineup of webinars.

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