



New Jersey Forestry Association  
**49<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Member Program**  
**Saturday, March 16, 2024**

Cook Campus Center, Rutgers University, 59 Biel Road, New Brunswick 08901

**PRESENTERS & PANELISTS**

(as of 2/28/24)

**Matthew Olson / Stockton University**

Assistant Professor of Environmental Science

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Matt grew up in Medford (Burlington County). He received forestry degrees from Paul Smith's College (AAS), the University of Tennessee (MS), and the University of Maine (BS and PhD).

Matt's expertise includes forest ecology, silviculture, and ecological forestry. He teaches upper-level forestry courses (Dendrology, Forest Measurements, and Ecological Forest Management) and lower-level courses in Environmental Science and General Studies. His scholarship broadly addresses tree regeneration and stand dynamics in managed forests.

**Emma Witt / Stockton University**

Assistant Professor of Environmental Science

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Emma is from Lexington, Kentucky and has been at Stockton University since 2014. She received forestry degrees from the University of Kentucky (BS and PhD) and the University of Minnesota (MS).

Emma's research is on surface water hydrology and water quality, and she is especially interested in how land use impacts hydrology. As a professor, she teaches Watershed Hydrology, Groundwater Hydrology, and Physical Geography.

**Daniel Duran / Rowan University**

Assistant Professor of Environmental Science

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Dan's areas of expertise include entomology, taxonomy and evolutionary ecology. He received degrees from Stockton University (BS), the University of Missouri (MS), and Vanderbilt University (PhD).

Dan's interests are in the fields of systematics, taxonomy, and biodiversity conservation. His research is primarily focused on biodiversity exploration and the discovery of 'cryptic species'; species that are distinct evolutionary units but go undetected due to physical similarity with closely related species. He mostly uses tiger beetles (Cicindelinae) as a study system. He is also interested in examining the important roles of insect and plant biodiversity in ecosystem functioning. He has recently begun work on the impacts of industrial hemp growing practices on insect biodiversity.

## **Todd Wyckoff / NJ Forest Service**

NJ State Forester

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Todd Wyckoff currently serves as New Jersey's State Forester. With the New Jersey Forest Service he has worked in the management of New Jersey's forests for over 20 years. New Jersey born and raised, he attended the University of Montana and spent a number of years living and working in the West on Hotshot crews fighting wildfires.

## **William Zipse / NJ Forest Service**

Supervising Forester

Phone: 609-306-0585

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Bill Zipse has been at the New Jersey Forest Service since 2000. He currently conducts analytical work and administers a variety of state programs, including forest management of public parks and forests, the state's forest health program, and the New Jersey's forest carbon and climate initiative. As a Supervising Forester, he also serves as the state's forest planner and the state's representative to the USDA Forest Service's Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Program. He has degrees from Paul Smith's College and Northern Arizona University and a graduate certificate in Data Mining from the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

## **Benjamin Pisano / NJ Forest Service**

GIS Specialist

Phone: 609.292.2532

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Ben Pisano received a Master of Science in Ecology and Evolution from Rutgers University in 2020. His research at Rutgers focused on community composition of post-agricultural successional fields in the Piedmont of New Jersey. Ben has worked with the NJ Forest Service since 2019 and has worked on a variety of different projects for both the forest health and state lands programs. Starting in 2023, Ben has become the forest health coordinator for the NJ Forest Service's forest health program.

## **Courtney Willitts / NJ Forest Service**

Assistant Regional Forester

Phone: 609-649-3279

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Courtney Willitts has been at the New Jersey Forest Service full-time for nearly eight years. Her current duties involve conducting silvicultural activities, forest management planning and implementation, operations, outreach and education efforts, and analytical project work. Prior to that, she worked part time doing some work with a New Jersey consulting forestry firm, in addition to some project work with the Mercer County Soil Conservation District. She also had a short stint teaching a forest measurements course at Stockton University as an adjunct professor. Courtney was recently promoted to Supervising Forester overseeing the State Forest Tree Nursery and Forest Resource Education Center. She has a Master of Forestry degree from SUNY ESF as well as a Bachelor's degree from Stockton University.

## **Mike Hart / NJ Forest Service**

Supervising Forester

Phone: 973-786-5035

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Born and raised in NJ, Mike Hart graduated from West Virginia University with a Bachelor of Science in Forest Management. He has been employed by the New Jersey Forest Service since 2001 and is currently the Supervising Forester overseeing the Private Lands, Urban & Community Forestry and No Net Loss programs. He has experience throughout the state with these programs as well as having spent years working within the State Lands program.

## **Bernard Isaacson / US Forest Service**

Research Ecologist

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Bernie is a Research Ecologist in the Analyst Band of the USFS Southern Research Station's Forest Inventory & Analysis Program (USFS SRS FIA). He works to develop decision support tools for silviculturists and land managers, making use of national-scale forest inventory and remote sensing datasets. With over twenty years of diverse professional experience in natural resources, he has worked in many different facets of the field, from backcountry trail crews to producing highly-visible land management and species restoration strategies in densely-peopled places. His work focuses on applied science and facilitation of stakeholders to articulate and achieve their objectives.

## **Vinh Lang / Pine Creek Forestry**

Consulting Forester

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Vinh was raised in the Pine Barrens where he worked as a forest technician for over ten years and assisted in the planting of hundreds of thousands of trees. He received his Bachelor's degree from Stockton University in Environmental Science and a Master of Forestry (MF) from Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

Vinh has worked in both the private and public sectors, for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the US Forest Service, as a researcher in Sri Lanka, as a geospatial consultant in Ecuador, and forest manager on the East Coast. Vinh is a New Jersey State Approved Forester.

## **Don Donnelly / Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**

NRCS State Forester

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Don has been working with the NRCS for about one year. He spent 12 years with New Jersey Audubon (NJA) as their director of forestry where they worked closely with NRCS on wildlife habitat and golden-winged warbler, as well as providing technical services and filling in knowledge gaps on forestry. Prior to joining NJA, Don was with the Morris Soil District, US Forest Service out of the Northern Research Station as part of an interdisciplinary team collecting field data for carbon sequestration, and Hunterdon County pulling double duty as forester and horticulturist. His role with NRCS will have him working with TSPs, contract planners, and field staff. Don received his degree in forestry from Rutgers University.

## **Dylon Borger / Ridge & Valley Forest Management**

Consulting Forester

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Dylon received forestry degrees from Pennsylvania College of Technology (AS) and Penn State (BS). Since graduating, he has worked as a consulting forester in New Jersey and Pennsylvania while also being a forestry technician for the Pennsylvania Department of Natural Resources.

Dylon's professional experience includes conducting forest inventories on public and private lands along with marking and cruising timber in both NJ and PA. Dylon has vast knowledge in georeferencing and digitally mapping properties. He also is experienced in conducting invasive species control, Forest Stand Improvement (FSI) cuttings, and conducting collaborative projects with organizations such as the NJ Forest Service, NRCS, and NJ Audubon.

## **Ryan Hasko / New Jersey Audubon**

Stewardship Project Director

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Ryan works with a dedicated team at NJ Audubon, where he focuses on conservation efforts aimed at enhancing the diversity and health of forests on both private and public land. He works with landowners to create comprehensive Forest Stewardship Plans to help guide management activities to enhance habitat for wildlife, increase forest health and resiliency, and ensure future sustainability of the forest. He is involved with the direct implementation of conservation activities including managing invasive plant species, conducting forest stand improvements, prescribed burning, and afforestation efforts. He has also been involved with specialized projects such as habitat creation for the federally endangered golden-winged warbler and research of the feasibility of the reintroduction of Northern Bobwhite Quail to New Jersey through translocation.

## **Jean Epiphan / Rutgers Cooperative Extension**

Agriculture & Natural Resources County Agent (Morris County)

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Jean Epiphan is an Agriculture & Natural Resource Agent at Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Morris County. Jean received her Bachelor of Science in Forestry from the University of Vermont and her Master's in Ecology from Rutgers University. She is an ISA Certified Arborist, a NJ Licensed Tree Expert, and is certified by Rutgers in Wetland Delineation and Ecological Restoration. Her background is in ecological forestry and sustainable landscape management which informs her work as a county agent, to help ornamental horticulture, commercial agriculture and land management become more environmentally sustainable.

## **Justin Gimmillaro / NJ Forest Service**

Assistant Regional Forester

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After graduating from Stockton University with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science (forestry concentration), Justin has spent time in various regions conducting forestry field work in the Sierra Nevadas and doing research on fire behavior in the Florida Everglades. In 2021 Justin returned home and joined the New Jersey Forest Service. Here he works with the State Lands Management program focusing on implementing forest management prescriptions throughout New Jersey. Justin also helps with various other projects such as working on forest management modelling and simulation and contributing to ongoing outreach campaigns.

## **Trevor Raynor / NJ Forest Fire Service**

Assistant Division Forest Firewarden / Division B

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Trevor grew up in western Monmouth County, New Jersey where he enjoyed spending time outdoors. At 16 years old, he became a Junior Firefighter for Hope Fire Company. He graduated from Rutgers University with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Geomatics and Minor in Natural Resource Management. During college, he interned with the New Jersey Forest Fire Service as a GIS Specialist and Wildland Firefighter. Upon graduating, he was hired as a Section Forest Firewarden, covering Middlesex and Monmouth Counties. Recently Raynor was promoted to an Assistant Division Forest Firewarden and assists in administering the Forest Fire Service's central region of the State.