

## SATURDAY MORNING FIELD TRIPS

### All-Day Hike to Top of Virginia

Dr. Phil Shelton has led this trip for 25 years. Along the way he will discuss the flora and fauna of Mount Rogers. Hikers should bring food and water and dress for high-altitude weather. This is a challenging nine-mile round trip.

**NEW**

### Round-Leaf Birch

After being listed as extinct in the wild, a small stand of these trees were discovered by Doug Ogle in 1975 near Sugar Grove. Join Doug at the viewing area on Cressy Creek (VA 601, Flat Ridge Road) where he will present a comprehensive history of the species from its discovery in 1918 to the restoration efforts of today.

**NEW**

### Birds, Blooms and Bugs

This downhill walk from Whitetop Mountain to Elk Garden will be led by nature enthusiasts Rebecca and Amanda Currin and Lee Adams. Spring nature at its finest on Virginia's second highest mountain. Bring field guides.

### Birding by Ear

Randy Stanley and Betsy Grossman will show you the latest gadgets and tools of birding, then lead this easy walk for birders who want to identify birds by sound.

### Salamanders

Our speaker, Kevin Hamed, is involved in a salamander research project on Whitetop Mountain. Many species of salamanders are only found at these high elevations. This hike will take you to several study areas. This is a great trip to learn of our region's amazing salamander diversity.

### Small Mammals

Join Karen Francel, Ph.D., Radford University, as she leads this hike to check pre-set live traps in hopes of examining a sample of the small mammal diversity of the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area.

### Forest Ecology Hike

**NEW** David Richert, a forester with the Virginia Department of Forestry, will lead a moderate hike on national forest land near Green Cove. In this three-hour hike, participants will explore how forest vegetation (herbs, shrubs and trees) is the expression of complex interrelationships between various biotic and abiotic factors. As a group, there will be some discussion about how these basic principles of ecology apply across a variety of landscapes, including the "backyard."

**NEW**

### Underground for Kids

(8:30-10:30) Teacher Mark Merz will offer children the opportunity to examine soil characteristics: texture, percolation and acidity. They will dig in tree locations near the community center looking for organisms that live right below the earth's surface. Kids—bring a parent! Then, at 11:00, Candace Edwards, interpreter from Hungry Mother State Park, will have the group use GPS units to locate hidden geo-

aches. Learn how to take part in this world-wide game of geo-caching.

## SATURDAY AFTERNOON FIELD TRIPS

### Geology of Virginia Highlands

Once upon a time the Appalachians were taller and more rugged than the Rockies. Find out what happened and why we have the green, gently rounded peaks we know and love today with Bill Whitlock, geologist with the Virginia DMME.

### Appalachian Woodland Wildflowers

The person who has attended more of the naturalist rallies than anyone else, Claude Greever, will lead this easy meandering at Grindstone Campground, then move on up the mountain to Elk Garden. Spring flowers galore! Bring field guides and hand lens.

### Field Finds at Raccoon Branch Campground

Doug Ogle will take a look at the biology of this USFS campground area, highlighting the natural and human processes that are evident in the current environment. Plant species identification and their human and animal uses will be emphasized.

### Whitetop Mountain to Elk Garden Hike

Eleanor Grasselli of the Mt. Rogers Appalachian Trail Club and Virginia Master Naturalist Judith Foster will lead this 2.5-mile hike down the mountain. Expect to see carpets of wildflowers as well as hear and see birds of the forest. Bring field guides and binoculars.

### Trees

Joel Keebler of the VHCC horticulture department will lead this easy hike in tree identification and appreciation. His focus will be on native trees and shrubs.

### Fly-Fishing at Creek Junction

Justin Laughlin, VDGIF, invites you to join the Trout Unlimited group for fly-fishing instruction and identification of the aquatic insects in Whitetop Laurel Creek. A Virginia fishing license, trout stamp and national forest permit are required if you plan to fish.

### Young People in the Forest, Field and Stream

Join Mary Alice Hardin of Nature's Powers Outdoor Education Center as she introduces children (must be with parent) to a close look at nature with activities in the forest, field and stream near the community center. You will also get an introduction to games played by early Native Americans. Bring creek shoes.

**NEW**

### Fence Row Lunch

Join Master Naturalist Carrie Sparks on this easy stroll along the fence rows near the community center in search of a free lunch. Prepare to sample spring greens, teas and natural meds.



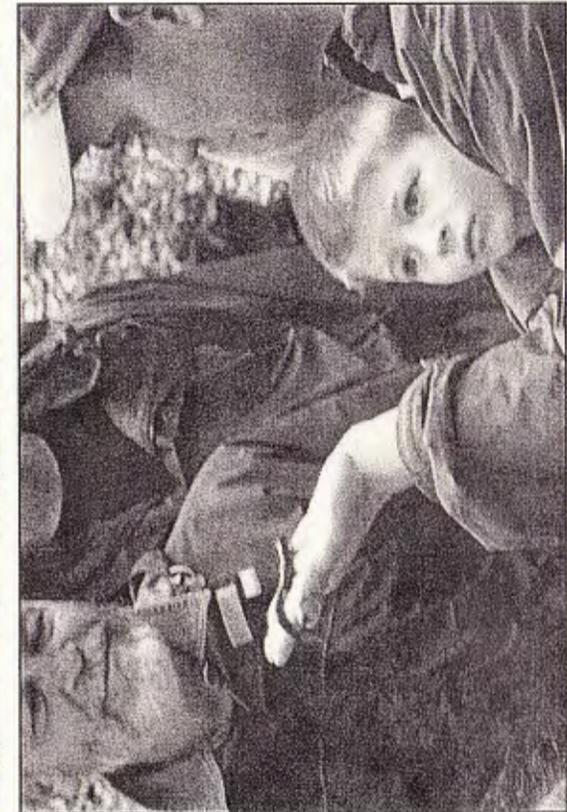
36th Annual

MOUNT ROGERS  
NATURALIST RALLY

May 7 and 8, 2010  
Konnarock, Virginia

[www.mountrogersnaturalist rally.org](http://www.mountrogersnaturalist rally.org)

Photo by Link Elmore



## THE 36th ANNUAL MOUNT ROGERS NATURALIST RALLY

*The 2010 rally will be based out of the Konnarock Community Center. It is located in Konnarock, Virginia, on VA 600 just about 1/2 mile south of the intersection of VA 600 and VA 603.*

Thank you for your interest in the 36th annual Mount Rogers Naturalist Rally. We've assembled a wide variety of excellent field trips with leaders who are experts in their field and who are able to make it understandable and interesting for everyone from inquisitive amateurs to accomplished naturalists.

The Mount Rogers area, which includes Virginia's three tallest peaks, has long fascinated scholars and explorers. Not only is there a wide variation in altitude within a short distance (Damascus is 2,000 feet above mean sea level; the summit of Mount Rogers is 5,729), there are many different ecosystems and mini-ecosystems within a short drive or hike of each other. In addition, there are many interesting overlaps between the extreme ranges of "southern" and "northern" species of plants, animals, and folks.

### HOW TO TAKE A FIELD TRIP

*All field trips leave from the parking lot of the Konnarock Community Center unless otherwise indicated or announced on Friday evening. All times listed are actual departure times. Please allow extra time if you still need to register and to sign up with the field trip leader. (Some leaders take sign-ups on Friday evening and some trips fill quickly.) All trips will go out regardless of weather conditions! Come prepared with good boots or shoes, a sweater or jacket, and a raincoat or poncho.*

### LODGING

Two USDA Forest Service campgrounds—Grindstone and Beartree—are within 10 miles of Konnarock. For information or to reserve a site, call 1-877-444-6777 or go online at [www.ReserveUSA.com](http://www.ReserveUSA.com). There are numerous bed & breakfast inns and rental cabins in the area. [www.virginiablueridge.org](http://www.virginiablueridge.org) and [www.visitvirginiamountains.com](http://www.visitvirginiamountains.com) have information and suggestions. Motels are available in Abingdon, Glade Spring, Chilhowie, Damascus and Marion. Troutdale, Damascus, et al, have good places to eat.

### 2010 RALLY COMMITTEE

**Sam Hambrick, Carrie Sparks, Bob McKinney, Paul Brown, Beth Merz, Sara Shell, Harry Dean, Louise Tilson, Brandy Nichols, Mike Nichols and Mary Alice Hardin**

2011 Rally will be May 6 & 7

### THIS YEAR'S FRIDAY NIGHT SPEAKER WILL BE KEVIN HAMED



*Hamed with hellbender*

Kevin Hamed has been leading field trips for the naturalist rally since 1997. At that time, he was nature center manager at Steele Creek Park. He has a BS in biology from Tennessee

Technological University and a MS in biology from East Tennessee State University. His graduate research was on the life history of the Tennessee dace. For the last six years, Kevin has been associate professor of biology at Virginia Highlands Community College. Recent research topics include the effect of bottle trash on small mammal populations and use of artificial nesting structures by the brown creeper on Whitetop Mountain. This year, Kevin will be furthering his education at the University of Tennessee as he pursues his doctorate.

For the naturalist rally program, he will discuss his ongoing research concerning the ecology of salamanders in the southern Appalachians, which have the world's greatest biodiversity of these animals. His lecture will introduce these creatures and the threats to their survival.

### PAST SPEAKERS

Dr. Theresa Dellinger, VPI&SU: 2009  
Dr. Steven Hopp, E&H 2008  
Mike Pender, VDGIF 2007  
Dr. Fred Hebard 2006  
J. Wallace Coffey 2005  
Dr. Phil Shelton 2004  
Dr. Donald Edward Davis, author 2003  
Doug Ogle, VHCC 2002  
Chris Bolgiano, author 2001

### Solar Collector Demonstration

Jack and Dianne Mason will have their solar equipment on display Friday evening all day Saturday. Solar cooking and solar electric will be included, but they will focus on demonstrating water heating with "state of the art" solar thermal equipment.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### Friday, May 7

5:00 PM: Registration begins, Konnarock Community Center. Fee is \$5 for each person 12 or older. *Advance registration using the form on this brochure would be greatly appreciated!*

5:30-6:30 PM: Chicken supper prepared and served by the Konnarock Community Club at the Konnarock Community Center. *Prepaid reservations for supper are absolutely, positively necessary.* The cost is \$10.00 per plate.

6:45 P.M.—Welcome, introductions of field trip leaders, last-minute announcements.

7:30—Featured speaker is Kevin Hamed, associate professor of biology at VHCC.

### Saturday, May 8

7:00 A.M. Continuing registration. Anyone who has not registered should do so. Registration is on an honor system, but your small fee helps insure the future of our rally.

8:00 A.M. Morning field trips depart Konnarock Community Center. Please carpool as much as possible!

11:30 Lunch break (Hot dogs for sale.)

1:00 P.M. Afternoon field trips depart Konnarock Community Center. Please carpool as much as possible!

### Writing at the Rally

Journals are one of the best tools of the trade whether used to organize and remember our contact with nature or to stockpile the stuff of story-writing. Debby Clark will lead participants in a discussion and demonstration of why, when and how to keep different kinds of journals, followed by an easy, brief walk near the community center and an activity in which notes taken during the walk can be entered into a journal. Clark is a freelance journalist and newspaper writer and now teaches English at Alleghany High School. She has won numerous awards, including the Sherwood Anderson Short Story Contest.

### Open House at Konnarock Retreat House

The Konnarock Retreat House (old Konnarock Girl's School) will have an open house to show the ongoing restoration project. The school was the center of the community during much of its existence. The building was constructed in 1924 of native hardwoods and is sided with bark from the American chestnut and is on the National Register of Historic Places.