



PINELANDS
PRESERVATION
ALLIANCE

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INSIDE THE PINELANDS



The Evesham Green Team and Jack McCausland install a rain garden at the Blue Barn as part of the South Jersey Landscape Makeover Program.

Transforming Our Landscapes – One Lawn at a Time

by Jack McCausland, Stormwater Outreach Specialist

The South Jersey Landscape Makeover Program (SJLMP) began in 2017 thanks to grant funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the William Penn Foundation. The program seeks to transform traditional lawns into landscapes that creatively address issues with stormwater management and provide habitat for bees, butterflies and other pollinators. The program provides financial and technical support to qualified homeowners, municipalities, schools, and similar groups to build these “green” stormwater infrastructure projects.

Green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) includes bioswales, rain barrels, permeable pavement, and rain gardens, among other solutions. These types of stormwater management methods differ from traditional “gray” stormwater infrastructure such as detention and retention basins, storm drains, pipes, and the Combined Sewer Systems used by many older East Coast communities. The SJLMP deals mainly with the GSI solution of rain gardens to help South Jersey

communities improve stormwater management and reduce flooding risks associated with climate change. We have helped install over 50 rain gardens since 2017 and many more are scheduled for this spring and fall. This program is truly making an impact on the local environment and, most importantly, helping to reduce the amount of pollutant-filled stormwater runoff that reaches local waterways.

Rain gardens are shallowly depressed gardens that collect runoff from impervious surfaces, such as asphalt, before the runoff reaches local waterways. This runoff is often filled with harmful pollutants such as motor oil, lawn treatment chemicals, and other toxic substances. When these substances end up in our waterways, they can harm living organisms and can even inhibit recreation like swimming and fishing in the waterway. Fortunately, the native plants we use in our gardens naturally filter these pollutants out of the water before it reaches a local stream, river, or lake. The native species’ deep root structures help

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Pinelands Juried Photography Exhibit

The best photography of the Pinelands National Reserve!

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We hosted our fourth annual juried photography exhibit focused on the Pinelands National Reserve at our headquarters from March 2022 to April 2022. In 2021 our staff and the volunteer planning committee made the tough decision to delay the exhibit for a year because of the coronavirus pandemic. Getting outside was one of the only activities people could engage in during this time and we saw a big increase in the number of photographs submitted for consideration.

Over 695 photographs were submitted by 170 photographers and 86 beautiful images were selected as finalists and displayed as part of the exhibit which represents some of the best photography taken within the boundaries of the Pinelands National Reserve to date. It was incredibly difficult to select finalists due to the high quality of the images that were entered. All images that meet the exhibition's criteria are now displayed in our New Jersey Pinelands Online Art Gallery. This online gallery is the largest collection of photographs taken within the Pinelands National Reserve and is searchable by category. More information about the exhibit is and a link to the online gallery is available at www.PinelandsPhotoExhibit.org.

Mike Pillows, photographer and educator, judged the exhibit and was impressed with the quality. Mike says, "Many people during the course of their lives, have experienced moments that remain imprinted on what I like to call our photographic senses. We often catch glimpses of pictures and visuals that help reawaken the images in our mind. Even though each one of us views a picture differently, for some it can help rekindle and bring back to life a special moment or at least give shape to a future journey."

Winning photographers in the categories of Open, Flora & Fauna, Landscape and Best in Show received a

cash prize. A total of \$2000 was handed out to the winning photographers. Winners included Patricia Migliore of Rahway, NJ (Best in Show), Audrey Geddes of Atco, NJ (1st place Open), Robert Ferguson II of Bristol, PA (1st place Flora & Fauna), and Rafal Goracznik of Hillsborough, NJ (1st place Landscape). The Executive Director of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, Carleton Montgomery selected Cold Trail by James Gunardson of Southampton, NJ for the Executive Director's Honorable Mention.

Our hope is that this exhibit exposes people to this lovely part of New Jersey and will inspire exploration and action on its behalf.

2022 Finalist and Honorable Mention awardee, Matthew Cipolloni of Egg Harbor City says, "I picked up photography about 16 years ago. I always felt comfortable in the pines. Like I belonged there. I love the feeling of being relaxed and taking my time and not trying to keep up with the daily hustle. The Pine Barrens provide this perfect escape for me."

Special thanks to PPA staff member Erin Tobiassen, photo exhibit steering committee and volunteer Janet Giardina. This exhibit would not be happening were it not for their hard work and dedication. Exhibit steering committee members are Rich Lewis of Medford (co-chair), Chris Kosseff of Monroe Township (co-chair), Peter Hewitt of Doylestown, PA, Robert Laramie of Moorestown, Sarah Puleo of Philadelphia, PA, Barry Nealis of Medford, NJ, Bonnie Rovere of Voorhees, and Edward Tenthoff of Medford.

Pinelands Adventures Opens for the Season

by Krissy Raudys, Director for Pinelands Adventures

Welcome back to another season with Pinelands Adventures! We opened on April 9th with our self-guided paddle trips and many new guided programs.

The Adventures team has been productive in the off season improving our knowledge and skills with many trainings including NOLS Wilderness First Aid, American Red Cross CPR/AED, ACA Paddle Instruction, and a fun chainsaw safety program to assist in keeping our rivers clear and our guests in good hands.

We also hired longtime driver Monica Cahill for our new fulltime position, Operations Lead. Her role consists of heading up maintenance of our fleet of boats and vehicles, yard supervision, creating new guided content, assisting in training and daily procedures for our seasonal staff, and continue to be role-model driver and guide for Pinelands Adventures. We welcome Monica to her first season in her new role!

Guests will be delighted to hear we are bringing back popular guided programs like the John McPhee tour, Ghost Towns, and Industries tours sprinkled throughout the season and Cranberry Tours for next October. Guided ecology paddles and hikes will continue and new guided lake and sunset tours will be added. In June, July, and August we will offer canoe and kayak instruction for those that want to learn or develop skills under the guidance of our certified instructors. New programming includes Beaver Ecology, Nature Journaling, The Forks Historical tour, Nature Rx, Maritime History, monthly night hikes or sunset paddles, overnight paddle trips, and presenting hikes to new locations.

Self-guided trips are available Fridays through Mondays and reservations are required as trips sell out in advance. We plan to expand our hours of operation staff permitting.

We offer boat rentals/delivery to guests at Atsion Family Campground. For overnight reservations at the Mullica River Wilderness Campground, guests must book a campground reservation on NJ State Parks website before calling us to book boat and transportation support. We can offer support for Thursday through Sunday night reservations at this time.

We are hiring seasonal drivers /guides. To learn more or apply visit www.pinelandsadventures.org.

We continue to clean and sanitize vehicles and equipment daily and have masks available to all guests who opt to use one on vehicles where distancing is not available. Masks are optional for all riders and subject to change with any public health situation warrants. Guests are strongly encouraged to postpone their trip if they are not feeling well. Cancellation policies remain with 24-hr notice for a reschedule trip or refund.

This year we are enforcing a last pick-up time of 5pm for all self-guided trips with a fee for guests that are not accounted for by 5pm.

Weather delays or cancellations will be made either the evening before or the morning of your trip depending on local weather reports and river conditions. If a high wind event occurs, we may close to visually inspect and clear the river before reopening to the public. Especially after storms, river conditions may not be suitable for novice paddlers and children and will work with you to rebook when conditions are more favorable.

We allow well-behaved dogs to join our self-guided paddles but we ask you to not bring dogs on any guided programs because some areas we may enter do not allow pets and we want to keep distractions for the guide and other trip guests to a minimum. Every participant must complete the online waiver and

children must be 6 years and older to participate in any of our programs.

To reduce waste and printed materials, we placed all of our trips, and registrations online at www.pinelandsadventures.org.

We highly encourage you to sign up for our Adventures E-Newsletter and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for operation updates, weather closures/river conditions, newsletter member invites, theme paddle weekends, guests speakers, and Pinelands community events.

We look forward to a brand new season. We hope you join us on the river! Remember, all members of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance receive 10% off their trip or program. Apply the discount at checkout.

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Pinelands Adventures is an initiative of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance and our members get 10% off all trips and programs.

Egg Harbor City Residents Rally to Protect Open Space

By Jason Howell, Public Lands Advocate and Rhyann Grech, Policy Advocate

In Egg Harbor City, Atlantic County, there's a lake with many memories. Generations of picnics, swimming, walking in the woods, and having fun with family and friends have taken place at this lake in Egg Harbor City. The lake and the surrounding lands, some 400 acres, were donated to the town by the Colwell family and the Gloucester Town and Farm Association (GFTA) in 1872. The GFTA and its members helped found the municipality in the 19th century. In the deed to the city, it was clearly stated that the donation was to be made on one condition – that this land “shall forever remain public”. The City Lake Park was envisioned as a grand central park for the burgeoning community, a place where people could come and recreate together as a place of respite from the daily grind. While the grand vision of Egg Harbor City attained a humble, yet robust result in the municipality that exists today, the vision for the park was largely realized. It is a place the community share, play, talk, and relax together.

That's why, when a plan was revealed in November to designate the whole park as “in need of redevelopment”, the community of Egg Harbor City was bewildered and incensed. This characterization under the law, originally created to address blighted and dilapidated properties, would have paved the way to carve off large sections of the lake for various purposes such as a commercial warehouse, retail outlet, and private lake-front housing. Despite warnings from the public and opposition from a few sitting members of the board, the town's planning board passed a recommendation to “redevelop” the City Lake Park. Pinelands Preservation Alliance representa-

tives attended the meeting and met the residents who formed the base of the movement to protect the park. Two days later, the city council approved the redevelopment designation, even though it was not listed on the public agenda. After massive public outcry, the council decided to hold a public hearing in December in order to take public comment.

Over the next month, we created our strategy, informed the public, and worked with all the residents we met at the planning board meeting to mobilize residents and neighbors to protect their park. After a few newspaper articles, many social media engagements, passing out flyers, the creation of DIY yard signs, mobilize they did. The town had to move the meeting to a larger venue because of the anticipated crowd size. Even so, the residents filled the entire cafeteria meeting space and more than 40 people had to wait outside in the cold as the sales pitch for the “Redevelopment Designation” went on despite clear public opposition.

After a three-hour meeting of heartfelt expression, legal opinion opposing taking public land in this way, and some heated rhetoric, the public demanded that the city council take a vote on the plan once more. Following some squirming by the council, the vote was unanimous: the city park would remain a park – the entire 400-acres. The redevelopment plan that had quietly passed only a month prior, was defeated by the council thanks to the people.

Today, many of these same residents are working to improve their Lake Park with cleanups and a new trail plan. The “Friends of Egg Harbor City Lake”, formed in

response to the deforestation threat, will now be the champions of improving the park so that it is a better destination for the town and for visitors. Outdoor spaces have never been more valued and this is an opportunity to share the great resource of a 400-acre park with our community and to attract new residents and activity to the town.

This was not the first time New Jersey's redevelopment law has been abused to promote destruction of a natural area against the original intent of the law. The designation has been given to intact forests and wetland areas, and even agricultural lands. Although it does not exempt those spaces from environmental regulations, it does provide a financial incentive to erase open space.

There is currently a bill making its way through the state Senate, S104, that would exclude farmland from the “redevelopment” or the similar “rehabilitation” area definitions in the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL). We support that bill, but the legislature needs to go further. Open space, forests and natural areas used for habitat or public parks must also be protected. The law should be used as intended: to incentivize the use of previously developed but abandoned properties for new projects, so our serene gathering spaces, like Egg Harbor City Lake Park, can be left alone for the enjoyment of all.

Thank You!

To our members and volunteers who support the Pinelands Preservation Alliance. You really make a difference! We are so lucky to have your support.

Transforming landscapes one lawn at a time

continued from cover

to break up the soil and infiltrate as much water as possible into the rain garden, thus reducing flooding in local communities.

Community engagement is at the core of our South Jersey Landscape Makeover Program. Many of our projects are installed on the grounds of religious institutions, community centers, and institutions of learning. GSI installations frequently happen at local public schools giving students the chance to get their hands dirty and develop a connection with the earth. We are extremely happy to help these students foster a connection to the earth through this program. Students get to see their efforts pay off each day as the garden matures, blooms, and attracts pollinators.

The SJLMP is also offered to qualified homeowners. They receive a complementary consultation with the Rutgers University design team and are eligible for a rebate up to \$450 for installation of their rain garden. The South Jersey Landscape Makeover Program serves residents and municipalities located in select zip codes. If you or someone you know is interested please visit SJwatersavers.org/makeover to learn more.

While rain gardens provide much needed relief to local waterways by reducing water runoff, helping to prevent harmful pollutants from reaching them and aiding in flood reduction, they also double as a pollinator garden! We use native plants in our rain gardens and these plants attract butterflies, bees, and birds to the gardens and to your property. Rain gardens serve as a creative and beautiful stormwater management method, hitting two birds (beauty and function) with one stone.

As this season of spring begins to bloom, we are looking forward to completing six rain garden installa-

tions in Evesham, Medford, Pemberton, and Lumberton. We are excited to see these projects come to fruition with the help of our partners, the students, and local community members. We will have more installations in the fall when the temperatures cool down and are better for planting.

The SJLMP has helped communities all over South Jersey manage stormwater and beautify local public and private properties. We hope you explore past rain garden installations for ideas, take in the beauty, and maybe even see butterflies and birds! These include installations done at Hammonton High School, Upper Pittsgrove Department of Public Works, and Auburn Road Winery.

PPA is one of nine organizations taking a lead role in an educational campaign referred to as the South Jersey Watersavers. More information can be found online at the website sjwatersavers.org.

The campaign's goal is to protect the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer, South Jersey's primary source of water. The South Jersey Landscape Makeover Program is one of the ways that we do that. Our partners are: Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions, South Jersey Land & Water Trust, American Littoral Society, Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program, New Jersey League of Conservation Voters Education Fund, New Jersey Conservation Foundation, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, and New Jersey Audubon.

For more information please email me jack@pinelandsalliance.org or visit sjwatersavers.org/makeover.

LANDSCAPE MAKEOVER PROGRAM

Interested in learning how to install a rain garden in your yard?

You might be eligible for a free design session with Rutgers University engineers and receive up to a \$450 rebate from us.

For eligibility information visit:
www.sjwatersavers.org/makeover

Contact:
jack@pinelandsalliance.org

Life Science Field Training Institute

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Getting Ready for the 2022 Farm Season

by Jeff Tober, Farm Manager

Hello and Greetings from Rancocas Creek Farm! 2022 will be our third year growing here as we continue the long-term transformation of these 72 acres from conventional soybean production to a diverse, chemical-free farm operation that we are striving to make sustainable and regenerative. The first two years have already seen fairly dramatic changes on the land. We established a five-acre native meadow that has been very supportive of bird and insect populations and has helped manage stormwater flow on one of the wetter sections of the farm. We have planted close to 2000 trees and shrubs to produce food, manage stormwater flow, sequester carbon, reduce erosion, provide windbreak, as well as pollinator and bird habitat (not to mention beauty!).

In 2021 we had an amazing array of birds including some fairly rare species like the Dickcissel, Grasshopper Sparrow, Lincoln Sparrow, Harrier, Pippit, Virginia Rail and Blue Grosbeak. Follow along or post sightings at www.ebird.org and search for Pinelands Preservation Alliance HQ where 160 species have been observed!

On the infrastructure side we've added a tractor barn, tool shed, 2 high tunnels (for season extension growing), a well, farm equipment (both new, used and MacGyvered), and we have about a third of the acreage inside an eight-foot deer fence. Many of these improvements were cost-shared by State and Federal agricultural programs. On the food side, we started growing veggies in 2020 on a smaller scale for some various markets and donations.

In 2021 we ramped up production to about 10 acres and we grew about 50 crops totaling over 73,000 pounds. These vegetables, herbs, fruits and flowers went to a number of places including Jeffrey Miller Catering who hosts weddings on the property, the Farm and Fisherman restaurant in Cherry Hill, and Fairgrown Farm

Cooperative in Hopewell. We donated nearly three tons of produce to local foodbanks including NJ Farmers Against Hunger who helps farms like ours get fresh produce to those in need. But most of our produce went to our 150 CSA Members. CSA Stands for Community Supported Agriculture. A CSA is a covenant between a farm and subscribers or shareholders who purchase a share to the farm. Shares are purchased at the start of the year which provides the farmer with capital at a time of year when there are many expenses and it provides the farm with a certain level of predictability and risk management. In return, shareholders receive a weekly distribution of fresh, chemical-free vegetables, flowers, herbs, and fruit grown here on the farm. In 2021 we had 150 shareholders and we plan on having 200 this year.

This winter we joined a new maple sugaring project sponsored by Stockton University. We tapped Red, Silver and Norway maples on the property and boiled down their sap into syrup. Sugar Maple sap has the highest concentration of sugar and thus produce syrup with less energy and time but the other maples also produce sap that can be processed down into yummy syrup. We are one of several hubs in central and south Jersey participating. One of the goals is to get others involved in tapping and they can bring their sap to us to process then we share the syrup. This is one way to use carbon sequestering trees that provides food and income to growers. We plan on expanding this project in subsequent winters and we even planted 50 Sugar Maples that should be ready to tap by 2048!

We are also excited to introduce this year's farm crew. We have 3 Apprentices at the farm this year. Alex Robb hails from Hamilton and worked as an Intern here last year. He is an avid gardener, country music fan and historical reenactor. Ezra Tischler is commuting to the farm from Philadelphia this year. Ezra has

experience on some orchards and farms and is involved with gardening and composting efforts in Philly. (He also says the 76ers are going all the way). Chris Bunn grew up in the area and is currently living in Hammonton, NJ. Chris went to school in Maine and has had stints at farms and outdoor centers in New England and Europe! He loves to cook and will sometimes bring his guitar to the farm (to play for the plants of course). Alex, Ezra and Chris have been working full-time since the end of February. They will be doing A LOT on the farm this year. Our goal is to give them a lot of training and responsibility as the cornerstone for a future in farming. I started in Agriculture as an Apprentice at Brookfield Farm in Amherst, MA and we hope to replicate that experience here to help grow the next generation of farmers.

We are really excited for the 2022 farm season. We are growing on more acreage, and we have a few new crops and varieties in the works. And some of our perennial crops planted in the past few years will be further along (more blackberries! And Asian Pears will be a year closer). We are working very hard on our soil building efforts like making and spreading compost, cover cropping, using mulches, resting (or fallowing) fields and planting more trees. The farm is open and welcome to walkers and a local Eagle Scout candidate will be installing a kiosk and trail markers on the property! So please pay us a visit. If you are interested in learning about our CSA and purchasing a share visit www.rancocasfarm.org or contact us at 609-859-8860 ext. 130 / jeff@pinelandsalliance.org.

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Calendar of Events

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Visit the Pinelands!

Now is a great time to explore the Pinelands. Here is a list of state parks and forest begging for you to visit. Make sure you check with each location before you visit.

Atlantic County

Estell Manor County Park

This is a large, user-friendly park where you can hike, bike, picnic, fish, go sightseeing, exercise, visit the park's nature center, and really enjoy the Pine Barrens. The Fox Nature Center provides programs for enjoying the outdoors as well as displays about the local ecology. With its location on tributaries to the Great Egg Harbor, the park provides an excellent point to launch all manner of water craft. Historic ruins in the park are well-explained in interpretive signs.

Burlington County

Bass River State Forest

Home to one of the first Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps, Bass River State Forest now provides easily accessible camping, swimming and hiking facilities. In addition to a swimming beach on Lake Absegami, the State Forest has eight walking of 1 to 3.2 miles through typical Pine Barrens habitats. Bass River State Forest is located at 762 Stage Road, Tuckerton, NJ. This state forest is in Burlington and Ocean County.

Brendan Byrne State Forest

Brendan Byrnes State Forest is over 37,000 acres lovely trails that crisscross the forest and pass historic sites. A great place to visit is Pakim Pond. A beautiful small pond in the heart of the Pine Barrens, Pakim Pond is a wonderful place to explore forest and wetland habitats. A short trail wraps around the entire perimeter of the pond, and also connects to the Batona Trail. Accessible by paved road, the pond has a gazebo, picnic tables and grills, and restrooms. Another lovely spot is historic Whitesbog Village the historic site of a company town where the blueberry was first culti-

vated for commercial production by Elizabeth White. The village, now incorporated within Brendan T. Byrne State Forest, includes historic buildings and houses, cranberry bogs, blueberry fields, reservoirs and surrounding woodlands. The village area is managed by the Whitesbog Preservation Trust, and JJ White Cranberry Company, owned by the descendants of Elizabeth White, cultivates some of the cranberry bogs at the edge of the village.

Wharton State Forest

Wharton State Forest is New Jersey's largest state forest at 125,000 acres. There are many trails, roads and historic places to visit. A great place to start is historic Batsto Village. Batsto is one of the most popular stops in the Pinelands. Originally founded as an ironworks in 1766, a restored village surrounds the original ironworks with information and displays on site to show how things were done "in the old days". The mill dam in the heart of the village creates Batsto Lake, a beautiful lake on which most Batsto River canoe and kayak trips end. The mansion is restored and open for tours, and the village includes a nature center, saw mill, general store and other early buildings. Batsto's Visitor Center is also the main office for Wharton State Forest, where camping permits, trail maps, and a gift shop can be found.

Ocean County

Double Trouble Village in Double Trouble State Forest

Double Trouble is the site of an old village dedicated to cranberry farming. Many of the historic buildings, including the cranberry packing house and the sawmill are intact and can be toured. Cedar Creek runs next to the village and is one of the Pine Barrens' most beautiful. The State Forest contains excellent hiking trails.

Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge

The Forsythe Refuge includes more than 47,000 acres of southern New Jersey coastal habitats and represents the fragile estuary ecosystems

which are sustained by fresh water flowing from the interior Pine Barrens forests into the coastal marshes and bays. Located on one of the Atlantic Flyway's most active flight paths, the Refuge provides world-class birding opportunities. The Refuge includes walking trails through rare coastal pine forest habitats. Start at the Visitor Center and Wildlife Drive on Great Creek Road in Galloway Township.

Pinelands Commission Meeting

5/13, 6/10, 7/8 starting at 9:30 am. Monthly meetings are open to the public and are held via livestream on YouTube.

The Pinelands Commission is the state agency that oversees conservation and development within the Pinelands. They meet on the 2nd Friday of the month. They continue to conduct meetings virtually. Meeting agendas, link to livestream and a phone number to call can be found at www.nj.gov/pinelands.

Pine Barrens Gravel Ride

May 15 at Pinelands Preservation Alliance, 17 Pemberton Rd, Southampton, NJ.

Distances of 72 and 58 miles are offered on paved, sand, gravel and dirt roads in the Pine Barrens. Organized by Kermesse Sport to benefit the PPA. Bicycle through state forests, nature preserves, trails, ghost towns and visit the Carranza Memorial. Register pinelandsgravel.com

Shop our Online Store for books, apparel, maps and more!

Our online store is always open! Purchase books, maps, t-shirts and hats! Items are shipped to you or your loved one or you can arrange a curbside pickup at our offices. Find the store here:

www.pinelandsalliance.org

Do you have an event that takes place in the Pinelands?

Let us know so we can put it on our calendar.

Email:

becky@pinelandsalliance.org



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Sponsors receive a copy of *The Pine Barrens: Up Close & Natural* DVD
 Patrons receive John McPhee's seminal book *The Pine Barrens*
 Benefactors receive *The Pine Barrens of New Jersey*, a photographic history of this region
 Chairman's Circle members receive a personalized tour of the Pinelands

Our mission is to protect and preserve the natural and cultural resources of New Jersey's Pinelands.