

*Southern Appalachian  
Naturalist Certification Program*

**Mammals & Naturalist Skills**

*November 6- 8, 2009*

---

- Friday:** 3:00-5:00 pm Check-in  
6:00 pm Supper  
7:00 pm Welcome & Orientation  
7:30 pm Introduction to Mammals *with Tyson Wepprich*  
8:45 pm Species Study
- Sat:** 7:00 am Breakfast and pack a lunch  
7:30 am Mammal Sign & Tracking *with Wanda DeWaard*  
9:30 am Depart for Cades Cove for field practice  
12:30 pm Sack lunch in Cades Cove  
1:30 pm Leave Cades Cove for Tremont  
2:30 pm Break  
3:00 pm Black Bear Ecology *with Jared Laufenberg, UT*  
6:00 pm Supper  
6:45 pm Mammal Conservation in the Southern  
Appalachians *with Brian Ballenger*  
8:00 Species Study
- Sunday:** 8:00 am Breakfast  
8:30 am Prepare for Species Presentations  
9:30 am Presentations  
11:00 am Assessment  
12:00 pm Lunch
- 1:00 pm **Naturalist Skills**  
Brief historical background, A Naturalist's Notebook,  
Journaling techniques, Honing your skills – Camera  
Activity, Field Notebook Assignment
- 4:00 pm Wrap-up & Evaluations

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT

9275 Tremont Road

Townsend, TN 37882

Phone: 865-448-6709 ` Fax: 865-448-9250

[www.gsmi.org](http://www.gsmi.org) ~ [mail@gsmi.org](mailto:mail@gsmi.org)

## **Brian Ballenger**

Brian grew up in Lancaster County, PA, the heart of rural Amish-country. It was here that he began a lifelong obsession with the outdoors. Hunting, fishing, roaming through woods and fields, Brian could always be found outdoors. He decided to attend Bloomsburg University to earn a degree in Geography with an emphasis in Environmental Planning. During his time at university, he studied in London, England, and worked as a backcountry ranger on Mt. Katahdin with the Student Conservation Association. Not only did he climb mountains and patrol the backcountry, he frequently took part in moose population surveys, and worked with the BBC to locate beaver and moose habitat. His fondness of mammals and education led him to work with the Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education where he helped design and implement a residential camp for youth based on whitetail deer management. Brian came to Tremont in the winter of 2007 to continue his pursuit of education. In his free time, Brian enjoys traveling to various national parks to climb big mountains and look at big, old trees.

## **Tyson Wepprich**

Tyson grew up in St. Charles, MO, where frequent excursions were made into the Ozarks on family float trips or Boy Scout camps. He came to the South to attend Duke University in Durham, NC, earning a B.S. in biology and an A.B. in Environmental Science & Policy. During summer internships, Tyson did field work to protect old-growth forests with the Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition and to map canyons in Alabama with Wild South. He focused on ecology in school by studying in Costa Rica and writing a thesis on modeling the extinction risk of a threatened plant population. He got to know and love the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina while leading backpacking trips for a student orientation program. After graduating, he worked as a science instructor at Seacamp in the Florida Keys, where he learned to captain boats, lifeguard, snorkel, and apply sunscreen. Last year, he returned to Duke to teach introductory biology labs and tried to convince pre-medicine students that ecology was cool. In May, Tyson came to Tremont as the summer's citizen science educator and currently is a teacher/naturalist. Being a huge fan of mountains and backpacking, he completed a thru-hike of the 215-mile John Muir Trail from Yosemite to Mt. Whitney in August.

## **John DiDiego**

John grew up catching snakes and turtles in the creeks of upstate South Carolina, and he has never lost his love of wild things and wild places. He holds a B.A. degree in English Literature from the University of Notre Dame and an M.S. in Natural Resources/Environmental Education from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. He has always enjoyed international travel and served two stints in the Peace Corps in Morocco and Russia. In over 12 years experience in environmental education, he has worked in places as far-flung as New England, Yosemite NP, far eastern Russia, and Georgia; but there is no place he'd rather be than the southern Appalachians. He is enjoying the changing seasons and the magic of changing students' lives at Tremont!