



Dear Naturalists,

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

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 compelling 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:

Caleb Carlton is excited to be your instructor for this workshop! Visit our website to learn more about him and the rest of our [faculty](#).

Arrival:

Our check-in has been modified due to COVID-19. **Plan to arrive between 3:00 and 5:00 pm on Friday.** Upon arrival you will find the gate open and unlocked. After crossing the bridge, turn right and go past the STOP sign (it does not apply to you and other registered guests). You may unload your belongings at the top of the hill by turning left up the gravel drive. **First thing, please report to the check-in station located in the nearby pavilion for a temperature check.** After unloading your belongings, please move your vehicle to the bottom of the hill to accommodate others who are arriving. Note that the gift shop will be open on Friday from 4:00-5:30 pm. This is the only time during the weekend when the gift shop will be open. Orientation begins at 6:45 pm.

Late arrivals: If you arrive after 5:00 pm, please follow the above instructions and meet the group in the pavilion (or nearby dining hall after 6:00).

Weather:

May sees an average daily high of 77° F, and low of 55° F. We will be outdoors, so keep an eye on the forecast and bring plenty of layers for chilly mornings and warm afternoons. 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. 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.

Additional 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.

Preparation:

Please watch these videos in advance of the course:

- [Please watch at least one "Nature is Speaking" videos](#)
- [Ralph Waldo Emerson and the Beauty of the Everyday](#)
- [Mindfulness and Happiness](#)
- [Amanda Gorman's reading of her poem, "Earthrise"](#)

And please read this document:

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

A special offer just for YOU...

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.