

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the **Southern Appalachian Naturalist Certification Program: Mammals**. Whether this is your first or eighth course, we hope it is one of many weekends we'll learn and practice naturalist skills together in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Please read this letter in full, as it contains information about our new procedures related to **COVID-19**.

During this workshop we'll discuss charismatic megafauna as well as overlooked smaller species. *Don't* expect to actually see many mammals since most are nocturnal and adept at avoiding humans. *Do* expect to gain new skills including landscape observation, animal tracking, and more. You can also expect to become familiar with issues mammals face here and throughout the eastern United States. We promise it will 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 complete a **homework** assignment in the form of a short reading before your arrival. Once you register this reading will be emailed to you. Its purpose is to give you background information necessary for taking part in discussions and building your toolkit of skills. You will also receive *Mammals of the Smokies*, published by Great Smoky Mountains Association. Throughout the weekend, lecture time will be balanced with experiential learning and practicing observational skills. Individual presentations and an assessment will round out the weekend.

**Instructors:**

I am pleased to be your primary instructor for this workshop. Visit our website to learn more about me and the rest of our [faculty](#). You can learn about Wanda DeWaard, who will teach tracking, by reading the bottom of the agenda.

**Arrival:**

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.

**Weather:**

The average daily high temperature at Tremont in January is 54°F and the average daily low is 28°F here in Walker Valley. Bring 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. Also bring warm clothing since we want to maximize outdoor time.

**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" document 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. You are welcome to bring a camp chair for the outdoor classroom since you may find it more comfortable than the provided benches.

Bring a notepad as well as sturdy footwear, outdoor clothing, and a hat for personal comfort. Raingear is a must! *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.

**Readings:**

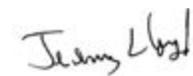
Please read the homework assignments for this course in advance. Doing so is crucial to helping you understand much of the material covered during the course. Some material therein will be a part of your assessment at the end of the course. The readings that will be emailed to you are: *Of Bears, Boars, and Chestnuts* by Rose Houk, and *Coyote Intelligence* by Paul Rezendes.

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

You will receive a copy of *Mammals of the Smokies* during the weekend. Lastly, we are offering you a 15% discount in our bookstore during the workshop. **Please note that the bookstore will only be open Friday 4:00 pm–5:30 pm.**

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,



Jeremy Lloyd  
Manager of Field Programs & Collegiate Studies