



Fall 2020

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Southern Appalachian Naturalist Certification Program elective course: Geology Weekend. We hope this is one of many weekends you'll spend with us as we seek to increase our naturalist skills and knowledge. The Great Smoky Mountains are ready and waiting for your arrival. **Please read this letter in full, as it contains information about our new procedures related to COVID-19.**

During this weekend we will use field techniques to investigate sedimentary and metamorphic outcrops and faults within the park. We will focus on interpreting the geologic history of the region through our field observations, and draw connections between bedrock and biodiversity through soil analysis. The workshop will conclude by compiling our collective observations to illustrate the geologic history of the Smokies. It's going to be a fun-filled learning experience.

Get ready! You have registered for an intense weekend during which we will cover material and skills that many 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 pre-readings that will be emailed to you, in order to give you the background information needed to take part in discussions and build your toolkit of skills. We have structured this weekend to be a practicum of knowledge you learn via the written word. This means that we keep lecture time to a minimum and actually work on learning skills and practicing them.

Your Instructor:

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:

Our check-in has been modified due to COVID-19. Plan to arrive at Tremont on Friday between 4:00 and 5:00 pm in order to have enough time to move into the dorm and meet other participants before our 5:45 pm evening meal. A staff member will be posted at the gate to direct you to the check-in station where you will have your temperature taken; if no one is at the gate to greet you, follow the instructions for late arrivals below.

Late arrivals: If you arrive after 5:00 pm, please park in the lot across from the gate, walk past the gate across the bridge, up the service road, stay to the right of the green dormitory building, and proceed to the open-air Pavilion where you will find the check-in station. If you expect to arrive late, please call 865-448-9732 ext. 23 and leave a message with your expected arrival time.

We expect to wrap up in the early to mid-afternoon on Sunday.

Weather:

The weather here can be cool in December. Over the past five years, the average daily high for December was 52° F and the average daily low was 28° F here in Walker Valley. However, some

activities will take place in the higher elevations, which can sometimes mean a difference of 15 degrees cooler temperatures or greater. Bring lots of warm layers, a hat, gloves, and a raincoat! 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 our COVIDSafe guidelines and let us know if you have any questions or concerns. In order to slow the spread of COVID-19, please bring a mask and wear it when social distancing is impractical.

Also please read the “Your Visit to Tremont” link for important packing information. Along with your linens and toiletries, you may want to bring a mattress pad to ease the firm mattress, plus a bedside light or headlamp if you are a late-night reader. If you’d like to bring a camp chair for the outdoor classroom you may find that more comfortable than the provided benches.

Bring a notepad and any field guides you like. Sturdy walking shoes/boots, outdoor clothing, and a hat are a must for personal 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; there is a refrigerator available for personal food storage in the Dining Hall.

Homework:

Please read the attachments that were emailed to you in advance of the course. Doing so ahead of time is crucial to helping you understand much of the material covered during the course.

A special offer just for YOU...

During the weekend, you will receive a 15% discount on any merchandise you purchase from our gift shop—this is a great deal! *Please note our gift shop will be open on arrival day only.*

I hope this information is 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,



Elizabeth Davis
Field Program Specialist

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