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Gouveia, Susan

From: Lashway, Lisa
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2015 11:14 AM
To: Canning, Sean
Cc: Gouveia, Susan
Subject: FW: NJDEP Press Release - Beach Plum Festival
Attachments: beach plum festival -- P75.pdf

CORRESPONDENCE

From: Rogers, Joseph [mailto:Joseph.Rogers@dep.nj.gov] **On Behalf Of** Randazzo, Cindy
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2015 11:04 AM
To: Randazzo, Cindy
Subject: NJDEP Press Release - Beach Plum Festival

Dear Municipal Clerk:

Please see the attached NJDEP Press Release concerning the 18th Annual Beach Plum Festival this weekend at Island Beach State Park.

If you have any questions, please contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Cindy W. Randazzo
Director
Office of Local Government Assistance
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
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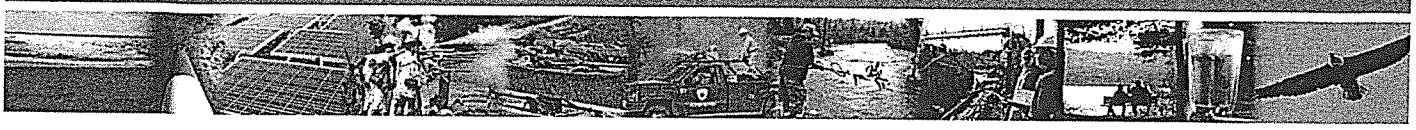
www.nj.gov/dep/

DEP NEWS RELEASE
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Chris Christie, Governor
Kim Guadagno, Lt. Governor
Bob Martin, Commissioner



IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 10, 2015
www.nj.gov/dep

Contact: Caryn Shinske (609) 984-1795
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Bob Considine (609) 292-2994

ISLAND BEACH STATE PARK TO HOST 18TH ANNUAL BEACH PLUM FESTIVAL THIS SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

END-OF-SUMMER EVENT IS PART OF CHRISTIE ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS TO HIGHLIGHT ACTIVITIES AT NEW JERSEY'S STATE PARKS

(15/P75) TRENTON – The 18th annual Island Beach State Park Beach Plum Festival, a popular event that supports programs at one of the most popular destinations in the State Park System, will be held this Sunday, September 13, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Bob Martin announced today.

The event, which is the main fundraiser of the year for the nonprofit partner Friends of Island Beach State Park, will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Ocean Bathing Area 1. Swimming will be permitted in this area during the event, which will be held rain or shine. There is no admission fee, but a $5 parking donation is suggested to help support the festival.

"This festival is a highlight every year on the Island Beach State Park calendar," said Mark Texel, Director of the State Park Service. "Thanks to dedicated partners like Friends of Island Beach State Park, this festival is always very well-attended and a much-anticipated event. We encourage everyone to come out this Sunday to learn more about the beach plum and its importance to the area, and to have a great time."

"It has been a great summer at Island Beach State Park and the annual Beach Plum festival puts a fine point on it as we turn to the fall," said Rich Boornazian, DEP Assistant Commissioner for Natural and Historic Resources. "We have had a great summer of swimming, recreation and relaxation and encourage anyone who has to enjoy this festival to come on out for a fun time."

The beach plum is a shrubby tree found in coastal environments from Maine to North Carolina, and is noted for its beautiful blossoms in early spring and its fruit in late summer and early autumn. The beach plum thrives in sandy soil, providing dune stabilization for sensitive coastal ecosystems such as those protected at Island Beach State Park.

The Beach Plum Festival offers activities, such as beach plum picking, children's games and more. This year's event will include a paddleboard raffle, music by Ocean County-based classic rock band New Suede Blues, crafts and numerous other exhibits and activities.

Visitors can watch lifesaving demonstrations by Island Beach State Park lifeguards, go on walks to see native plants, and participate in seining on Barnegat Bay with park naturalists to enclose and catch fish by using large nets with sinkers and floats. A food court with numerous cuisine choices will be available.

"The Beach Plum Festival is always very well-attended," said Patricia M. Vargo, President of the Friends of Island Beach State Park. "It is our biggest fundraiser of the year and we expect great attendance again this year. With the participation and support of visitors who attend the festival, we can continue our mission of improving and adding additional programs and events at Island Beach State Park."

The volunteer Friends of Island Beach State Park formed in 1996 to encourage protection of the barrier island ecosystem and to enhance both educational and recreational programs at the park. The group now has 175 members, publishes and distributes 30,000 copies of the park's Visitor Guide annually, has funded improvements to the park's Nature Center and Interpretive Center, picnic tables, radios for Nature Center staff, and installation of state-of-the-art camera system to monitor an osprey nest at the park, among other needs.

Funds raised from the festival will help the Friends of Island Beach plant American beach grass to further enhance and stabilize dunes. The group also hopes to eventually purchase a small van to transport children who participate in the park's many environmental programs each year to different locations on the island for other events.

The fruit of the wild beach plum fruit usually measures less than 2 centimeters in circumference. Its taste has been described as a mix between a plum, strawberry and apricot. It can be eaten raw, but is often used as a jam or jelly, marinade or dessert sauce.

During September, the beach at Ocean Bathing Area 2 will have lifeguard service September through 4 through 7, September 11 through 14, September 18 through 21 and September 25 through 28. Park hours are 8 a.m. to sunset. Showers will close one hour prior to the park's closing.

For more information on Island Beach State Park, visit:
www.nj.gov/de/parksandforests/parks/island.html

For more information on the Friends of Island Beach State Park, visit:
www.thefriendsofislandbeach.org

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