

The logo for the Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont is a dark green square with the text "GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT" in a light green, sans-serif font, stacked in four lines.

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the **Southern Appalachian Naturalist Certification Program: Aquatic Ecology!** Whether this is your first course or eighth course, we hope this is one of many weekends we'll learn and practice naturalist skills together as we gain knowledge about the Great Smoky Mountains.

This course will engage you with an overview of the unique ecology of aquatic systems in the southern Appalachian Mountains, particularly as it relates to Great Smoky Mountains National Park, through lecture, discussions, field trips and most of all, first-hand experience. Topics will include aquatic macroinvertebrates, fish, habitats, stream health, and conservation issues. Field trips will include visits to examples of the most common aquatic systems. We will have a fabulous time and get very wet!

Get ready! You have registered for an intense three days during which we will cover material and skills that most people receive in a semester-long class. If you think this sounds ambitious, you are right! In order to accomplish our goals it is necessary for you to do some homework, in the form of readings, to give you the background information needed to take part in discussions and build your toolkit of skills. See *Preparation* below. We will keep lecture time to a minimum in order to have ample time learning skills and practicing them in the field.

**Instructors:**

I am pleased to be your instructor for this workshop. Visit our website to learn more about me and the rest of our [faculty](#).

**Arrival and Departure:**

Plan to arrive at Tremont on Friday between 3:00 and 5:00 pm in order to have enough time to move into the dorm and meet other participants before our 6:00 pm evening meal. Check-In will take place in the Gift Shop, located in our office building, which is the first structure to appear on your left after crossing the bridge onto Tremont's campus. The program will end around 3:00 pm on Sunday.

**Weather:**

The average daily high temperature during this time of year is 88 degrees F., and the daily low is around 61 degrees F. here in Walker Valley. Come prepared for warm and humid weather. Bring a rain coat! The Smokies are a very wet and humid climate and you can *expect precipitation in one form or another* at some point during your stay here.

**Logistics:**

Please read the "Your Visit to Tremont" link for important packing information. Along with your readings, linens, and toiletries, you may want to bring a mattress pad to ease the firm mattress and perhaps a bedside lamp if you are a late-night reader. Please bring clothes that you don't mind getting wet and closed-toe shoes for wading and swimming. If you don't own any we have a few pairs of old tennis shoes to loan, but bringing some that are sure to fit is ideal. Also bring a notepad and pencil and any field guides you like. Sturdy walking shoes/boots, sunscreen, and a hat are also important for your

comfort. *Note: though wifi is available in the Activity Center, we invite and encourage you to unplug for the weekend.* Learn more about our [food](#) and [facilities](#). Please note that food is not allowed in the dorm.

**Preparation:**

Please read the attachments emailed to you in advance of the course. These It is important that you read and reflect on this in order to prepare for the class. The more you become acquainted with concepts and vocabulary ahead of time the better! If you are a novice, reading related sections in a biology text and/or exploring on-line resources will be helpful and will assist you in being involved in discussion.

**A special offer just for YOU...**

You will receive a copy of *Birds of the Smokies* during the weekend. Also, during the weekend, you will receive a 15% discount on any merchandise you purchase from our gift shop—this is a great deal!

I hope this information us helpful to you in planning for your upcoming visit to Tremont. Please tell a friend about us so that they too can learn about the wonders of the Smokies. If you have further questions, please feel free to call.

Sincerely,



Jennie McGuigan  
Manager of School Partnerships and Teacher Development

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