



Dear Naturalists,

Welcome to the **Southern Appalachian Naturalist Certification Program: *Skills for Sharing Nature weekend!*** We hope this is one of many weekends we will spend together as we seek to become better naturalists. Becoming a naturalist is a lifelong process of noticing, exploring, discovering, and experiencing a rich sense of wonder in the natural world.

We will focus on two areas of study this weekend. The majority of our time will be spent developing skills, resources, and strategies for connecting people and nature. Our ability to interpret and inspire are key skills necessary for sharing the world with others and passing on essential information in a provocative manner. Our second area of study will help us further develop our naturalist skills. This includes field journaling, record keeping, question forming, and nurturing an awareness of the naturalist tradition.

**Instructors:**

Your primary instructor for this course will be Tremont Manager for Innovation and Assessment, Caleb Carlton. Caleb has been teaching, managing, and directing with Tremont for 9 years, and is currently pursuing a PhD in Environmental Geoscience, with a focus in experiential STEM education for urban and underserved populations. You can learn more about our staff by visiting our website at: <http://www.gsmit.org/staff.html#program>

**Arrival and Departure:**

Plan to arrive at Tremont on Friday between 3:00 and 5:00 PM, giving you an opportunity to move into the dorm and meet other participants before our 6:00 PM dinner. Check-in will take place in our Gift Shop, located in our office building, the first structure to appear on your left after crossing the bridge onto Tremont's campus. The course will finish Sunday afternoon. For directions, use the destination: 9275 Tremont Rd, Townsend, TN 37882.

**Weather:**

February sees an average daily high of 54° F, and low of 28° F. We will be outdoors, so keep an eye on the forecast and bring warm layers and winter outerwear if that seems warranted. We also ask that you bring a small backpack to be hands-free and a water bottle to stay hydrated while out on the trail. The Smokies are a very wet and humid climate; you should *expect that it will rain* at some point during your stay here.

**Additional Logistics:**

Along with your linens and toiletries, you may want to bring a mattress pad to ease the firm mattress, and a bedside light or headlamp if you are a late-night reader. You may want to consider bringing some additional items with you for this weekend such as binoculars, hand lens, notepad and pencil, field guides, and camera. Learn more about our [food](#) and [facilities](#).

Note – while we do have wireless internet access in the Activity Center, we invite and encourage you to unplug for the weekend. Please note that food is not allowed in the dormitory.

**Preparation:**

Please watch these videos in advance of the course:

- [Please watch at least 3 “Nature is Speaking” videos](#)
- [Ralph Waldo Emerson and the Beauty of the Everyday](#)
- [Mindfulness and Happiness](#)

And, please read this document:

- [The National Park Service’s Foundations of Interpretation](#)

During the weekend we will also be offering you a 15% discount in our bookstore.

I hope that this information is helpful to you in planning for your upcoming visit to Tremont. If you have further questions, please feel free to call or email.

Sincerely,

*Caleb Carlton*  
*Manager for Innovation and Assessment*