



## The Blue Ridge Naturalist Certificate of Merit Course Schedule August – December 2010

### Core Courses

#### **Summer Flora of the Blue Ridge: a 6-week series**

Instructor: Scott Dean

*Wednesdays, July 28, August 4, 11, 18, 25, Sept 1*

*9:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. each session*

*\$119 Member/\$134 Public*

*Limit: 12 students*

Students will learn to identify native mountain flora using a non-technical keying system, while studying characteristics of plant families, the basics of plant community ecology, and both natural and cultural history of the flora of the Blue Ridge. Our focus will be on wildflowers, but we will also work with trees, and students will become familiar with more technical dichotomous keys as a means of identification.

Dean recommends both "Newcomb's Wildflower Guide" and Swanson's "A Field Guide to the Trees and Shrubs of the Southern Appalachians." Students should dress appropriately for walking along trails; water, rain gear and sun protection should always be carried. Binoculars and fields are a good idea but not required. . Fulfills core requirement for BRN Certificate of Merit.

#### **Autumn Flora of the Blue Ridge: a 6-week series**

Instructor: Scott Dean

*Fridays, Sept 3, 10, 17, 24, Oct 1, 8*

*9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.*

*\$119 Member/\$134 Public*

*Limit: 12 students*

For the last seventeen years Dean has been a walk leader for UNCAshville's annual Wildflower Pilgrimage, as well as leading wildlife and wildflower walks at the Western North Carolina Nature Center and the Arboretum. In this field study students will learn how to identify an unknown plant species, use a technical key, lead a class discussion on a plant family and be introduced to the basic concepts of plant ecology. Fulfills core requirement for BRN Certificate of Merit.

#### **Botany Basics: an 8-week series**

Instructor: Alexandra Holland

*Wednesdays, Sept 8, 15, 22, 29, Oct 6, 13, 20, 27*

*9:30 a.m. to Noon each session*

*\$119 Member/\$134 Public*

*Limit: 18 students*

Plants have amazing abilities to make their own food, pull water hundreds of feet into the air against gravity, and trick insects and other animals into helping them reproduce. Participants will explore plant structure, function, evolution, classification, and ecology. Blue Ridge Naturalist graduate Alexandra Holland teaches this 20-hour course that is primarily academic lecture with some hands-on activities, short outdoor walks and discussions of practical applications of botanical principles. Fulfills core requirement for BRN Certificate of Merit.

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## Elective Courses

### **An Introduction to the Butterflies and Moths of Western North Carolina: a 4-week series**

Instructor: Carlton Burke

*Thursdays, Aug 12, 19, 26, Sept 2*

*1:00 to 3:30 p.m.*

*\$59 Member/\$68 Public*

*Limit: 20 students*

Carlton Burke is a local naturalist and educator and operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists. Burke was on staff at the WNC Nature Center for 25 years and currently serves as a field instructor with Muddy Sneakers. Here he discusses Western North Carolina's abundance of butterfly and moth species. In this class we will focus on the interesting life cycles of these creatures, learn to identify many of the species found in our mountain region, and participate in classroom and field activities relating to learning more about their natural history and methods of attracting them to the home landscape. Fulfills elective requirement for BRN Certificate of Merit.

### **Animals of the Blue Ridge: a 6-week series**

Instructor: Carlton Burke

*Wednesdays, Sept 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, Oct 6*

*1:00 to 4:30 p.m.*

*\$119 Member/\$134 Public*

*Limit: 20 students*

In this series of classes, students will learn the basic identification and natural history of many of our mountain wildlife species. Each week we will cover a different group of vertebrate animals – fish, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and birds through the use of powerpoint presentations, hands-on activities, worksheets, and by observing live animals in the classroom. Fulfills elective requirement for BRN Certificate of Merit.

### **Mountain Herpetology: a 4-week series**

Instructor: Carlton Burke

*Tuesdays, Oct 5, 12, 19, 26*

*1:00 to 3:30 p.m.*

*\$59 Member/\$68 Public*

*Limit: 20 students*

Herpetology is the study of reptiles and amphibians. These creatures have often been misunderstood--even by seasoned nature enthusiasts. In truth, these

interesting animals occupy an important niche in our mountain forests. In this class the student will be introduced to the many varied "herp" species found in our mountain region and meet many of them alive and up-close as we learn about their identification, natural history, and place in the ecosystem. Fulfills elective requirement for BRN Certificate of Merit.

### **Introduction to Lichens**

Instructor: Jennifer Love

*Saturday, November 13*

*9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.*

*\$34 Member/\$40 Public*

*Limit: 20 students*

Experts estimate that lichens cover 8% of the Earth's surface yet they are overlooked by most. Participants in this workshop learn to identify the growth forms and some common Southeastern lichens, understand many of the uses for lichens as well as how lichens are bio-indicators of air quality. Instructor Jennifer Love returns to lead this popular class -- she begins with an indoor classroom session, and then moves outside for field identification. Love has been an environmental educator for 10 years. Fulfills elective requirement for BRN Certificate of Merit.

### **Advanced Lichens: Delving Deeper**

Instructor: Jennifer Love

*Saturday, November 20*

*9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.*

*\$39 Member/\$45 Public*

*Limit: 12 students*

This program is a continuation of the Introduction to Lichens program, and while participants are not required to take the early class, confidence with lichen basic information is required. Instructor Jennifer Love leads students in several activities, including using dissecting microscopes to identify growth forms and reproductive structures, using chemical testing, and practice using a detailed key to identify lichens to species. If available, students should bring a 10x lens and a copy of Lichens of North America, but neither are required for class participation. Fulfills elective requirement for BRN Certificate of Merit.