Dear Friends,

Thank-you for registering for our Likin’ Lichens Workshop at Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont! We hope you are looking forward to a fun and adventure-filled weekend together exploring nature in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This special program is funded through a partnership with the National Park Service.

We will explore the mysterious world of lichens; they are part fungus, part algae, and all beautiful and fascinating. You will learn to identify lichens, various human uses for lichens, lichens’ role in the ecosystem and ways to use them to bio monitor for air quality. Once we feel more grounded with understanding lichens, we will offer opportunities to share the fascinating world of lichens with your students in creative and meaningful ways. As with all Tremont programs, this weekend workshop will be largely field based, so be ready to be outside!

You will be sharing the dormitory with other curious naturalists in our Naturalist Certification Program: Interpretation, a Teachable Art. Visit our program page [http://gsmi.org/sanlp/](http://gsmi.org/sanlp/) learn more about these exciting programs to gain even more specialty skills in southern Appalachian ecology and interpretive techniques. We hope this is one of many weekends we will spend together as we seek naturalist skills and knowledge.

**Instructors:**

Instructors for the weekend will be Jennifer Love, Susan Sachs and Jennie McGuigan:

Jennifer Love is the STEM coordinator for Macon County Schools and has been teaching science and math in North Carolina for many years. She has been studying lichens for over 12 years and is participating in the Lichen ATLAS program in Georgia helping to map all the lichen species distribution in Georgia.

Susan Sachs is the Education Branch Chief for Great Smoky Mountains National Park. She has been Educational Coordinator for Appalachian Highlands Science Learning Center at Purchase Knob and long time Park Ranger for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Apart from leading teacher workshops focused on hands-on science education, she focuses on integrating park science and education with a focus on creating curriculum-based citizen Science projects for school programs.

Jennie McGuigan is Manager of School Partnerships and Teacher Development at Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont (GSMIT) & will be your host for the weekend. She
has over 25 years of experience in formal and non-formal classrooms, 8 of those at GSMIT. She focuses much of her time on training the teaching faculty at GSMIT, constructing standards-based curriculum, embedding brain-based pedagogy in programming, and leading teacher workshops that train not only in content, but in dynamic pedagogical routines.

Arrival and Departure:
Plan to arrive at Tremont on Friday, February 8th between 3:00 and 5:00 PM, giving you opportunity to move into the dorm and meet other participants before our 6:00 evening meal. The program will end after lunch on Sunday, February 10th.

Weather:
It may help you to know that over the past five years the month of February has been characterized by an average daily high of 54° F, and an average daily low of 28° F. Come prepared for cold early mornings and cold, wet afternoons. We may get the occasional warm afternoon, however, you will be outdoors for long periods of time, so be prepared with rain gear and layers to keep you comfy, especially if you tend to stay cold. The Smokies are a very wet, humid and often dynamic climate; expect that it will rain or snow at some point during your stay here. Rain gear is always necessary in the Smokies. We will carry it at all times.

**DO NOT FORGET:** Many sessions will be outside (rain or shine), so please come prepared with proper clothing:
- A day pack
- A water bottle
- Warm layers for cold days in the field (hat, gloves, socks, thermal layers, etc.)
- Raingear
- Something to take notes with
- Remember to bring your own towels, linens and pillow – they are not provided
- Toiletries & Towel
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Shoes for hiking on the trail
- Water shoes – preferably that have a strap on the back and covered toes (we do not plan on going in the water, but they are still good to have)
- Optional: Small reading light for in the dorm after 10:00pm
- Questions and/or curriculum materials to share with other teachers
- Sit pad for journaling in the field (we have some at Tremont if you prefer)
- Anything else that will make you comfy (don't hesitate to call if you have questions!)

Logistics:
Please read the “Your Visit to Tremont” link on our website for important packing information. Along with linens and toiletries you may want to bring a mattress pad to ease the firm mattress. You also may want to consider bringing some additional items with you for this weekend such as binoculars, notepad and pencil, field guides, and camera.

It may also be helpful to bring something to take notes on and a laptop or hand-held device for resourcing. Our activity center does have limited Wi-Fi reception for your use, however, there is no cell service in Walker Valley, and we will ask that participants withhold the use of hand-held devices, other than for notes and photos during teaching sessions, as they can distract from the overall experience.
Food on campus:
Please note that food is not allowed in the dorm, due to critters; however there is a refrigerator located in the First Aid room and tall metal food storage bins in the Mountain Room (within the Dining Hall) that will be accessible at all times in the case you bring snacks or beverages with you.

Parking:
Please do not park up the 2nd gravel road nearest to the Activity Center and Kitchen drop-off area (near dumpsters) and remain parked up there – the kitchen staff expect food deliveries throughout the day, and the garbage collector arrives very early in the morning. Please keep that area clear. You may unload your things, and park down on the blacktop for the weekend.

Accommodations:
You will be staying in an open-air planned dorm. Quiet time on campus is 10:00pm every evening. Again, a flashlight or headlamp will be necessary to have with you. We will not have alot of down time throughout the weekend, however, if you need something we do not have in our supplies, there are a number of places just in town (Townsend – 10 minutes away). Remember that most stores will close around 9-10pm.

Lichen information:
Backyard Nature website has a nice collection of lichen information with other links – this will give you a great introduction to the topic which we will review and augment during the weekend. http://www.backyardnature.net/lichens.htm

I hope that this information is helpful to you in planning for your upcoming visit to Tremont. Please tell a friend about us, so that they can learn about the wonders of the Smokies. If you have any questions concerning the weekend please email me at jennie@gsmi.org or Julie Brown at julie@gsmi.org. I am excited to see all of you soon!

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