

500 Attend 26th Annual Pinelands Short Course at Stockton University

Family-Friendly Presentations Help to Attract More Young People

For Immediate Release ; photos attached, captions below

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Galloway Township, NJ - About 500 people - including more children than ever before - attended the 26th annual Pinelands Short Course at Stockton University today to explore the region's unique history, ecology, culture and music.

Finn Duffey, 8, learned how to make a headache remedy

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“The Pinelands were an important place where they could find plants for food and medicine, and animals that provided food, clothing and bones to be made into tools,” Day said.

Many of those attending had been coming to the Pinelands Short Course for years, while others were first-timers.

The Connor family of Sweetwater, NJ represented both kinds of participants.

“We’ve come seven or eight times and we learn something new every time,” said Barbara Connor, referring to herself and husband Kyran. It was a first visit for their son, Eamonn, of Philadelphia.

She said she liked learning about “what’s in your backyard,” or in the case of one course she took, “Fishes of the Mullica River/Great Bay Estuary,” it was learning about “what we are swimming with.”

Eamonn Connor said he thought the Lenni Lenape course he attended was “a great way to expose kids to the Pinelands and their history.”

The new family-friendly track of courses was designed to attract more students from middle school and up, to instill a sense of Pinelands stewardship in new generations.

First-time courses this year included presentations on the Pinelands Jetport, the Jersey Devil and the Origins of New Jersey, Lost Towns of the Pines, Wetlands and Hydrologic Gradients, From the Lens: Learning to Appreciate the Pinelands through Photography, Wilderness Survival Fundamentals, Waste Management/Recycling in the Pinelands, Birding the Pinelands at Stockton, and family-friendly programs on Sea Creatures with Amazing Features, Birding 101: Learning the Basics of Birdwatching and the Lenni Lenape course.

Popular presentations from the past were reprised, including: Pinelands Frogs and Toads, Raptors of New Jersey (with live raptors, another family friendly course), Know the Bear Facts: Black Bears in New Jersey (also family friendly), Dragonflies and Damselflies of the Pinelands, Batsto through the Years, Atlantic White Cedar: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, Pinelands Stream-water Quality and Aquatic Communities, Lure of the Pine Barrens, Estell Manor Park, New Jersey’s Biodiversity: North & South and A Photographic Journey through the Pinelands National Reserve.

Live music was provided by the Thomas Wesley Stern Band and Tunes & Tales.

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Photo credit: Paul Leakan/New Jersey Pinelands Commission

Captions:

John Rokita, principal lab technician at Stockton University, presents “Birding at Stockton.”

Erin Kiefer, a naturalist at the Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge in Medford, NJ, gives a family-friendly presentation on Raptors of New Jersey, which include this barred owl.