



## **Backyard Exploration**

### **Perfect Nature of the Pine Barrens**

Two Day Tour ~ September 30-Oct 1, 2026

One Beachy Night at the Oceanfront Sea Shell Resort, LBI • Whitesbog Historic Farm & Village Cranberry Harvest Tour • Estell Manor Park Boardwalk Trail • Warren E. Fox Nature Center • Double Trouble Historic Village • Scenic Pakim Pond • One Breakfast • Two Lunches • Fully Escorted

You don't always have to travel far and wide to find interesting, historic, and beautiful places; often enough some pretty fantastic hidden gems are right here in your own backyard just waiting to be explored! The New Jersey Pine Barrens are one of these gems that you've perhaps driven through several times but never stopped to appreciate. This unique, beautiful, and fascinating ecosystem is actually the largest forested area on the Eastern Seaboard between Maine and the Florida Everglades. Today, and throughout history, humans have depended on the health and vitality of the Pine Barrens' ecosystems to provide water, clean air and a refuge for rare species of wildlife and plants. We'll spend our time here exploring the surprising diversity of scenery, habitats, and species within this forested region as we seek out ghost towns with historic sites and legends that tell the story of how past inhabitants have used and depended on this landscape for survival. We'll wander into the otherworldly beauty of the quiet, pine filled forests where we can take a deep breath of relaxation and appreciate the lovely beauty surrounding us. In the evening we'll have the sounds of the ocean nearby and a beach to walk along or a comfy spot in which to gaze into the night sky. So why not pack up a few things and let's get exploring!

**Day 1.** Today we travel south through New Jersey to the gateway of the Pine Barrens, the Whitesbog Historic Farm & Village, a small cranberry and blueberry farming village founded in 1857. We'll step back in time as we tour the village and learn its history along with information on cranberry farming, life in a rural South Jersey company town, and the individuals who started and kept the farming operations alive today. It should be close to cranberry harvest time so we may get to glimpse the wet harvest in progress and see berries floating on the bogs. Now it's time to enjoy an included lunch nearby before delving into more beauty of the Pine Barrens. Welcome to the lovely, scenic Pakim Pond in the perfect Pine Barrens setting with a carpet of soft pine needles at your feet and gently swaying pine branches offering shade overhead. Take a stroll along the easy flat, sandy trail winding around the pond's edge



**Whitesbog Village Cranberries**



**Estell Manor Park Boardwalk**

and immerse into the perfect nature of the area while keeping an eye out for carnivorous sundew and pitcher plants and an ear out for breeding frogs. We'll take all our Pine Barren's relaxation straight to Long Beach Island in the serene setting among the shores the Atlantic Ocean. Take in all the ocean views and when you're hungry, it's a short walk to nearby restaurants for dinner on your own.

**Day 2.** We say goodbye to our serene ocean scenery, but more Pine Barrens nature awaits! Estell Manor Park, once the site of glassworks in the 1800s and later a munitions plant during World War I, is now a reforested area home to an incredible diversity of plants and animals. Visit the Warren E. Fox Nature Center with exhibits and brochures, then take a stroll into nature on the Swamp Trail Boardwalk, an elevated wooden nature trail that crosses through streams, cedar swamps, coastal forest, ruins of the Bethlehem Loading Company, and two areas leading to magnificent views of South River. After an included lunch at a local spot, we'll step back into time once more as we explore the ghost town of Double Trouble Historic Village, originally a cranberry farm fed by the fresh, pure waters of Cedar Creek. An easy nature trail through the peaceful Pine Barrens ecosystem will lead us past 14 original historic structures dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century including a general store, schoolhouse, sawmill, and cottages. It's then a quick drive north to get back home to your own special part of New Jersey. © 2026 The Educated Wanderer

Departs Ridgewood's Graydon Pool, at the corner of Linwood Ave & Northern Pkwy at 7:30 AM and returns at approximately 7:30 PM

Departs Madison's Kings Road Parking Lot, 62 Kings Rd. at 8:15 AM and returns at approximately 6:45 PM (park in the back of the lot next to the police station in the Daily Parking spaces)

Departs South Plainfield High School at the end of Lane Ave at 9:00 AM and returns at approximately 6:00 PM (as you enter from Lane Ave, park on the left by the fence between the two schools)

**Price per person is \$795 Twin & \$925 Single.** No reservations accepted without a deposit of \$150 per person. Make checks payable to "Educated Wanderer" and mail to the included address. Final payment is due August 1, 2026. Deposits are fully refundable if cancellation occurs on or before August 1, 2026. There are no refunds if cancellation occurs after August 1, 2026. Travel protection/cancellation coverage is available and highly recommended (approximately 10% of the total cost of the tour) but not included. One piece of luggage per person and one carry-on are permitted. Educated Wanderer is not responsible for any delays, cancellations, injuries or circumstances beyond its control and reserves the right to change this itinerary. All trip components are subject to change in accordance with Government, State and Local guidelines and/or mandates. This tour will run rain or shine. Visit our website at [www.educatedwanderer.com](http://www.educatedwanderer.com) for additional tours and pictures.

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Please reserve \_\_\_\_ seat(s). The enclosed check is for \$\_\_\_\_\_#3389

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone:\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Rooming with: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I will be departing from Ridgewood \_\_\_\_\_ from Madison \_\_\_\_\_ from South Plainfield \_\_\_\_\_

**Email for confirmation of registration and final payment**\_\_\_\_\_