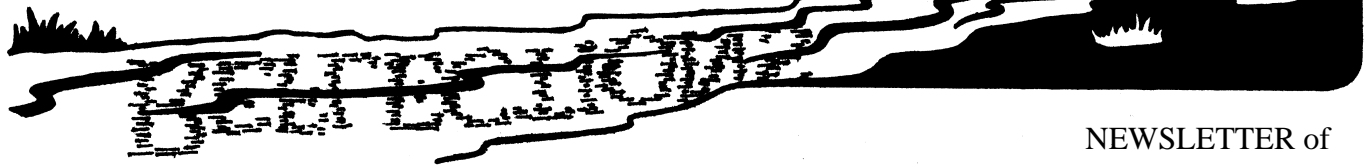


# WALKER VALLEY REFLECTIONS



SUMMER 2002

NEWSLETTER of  
GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT

## WHY WALK?

*I never knew a man go for an honest day's walk for whatever distance, great or small... and not have his reward in the repossession of his own soul.*  
G.M Trevelyan

This summer, we all have done our fair share of walking. Whether around Tremont or through the forest wilderness, walking has been a central point of daily life around here. We have hosted programs such as Elderhostel Hiking week, Naturalist Hiking week, Wilderness Adventure and High Adventure camps, all of which involved a considerable amount of walking. So I began to wonder; why do these people come to Tremont to walk through the woods? What is it about walking in the woods, up and down those steep, rocky trails that appeals to so many people? Edward Abbey also pondered this question, as he wrote:

"There is something unnatural about walking. Especially walking uphill, which always seems to me not only unnatural, but so unnecessary. That iron tug of gravitation should be all the reminder we need that in walking uphill we are violating a basic law of nature. Yet we persist in doing it. No one can explain why."

Maybe this explains why only ten percent of park visitors ever get out of their vehicles. And why an even smaller percentage of those people ever actually set out

to walk on any of the nine hundred miles of trail that exist in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Does this mean that the other ninety percent of people know something that we don't? I mean, why walk through Cades Cove when you can just drive around it? It sure doesn't take as long (unless you're there on a Saturday in July). As a matter of fact, the average American walks only about 350 yards a day, roughly 1.4 miles a week, according to Bill Bryson; from the house to the car, from the car to the office, back to the car at the end of the day etc. And yet, some of the participants who come to Tremont can travel up to thirty times that amount in a week if they choose, if not more.

I cannot speak for all of the walkers of the world, but for me, walking has a very meditative, calming effect on my psyche. After walking far enough, my feet start to move on their own, seemingly disconnected from my brain telling them to do so, and my brain becomes free to observe and experience the world around me.. Thoughts become more clear, and life becomes more real. Edward Abbey also observes that "Walking takes longer, for example, than any other known form of locomotion except crawling. Thus it stretches time and prolongs life." So maybe sometimes driving may be necessary and perhaps more convenient, but if we *never* get out of our

cars, we will certainly miss out on that experience and energy that is only discovered by walking, by using the power of our bodies alone to propel us through life.

I may not have the answer to my previous question of why people come to Tremont to walk, but I assume that it has something to do with the experience of living slowly, of engaging in a non-competitive, self-empowering activity with like-minded individuals, of experiencing the world through eyes undistracted by flashing lights and billboards, and finding that humans have the power, skill and talent of walking and observing this great world. Whether in the park or not, it doesn't take much, just one foot in front the other.

*-Crawford Paylor*

*Afoot and light-hearted I take to  
the open road;  
Healthy, free, the world before me,  
The long brown path leading wher-  
ever I choose.  
Henceforth, I ask not good for-  
tune;  
I myself am good fortune.  
Henceforth, I whimper no more,  
postpone no more, I need nothing  
I'm done with indoor complaints,  
libraries, and querulous criticisms.  
Strong and content I travel the  
open road.*

*Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass*

# TREMONT HAPPENINGS

## ALCOA FOUNDATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The \$250,000 grant that we received from Alcoa Foundation has produced many great outcomes already this year. One was that the Alcoa Foundation was awarded the National Heritage Conservation Award, part of the 2002 Environmental and Conservation Stewardship Awards given by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation. Their grant to Tremont along with other donations to, and partnerships with, local environmental organizations contributed to receiving this award.

Alcoa funds have also meant that we have been able to give out more scholarships and financial aid to our program participants than ever before. Other accomplishments include: allowing us to bring in scientists with expertise on bees and on hellbenders (see science corner article pages 6-9), purchase of much needed science equipment including a projection microscope, projection screen and digital camera hookup, hiring of 3 student research assistants for the summer, and much more.

We want to continue to voice our appreciation to Alcoa for this gift and to the Friends for their help in securing this grant as well as for the matching funds that they are contributing to our endowment fund!

## WORK DAY-

### WE NEED YOUR HELP

Come join us for our annual volunteer work day on Saturday November 24th. We will have a number of projects lined up and will use those who are willing to work, no matter what your skills. Please send in a registration form or call by November 15th so we have an idea of how many are coming.

## KEEP GETTING THIS NEWSLETTER

Please return the enclosed form to let us know you want to keep receiving Walker Valley Reflections!

## TRANSITIONS

What a great team we had assembled to work with our summer programs! The summer teacher naturalists, summer interns and research assistants, listed on the staff list at the back of this newsletter, have now headed to the four directions. In addition to our thanks and hope that some will return, we wish them the best with spreading the environmental education message elsewhere. Our core staff helped provide a solid foundation to our summer programs and we are very pleased to be starting off the fall season with this same great group of people who have all been with us at least a year.

Lebo Sekgothe will be returning to South Africa where she will be working at Addo Elephant Park in Port Elizabeth as an environmental educator. We hope that she gained as much from her experience as we did having her with us.

We welcome Artem Khatsko as our newest international intern. Artem is finishing his undergraduate work in biology at Mari El State University in Russia. He will be with us until November.

## GEORGE W FRY ENDOWMENT

George W Fry was superintendent of Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the 1960's. This summer his daughter, Georgiana Vines, approached the park about doing something in her father's honor. During his tenure George helped to establish the job corps program at Tremont. He also served on the Natural History Association board and was supportive of Tremont programs as they developed. At a press conference this June, Senator Jimmy Duncan announced that an endowment at Tremont in George Fry's name would be an appropriate way to honor him. "George Fry had a long and distinguished career throughout this nation with the National Park Service and spent much

of his time working with the Boy Scouts and other young people," remarked Duncan. "It is especially appropriate to honor him by this fellowship in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, a special place he cherished."

The Fry family has been working to raise funds to establish this endowment. Those funds will be matched by the Friends of the Smokies and then given to Tremont. The fund will provide an endowed chair in science education meaning that it will generate funds each year for us to hire a summer research assistant. We are proud to be able to honor George Fry in this way and appreciate the support of his daughter Georgiana Vines and the Friends for making this happen.

## LARGEST PRIVATE FINANCIAL GIFT TO FRIENDS DESIGNATED FOR TREMONT

Long time Gatlinburg resident and friend of the Smokies Wilma Maples, made a donation to the Friends to be designated for the Tremont endowment fund to help Tremont in offering quality programs to underserved students. The undisclosed amount was the largest financial gift by an individual that the Friends have yet received. Once again we are thankful to Mrs. Maples and the Friends for helping us assure that future generations will experience and learn about the wonders of this great park!

**If you would like to join those who are giving to Tremont to help create an outstanding world-class center that serves all who would like to come contact our office or the Friends of the Smokies at 1-800-845-5785**

# GOODBYE! OFF TO SOUTH AFRICA

It's amazing how time flies... When I first arrived here in January it felt like it was going to be a long 7 months, but now it's time for me to go and it's hard for me to say goodbye.

I have a lot of memories from Tremont that I will take home with me. This place has captured my heart in a way that words could not explain. I am going to miss a lot of things about Tremont as well as the people I grew attached to during the past months.

I arrived at Tremont on January 13<sup>th</sup> 2002 and at first I didn't know what to expect.

It was my first time visiting the U.S. and I didn't know anybody, but at the same time I was very excited and felt honored to have had this kind of a lifetime opportunity. I was just a 23-year old South African stranger in America. The

Tremont staff were very welcoming and they took the time to explain what I would be expected to do over the period of my internship.

I was very impressed by their level of professionalism and the way in which their programs were designed. If you were fortunate enough to have participated in any of their programs you would know what I'm talking about. The Lesson Plan Manual designed for school groups has a wealth of information on environmental education topics relating to the park. All the lessons are fun to learn as they include hiking around Institute and doing field activities along the trails. Watching the Teacher Naturalists (TNs) out in the field working with the groups made me very excited and enthusiastic about my future here at Tremont.

Not long after my arrival, I was

also out in the field leading a hike to the Spruce Flats Falls, one of the hikes most groups look forward to when here. That, for me, was one of the most memorable days. It was such a wonderful feeling to know that I was now part of Tremont's professional family. It is such a wonderful feeling to hear the participants' appreciation of your work and to see the smiles on their faces after the lesson is over.

On 26 January 2002, I was fortunate enough to be one of a handful of people that got to witness the reintroduction of Elk in the park at Cataloochee. The animals had been in the trailer for a long time and as soon as the door was opened they sprinted into the pen and disappeared behind the trees. Freedom at last!

Just when I thought I had witnessed the most spectacular event of my life, springtime came and the park sort of magically transformed into gigantic blanket of

beautiful wildflowers blooming all over. Tourists from all over came flocking into the park in multitudes as if they were drawn by Smokies wildflower-scented potion. I started to learn most of the flowers in order to help our program participants in identifying them. That was a very big challenge for me as there were a lot of flowers to identify, not forgetting all the trees as well. To add to the beauty of springtime, wild animals crept out from their winter homes to 'smell the roses' and bask in the warmth of the sun. This was a crazy period for me as the biodiversity of the park sprung from all corners.

I could write a hundred pages about the different things I learned at Tremont but reading about it and imagining all these things doesn't compare to experiencing it on your own. I've always felt at peace when in the wild,

just like when I go game-viewing in one of our parks back home, watching the Big 5 (lion, elephant, rhino, leopard and buffalo) roam freely in the bush. Of course you'll be viewing from inside your vehicle! It was interesting to see the different wildlife, trees and flowers.

How can I forget the day I spotted the first timber rattlesnake sighting of the year? The creature I respect the most in the park, together with any other snakes! I walked right past it when I was leading a group of kids on an all day hike. It was about a foot away from my foot, on the side of the trail and I didn't see it! One of the kids saw it after I had walked passed it and I noticed that nobody was following me anymore, and that's when I saw it. The kids were so excited to see it, especially the boys, and they all wanted to take pictures of it. As a leader, you have to try and stay calm. That's the role I played that day, the "cool and calm snake-loving tree hugger!" We were about a mile and half away from camp and my eyes were fixed on the ground all the way back. Every stick and root on the ground looked like a snake and I just couldn't wait to get back to camp.

As I mentioned earlier, I could go on and on about my Tremont adventures. I will remember each and every day I spent here and keep spreading the work about the good job Tremont's doing. On behalf of South African National Parks, and myself I would like to thank Tremont and the US National Park Service for creating such opportunities for international volunteers as well as taking care of all the logistics for my trip. I will definitely use the skills and knowledge I gained and try my level best in "connecting people and nature". I will miss all the people I worked with and as I journey back home I will have 7 months' worth of memories to reflect on my 18-hour long flight. "Sala Sentle" (Goodbye) Walker Valley, you will always be in my heart!

*-Lebo Sekgothe*



# MY JOURNEY TO TREMONT AND BEYOND.

## I THE BEGINNING

A small boy-age seven, quietly and with great stealth slips over the old fence which marks for him the allowed boundaries surrounding his rural home from the "out of bounds" set by his parents. It's the beginning of a journey for him into the fields and nearby woods, which beckon him in a silent mystical language that cannot be explained to his parents or the majority of his peers. With heightened senses and deep felt emotion, the boy is drawn towards the fields with their tangle of plants, as well as the woods with its profusion of trees, large and small, along with numerous grapevines sheltering a shallow cold, spring branch whose source is the hillside family spring.

The child plunges in, drawn just this way then that way, by vibrant colored wildflowers with delicate scents and bursting sweet black berries in the hard to reach briar thickets. Now the branch beckons as it gurgles and winds over moss covered logs and rocks on its relentless journey through the wooded hollows, across the broad corn-filled field that stretch across that bottamland, and into the mouth of a larger creek whose combined waters will at its journey's end become part of the ocean.

Suddenly, the boy's journey is interrupted by a far-off too familiar sound of a car horn signaling supper and discovery of another "out of bounds" foray by all-knowing, loving parents. This journey, like many before will be resumed another day and, after all, the fields and woods will still be there, or will they?

This boy whom I lovingly write about happens to be me, but it could very well be you. In a happier, simpler, slower paced time long ago, but not so far away in our hearts and minds, many people bonded with the land and their natural surroundings in an unhurried, fearless way. They were filled with a sense of joy and excitement over what could or would happen on that particular day.

I believe with every fiber of my being that my spiritual journey to Tremont began back in those early childhood journeys.

## II THE PRESENT

I fast forward in time to the present day, much like many do when watching an all too familiar video. Tremont, an environmental education center in Great Smoky

...many, like myself  
are subconsciously  
being called to  
pick up that often  
interrupted jour-  
ney started in  
childhood.

Mountains National Park, has captured my heart and soul, for it is here and I believe I have discovered my true calling which also happens to be Tremont's main purpose: Connecting people with nature or as in my case: re-connecting me to nature and showing me the way back to my life's journey.

I have often wondered why people make their way to Tremont. I believe many like myself are subconsciously being called to pick up that often interrupted journey started in childhood. Looking back, I know I have at times, tried to resume the journey through my scouting activities and other outdoor pursuits centered around hunting, fishing, boating, hiking, and environmental teaching at Tremont and back home at my school.

All of us long to ignore the car horns of life calling us to supper, family, and responsibility. Many come to Tremont for a week, a few days, or a summer shedding life's other burdens to try re-connecting for a while with the spiritual essence of life.

Looking back through years of good times, bad times, bumps and bruises, both physical and emotional. I know now that when I can lose myself in the fields and woods it is as if I am entering God's cathedral where all tears are wiped away and my soul is filled with a sense of wonder, warmth and well-being. It is almost as if the first day in the Garden of Eden. The creator looked down on his creation and all was good.

## III THE FUTURE

My journey, which started as a journey of the feet, has now become a journey of the mind and spirit. Like many journeys, we discover that what may seem to us in human terms to have been a long journey, is in reality one that has only begun.

There are many more discoveries to be discovered before we sleep. If only we will begin to see with our heart mind and soul.

Where are you in your life's journey? Have you been interrupted by life's call to "supper" (careers, bosses, the pursuit of perceived happiness, or monetary gains)?

All of us realistically have to strive for a balance between the modern world we live in and the natural world outside our door. Snails and turtles measure their journeys in inches, feet and yards, rather than miles.

My hope in the time God will grant me to live on this physical earth is to help forlorn, weary travelers re-connect with the land that has nurtured us and will continue to do so if we approach it in the reverence and awe we all did as children. If we can see through child-like eyes of faith, we will re-discover that spiritual road that leads to the light of true understanding. Amen & Amen

-Mickey Larkins

## OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES

Children tell it like it is. We learn this over and over again as we host school groups and summer camps at GSMIT. Few things in life are as funny as listening to a 10-year-old boy describe a salamander hunt. Few things in life are as rewarding as hearing a 16-year-old girl describe a life-changing backpacking experience.

We've been putting together a list of some of our favorite quotes at Tremont. Here's a sample of the gems we've come up with, so far.

One camper explained to us where the "smoke" in Great Smoky Mountains National Park comes from. "My Papaw says it's the rabbits makin' coffee." Another told us he had figured out why the rugged Spruce Flats trail is also called the "Falls Trail." "There's so much stuff to FALL over."

On a more serious note, we frequently receive positive feedback from children who say they never knew learning about nature could be so much fun.

"I had no clue you could strike quartz together and it would make a spark," says Thomas. "I learned that it was a chemical reaction inside the rock." "The red-cheeked salamander only lives in the Smoky Mountains," adds Matt. "I also learned how big a part I play in keeping the earth healthy."

Another camper told us she learned so much that she'll never be the same. "You have changed my feeling about nature forever."

Aimee, a 15-year-old girl who took part in Wilderness Adventure Camp this year, remarked to a friend that GSMIT had made a difference in her life, as well. "It has really changed my life. I used to be afraid of every-

thing in the woods and wouldn't even pick up a stick because I thought it would hurt me." "But now I love coming to the Smokies to explore."

Sometimes we don't hear from the kids themselves. We hear from their parents, as in the case of another participant in Wilderness Adventure Camp 2002. "Your camp changed Jessica permanently...Not only did she talk non-stop about the program, but she changed her way of life to be more environmentally conscious."

For all the funny anecdotes we have on file at Tremont, statements like these are the ones we take to heart. Statements like these reassure us that we are...and should continue...to strive towards "connecting people and nature."

-Tonya Stoutt-Brown

## MY NEW HOME IN WALKER VALLEY

Coming into Tremont this past May from Ohio, I had no idea what to expect of my summer. However, the one thing that I did know was that I could not pass up the opportunity to work in the Great Smoky Mountains.

My family had been vacationing in the Smokies for as long as I could remember and I knew that no matter what I was in for I'd love every minute of my summer here, and I was right.

I experienced many new things here at Tremont this summer and met a number of exciting people. Each member of the staff brought something unique and exciting to the table to offer to our participants. Whether it was the diligent work of our office staff, the knowledge of what plants can be used as insect bite remedies on the trail, an insatiable love for all things wild, or even the simple desire to reach out to the future of our world and implant the seed of knowledge, all of it added up to a terrific summer here at Tremont

not just for me, but for all that were here.

Some of the experiences that will forever live on in my mind from this summer include; seeing a Timber Rattler along the trail during an all day hike just lying there with no concern of our presence, sitting around a campfire listening to people playing music and sharing stories, teaching classes on Stream Evolution and Orienteering, swimming in the river, as well as meeting new friends in all of the campers that came through this summer.

The location of Tremont had to be the icing on the cake as far as making this summer memorable. We were always within earshot of the Middle Prong of the Little River, Fodderstack Mountain was always looming overhead, and just being situated within the national park where the diversity of life within the park was part of our daily lives.

There was a majestic beauty in everything that surrounded us; a beauty that words cannot describe.

I'd like to thank all of the people that made this summer the most incredible work experience that I have ever had, especially my coworkers and all of the campers that I had the pleasure of working with. To be honest I don't even know that I can call what I did here work, it was more of a pleasure than work. I am so privileged to have been able to have an experience such as this.

It is these memories and friendships that will bring me back to Walker Valley and Tremont. A song written by Ken Vorhis, Director of Tremont, sums up my sentiments for this place:

*I've found a home in Walker Valley  
I'll return though I travel far away  
Tremont holds, a piece of my soul  
Great Smoky Mountains I'll be back  
Some other day*

-Scott Snider

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# from the science corner

Another frantic but fun summer of research is coming to a close. We accomplished so much, it is difficult to relay it all, but here are some highlights:

- We collected hundreds of bees and recorded their associations with a variety of flowering plants.
- We completed a third successful year of bird banding (85 birds banded).
- We caught, identified, and released thousands of moths. Our new favorite (or perhaps nemesis?) is *Condylolomia participalis*, a small Pyralid moth that appeared in our moth trap in enormous numbers (1000+) in June.
- We collected data on monarch butterfly populations and their milkweed habitat at Cades Cove, and will participate in monarch tagging activities this fall as they migrate through our area.
- We surveyed fern and snail populations along the Finley Cane Trail.
- Tremont staff and student volunteers participated in several BioQuests for the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI). BioQuests are short, focused periods during which volunteers and experts work together to collect and identify as many species as possible within a given group. For example, we sought out caterpillars and moths for the Lepidoptera Quest, scraped algae from rocks for the Protista Pursuit, and explored dead logs in the name of a Slime Mold Search.
- We were also fortunate to host two visiting scientists: Terry Griswold, a bee expert from Utah, and Max Nickerson, a hellbender expert from Florida. Although our bee-finding efforts seem to be more productive than our hellbender-finding efforts, we plan to continue our collaboration with both researchers.
- By reporting sightings during hikes all over the park, Tremont staff and participants helped the park track the invasion of Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, an invasive exotic species threatening hemlock trees.
- We recorded our many observations of reptiles this summer and collected reptile road kill for Ben Cash, reptile researcher for the ATBI.

These accomplishments were achieved through a large crew of enthusiastic “citizen scientists”, including 17 science campers, 6 Elderhostel participants, dozens of Naturalist Week and College Consortium participants, 2 teachers and 11 students from St. Mary’s School in Oak Ridge, many Volunteer Research Interns from surrounding high schools and universities, and Sarah Hoyle, our ATBI Teacher Intern. The glue holding us all together was our fantastic team of Summer Research Assistants, who participated in all of the projects I have mentioned and keep things running with behind-the-scenes work ranging from washing petri dishes to entering data to writing a Friday Science Report each week to keep us all informed. A hearty thanks to everyone! We are seeking student volunteers (8<sup>th</sup> grade and up) to help us to continue our research this fall—please contact me if you are interested.

-Michelle Prysby

Science Education Specialist

## HOME AGAIN

After spending the summer of 2001 working as a research assistant at Tremont, I felt prepared for a change of scenery. I have always loved the Smokies and enjoyed spending time satisfying my yearning for fresh air and the certain kind of unity I feel with nature while in the mountains. But after my graduation from high school, I was sure that I was ready to move on to Kentucky where college, new experiences, and change awaited me. Surely spending so much of my summer in the Smokies had cemented my remembrance of the fascination I felt for nature’s diverse organisms and sealed an appreciation of the mountains in my mind’s eye.

As my days as a college student multiplied, I began to notice startling differences between myself and many of the people I had met. Moths circling the light above the dorm door became malicious deadly insects just waiting to attack an

unaware student with their flapping wings. Upon seeing a bee, the proper etiquette was to scream loudly and then swing anything handy in its direction no matter how far away it was from one’s body. The disparities in behavior I also observed in myself. When one day walking to the cafeteria with my friends, I saw a beetle and instinctively dropped to my knees and began following it around in order to get a closer look. As soon as I looked up and saw the expressions on my friends’ faces, I knew some kind of happy medium would have to be found, for I was in a strange and foreign land.

The day our biology lab class took a trip to a wildlife reserve I was very excited. I had been at school for two months and had not yet been able to explore Kentucky’s landscape. As we drove towards the reserve, I was shocked at the lack of foothills on the horizon. In reality, I had no idea

how accustomed I had become to the ever-present view of mountains towering in the distance or to the easy access I had to a national park. No longer was I able to go hiking or backpacking for free in such a beautiful place. Nostalgic memories of the numerous trips taken with my parents and friends filled my mind as I longed for a chance to experience the Smokies again.

Now I am home again, back with my family, my friends, and my mountains. My experience this summer has again allowed me to make new friends and contribute to the continuing goal of connecting people with nature. I had tremendous fortune to again have the chance to work at Tremont, a place where I always feel at home and where I know that when I look to the horizon, I will always see the mountains.

-Erin Henegar

## EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES

This summer, I had the awesome opportunity to work in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. I learned many new and exciting things while helping with the ATBI project. I would definitely say that my two favorite projects were moths and bird banding.

Even though working with moths meant that I had to lug the refrigerator trap up and down the stairs and I had to stay inside most of the day, it was still really neat to learn how many different types of moths are really out there! At the beginning of the summer I could hardly tell the difference between a moth and a butterfly, but now I can identify several moths without even having to look them up in the book! What an awesome feeling! I have decided that I would like to own a

Peterson's Moth Guide so I can identify moths at home or when I am out camping!

While working here at Tremont, I was also able to help with bird banding. It was really neat to follow Tremont's motto and connect with nature! By helping with banding this season, I was able to learn what kind of data "birders" collect, how to properly remove a bird from the mist nets, and how to hold a bird without hurting it. I have always enjoyed watching birds at home and trying to identify them, and now, thanks to Paul Super and Charlie Muise, I can now identify some birds by sight and/or sound! My favorite part of bird banding was, of course, being able to hold a wild bird in my hands!

Although I have volunteered at Tremont for the past four or five

years, I had never really considered making a career out of it... until now! I am not sure where my life will go from here, but I know that what I have learned by working here will always have an impact on my life!

I plan to continue volunteering at Tremont for as long as possible and I would love to be able to come back next year as a Summer Research Assistant. Someday, I would like to come back as a Teacher Naturalist or Summer Intern.

I would like to say a quick thank you to the people who made this extraordinary experience happen for me. To Paul Super for putting up with me and getting me involved in various projects as a volunteer! To Michelle Prysby for working with me and teaching me this summer! Erin, Rachel, and Sarah you guys rock!

*-Amanda Heinrich*

## POLLINATOR PARANOIA

When I first heard about the summer research assistant's position at Tremont I became very excited. It seemed like such an incredible opportunity—a chance to learn new ideas, experience new things, and meet new people! Besides, getting paid to snorkel in mountain streams, hike trails all day, and dig in the dirt while my fellow classmates were slaving away at local fast-food joints was also rather appealing. One thing led to another and I received a call from the science ed. specialist, Michelle Prysby, saying I had gotten the position!

However, in my excitement to work at GSMIT, I had overlooked an important fact in the job description...bees. Now, for as long as I can remember I have had an unexplained fear of these insects. I am perfectly aware of how irrational this fear is but when it comes to bees, all logic and reason is lost on me. If I see a flying object and hear the buzzing, my first instinct is to run...preferably as far as possible.

'Pollinators.' That's the term Michelle picked to describe the bee

project. I still assumed, however, that Tremont would not put me in close contact with the stinging terrors. I thought wrong. I still remember quite vividly that fateful day in May when Michelle led us outside to collect bees for the first time. Once there, superhuman that she is, Michelle reached into a net with her BARE HAND to place a bee that she had captured in a kill jar. Did I understand how catching bees was done? Yes. Would I be brave enough to do it myself? Good question.

About a week later we went to our infamous Marc's Trail bee plot. This would be my first experience catching bees in nets by myself. After we hiked to the plot I bravely set out alone, armed only with my net and several vials... Suddenly I heard a buzzing to the right of my ear... biting my tongue to keep from shrieking, I ran after it with my net. I quickly caught it... and then I placed the bee (still in the net) into the kill jar. I had just caught



my first bee! My heart was pounding and I looked closely at the source of my fear... he was actually rather cute and fuzzy. This couldn't possibly have been what I was afraid of for so long!

Over the course of this summer, I have learned many things, one of which is that the bee project is not an activity to be feared or dreaded. Catching bees is fun and bees are actually very interesting creatures. Of course, I will still not stick my bare hand into a net, but I can- confirmed bee hater that I was- now look a bee calmly in the face without running away. It just goes to show that all prejudices- even those against bees- come from a lack of knowledge. So thanks to my summer at Tremont, I now have a better understanding of bees, but also of moths, flies, salamanders, snails, and even protists. After all, creatures that have been around before humans, and more than likely will outlast us, deserve a little more respect than a flyswatter!

*-Rachel Hughes*

## A BIRD IN THE HAND

This marks the third season of Tremont's bird banding station. We are part of a continent-wide program called Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship, or MAPS for short. Like most research endeavors, this program is set up to answer questions. The long title translates in plain English to these two questions: How many baby birds are being produced? How long are they living? Over these three years we have learned a lot.

This year we caught and banded 85 birds of twenty-one species, including some we did not previously catch: Brown-headed Cowbird, Hooded Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Northern Parula, and either a Gray-cheeked or Bicknell's Thrush (more on that later). Perhaps most notable were eighteen recaptures – birds that were previously banded. Recaptures provide the most information, since we can get an idea of how long they live, how many return to the same place each year, and whether birds hatched here will return to breed here as adults. It's too early to say anything for sure, but we are starting to build a good database.

One trend we are watching closely is a possible decline in Louisiana Waterthrushes. This small brown warbler nests by mountain streams and is considered common in the lower elevations of the park, including Tremont. Although the total number of birds banded has remained steady (84 in 2000, 86 in 2001 and 85 in 2002), the number of Louisiana Waterthrushes has declined each year. With just three years of data, it's far too early to panic, but we will certainly keep tabs on them from here on out.

The very first bird we caught was an interesting visitor, which we assumed at the time to be a migrant. It was either a Gray-cheeked Thrush, or a Bicknell's Thrush. Both species breed far north of here; the former is seen annually in spring migration, but the latter is yet to be documented in the state of Tennessee. The two

species are so similar that they used to be considered races of the same species. Most observers in the field will not try to differentiate one without hearing the bird sing. Naturally, most birds do not sing when being held, so banders rely on a variety of measurements and very careful observations (how much bigger is this wing feather than that wing feather? Are the toes darker than the ankle? What are the dimensions of the bill?) to separate them. Unfortunately, this bird escaped before we could get enough detail to positively identify it, though we believe it to be the more expected Gray-cheeked. On the second banding day we saw a bird of that complex. Same individual? The story got much more intriguing on August 3, our last banding day, when we caught another individual of this complex, which we have tentatively identified as a Gray-cheeked. This bird was heavily in molt. Molting is a semi-annual process of replacing feathers. It often changes the bird's appearance and leaves it short on feathers for a time, which can affect a bird's ability to fly. Molting usually occurs just prior to migration, since during the busy breeding season feathers are worn, broken or lost. This bird also had very little fat. These factors lead us to believe it was not migrating. Did this bird stick around here all summer? If only I'd gotten a band on that one in May!

Tremont has another goal in running this station: teaching young people science by having them do science. This year we had three high school volunteers, two high school interns, one college freshman intern and one high school science teacher assisting with the station. Each one helped with all aspects of running the station, to varying degrees depending on experience. At the beginning of the season they helped erect ten nets according to GPS data. Each day they arrived faithfully at 6:00 am to help open the nets. During the ensuing six hours they helped check

the nets on a schedule, removed birds from the nets, weighed birds, took detailed notes using a vocabulary that was, at first entirely foreign to them (retrices, tertials, outer coverts, cloacal protuberance?) and released birds after they had been fully poked and prodded (the birds, not the students).

Additionally, these intrepid souls braved cold, early mornings, hot afternoons, black flies, noseeums, mosquitos, slippery rocks, a treacherous trail and two river crossings. Whew! Makes me tired thinking about what I would have had to do all alone if it were not for their inquisitive nature, work ethic and willingness to be flexible.

Below, in their own words, are what two of our volunteers experienced this summer.

*-Charlie Muise*

### WORKING WITH BIRDS

It is six a.m. on a Saturday, and I am walking along a trail in Great Smoky Mountains National Park setting up mist nets. Though it is July, the weather is cool and brisk. There is a certain smell that the mountains have, a crisp yet soothing earthy scent that always draws a smile to my face. But the mountain air is not the only reason I am smiling. Today, along with other young volunteers, I have been given the chance to contribute my time and effort to help understand and save one of the most beautiful and delicate creatures on the planet, the songbird.

By six-thirty, seven nets have been set up at Tremont, Great Smoky Mountain's environmental research center and retreat. Each net site has been carefully planned out according to a bird's local travel patterns. Now it is time to wait twenty minutes until we can check each net for any findings. This is my first year working with the park service. I decided to volunteer to help band birds because of a sudden desire to try something new.

Little did I know that I would enjoy working in the park so much. Though the atmosphere is indeed beautiful and soothing, there is something else I receive from working in the park. Banding birds is contributing to science and the well-being of a priceless species. My volunteer experience helped me realize that I wanted to pursue a career in environmental science to become a park ranger.

Now it is six forty-five and time to check the bird nets. Luckily, one of the nets that I was chosen to check has a young Louisiana Waterthrush. To remove the bird properly, I place the bird's neck between my two fingers while untangling the bird's claws from the net. The bird is placed in a cloth bag and taken back to the research center where I will record information about the bird under the assistance of either Charlie Muise or Paul Super. Wing length, gender, wing wear, flight feather wear, and age are a few of the observations recorded on a chart, later to be sent to a lab for further research. After collecting the data, a tiny metal band is placed on the bird's leg. The metal band has a number around the edge, different for each bird caught. After banding the bird, I take the bird back to the net where it was found, and release it.

At twelve p.m., it is time to pack up and go home, away from nature, to the crowded streets and polluted air. But maybe someday I will come back to the woods and make a new home. Perhaps I will be a park ranger. Either way, I know that no matter what I do, I will always remember the time I held a tiny bird and appreciated nature's gifts for the first time.

- Heather Amann

*Heather helped us for the second year in a row. She just graduated from Fulton High School in N. Knoxville and will be going to Tennessee Wesleyan College in Athens, TN to study biology.*

## LEARNING BY DOING

As I was finishing my Hardee's chicken biscuit at 5:45 in the morning on my way to Tremont, I couldn't help but question whether or not I had been sane when I decided to volunteer to band birds for the summer. Yet, on that same day, as I held an American Robin, I realized that my choice was worthwhile. Never before had I admired the beauty of birds and their songs. Now when I hike through the mountains, I not only notice the various wildflowers and gargantuan trees, but I listen intently for the numerous birds which I have learned to identify.



Bird banding is an exciting challenge which very few people are able to experience. The early mornings, constant hiking between nets, and big bird droppings are not the greatest parts of banding birds, but being able to hold a live bird is worthwhile.

Much work is involved in bird banding. First, the nets have to be set up and checked periodically. Then when a bird is captured, it must be processed. The bird must be banded, aged, and most importantly admired before it is released. Besides the excitement of seeing a live bird close up, the educational experience is also incredible.

Lots of people have probably read a book with information per-

taining to birds, but the best education comes from hands-on experiences. Reading from a book cannot teach anyone just how delicate a bird is, but actually removing a bird from a net can.

Much patience and care is needed to remove birds from a net, as they frequently kick their legs, twist, and do somersaults in the nets to make themselves all the more difficult to extract. It took half of the summer watching superior bird banders before I was able to complete this delicate process of removing a bird from a net. Once I removed my first bird, a Wood Thrush, I felt very proud, for not many people can say that they caught and held a bird.

Though bird banding has been a great educational experience for me, I have to say that it has been more fun than anything else. To be honest, there is no way I would have traveled to Tremont eight times this summer to just learn; I learn plenty during the school year. But banding birds provides me with excitement. I wonder what bird we'll catch next, or even if we'll catch a bird at all. Bird banding is also a challenge. It is difficult to remove a bird from a net and maintain its safety, but that challenge is something that I wanted to defeat this summer, and I did. I luckily managed to help out with the MAPS project without hurting any birds, which was my goal.

While banding birds, I not only became more appreciative of birds and learned about them, but I had fun doing so, and I feel as if I made a difference.

- Andrew Matthewson

*Andrew has just started his senior year at Maryville High School. This was his first season helping at Tremont and he learned very quickly.*

# AN END IN SIGHT?

## DAY 7, TREMONT HIGH ADVENTURE BACKPACKING TRIP

Wow, our last day in the backcountry. After a somewhat fitful night of sleep I awoke to visible patches of blue sky between the leaves and branches overhead. Everyone in camp appeared to be sound asleep. Whether my wakefulness was due to anticipation of arriving back at Tremont or dread of having to leave this beautiful wilderness I'm not quite sure. Nonetheless I rose and took a quick dip in Forney Creek, which ran alongside our campsite.

Myself, along with my co-leader Tom, and nine teenagers participating in Tremont's 10 day High Adventure Camp, would be hiking a short three miles out to Lakeview drive. There, we would be picked up and shuttled back to campus. A *short* 3 miles I suppose, compared to the miles we had hiked days hence, already having covered about 39 in total. We started our trip by hiking out of Tremont; continuing up over Clingman's Dome, the second highest peak east of the Mississippi; and would be finishing at Lakeview Drive, or what is sometimes known as the North Shore Road or, somewhat less affectionately, the Road to Nowhere.

After 6 days in the backcountry, the trip would be over in just a short time. Once we were packed up and out of camp the miles flew by and we had reached pavement and were standing at the gaping mouth of a 1200 ft tunnel before we knew it. Ah, so this is the road to nowhere, I thought aloud.

We gathered at the mouth of the tunnel to reflect on the past few days, what we had all accomplished together, how many days it had rained, the importance of the experience we had all shared, and the amazing landscape that served as the medium for that experience. I think we all felt that the tunnel was some foreign object, a physical manifestation for the transition we were all facing from the backcountry life to our day to day life (which one would

be considered civilization?). I watched the campers pass through the tunnel one by one, black silhouettes against the garish light that outlined the tunnel's distant end. Soon I was left standing alone at the mouth, trying to convince myself to start walking again, and finish the last half-mile of our trip.

But what were this tunnel and road doing here in the first place? This question has been asked by many, as this is an issue with a lot of history and more importantly, controversy. Here is a little background information.

Around the time of World War II, Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) purchased over 11,000 acres of land in North Carolina along the Little Tennessee River, most of which would be flooded with the creation of Fontana Dam, a project built to provide electricity for Alcoa Aluminum. This project would also isolate approximately 44,000 acres once NC 288 was flooded by the rising waters of Fontana Reservoir. The ownership of this acreage, upon creation of the dam, was transferred to the National Park Service to become part of Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP). With WW II underway, there was a lack of funds to rebuild a road to replace NC 288. Because of this, the U.S. Department of the Interior agreed that if and when Congress appropriated the funds, a new road within the GSMNP along the north shore of Fontana Reservoir would be built to replace NC 288. This became known as the "1943 Agreement."

Several decades ago, NC 28 was built with state funding and currently runs along the south shore of Fontana. However, there was and is still demand by some for a new road to run along the north shore. Work began on the North Shore Road in the 1960's when about 7 miles of the road were built, including the tunnel that served as our abrupt exit from the wilderness. The rest of the

road was never completed.

Several complications have prevented the completion of the North Shore Road that could cover some 30 miles through the southern end of the Park. Acid deposition caused from construction through Anakeesta rock formation, disturbance to wildlife, and the requirement of extensive cuts and fills have all been cited as reasons to halt construction indefinitely. Also, GSMNP is one of the largest roadless areas in the Eastern U.S. and further construction would prevent the park from ever being designated as a wilderness area, a designation that occurs infrequently in the east.

The debate over this issue is still brewing. Many residents of Swain County, Representative Charles Taylor (R-NC), and Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) still strongly support the construction of the road. However, the National Park Service and many environmental groups, as well as the Citizens for the Economic Future of Swain County, are in favor of a cash settlement. Currently the Federal Highway Administration is working to begin an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed road and public meetings will most likely begin in mid to late fall.

I could hear the echo of my footsteps as I walked through the cool, dank environment of the tunnel. I tried to imagine how the park would change if this road was completed, how the wilderness of the Smokies shaped the unique experience of these 9 teenagers and their instructors. Most people who visit the park view it through the windshield of a car. How can one truly experience the Smokies in this way? As I reached the end of the tunnel I squinted my eyes in the bright sunlight feeling elated at having made one small step towards the preservation of this incredible Park.

-Bethany Hannah

# BEAR ENCOUNTERS IN CADES COVE

Researchers have found that the black bear, *Ursus americanus*, population in Great Smoky Mountain National Park has now grown to around 2,000 bears. This is a direct result of the refuge that Great Smoky Mountain National Park provides. Fortunately this Park is also available as a getaway for people. Most times when people and bears meet it is a fantastic event. In the last several months however there have been several human-bear interactions that have resulted in tragedy.

Every year about 10 million vacationers and recreationists travel to GSMNP. Many folks come here to hike, ride horses, fish, and jump in the fresh mountain streams to cool down. And many people come here to get a chance to see the elusive Smoky Mountain icon, the black bear. This summer many people have gotten way too close and personal with these wild creatures.

It's not an easy life for a bear. Finding food, shelter and raising young is hard enough. On top of all these normal day-to-day challenges Cades Cove bears have been dealing with a lot of harassment from humans. Here are a few of the more prominent bear mishaps in the Cove.

The first incident to occur happened in July when a group of park visitors spotted a bear and approached it for a closer look. Apparently the young bear was trying to kill a fawn for food, as bears do. The bear's action greatly displeased one man who tried to run it off by kicking the bear several times. Proving unsuccessful, other bystanders joined in the offense. When that didn't work, he literally picked the bear up, threw it and then continued to stomp and kick the bear. Fortunately a friend of the park was disgusted by his actions and turned his license plate number into the rangers. This action earned the bear wrestler two mandatory court appearance citations.

One week later, a crowd of fifty visitors saw a bear killing a fawn

and some began to throw baseball size rocks at the bear to interrupt his supper. Fortunately, National Park researchers in the area saw what was happening and stopped to educate the folks about a typical bear's diet, and that throwing rocks at any living creature is not appropriate.

The third story of human misbehavior towards bears in Cades Cove is of a man that had been seen and video taped while he hit a bear with a stick.

And the last incident that was reported to rangers involved more violence, this time against the human that was involved. Apparently a young man in his teens approached and picked up a yearling in order to have his picture taken cuddling with a smoky bear. The bear, not sure how to react, bit the aggressor on his hand.

In cases like these it is usually the bears that lose. Fortunately none of these bears had to be put to sleep by the Park. Park Biologists say that on average they euthanize 1-2 bears a year. The bears are put to death for a variety of reasons; usually because they have become habituated to human food and they will do about anything to get it, or because they harm a human in some way.

We all need to learn how to act while we are guests in bears' homes. Bears are wild, unpredictable creatures. While viewing bears we should remember to keep a distance and respect their wildness and livelihood. Bears need plenty of space and food to survive. Only when they are given enough space will they find the appropriate food.

A bear's diet is mostly comprised of berries, acorns, grasses and other vegetables (about 87%). The remaining 13% comes from insects and meat. Bears are opportunists. They are happy to eat anything they happen to stroll past. So if they come upon an injured, orphaned or just plain scared fawn, you better believe they are going to

eat it. For the bear it is like walking right up to Thanksgiving dinner. Remember that over 85% of their diet is composed of relatively bland vegetables like grasses and acorns-yuk!

For some families the concept of a matinee viewing of "Black Bear Eats Bambi" may be hard to swallow. For me this is a fantastic teaching opportunity, especially if children are present. Our youth need to know that predators are called predators because they eat prey. Predators keep the deer population in check by harvesting a few fawns from the Cove. If we do not allow bears to feed on deer, the deer population would increase and create additional problems for Cades Cove. With the absence of predators in many other parts of the nation, the deer populations have boomed. Now communities have to deal with forests and gardens that have been over-browsed, and the ethical dilemma of whether they should allow hunters to harvest the deer. This predator/prey relationship between animals is natural and as humans visiting a National Park, it is our duty to allow this process to take its course.

The main question pertaining to bears in GSMNP is how can the park educate some 10 million visitors a year about bear safety for humans and for the bears. I would like to think that all ten million folks visiting the park would read the guidelines at the end of my article, but that is unlikely. That leaves rangers, park volunteers and other park employees to talk to visitors informally about appropriate ways to interact with bears.

This type of informal education has been working to some degree, but with a greater occurrence of bear incidents and an increasing number of bears in the park, it may be time to consider some alternatives. One option that would get this important information to EVERYONE entering the park would be to put a booth at each park entrance.

Each car coming into the park could simply stop, be handed a flyer on bears along with a Park map, and then be on their way. Most other National Parks have a system such as this to distribute pertinent information to visitors.

While the national park works on a system to educate everyone, I encourage you to get out and explore the woods in search of these amazing creatures. Fall is a great time to see bears, especially in Cades Cove. They will be out foraging for

acorns and at the tops of cherry trees getting ready for winter. So good luck in your bear viewing this fall, but be careful. Please read the guidelines below set by GSMNP. It's full of all the information you need to know.

-Ryan Young

### BEARS Guidelines for your safety

**Black bears in the park are wild and sometimes their behavior is unpredictable. Although extremely rare, attacks on humans have occurred, inflicting serious injuries and death. Treat bear encounters with extreme caution and follow these guidelines.**

If you see a bear, remain watchful. **Do not approach it.** If your presence causes the bear to change its behavior (stops feeding, changes its travel direction, watches you etc.) YOU ARE TOO CLOSE. Being too close may promote aggressive behavior from the bear such as running toward you, making loud noises, or swatting the ground. The bear is demanding more space. Do not run, but slowly back away, watching the bear. Try to increase the distance between you and the bear. The bear will probably do the same.

If a bear persistently follows or approaches you without vocalizing or paw swatting, try changing your direction. If the bear continues to follow you, stand your ground. If the bear gets closer, talk loudly or shout at it. Act aggressively and try to intimidate the bear. Act together as a group if you have companions. Make yourselves look as large as possible (for example move to higher ground). Throw non-food objects such as rocks at the bear. Use a deterrent such as a stout stick. **Don't run and don't turn away from the bear.** Don't leave food for the bear; this encourages further problems.

Most injuries from black bear attacks are minor and result from a bear attempting to get at people's food. If the bear's behavior indicates that it is after your food and you are physically attacked, separate yourself from the food and slowly back away.

If the bear shows no interest in you're food and your being physically attacked, fight back aggressively with any available object-The bear may consider you as prey! **Help protect others. Report all bear incidents to a park ranger immediately. Above all keep your distance from bears!**

**Approaching any wild animal may disturb it. Wildlife harassment is punishable by fines up to \$5,000 and/ or imprisonment of up to six months.**

To report a bear incident, call 865-436-1230.

## SWEATING BULLETS , REAPING MEMORIES

This summer – my fifth here at Tremont – my life has somewhat resembled *The Wizard of Oz*. Jeremy, you say, it's time to visit the camp psychiatrist. Actually, by the time you read this, when school is in full swing and the return of summer longed for, my therapy should have already come: it's called vacation.

But for now, camp remains in full swing. And I mean *full*. As part of Summer High Adventure *right this moment* thirty-six teenagers and staff are spending their sixth day, as

Horace Kephart would say, in the Back of Beyond – many miles deep in Smoky Mountain wilderness (but mind you not all on the same trip!). Almost a dozen kids with Teen Science Camp spent this morning identifying live-trapped moths. And nearly a dozen more with Naturalist Expeditions right now are enjoying the sunset in Cades Cove after spending the day checking bear traps and searching for salamanders and snakes. As any staff member can tell you, the summer has been full, fast

and fun.

And the reason my life feels like L. Frank Baum's story?

As you might remember, near the end of the tale Dorothy and Toto and the others discover that the legendary Wizard of Oz is only a human maneuvering levers and pulleys behind a curtain, not really a wizard at all. Well, to a certain extent that's been me this summer. No tricks or special powers, just a frantic individual putting on a good face and hoping others don't notice the sweat

beading on his forehead.

Put more accurately, rather than being directly involved in camp programs, or leading backpack trips such as my past four summers, I've gotten to play Camp Director. I've done all (or a lot of) the planning and preparing and fretting and knuckle-biting that administrators, program directors, and teachers planning a trip to Tremont typically experience. What dedication, determination, and patience it takes to be such a person!

If you are one such person reading this, this comes as old news to you. It's not exactly news to me either, but experiencing it first hand is a reminder like none other.

In a way, though, directing is easy. Managing ten teenagers on a seven-day backpack trip, or putting together a week-long program on reptiles and amphibians – just two examples of this summer's many wonderful programs – takes energy I'm not sure I could muster just now.

What it really takes to make any summer work is a fantastic team such as the one embodied by our staff this summer. So let me take my hat off and thank each one of you for your energy, hard work, and dedication. That goes as well for anyone else reading this who has ever made it possible for a child to fall in love with the Smokies. Humans and wizards, every one of you.

- Jeremy Lloyd

## SMOKE SIGNALS

A feature especially for teachers bringing groups to Tremont

### ARE YOU GONNA EAT THAT?!?

Anyone who has been to Tremont knows that we don't like to see energy being wasted. Whether it's turning off the lights when you leave a room, not letting the water run down the drain while brushing your teeth, or re-using cloth napkins at meal times, energy conservation is an underlying theme in daily life at Tremont. But since all of the participants who come to Tremont are exceptional people, these tasks are old habits for them. So each week an even larger challenge is put forth, finish each meal in the dining hall without having any food waste!

The task seems simple enough; everyone in the group eats everything they put on their plate at every meal in the dining hall. Anything left on the serving platters goes back to the kitchen, but any food left on plates must be thrown away. When we consider all the energy it takes to plant, grow, harvest, transport, store, cook, and serve food for fifty or more people, a little food waste can equal a lot of energy waste. Through hard work and determination, a near record number of groups made it into the Zero Food Waste Hall of Fame this past school year. (see the list on page 15) As always, these schools will also be immortalized in a framed plaque in the dining hall.

And through a unanimous vote from the Tremont naturalists, a new category will be added this coming school year. The Most Improved Award will go to the school that shows the largest improvement in food waste over the course of their visit. As with anything else we teach at Tremont, hopefully your zero food waste efforts are not forgotten once you have left. It is a simple task that if used every day, can make a big difference. Thanks everybody!

-Captain Zero

### 2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR

We are more excited than ever about the upcoming school year. Our staff of experienced Teacher/Naturalists are ready to get your students out on the trail and into one of nature's most beautiful classrooms!

If your group is scheduled to visit us September through December, you should have recently received a packet containing the Tremont Trip Planner and other materials you need to plan your visit. If you have not received this packet please let us know so that we may get one to you as soon as possible. Schools visiting Tremont in January through June will receive packets in late October.

Regardless of when you are scheduled to come to Tremont, please send us your schedule request form and call or e-mail us with any questions or concerns you may have.

If you are not yet scheduled for a 2002-2003 visit to Tremont, we still have room on the calendar for you and your students. Please contact us to see what is available. We look forward to sharing the beauty and magic of the Smokies with you.

Reminders to teachers:

- If you are a teacher that has students with financial needs, please make sure that the financial aid form is filled out completely. If you have questions or need assistance with the request process please don't hesitate to call.
- Use the pre-Tremont checklist ( page 10 of the Trip Planner) to guide you through the planning process. This checklist will tell you everything you need to do to prepare for your group's trip.
- Send in your schedule request form as soon as possible. This is especially important for teachers wanting to schedule special presenters.

All of us at Tremont are looking forward to sharing our love of the mountains with you and your students. We know that you have been working hard to prepare for the upcoming school year and hope that what we have to share will educate, excite, and inspire you.

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## LOOKING AHEAD Register now for these exciting upcoming programs!

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### TEACHER ESCAPE WEEKEND SEPTEMBER 13-15

Escape to Great Smoky Mountains National Park! Teachers, prepare for your school's trip to Tremont by spending this inspiring fall weekend in the mountains! Even if you are not bringing a group to Tremont this year, this workshop focuses on rejuvenating, inspiring, and educating all teachers. Sessions will revolve around our award-winning lesson manual, *Connecting People and Nature... a Teacher's Guide*. The lessons within this manual have been correlated to the National Science Standards for grades 5 through 8 and can be adapted and used in any classroom. We'll also concentrate on activities and methods used at Tremont that you can use in the classroom. We will accomplish all of this while becoming familiar with the local Tremont trails and learning the natural and cultural history of the Great Smoky Mountains. Our evenings will include entertainment by Mike Clemmer of Wood-n-Strings Dulcimer Shop in Townsend, a presentation on predators of the Smokies by Marcella Cranford (live animals!), folkdancing led by Bob Grimac, and a closing campfire on Saturday night. Any or all of these presenters can be scheduled for your group's program as well. Teacher Escape Weekend lasts from Friday supper to Sunday lunch. Let us take you away from your classroom and into 500,00 acres of one of nature's most beautiful and inspiring classrooms.

Cost: \$150. One hour of graduate credit is available for an additional fee.

*Teachers who attend these workshops can come with their school group at no cost.*

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### FALL NATURALIST WEEKEND OCTOBER 25-27

Autumn is a magical time of color and change in the "Place of Blue Smoke." Crisp sunny days and brilliant color displays give a special flavor to fall explorations. Come prepared to be outside and active. After a long day in the park, we will come together in the evening to share our findings and enjoy lectures, music, storytelling and more. Sunday morning sessions will give participants the chance for a leisurely exploration of additional subjects. This will be a Naturalist Weekend to remember. Program lasts from Friday supper to Sunday lunch. Please indicate your preference for a workshop track when you register. Cost: \$160. One hour of graduate credit is available for an additional fee. Visit our website at [www.gsmit.org](http://www.gsmit.org) for more information.

*Choose your Fall Naturalist Weekend adventure from the following options:*

#### A River Runs Through It

Spend the weekend learning about aquatic insects, fisheries issues, and exploring the Middle Prong from its main channel to its tributaries. Interested in fly fishing? Great! Participants will also work with local experts to discover the connections between a knowledge of aquatic insects and catching the big one.

#### Fall Field Extravaganza

Spend the weekend checking off your color wheel and finding fall fruits. Roam the ridges and creeksides as we learn the plants that make a Smoky Mountain fall so brilliant and so fruitful.

#### Cataloochee and Purchase Knob *This track is Full*

This morning-to-night trip will take us to the North Carolina side of the Smokies where we will learn about the history and present day happenings at Purchase Knob and Cataloochee Valley.

#### Salamanders of the Smokies

Ahhh, salamanders! Learn about salamander ecology, distribution, and identification as our search leads us from Walker Valley to the high country. Participants will assist in the Tremont salamander monitoring project, then venture out to discover the secret places of species from cove forest to spruce-fir forest.

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### GEOLOGY OF THE SMOKIES NOVEMBER 8-10

Join us for hikes and field trips to investigate different geological aspects of the park. Walks to waterfalls, coves, folds, faults, and interesting formations will reveal the earth processes and unique geologic history of the Smokies. We'll relate the rocks to the biological world and environmental concerns in the park. Program lasts from Friday supper to Sunday lunch. Cost: \$150. One hour of graduate credit is available for an additional fee.

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### NATURE OBSERVATION AND TRACKING NOVEMBER 8-10

Spend a weekend developing your skills to recognize and interpret the clues left behind by the wide variety of creatures that live in the Smoky Mountains. Explore animal sign, stalking and movement techniques, and nature awareness and observation skills. Much of the time will be spent exploring the park and interpreting what we find. Program lasts from Friday supper to Sunday lunch. Cost: \$160. One hour of graduate credit is available for an additional fee.

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### ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND THE ARTS FEBRUARY 21-23, 2001

See our website, [www.gsmit.org](http://www.gsmit.org), for more details regarding this and other adult workshops.

TREMONT FOOD WASTE HALL OF  
FAME

2001-2002 SCHOOL YEAR

A.B. GREEN M.S.  
NORRIS M.S.  
NEW HORIZON MONTESSORI  
BERRY COLLEGE M.S.  
SEWANEE  
BRENTWOOD M.S.  
BUENA VISTA  
OAK PARK RIVER FOREST  
PERRY H.S.  
CHEROKEE BEND  
RANDOLPH SCHOOL  
EAST TN. HOMESCHOOL  
GREEN COUNTY  
ROBERTSVILLE M.S. (1 and 2)  
FOUNDATION ACADEMY  
SAYRE SCHOOL  
SHELBY COUNTY  
GIRL SCOUT TROOP #470  
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
STANLEY SWITLIK  
J.J. DANIELL  
TAYLOR COUNTY  
JUPITER H.S.  
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Please fill out a separate form for each person registering.

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Program title \_\_\_\_\_

Program date \_\_\_\_\_ Amt. enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

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Minimum deposit for a three-day program is \$50, and for all other programs is \$100. The balance is due 60 days prior to the program. Cancellations received in writing 60 days prior to a program will receive a 75% refund. Cancellations received less than 60 days prior to the program will not be refunded.

# GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE  
AT TREMONT

IS OPERATED IN COOPERATION WITH  
GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

## PROGRAM CALENDAR

Sep 13-15 Teacher Escape Weekend

OCT 6-11 Fall hiking elderhostel

Oct 18-21 Autumn Photo Workshop

Oct 18-20 Fall Adult Backpack

Oct 25-27 Women's Backpack

Oct 25-27 Fall Naturalist Weekend

Nov 8-10 Geology of the Smokies

Nov 8-10 Tracking Workshop

2003

Jan 19-26 Wilderness First Responder

FEB 14-16 Project Leopold Workshop

Feb 14-16 WFR refresher

Feb 21 - 23 Environ. Education & the Arts

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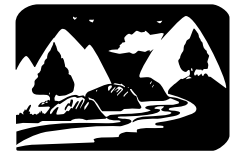
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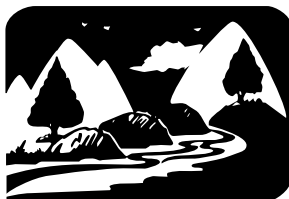
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