

**FRIENDS OF THE EAST BRUNSWICK
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

501c-3 nonprofit organization

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**Option Green: 'The Jersey Pinelands: More Than Meets the Eye,' with Jim Peck
at the East Brunswick Library, 7 p.m., Nov. 8**

The Jersey Pinelands, covering 20 percent of the state, is one of just three remaining Atlantic coastal pine barrens in the Northeast. But for many New Jerseyans, according to local naturalist Jim Peck, "it's just a swath of land they drive through to get to the Jersey Shore." To him, it's much more.

Peck, who's been exploring and leading tours of the area for decades, will share his observations and knowledge of this vast, natural treasure in a hybrid program, "The Jersey Pinelands: More Than Meets the Eye," at the East Brunswick Public Library and on Zoom at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 8.

"Although its features are more subtle than the rugged land of the western U.S., the Pinelands, also known as the Pine Barrens, are just as diverse, interesting and complex," says Peck. "Living in New Jersey and not exploring and learning about them is a big loss."

In his talk, Peck will cover a wide variety of Pineland topics including carnivorous plants, the pygmy pine forest, Atlantic white cedar bogs, glass and charcoal production, orchids, rare tree frogs, the indigenous curly grass fern, the Greenwood boardwalk, the need for fire, the 17 trillion-gallon Cohansey aquifer, pitch pines, the importance of the cuesta, Apple Pie Hill and more.

Previously, as education director of the American Littoral Society, Peck led many overnight canoe trips through the Pinelands and has run "car caravan tours" to many of its sights. He also served as executive director of the Cora Hartshorn Arboretum and Bird Sanctuary in Short Hills. He wrote the Trail Mix nature column for the Gannett Newspaper chain for 14 years as he explored the state from High Point to Cape May, and has given talks on science and nature topics at libraries across New Jersey.

The program is part of the Option Green lecture series presented by the Friends of the East Brunswick Environmental Commission in partnership with the East Brunswick Public Library. It is free and open to the public. To register for the Zoom presentation, go to [this link](#), which also can be found at ebpl.org. For more information on the Friends, a nonprofit community group dedicated to conservation and education, go to friendsebec.com.

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