

Certificate of Merit Core & Elective Courses

Spring 2024

Please keep in mind that this is a WORKING document. There may well be changes in prices, dates and times. All class schedules are subject to change due to space availability and instructor scheduling. This document is only to be used as a reference for course descriptions and initial planning of your schedules.

We will periodically update and correct the information in the Certificate of Merit Digest.

February 2024

Vertebrate Zoology of the Blue Ridge, Part I

ONLINE | Asynchronous Class Open February 15 through April 30, 2024; With course materials and online discussion session.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$125 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core

Limit: 50

Asynchronous Series Open February 15 through April 30. Part I consists of six pre-recorded lectures with course materials; Supplemented with an Online Interactive Discussion Session on Tuesday, February 27, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., with Instructor Carlton Burke.

Videos and assignments for Part I will focus on different groups of vertebrate animals – fish, amphibians, and reptiles.

The Southern Appalachian Mountain region is quite diverse in the many different species of vertebrate animals that make their home here. In this series of classes, students will learn the basic identification and natural history of many of our mountain wildlife species. All six lectures of Part I will be released asynchronously – or on demand – on February 15th and will be available through April 30th in 2024. On-demand delivery allows participants to view the lectures at times most convenient for them, to pause and absorb the knowledge from the videos in ways best suited to different learning styles! Then take advantage of interactive opportunities to meet the instructor for an in-person Lunch & Learn discussion or an online Q & A. Continue in March with Vertebrate Zoology of the Blue Ridge II to learn about the region's birds and mammals.

Part 1 of 2; Vertebrate Zoology Parts I and II must be completed to fulfill the core requirement for the certificate program.

Carlton Burke is a naturalist and educator who operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists, an educational service that offers wildlife and nature educational programs throughout Western North Carolina. He also was on the staff of the WNC Nature Center in Asheville for over 25 years as the Curator of Exhibits. Carlton co-hosts [Nature News](#), a weekly radio program on WTZQ, with Dan Lazar and is a NC state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Registration and Participation in Online Classes through the Arboretum

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
- Make sure you enter your email address correctly when registering.

- Access to meeting information and Zoom links will be accessible upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section. To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).
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Please add adulteducation@ncarboretum.org to your contacts to ensure our emails do not end up in your spam folder.

Great Backyard Birdcount 2024: Introducing eBird!

ONSITE | Saturday, February 17, 10 - 10:30 a.m.

Instructor: Kevin Burke

Free!

BRN - Elective, 1 hour* | BREG - Elective, 1 hour*

Get ready for the Great Backyard Bird Count! Kick off an exciting day of birdwatching events at the Arboretum with an open workshop on using eBird, a free online program that will help you track and share your sightings and join in a world-wide community science movement.

**Blue Ridge Naturalist & Blue Ridge Eco Gardener Certificate of Merit participants can receive a one-hour elective credit by participating in this class and in the events at the Arboretum on Saturday, February 17th. Learn how you can earn credit for other programs and for participating in the Great Backyard Bird Count 2024!*

Kevin Burke is originally from the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia. He grew up running around in the woods and trails of Shenandoah National Park, where he spent summers camping and hiking with his family. Kevin was introduced to birding by his grandmother, who pointed out all the feeder birds and helped him identify them. This early exposure to the natural world helped foster a lifelong love of learning and birding! Inspired by his first formal ornithology class at Hocking College in Ohio, Kevin has been birding every day since. He went on to get a Bachelor of Science in Ecotourism and Conservation Ecology from the University of Idaho. He has been leading birding trips in some capacity for almost 20 years, traveling throughout the US, Costa Rica, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic. His birding journey has also taken him to some other spectacular locations including Portugal, Colombia, The Bahamas and Canada.

Build Your Own Bluebird Box

ONSITE | Tuesday, February 20, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Instructor: Joe Sanders

\$120 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 3 hours | BREG - Elective, 3 hours

Limit: 15

Help bluebirds thrive in your area by learning how to construct and place a bluebird nest box on your property. Bluebirds actually need human intervention in order to compensate for their natural habitats being overtaken by non-native species. This three-hour class will give a history of the bluebird and its lifecycle. Each participant will build their own cedar nest box of the type that has proven popular with bluebirds.

All supplies are included in the registration fee and no carpentry experience is required. You will go home with a completed bluebird nest box, mounting pole, and written information on attracting bluebirds to your property.

Joe Sanders has been working with bluebird restoration for over 30 years and is currently a County Representative for the North Carolina Bluebird Society. He has taught classes to numerous community garden groups and currently monitors nest boxes during the nesting season, including those on the Arboretum grounds.

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Winter Native Tree Identification - Online

ONLINE | Wednesday, February 21, 1 - 3 p.m.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$40 Adult Non-Member

*(**[Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core (With Field Experience) | BREG - Elective, 2 hours

Limit: 50

Trees take on a whole new dimension in winter with the usual methods of identification less obvious. Is this twig smooth or wooly, this end bud hairy, leaf scars narrow? Learn to speak the language of Winter Native Tree ID in this two-hour online course with Naturalist Carlton Burke. His rich course materials give helpful tips and techniques for identifying trees in the winter months based on silhouette, bark, buds, leaf scars, twigs and other distinguishing characteristics.

This class counts as a core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit when taken with a two-hour field experience.

Carlton Burke is a naturalist and educator who operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists, an educational service that offers wildlife and nature educational programs throughout Western North Carolina. He also was on the staff of the WNC Nature Center in Asheville for over 25 years as the Curator of Exhibits. Carlton co-hosts [Nature News](#), a weekly radio program on WTZQ, with Dan Lazar and is a NC state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

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Winter Native Tree ID - Field Experience A

ONSITE | Thursday, February 22, 1 - 3 p.m.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$40 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Field Experience or Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours

Limit: 12

Trees take on a whole new dimension in winter with the usual methods of identification less obvious. Bundle up to join Naturalist Carlton Burke in this field experience in the Arboretum forest and gather tips and techniques for identifying trees in the winter months based on silhouette, bark, buds, leaf scars, twigs and other distinguishing characteristics.

This class counts as a core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit when taken with the two-hour online lecture.

Carlton Burke is a naturalist and educator who operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists, an educational service that offers wildlife and nature educational programs throughout Western North Carolina. He also was on the staff of the WNC Nature Center in Asheville for over 25 years as the Curator of Exhibits. Carlton co-hosts [Nature News](#), a weekly radio program on WTZQ, with Dan Lazar and is a NC state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

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Winter Native Tree ID - Field Experience B

ONSITE | Saturday, February 24, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$40 Adult Non-Member

(*Arboretum Members* receive a 10% discount on all classes.)**

BRN - Field Experience or Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours

Limit: 12

Trees take on a whole new dimension in winter with the usual methods of identification less obvious. Bundle up to join Naturalist Carlton Burke in this field experience in the Arboretum forest and gather tips and techniques for identifying trees in the winter months based on silhouette, bark, buds, leaf scars, twigs and other distinguishing characteristics.

This class counts as a core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit when taken with the two-hour online lecture.

Carlton Burke is a naturalist and educator who operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists, an educational service that offers wildlife and nature educational programs throughout Western North Carolina. He also was on the staff of the WNC Nature Center in Asheville for over 25 years as the Curator of Exhibits. Carlton co-hosts [Nature News](#), a weekly radio program on WTZQ, with Dan Lazar and is a NC state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

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Planning & Creating a Multi-use Native Plant Garden

ONSITE | Saturday, February 24, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Instructors: Sarah Coury & Ben Pick

\$55 Adult Non-Member

(*Arboretum Members* receive a 10% discount on all classes.)**

BREG - Core or Elective, 2 hours | BRN - Elective, 2 hours

Limit: 24

Native plants are beautiful, low maintenance, ecologically beneficial and bestow a distinct sense of place to cultivated landscapes. Growers Sarah Coury and Ben Pick lead this informative overview that will guide students in planning a native garden to serve multiple purposes, including growing native species for cut flowers, ornamental value, edible gardens, butterfly host plants, and more!

Sarah Coury co-owns Saturnia Farm in Weaverville, N.C., which specializes in holistic production of specialty perennials and native plants. In January 2023, she also began a new role as Garden Manager at the Botanical Gardens at Asheville. Sarah's background is in wildlife conservation, and her passion is creating multi-use garden spaces that provide both high habitat value for flora and fauna, and the healing qualities of beauty for people.

Ben Pick grew up in Asheville and has been deeply influenced by his time in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Since graduating from NC State University in Horticulture Design, he has traveled and gained experience in many different gardens. He now runs a small garden services company, Meadow Edge LLC, and also co-owns specialty plant nursery, Saturnia Farm, in Weaverville, N.C. www.saturniafarm.com

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Winter Birding: Duck Day!

FIELD | Sunday, February 25, 1 - 4 p.m.

Instructor: Kevin Burke

\$65 Adult Non-Member

(*Arboretum Members* receive a 10% discount on all classes.)**

BRN - Elective, 3 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 3 hours

Capacity: 12

Bundle up and join Kevin Burke for a fun and informative day of winter birding! Winter is among the best of times in the year to be on the lookout for ducks in Western North Carolina. We'll learn where to look and tips on identifying. Hooded Merganser, Gadwall, Northern Shoveler and Lesser Scaup are a few of the ducks we could glimpse. This should be an easy field experience with a fair amount of walking on flat trails and roads.

Kevin Burke is originally from the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia. He grew up running around in the woods and trails of Shenandoah National Park, where he spent summers camping and hiking with his family. Kevin was introduced to birding by his grandmother, who pointed out all the feeder birds and helped him identify them. This early exposure to the natural world helped foster a lifelong love of learning and birding! Inspired by his first formal ornithology class at Hocking College in Ohio, Kevin has been birding every day since. He went on to get a Bachelor of Science in Ecotourism and Conservation Ecology from the University of Idaho. He has been leading birding trips in some capacity for almost 20 years, traveling throughout the US, Costa Rica, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic. His birding journey has also taken him to some other spectacular locations including Portugal, Colombia, The Bahamas and Canada.

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Late Winter Ethnobotany & Tree ID - Intensive

ONSITE | Sunday, February 25, 1 - 5 p.m.

Instructor: Marc Williams

\$80 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core or Elective, 4 hours | BREG - Elective, 4 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours

Limit: 15

Ethnobiologist Marc Williams teaches this afternoon intensive that starts in the classroom and closes with a plant walk around the Arboretum gardens and forest to mark the close of nature's most challenging botanizing season. Learn to distinguish more subtle clues in the absence of flowers, fruits and leaves to identify woody plants. That said, by the end of February some plants may already be coming up and showing signs of early spring. We will take note of these early bloomers especially while engaging in a dialogue about off-season woody plant characteristics, ethnobotanical applications and various resources available for further study.

This class combines classroom lecture and field experience to count as the Winter Native Tree ID core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit.

Marc Williams has taught hundreds of classes to thousands of people about plants, humans, other life forms and their interface in his work as an ethnobiologist. His training includes a B.A. in Environmental Studies/Sustainable Agriculture from Warren Wilson College with a minor in Business and a M.A. in Appalachian Studies/Sustainable Development from Appalachian State University with a minor in Planning/Geography. He has spent over 20 years working at various restaurants, farms, and travels throughout 30 countries in Central/ North/South America, Europe and all 50 states in the USA.

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Arboretum Reads *The Climate Book* by Greta Thunberg

ONSITE | Tuesday, February 27, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Facilitators: Laura Stephens, Revathi Muralidharan & Mya Sears

Free | Suggested Donation \$12

BRN - Elective, 1 hour | BREG - Elective, 1 hour

Limit: 20

In *The Climate Book*, Greta Thunberg has gathered the wisdom of over one hundred experts—geophysicists, oceanographers and meteorologists; engineers, economists and mathematicians; historians, philosophers and Indigenous leaders—to open a full panoramic view of the effects of climate change on a global scale. Join in a free overview and discussion of this timely Arboretum Reads selection with Laura Stevens, Revathi Muralidharan and Mya Sears of the NC Institute for Climate Studies. They'll equip us all with the current science, making information accessible in a way that we can find hope and take action here on our local level.

Learn about the climate change science series offered each fall in collaboration with NOAA ([the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#)), NCEI ([National Centers for Environmental Information](#)), and NCICS ([the North Carolina Institute of Climate Studies](#)). For more information on the class, email adulthoodeducation@ncarboretum.org.

Laura Stevens is a research scientist who analyzes changes in both past and future climate and has served as an author on several U.S. climate reports. With NCICS colleagues. **Revathi Muralidharan** is a climate data analyst who tests and develops climate datasets for a variety of scientific applications, with a focus in the health sciences. **Mya Sears**, an engagement specialist who helps many audiences find, analyze, and understand climate data from satellites, weather stations and radar.

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Build a Rustic Wren House

ONSITE | Wednesday, February 28, 1 - 4 p.m.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$120 Adult Non-Member

*(**[Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 3 hours | BREG - Elective, 3 hours

Limit: 15

Wrens are common but secretive little birds that nest in a variety of recessed holes and cavities. They are usually easily attracted to properly-designed handmade nesting boxes. Learn all about the variety of wren species that call Western North Carolina home. In the second part of the class, participants will build a customizable rustic wooden wren house designed to be cleaned easily and one that can be well placed in a landscape to attract these little birds with big personalities and tuneful songs.

All supplies are included in the registration fee and no carpentry experience is required. You'll go home with a completed wren house along with tips on proper placement in your landscape.

Carlton Burke is a naturalist and educator who operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists, an educational service that offers wildlife and nature educational programs throughout Western North Carolina. He also was on the staff of the WNC Nature Center in Asheville for over 25 years as the Curator of Exhibits. Carlton co-hosts [Nature News](#), a weekly radio program on WTZQ, with Dan Lazar and is a NC state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

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Winter Ecology Walk: Advanced Topics in Ecology

ONSITE | Thursday, February 29, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Instructor: Dan Lazar

\$24 Adult Non-Member

(*Arboretum Members* receive a 10% discount on all classes.)**

BRN - Elective, 1 hour | BREG - Elective, 1 hour | NCEE - Criteria II, 1.5 hours

Limit: 12

The start of a new seasonal series of special topics in ecology builds on a beloved Arboretum course. Join Naturalist Dan Lazar for this Winter Ecology Walk with trailside stops for discussing the many ways in which organisms have adapted to winter in the Southern Appalachians. Many trees are leafless during the winter, but are they really dormant? Why do some trees retain their leaves throughout the year? How do insects survive the cold? What is happening underground below the thick layer of insulating leaves? Opportunities for learning in place are far from dormant in this or any season at the Arboretum!

Dan Lazar served for many years as the director of education at the Western North Carolina Nature Center, followed by several years as executive director of the Colburn Earth Science Museum. Dan has a degree in forest biology from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry and has been an instructor in the Blue Ridge Naturalist program since 2005.

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Treasures of the Winter Night Sky

ONLINE | Thursday, February 29, 2 - 3:30 p.m.*

Instructor: Stephan Martin

\$30 Adult Non-Member

(*Arboretum Members* receive a 10% discount on all classes.)**

BRN - Elective, 1 hour | BREG - Elective, 1 hour

Limit: 30

Join Astronomer Stephan Martin for an exploration of the treasures of the night sky as we discover the constellations, bright stars, planets, and deep sky objects that fill the evening skies in late winter. During this lively interactive online class, we'll review the basic use of planispheres, star charts and apps to find our way around the night sky and learn about some of the rich collections of objects that are visible with binoculars and small telescopes.

**Included in the class is a separate virtual skywatch scheduled for Friday, March 1, from 8 to 9 p.m., that you can join from wherever you are to discover the season's starry treasures.*

Stephan Martin is an astronomer and educator who taught at colleges and universities for more than 25 years. He has lectured on light pollution and its effects on the environment and has offered stargazing and introductory astronomy workshops domestically and internationally. He was formerly the supervisor of the Williams College observatory, where he participated in research expeditions around the world to study and observe solar eclipses.

Cosmicconversations.weebly.com

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March 2024

Vertebrate Zoology of the Blue Ridge, Part II

ONLINE | Asynchronous Class Open March 1 through May 31, 2024; With course materials and online discussion session.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$125 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core

Limit: 50

Asynchronous Series Open February March 1 through May 31. Part II consists of six pre-recorded lectures with course materials; Supplemented with an In-Person Lunch & Learn Discussion on Tuesday, March 12, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., and an Online Interactive Discussion Session on Tuesday, March 26, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., with Instructor Carlton Burke.

Videos and assignments for Part II will focus on different groups of vertebrate animals – birds and mammals.

The Southern Appalachian Mountain region is quite diverse in the many different species of vertebrate animals that make their home here. In this series of classes, students will learn the basic identification and natural history of many of our mountain wildlife species. All six lectures of Part I will be released asynchronously – or on demand – on March 1st and will be available through May 31st in 2024. On-demand delivery allows participants to view the lectures at times most convenient for them, to pause and absorb the knowledge from the videos in ways best suited to different learning styles! Then take advantage of interactive opportunities to meet the instructor for an in-person Lunch & Learn discussion or an online Q & A.

Part 2 of 2; Vertebrate Zoology Parts I and II must be completed to fulfill the core requirement for the certificate program.

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Winter Sky Watch

ONLINE | Friday, March 1, 8 - 9 p.m.

Instructor: Stephan Martin

\$15 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 1 hour | BREG - Elective, 1 hour

Limit: 30

Be part of a unique virtual stargazing community as we gather online to explore the constellations, bright stars, planets and deep sky objects of the winter night sky with local astronomer Stephan Martin as our guide. All you need is a smartphone or mobile device, a free downloadable astronomy app and an internet connection to join from the warmth and safety of your own stargazing location. Steve will point out some of the celestial wonders of the night sky during this time of year and share their myths and legends.

Stephan Martin is an astronomer and educator who taught at colleges and universities for more than 25 years. He has lectured on light pollution and its effects on the environment and has offered stargazing and introductory astronomy workshops domestically and internationally. He was formerly the supervisor of the Williams College observatory, where he participated in research expeditions around the world to study and observe solar eclipses.

cosmicconversations.weebly.com

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Eco Gardening: Principles in Practice - In Person

ONSITE | Three Sessions: Wednesdays, March 6, 20 & April 3, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Instructor: Nina Shippen

\$145 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BREG - Core

Limit: 24

Ecological gardening is a way of thinking about the designed landscape in which gardens are no longer seen as a collection of plants, but as a community of complex interdependencies among plants, soils, environment and animals. Ecology-based methods used in design, site assessment, planning, planting and management are all covered in this comprehensive overview class. Gardeners of all levels of interest and ability will find this foundational class valuable for learning ecologically-sustainable practices that can be adapted and applied in a variety of landscapes. Participants in the in-person class have access to the online sessions in case they have to miss a meeting.

The class is a core requirement for the Arboretum's Blue Ridge Eco Gardener Certificate of Merit program. An asynchronous version of this class is open from March 6 through May 31 in 2024.

Planting in a Post-Wild World: Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes by Thomas Rainer and Claudia West and *Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard* by Doug Tallamy are recommended texts. Available in the Arboretum's Connections Gallery with student member discount.

Nina Shippen practices residential landscape and garden design through her company Hidden Road Landscape Design, which focuses on coupling the principles of healing gardens with sound ecologic practices to create satisfying gardens for her clients. A graduate of the landscape design program at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies, she has lived and gardened in Transylvania County since 2005.

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Eco Gardening: Principles in Practice - Asynchronous

ONLINE | Asynchronous Series Open March 6 through May 31, 2024; With course materials and online discussion session

Instructor: Nina Shippen

\$95 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BREG - Core

Limit: 30

Asynchronous Series Open February March 6 through May 31. Supplemented with an Online Interactive Discussion Session with Instructor Nina Shippen.

Ecological gardening is a way of thinking about the designed landscape in which gardens are no longer seen as a collection of plants, but as a community of complex interdependencies among plants, soils, environment and animals. Ecology-based methods used in design, site assessment, planning, planting and management are all covered in this comprehensive overview class. Gardeners of all levels of interest and ability will find this foundational class valuable for learning ecologically-sustainable practices that can be adapted and applied in a variety of landscapes.

The class is a core requirement for the Arboretum's Blue Ridge Eco Gardener Certificate of Merit program. An in-person version of this class is scheduled for March 6, 20, and April 3 in 2024.

Planting in a Post-Wild World: Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes by Thomas Rainer and Claudia West and *Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard* by Doug Tallamy are recommended texts. Available in the Arboretum's Connections Gallery with student member discount.

Nina Shippen practices residential landscape and garden design through her company Hidden Road Landscape Design, which focuses on coupling the principles of healing gardens with sound ecologic practices to create satisfying gardens for her clients. A graduate of the landscape design program at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies, she has lived and gardened in Transylvania County since 2005.

Registration and Participation in Online Classes through the Arboretum

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
- Make sure you enter your email address correctly when registering.
- Access to meeting information and Zoom links will be accessible upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section. To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).
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Please add adulteducation@ncarboretum.org to your contacts to ensure our emails do not end up in your spam folder.

Salamander Diversity of the Southern Appalachians

ONLINE | Wednesday, March 6, 1 - 2:30 p.m.

Instructor: Patrick Brannon

\$35 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 1 hour | BREG - Elective, 1 hour

Limit: 30

The Southern Appalachians are one of the most biologically diverse regions in the temperate world. More species of salamanders exist in these mountains than anywhere else, and nowhere are they more abundant. This engaging online class taught by Naturalist/Educator Patrick Brannon includes a lecture focusing on the biology and ecology of salamanders, biogeography, reasons for the enormous diversity in this region, and local threats to species diversity. Following is a "lab" in which we will analyze previously collected data to examine how individual salamander species share a stream habitat. Students are encouraged to search for salamanders on their own using the local species checklist provided and various field guides.

Patrick Brannon is a naturalist and educator at the WCU Highlands Biological Station in Highlands, NC. He holds a M.S. in Biology from Appalachian State University, and conducts research on the ecology of both salamanders and small mammals. In addition, Patrick presents a wide variety of K-12 school programs and educator workshops throughout the region.

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Emergence: Spring Wildflower Walk

ONSITE | Saturday, March 9, 1 - 3 p.m.

Instructor: Alexandra Holland

\$35 Adult Non-Member

*(**[Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours

Limit: 15

Spring is here, and the natural world is waking from its winter rest! Naturalist and botanist Alexandra Holland leads this wildflower walk at the Arboretum, pointing out the array of spring wildflowers emerging and in bloom. Learn some basics of wildflower ecology and identification while taking in the beauty of spring.

Alexandra Holland graduated from Duke University and earned her Master's degree in botany from the University of Texas at Austin. She was in the first class of students to be certified as Blue Ridge Naturalists. Alexandra managed the UTEX Culture Collection of Algae at UT Austin and spent many hours working with education programs at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. She has taught botany for over a decade and leads nature hikes in Western North Carolina for groups of all ages.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum

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Contemplating Place: Seeing Beauty Awe Walk

ONSITE | Sunday, March 10, 3:30 - 5 p.m.

Instructor: Susan Patrice

\$24 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 1 hours | BREG - Elective, 1 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 1.5 hours

Limit: 12

Take a fresh look at the objects, moments and vistas that surround you during this “awe walk” led by documentary photographer Susan Patrice. The contemplative practices she teaches help you experience place through new and loving eyes, to see beauty and wonder in your surroundings. Bring cameras or phones to capture what calls to you in the enveloping landscape. Participants will be sent meeting instructions for this small-group class that will take a slow intentional walk through parts of the Arboretum forest and forest meadow. This walk is a precursor to the generative writing and contemplative photography workshops to be held the following weekend. Above: *Photograph by Contemplative Photography Participant Barbara Kotts.*

Susan Patrice is a documentary photographer, community artist, and founder of Makers Circle. She recently launched Kinship Photography Collective, a global community of practice designed to create rich visual conversations that explore the intimate connections between nature, culture and belonging. Susan's own photography and public installations focus primarily on the Southern Landscape and its people and feature intimate images that touch deeply into the questions of place, gender, and belonging.

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Lifelong Gardening

ONSITE | Wednesday, March 13, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Instructors: John Bowen, Sue Bumby, John Fieselman and Nancy Humphries, Extension Master Gardener Volunteers

\$55 Adult Non-Member

*(** Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BREG - Elective, 3 hours | BRN - Elective, 3 hours

Limit: 24

Is gardening becoming a little more physically challenging for you as time goes by? Are you concerned about making things easier or safer in your garden? Make some smart gardening decisions and modifications with the help of this interactive and informative half-day workshop taught by a team of Extension Master Gardeners Volunteers who will help you consider your approach to gardening as you and your garden mature. They will also discuss appropriate tool choices and demonstrate new ergonomic and adaptive tools for you to try out. You are sure to come away with tips to keep you gardening safely for a lifetime! Bring your questions and your curiosity, and bring a brown bag lunch for a break in the middle of class.

John Bowen, Sue Bumby, John Fieselman and Nancy Humphries bring their smart gardening experience to share with participants of all ages. All four are lifelong gardeners and longtime Extension Master Gardener Volunteers.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum

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Lunch & Learn: Previewing the Cullowhee Native Plants Conference

ONSITE | Thursday, March 14, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Instructor: Adam Bigelow

Free | Suggested Donation \$12

Limit: 24

This year is the 40th anniversary of the Cullowhee Native Plant Conference, the largest and oldest conference of its kind in the country. Hear about the history and impact of this great annual gathering, and get a preview of some highlights of this year's historic conference in this informal Lunch & Learn discussion with Adam Bigelow, who is one of the conference planners.

NOTE: Participation in the Cullowhee Native Plants Conference is eligible for up to six hours elective credit for either certificate of merit program with proof of registration/attendance.

Adam Bigelow is a horticulturist and amateur botanist who lives in Cullowhee, NC, and has been studying the plants and wildflowers of Southern Appalachia for over 20 years. Adam is the owner/operator of Bigelow's Botanical Excursions, an eco-tour business leading guided plant walks in WNC. He is an avid organic gardener and founded and managed the Cullowhee Community Garden for ten years. Adam is a long-time attendee, field trip leader, and steering committee member of the Cullowhee Native Plant Conference, the largest and oldest annual conference focusing on Native Plants on the East Coast. Adam has lived in WNC for 30 years.

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Native Plants for the Vegetable Garden

ONSITE | Thursday, March 14, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Instructor: Adam Bigelow

\$35 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BREG - Elective, 1 hour | BRN - Elective, 1 hour

Limit: 24

In *Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation that Starts in Your Yard*, Author Doug Tallamy makes an instructive analogy when it comes to the subject of this class: "Gardening is like cooking," says Tallamy. "It is tempting to cook only with the goal of achieving great taste, with no thought of healthy eating, but that often results in tasty concoctions so full of fat, sugar, and salt that they are deadly in the long run. Similarly, it is tempting to garden only for beauty, without regard to the many ecological roles our landscapes must perform. All too often, such narrow gardening goals result in a landscape so low in ecological function that it drains the vitality from the surrounding ecosystem."

Horticulturist and community garden organizer Adam Bigelow leads this class on how to integrate native plants into our foodscapes in ways that will benefit us, our gardens, and the landscapes and ecosystems we depend upon. We will discuss how native plants can help attract beneficial insects, beautify vegetable and flower gardens, and provide nutrition and good taste to the dinner plate.

Join us in April for Arboretum Reads Nature's Best Hope by Doug Tallamy, a two-session reading circle led by Environmental Educator Libby Oswald.

Adam Bigelow is a horticulturist and amateur botanist who lives in Cullowhee, NC, and has been studying the plants and wildflowers of Southern Appalachia for over 20 years. Adam is the owner/operator of Bigelow's Botanical Excursions, an eco-tour business leading guided plant walks in WNC. He is an avid organic gardener and founded and managed the Cullowhee Community Garden for ten years. Adam is a long-time attendee, field trip leader, and steering committee member of the Cullowhee Native Plant Conference, the largest and oldest annual conference focusing on Native Plants on the East Coast. Adam has lived in WNC for 30 years.

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UNC Press, TNCA & Malaprop's Present: A Book Talk with Robert Brunk on *A Question of Value*

ONLINE | Thursday, March 14, 6 - 7 p.m.

Presenter: Robert Brunk

Free | Suggested Donation \$12

Limit: 30

In the late 1970s, Robert Brunk discovered the world of auctioneering. Drawn to the unique mountain culture and the history of fine art in and around Asheville, Bob started a business, Brunk Auctions, that grew to offer the finest examples of American and European art. America's passion for collecting, buying, and selling reached remarkable heights in the following decades. Auction houses and antiques stores thrived; people paid hundreds of dollars for a humble country basket and thousands for a rare piece of folk art. In this recent collection of essays, published by UNC Press, Bob considers specific items and remarkable situations he encountered in his long and successful work as an auctioneer and appraiser. He presents objects as invitations to consider personal and collective histories often related to unresolved social inequities. Join us in an online conversation with the author and co-hosts from UNC Press and Malaprop's to consider *A Question of Value* and also reflect with Bob about a career that often came in conflict with his Mennonite upbringing and the complexities of ownership and value. Both the book and the conversation will have listeners reflecting on the ways we live with objects—and what it brings out in us when we decide it's time to let them go.

Robert Brunk also authored the acclaimed two-volume *May We All Remember Well: A Journal of the History & Cultures of Western North Carolina*. In addition to a long career as an auctioneer and appraiser, his writing has been widely published and listed as Notable in *Best American Essays*. He is the founder of Brunk Auctions in Asheville, N.C.

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Growing in Place Artists Talk

ONSITE | Friday, March 15, 5 - 6:30 p.m.

Instructors: Mildred K. Barya, Susan Patrice

Free | Suggested Donation \$12

Limit: 30

How does place shape who we are? How do our encounters with our more-than-human "kin" change our fundamental understanding of belonging to a place rather than a place existing for us? A number of paradigms governing our views of nature haven't been shifting in recent years, and we have a deeper appreciation for how humans are but one part of a vast, interconnected network. Join us for this generous evening with two artists exploring ideas of identity, interdependence, and place, setting the tone for a weekend of generative writing and contemplative photography workshops at the Arboretum. Poet Mildred Barya will read from her most recent poetry collection *The Animals of My Earth School* and from her recent essay "Rituals of Home." Photographer Susan Patrice will share images from the *Enveloping Landscape* series and other projects that show loving eyes focusing on the lands we steward.

Susan Patrice is a documentary photographer, community artist, and founder of Makers Circle. She recently launched Kinship Photography Collective, a global community of practice designed to create rich visual conversations that explore the intimate connections between nature, culture and belonging. Susan's own photography and public installations focus primarily on the Southern Landscape and its people and feature intimate images that touch deeply into the questions of place, gender, and belonging. www.susanpatrice.com

Mildred K. Barya is a North Carolina-based writer and poet of East African descent. She teaches and lectures globally, and is the author of four full-length poetry collections, most recently *The Animals of My Earth School* published by Terrapin Books, 2023. Her prose, hybrids, and poems have appeared in *New England Review*, *Shenandoah*, *Joyland*, *The Cincinnati Review*, *Tin House*, *Forge*, and elsewhere. Her essay, "Being Here in This Body," won the 2020 Linda Flowers Literary Award and is published in the *North Carolina Literary Review*. She serves on the boards of African Writers Trust, Story Parlor, and coordinates the Poetrio Reading events at Malaprop's Independent Bookstore/Café. She blogs here: www.mildredbarya.com

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Identity & Place in the Natural World: A Generative Writing Workshop

ONSITE | Two Sessions: Friday, March 15, 5 - 6:30 p.m.; Saturday, March 16, 9:30 a.m.- 5 p.m.

Instructor: Mildred Barya

\$125 Adult Non-Member **

(** [Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)

BRN - Elective, 6 hours | BREG - Elective, 6 hours

Limit: 10

Wendell Berry, Mary Oliver, Barry Lopez, and other nature-based writers found solace and kinship with the natural world. What about us? This creative writing workshop offers tips on how to receive inspiration from the flourishing and/or endangered non-human environment. It is for anyone who is curious about exploring our connections with nature and discovering a new way of being in the world. A creative writing background is not required to participate.

This generative writing workshop includes the Artists Talk on Friday, March 15, from 5 - 6:30 p.m., and a full day at the Arboretum on Saturday, March 16, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Mildred K Barya is a North Carolina-based writer and poet of East African descent. She teaches and lectures globally, and is the author of four full-length poetry collections, most recently *The Animals of My Earth School* published by Terrapin Books, 2023. Her prose, hybrids, and poems have appeared in *New England Review*, *Shenandoah*, *Joyland*, *The Cincinnati Review*, *Tin House*, *Forge*, and elsewhere. Her essay, "Being Here in This Body," won the 2020 Linda Flowers Literary Award and is published in the *North Carolina Literary Review*. She serves on the boards of African Writers Trust, Story Parlor, and coordinates the Poetrio Reading events at Malaprop's Independent Bookstore/Café. She blogs here: www.mildredbarya.com

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Making Kin with the Natural World: A Contemplative Photography Workshop

ONSITE | Two Sessions: Friday, March 15, 5 - 6:30 p.m.; Saturday, March 16, 9:30 a.m.- 5 p.m.

Instructor: Susan Patrice

\$125 Adult Non-Member **

*(** Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 6 hours | BREG - Elective, 6 hours

Limit: 10

Many of us yearn for kinship with the natural world. Contemplative photography offers us a path. The camera you carry in your pocket or bag can become a powerful tool for reimagining your relationships and deepening your intimacy and connection with the places you love. During this creative retreat, Susan Patrice will share unique contemplative photography practices designed to awaken curiosity and wonder. We will use our cameras to explore the magical place that is The North Carolina Arboretum, nestled in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. We will celebrate the visual wonders of nature while finding creative nourishment and inspiration within this protected and loved landscape. As we practice together, our photographs will come alive with new meaning and beauty. Together we will contemplate how photography can become a powerful tool for visual stewardship by deepening our capacity for seeing, knowing, and caring for a place. Open to photographers of all levels; even seasoned practitioners should find value in this unique approach to the medium.

This contemplative photography workshop includes the Artists Talk on Friday, March 15, from 5 - 6:30 p.m., and a full day at the Arboretum on Saturday, March 16, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Susan Patrice is a documentary photographer, community artist, and founder of Makers Circle. She recently launched Kinship Photography Collective, a global community of practice designed to create rich visual conversations that explore the intimate connections between nature, culture and belonging. Susan's own photography and public installations focus primarily on the Southern Landscape and its people and feature intimate images that touch deeply into the questions of place, gender, and belonging.

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Emergence: Spring Wildflower Walk

ONSITE | Saturday, March 16, 1 - 3 p.m.

Instructor: Alexandra Holland

\$35 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours

Limit: 15

Spring is here, and the natural world is waking from its winter rest! Naturalist and botanist Alexandra Holland leads this wildflower walk at the Arboretum, pointing out the array of spring wildflowers emerging and in bloom. Learn some basics of wildflower ecology and identification while taking in the beauty of spring.

Alexandra Holland graduated from Duke University and earned her Master's degree in botany from the University of Texas at Austin. She was in the first class of students to be certified as Blue Ridge Naturalists. Alexandra managed the UTEX Culture Collection of Algae at UT Austin and spent many hours working with education programs at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. She has taught botany for over a decade and leads nature hikes in Western North Carolina for groups of all ages.

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Botany Basics - In Person

ONSITE | Six Sessions: Tuesdays & Thursdays, March 19 - April 4, 1 - 3 p.m.

Instructor: Alexandra Holland

\$185 Adult Non-Member**

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core | BREG - Core

Limit: 20

Plants have many amazing abilities: they make their own food, pull water hundreds of feet in the air against gravity, and trick insects and other animals into helping them reproduce. They track the sun, recoil at a touch, and warn other plants of danger. In this class we will explore all these phenomena and more as we look at the basics of plant structure, function, evolution, classification, and ecology. This version of Botany Basics meets in person at the Arboretum in six two-hour sessions that allow for botanizing walks, lab activities, and discussion questions. Participants in the in-person class have access to the online sessions in case they have to miss a meeting.

This in-person intensive course fulfills the core Botany requirement for the Blue Ridge Naturalist and the Blue Ridge Eco Gardener Certificates of Merit.

Alexandra Holland graduated from Duke University and earned her Master's degree in botany from the University of Texas at Austin. She was in the first class of students to be certified as Blue Ridge Naturalists. Alexandra managed the UTEX Culture Collection of Algae at UT Austin and spent many hours working with education programs at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. She has taught botany for over a decade and leads nature hikes in Western North Carolina for groups of all ages.

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Botany Basics - Asynchronous

ONLINE | Open March 19 through June 30, 2024. Consists of pre-recorded lectures with course materials

Instructor: Alexandra Holland

\$125 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core | BREG - Core

Limit: 50

Plants have many amazing abilities: they make their own food, pull water hundreds of feet in the air against gravity, and trick insects and other animals into helping them reproduce. They track the sun, recoil at a touch, and warn other plants of danger. In this class we will explore all these phenomena and more as we look at the basics of plant structure, function, evolution, classification, and ecology. The class is presented in an asynchronous lecture format with supplemental course materials. Discussion questions and practical exercises will be provided to reinforce the lecture material, including making observations in your own yard or neighborhood. Participants can sign up for supplemental botanizing and wildflower walks for further reinforcement of the lectures.

This asynchronous course fulfills the core Botany requirement for the Blue Ridge Naturalist and the Blue Ridge Eco Gardener Certificates of Merit.

Alexandra Holland graduated from Duke University and earned her Master's degree in botany from the University of Texas at Austin. She was in the first class of students to be certified as Blue Ridge Naturalists. Alexandra managed the UTEX Culture Collection of Algae at UT Austin and spent many hours working with education programs at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. She has taught botany for over a decade and leads nature hikes in Western North Carolina for groups of all ages.

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Contemplative Cosmology: Finding Balance at the Turning Point of the Year

ONLINE | Friday, March 22, 8:30 - 10 p.m.

Instructors: Stephan Martin, Marianne Rowe

\$24 Non-member Adult **

*(** Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

Limit: 24

When was the last time you created the space for gazing up and letting your mind wander into the spaciousness of the night sky? For thousands of years, human beings have engaged in a contemplative relationship with the darkness of night and the night sky and this exploration has evoked countless insights, reflections, and inspirations. Join certified Forest-Bathing guide Marianne Rowe and astronomer Stephan Martin for a unique experience of being with the night as we contemplate where we are in the cosmos and in the calendar, balanced on the Spring Equinox. In an audio-only Zoom call, connected in this unique virtual stargazing community, Steve will guide us to some of the hidden wonders of the night sky. Marianne will offer contemplation and sharing prompts to help deepen our experience of the wonder, mystery, and beauty of the universe and the night

Stephan Martin is an astronomer and educator who taught at colleges and universities for more than 25 years. He has lectured on light pollution and its effects on the environment and has offered stargazing and introductory astronomy workshops domestically and internationally. He was formerly the supervisor of the Williams College observatory, where he participated in research expeditions around the world to study and observe solar eclipses. Cosmicconversations.weebly.com

Marianne Rowe, MS, is a Founding Teacher of Monterey Bay Meditation Studio, an Emergent Dialogue facilitator, and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Pacific Grove, CA. Her teaching, therapeutic work and leadership focus on healing, transformation and evolution through awareness and relationship. Her passions include inspiring reverence and reciprocity with Earth and Universe, spiritual activism, and conscious relationship with all beings. Her website is: www.montereybaymeditation.com

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iNaturalist & City Nature Challenge Overview & Walk

ONSITE | Saturday, March 23, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Instructors: Jonathan Marchal & Lauren Lampley

\$15 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 1 hour

Limit: 24

Be part of a worldwide effort to document the planet's biodiversity! Join Arboretum Education Director Jonathan Marchal and Adult Education Specialist Lauren Lampley to learn how you can participate as part of Team WNC in the 2024 City Nature Challenge, scheduled for April 26 to the 29th. This friendly competition between other cities and regions in North Carolina and across the world is designed to see who can document the most sightings of plants, animals and more! Get a great overview and pointers on using the iNaturalist mobile app or iNaturalist.org website to upload photo observations of living organisms so that they can be identified by other users. What's more, these observations aid in the scientific understanding of the biodiversity of our state. By taking this course you'll learn how to use iNaturalist to find new places to explore, get help identifying plants and animals in your own neighborhood and help Team WNC gain world domination in our ecologically diverse place on the planet! And you can earn a cool patch in the process!

Participants who complete the course as well as participate in the City Nature Challenge by submitting 40 observations and 10 identifications will receive a free NC BioBlitz patch.

Jonathan Marchal serves as Director of Education at the Arboretum and is the creator of ecoEXPLORE, a youth citizen science initiative. He has been leading outdoor ecology and recreation programming for over twenty years for youth and adults, and was named the 2019 Naturalist of the Year by the Blue Ridge Naturalist Network. He has prior work experience with the National Park System, North Carolina State Parks and Trout Unlimited. He is an award winning, certified environmental educator and has served as the president of the Environmental Educators of North Carolina. Jonathan holds an AAS in Recreation and Wildlife Management, a BA in Ecology and a Master's Degree in Park, Recreation and Tourism Management. He is the project lead for Team WNC in the City Nature Challenge.

Lauren Lampley works at the NC Arboretum as an Adult Education Specialist and manages the community science projects and other research on the property. She has been a Certified NC Environmental Educator since 2017 and has been interested in community science for over 10 years. She led a conference session at EENC's annual conference in 2023 about how to use iNaturalist and is helping Jonathan organize the City Nature Challenge for Western NC in 2024.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum

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- Access to more information will be available upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section (if applicable to your class). To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).

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The Science of Eclipses

ONSITE | Tuesday, March 26, 2 - 4 p.m.

Instructor: Stephan Martin

\$40 Adult Non-Member**

(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)

BRN - Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 1 hour

Limit: 24

Eclipses are one of the most spectacular wonders of nature and the total solar eclipse in April 2024 will be no exception. While the eclipse in Western North Carolina will be partial, there will still be great interest in safely observing this unusual and beautiful event. In this timely and engaging class with Astronomer Stephan Martin, who has been involved in global eclipse studies over decades, we'll explore why eclipses happen, what to look for during a total or partial solar eclipse, and how to observe them safely. Weather permitting, we'll also view the Sun through naked-eye and telescope filters to have a close-up look at our nearest star.

Stephan Martin is an astronomer and educator who taught at colleges and universities for more than 25 years. He has lectured on light pollution and its effects on the environment and has offered stargazing and introductory astronomy workshops domestically and internationally. He was formerly the supervisor of the Williams College observatory, where he participated in research expeditions around the world to study and observe solar eclipses.

cosmicconversations.weebly.com

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum

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Soil Health Check Up

ONSITE | Wednesday, March 27, 1:30 - 4 p.m.

Instructor: Laura Lengnick

\$55 Adult Non-Member

*(** Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BREG - Core (Soils Requirement) | BRN - Elective 2 hours

Learn why healthy soils are critical to the well being of our communities and how to cultivate landscapes that promote soil health. This practical, hands-on course set at the Arboretum will cover how to conduct simple but effective soil monitoring.

This class fulfills the Soils core requirement for the Blue Ridge Gardener Certificate of Merit program.

Laura Lengnick is an award-winning soil scientist and author of “Resilient Agriculture: Cultivating Food Systems for a Changing Climate.” She has been a sustainable food systems researcher, activist and educator for almost 30 years. A lifelong gardener, Lengnick currently cultivates a diverse mix of vegetable, fruit, medicinal, culinary and ornamental plants using biointensive and permaculture practices on her two-acre mini-farm in Buncombe County. Cultivatingresilience.com

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum

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April 2024

Landscape Design Fundamentals - Asynchronous

ONLINE | Asynchronous Series Open April 1 through June 30, 2024

Instructor: Preston Montague

\$55 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BREG - Core or Elective, 2 hours | BRN - Elective, 2 hours

Limit: 30

Consists of two pre-recorded lectures and includes an online interactive design charrette/discussion with Instructor Preston Montague set for Wednesday, April 24, at 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Start off April -- World Landscape Architecture Month -- with inspired design. Landscape Architect and Visual Artist Preston Montague teaches this asynchronous fundamentals class that introduces participants to design principles, site assessment and planning, among other topics. Gain a better understanding of what comes into play in creating and managing sustainable and aesthetically appealing landscapes. You will come away empowered to be more creative, instinctive, decisive and purposeful in understanding good design and more adept at recognizing what's not. The course includes two learning modules accessed online (asynchronous) along with an opportunity for live (synchronous) and lively discussion with the instructor and other participants. See Landscape Design Fundamentals: Approaches to Design, a live-time synchronous class and design charrette scheduled for Wednesday, April 24.

This asynchronous version of Landscape Design Fundamentals can count as the core Design requirement for the Blue Ridge Eco Gardener Certificate of Merit program in 2024. An in-person version of the class is offered in May 2024 with Landscape Architect Jennifer Verprauskus.

Preston Montague is an artist, educator, and landscape architect who developed a passion for the natural world while growing up in the rural foothills of Virginia. He works in Durham, N.C., focusing on projects that encourage stronger relationships between people and their environment. Montague's latest body of work, Codex Carolinum, is a series of didactic botanical illustrations using art and storytelling to foster natural science literacy, which can be viewed on his website: www.prestonmontague.com

Registration and Participation in Online Classes through the Arboretum

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
- Make sure you enter your email address correctly when registering.
- Access to meeting information and Zoom links will be accessible upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section. To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).

- Links to recorded meetings will be sent via email within two business days following the live meeting date.

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Arboretum Reads *Nature's Best Hope* by Doug Tallamy

ONSITE | Two Sessions: Thursday, April 4 & 18, 3:30 - 5 p.m.

Facilitator: Libby Oswalt

Free | Suggested Donation \$16

BRN - Elective, 3 hours | BREG - Elective, 3 hours

Limit: 12

“Tallamy lays out all you need to know to participate in one of the great conservation projects of our time. Read it and get started!” —Elizabeth Kolbert, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Sixth Extinction*

Douglas W. Tallamy's first book, *Bringing Nature Home*, awakened thousands of readers to an urgent situation: wildlife populations are in decline because the native plants they depend on are fast disappearing. His solution? Plant more natives. Another of Tallamy's books, *The Nature of Oaks*, looked at the same issues in connection with one keystone species increasingly more imperiled in our urban canopies: the oak, a powerhouse of the plant kingdom that supports more life forms and interactions than any other tree genus in North America. In *Nature's Best Hope*, Tallamy takes the next step and outlines his vision for a grassroots approach to conservation, showing how homeowners everywhere can turn their yards into conservation corridors that provide wildlife habitats. Arboretum environmental educator Libby Oswalt leads this drop-in reading circle in person at the Arboretum over two sessions. Bring your questions, comments and take-away wisdom from this insightful read and let's discuss your plans for putting Tallamy's recommendations to work in your own landscapes and communities!

Libby Oswalt loves all plants but is especially passionate about native plants! She graduated from Virginia Tech with a degree in Environmental Horticulture and has since gained years of experience working in the nursery industry with a particular interest in native trees, shrubs, and perennials. She currently works as a Youth Environmental Educator at the North Carolina Arboretum where she enjoys teaching students about the many wonders of Appalachian biodiversity. She enjoys spending her free time exploring the woods, gardening, and spreading awareness of the importance of native plants in our landscapes.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

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Coexisting with Black Bears

ONSITE | Thursday, April 4, 6 - 7 p.m.

Instructor: Tanya Poole

Free | Suggested Donation \$12

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 1 hour | BREG - Elective, 1 hour

Limit: 40

It's spring and you know what that means! Warmer temperatures, beautiful flowers and trees blooming, people venturing out to enjoy it all. And it turns out black bears are coming out in large numbers to enjoy the same things that humans enjoy. Learn about the conditions that contribute to the black bear population continuing to thrive in Western North Carolina in proximity to so many people. Tanya Poole, Regional Education Specialist at NC Wildlife Resources Commission, discusses BearWise strategies recommended by wildlife experts that will help people better coexist with these amazing animals.

Tanya Poole is an engagement specialist with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission and is also the state Project WILD Coordinator. She supports educators in teaching others about wildlife and our natural resources throughout the state. She has worked for the Commission for 19 years and has a BS in Elementary Education and minor in Biology from Western Carolina University and a MS in Environmental Education from Montreat College.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
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Spring Native Flora Identification - Field

FIELD | Five Sessions: Wednesdays, April 3 - May 8 (No Class April 10), 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. + (Hikes may go longer.)

Instructor: Scott Dean

\$285 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core | BREG - Elective, 6 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 10 hours

Limit: 12

In this entirely field-based class led by Naturalist Scott Dean, you will learn to identify native mountain flora on the trail by training your eyes and using a non-technical dichotomous keying system. You will study the characteristics of plant families and the basics of plant communities all in place. While the focus is on spring wildflowers and trees, you will also pick up a wealth of information on the natural and cultural history of the native flora of the Blue Ridge. Participants in the field class have access to the online sessions.

Newcomb's Wildflower Guide and Wildflowers of Tennessee, the Ohio Valley and the Southern Appalachians are recommended as references.

This field-based class counts as the Spring Native Flora Identification core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit.

Scott Dean was born and raised in the mountains of southern Appalachia, specifically the coalfields of West Virginia and southwestern Virginia. He developed the original Ecology, Botany, and Zoology curricula for the Blue Ridge Naturalist Program, and has been both a classroom and field instructor with the program since its inception. He has led walks for UNC Asheville and the Cullowhee Native Plants Conference, been a featured speaker at the Great Smoky Mountain National Park Wildflower program, and spoken at various social and civic events in the Asheville area over the last twenty years.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
- Make sure you enter your email address correctly when registering.
- Registrants will be sent a reminder email the day prior to class with the meeting location, current [Safety Guidelines](#), and additional details.
- Access to more information will be available upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section (if applicable to your class). To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).

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Spring Native Flora Identification - Blended

BLENDED | Five Sessions: FIELD - Saturday, April 6 & May 11, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.; ONLINE - Tuesdays, April 16, 23 & 30, 10 - 11 a.m.

Instructor: Scott Dean

\$90 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core | BREG - Elective, 6 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 6 hours

Limit: 24

This version of our popular Flora ID class, taught by Naturalist Scott Dean, blends two botanizing walks with three convenient online sessions to give participants practice identifying native mountain flora and learning the characteristics of plant families. While the focus is on spring wildflowers, participants can also pick up a wealth of information on the natural and cultural history of the native flora of the Blue Ridge. Includes a hike to begin and end the class. A fully field-based version of this class is also available in Spring, Summer and Fall each year. Also included is an asynchronous introduction for an overview of the non-technical keying system Scott uses for teaching how to recognize and accurately identify wildflowers.

Newcomb's Wildflower Guide and Wildflowers of Tennessee, the Ohio Valley and the Southern Appalachians are recommended as references.

This class combines classroom lecture and field experience to count as the Spring Native Flora Identification core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit.

Scott Dean was born and raised in the mountains of southern Appalachia, specifically the coalfields of West Virginia and southwestern Virginia. He developed the original Ecology, Botany, and Zoology curricula for the Blue Ridge Naturalist Program, and has been both a classroom and field instructor with the program since its inception. He has led walks for UNC Asheville and the Cullowhee Native Plants Conference, been a featured speaker at the Great Smoky Mountain National Park Wildflower program, and spoken at various social and civic events in the Asheville area over the last twenty years.

Spring Native Tree Identification - Online

ONLINE | Wednesday, April 10, 1 - 3 p.m.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$40 Adult Non-Member

*(**[Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core (With Field Experience) | BREG - Elective, 2 hours

Limit: 30

When we think of flowers in the spring, our attention often is turned towards the numerous showy flowers found on herbaceous plants on the forest floor. If we look upwards however, we would notice the many species of mountain trees that also begin blooming at this time of the year as well. Learn about identifying trees by their flowers, buds and bark, and investigate tree structures and pollination strategies. Participants are encouraged to sign up for the Spring Native Tree ID Field Experiences for practical application.

This class counts as a core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit when taken with a two-hour field experience.

Carlton Burke is a naturalist and educator who operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists, an educational service that offers wildlife and nature educational programs throughout Western North Carolina. He also was on the staff of the WNC Nature Center in Asheville for over 25 years as the Curator of Exhibits. Carlton co-hosts [Nature News](#), a weekly radio program on WTZQ, with Dan Lazar and is a NC state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Registration and Participation in Online Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
- Make sure you enter your email address correctly when registering.
- Access to meeting information and Zoom links will be accessible upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section. To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).
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Stream Salamanders as Biological Indicators of Water Quality: Field Research at Highlands Biological Station

FIELD | Saturday, April 13, 1 - 4 p.m.

Instructor: Patrick Brannon

\$55 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 3 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 3 hours

Limit: 15

Southern Appalachian headwater streams are home to a great diversity of salamander species. Because salamanders are sensitive to environmental change, they may be used (along with macroinvertebrates) as biological indicators of stream health. Participants in this field experience taught by Naturalist/Educator Patrick Brannon will view a presentation on the biology of regional salamanders and then be given an opportunity to collect and identify species found in a stream onsite at the Station. Through data collected that day and previously, we will also examine the effects of microhabitat availability and water quality on salamander populations, interpreting graphs and using critical thinking skills to answer a variety of questions. Participants should wear or bring shoes that can potentially get wet while walking in the stream.

Patrick Brannon is a naturalist and educator at the WCU Highlands Biological Station in Highlands, NC. He holds a M.S. in Biology from Appalachian State University, and conducts research on the ecology of both salamanders and small mammals. In addition, Patrick presents a wide variety of K-12 school programs and educator workshops throughout the region.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

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Spring Native Tree ID - Field Experience A

ONSITE | Saturday, April 13, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$40 Adult Non-Member

*(**[Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Field Experience or Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours

Limit: 12

When we think of flowers in the spring, our attention often is turned towards the numerous showy flowers found on herbaceous plants on the forest floor. If we look upwards, however, we learn to notice the many species of mountain trees that also begin blooming at this time of the year as well. Naturalist Carlton Burke leads this two-hour field experience for practice identifying trees and woody shrubs by their blooms, buds and bark this time of year, and investigating tree structures and pollination strategies.

This class counts as a core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit when taken with the two-hour online lecture.

Carlton Burke is a naturalist and educator who operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists, an educational service that offers wildlife and nature educational programs throughout Western North Carolina. He also was on the staff of the WNC Nature Center in Asheville for over 25 years as the Curator of Exhibits. Carlton co-hosts [Nature News](#), a weekly radio program on WTZQ, with Dan Lazar and is a NC state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

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Wildflower Walk with Adam Bigelow: Dan Pitillo's Nodding Trillium Garden

FIELD | Sunday, April 14, 1 - 4 p.m.

Instructor: Adam Bigelow

\$55 Adult Non-Member

*(**[Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 3 hours | BREG - Elective, 3 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 3 hours

Limit: 15

Enjoy this opportunity to head over to Jackson County and discover the famous Nodding Trillium Garden at Dr. Dan Pitillo's house near Cullowhee with Adam Bigelow as our guide. This amazing garden, open to the public, is filled with an impressive diversity of naturally occurring and planted Native Wildflowers. Dr Pitillo is a renowned botanist who has been planting and tending this garden for over 40 years.

Adam Bigelow is a horticulturist and botanist who lives in Cullowhee, N.C., and has been studying the plants and wildflowers of Southern Appalachia for over 20 years. Adam is the owner/operator of Bigelow's Botanical Excursions, an eco-tour business leading guided plant walks in WNC. An avid organic gardener and founder of the Cullowhee Community Garden, Adam is a member of the planning committee for the Cullowhee Native Plant Conference, among the largest and oldest Native Plant conferences in the country. Adam lives in Cullowhee at 3,600 ft, surrounded by native plants and wildflowers with his dog *Magnolia fraseri*, and two cats Hazel Alder and Silky Willow.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

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All About Bluebirds

ONSITE | Tuesday, April 16, 10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Instructor: Joe Sanders

\$45 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours

Limit: 24

The recent upsurge in bluebird populations can largely be attributed to a movement of volunteer citizens establishing and monitoring bluebird nest boxes. Joe Sanders has been a bluebird protector for decades. His presentation gives an up close look at life in an active nest box and focuses on threats that bluebird's survival. Wear sturdy shoes and appropriate clothing for a walk to various nesting sites on the Arboretum grounds and an outdoor demonstration on how to monitor bluebird nest boxes.

Joe Sanders has been working with bluebird restoration for over 30 years and is currently a County Representative for the North Carolina Bluebird Society. He has taught classes to numerous community garden groups and currently monitors nest boxes during the nesting season, including those on the Arboretum grounds.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

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Spring Native Tree Identification - Intensive

ONSITE | Thursday, April 18, 1 - 5 p.m.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$80 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core | BREG - Elective, 4 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours

Limit: 12

When we think of flowers in the spring, our attention often is turned towards the numerous showy flowers found on herbaceous plants on the forest floor. If we look upwards, however, we learn to notice the many species of mountain trees that also begin blooming at this time of the year as well. Naturalist Carlton Burke leads this half-day intensive that combines classroom lecture/discussion and applied time for practice identifying trees and woody shrubs by their blooms, buds and bark this time of year, and investigating tree structures and pollination strategies. Learn about trees in springtime in the Arboretum Forest.

This class combines classroom lecture and field experience to count as the Spring Native Tree ID core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit.

Carlton Burke is a naturalist and educator who operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists, an educational service that offers wildlife and nature educational programs throughout Western North Carolina. He also was on the staff of the WNC Nature Center in Asheville for over 25 years as the Curator of Exhibits. Carlton co-hosts [Nature News](#), a weekly radio program on WTZQ, with Dan Lazar and is a NC state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

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You are Here: Understanding & Reading Maps

ONSITE | Friday, April 19, 1 - 3 p.m.

Instructor: Anton DuMars

\$40 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 1 hour

Limit: 15

With GPS built into our phones and cars, we are increasingly in danger of losing our ways of navigating. Expand your understanding of topographic and geologic maps with this course taught by Geologist Anton DuMars. An in-class portion will focus on an investigation of map symbols, scales, dates, color-coding, water features, and other attributes that are used to interpret data on topographic and geologic maps into. Then the class will move outside for a skills session to interpret real-world features within a map, stepping off on some exploration at the Arboretum.

Anton DuMars, a resident of Black Mountain, NC, is an adjunct professor at the College of Charleston. His geological interests include fluvial, deltaic, and coastal processes. He spends his spare time building (simple) furniture and fixing his Mercedes diesel. Ideally, he's spending time on a hiking trail or aboard his sailboat.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

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Spring Native Tree ID - Field Experience B

ONSITE | Saturday, April 20, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$40 Adult Non-Member

*(**[Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Field Experience or Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours

Limit: 12

When we think of flowers in the spring, our attention often is turned towards the numerous showy flowers found on herbaceous plants on the forest floor. If we look upwards, however, we learn to notice the many species of mountain trees that also begin blooming at this time of the year as well. Naturalist Carlton Burke leads this two-hour field experience for practice identifying trees and woody shrubs by their blooms, buds and bark this time of year, and investigating tree structures and pollination strategies.

This class counts as a core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit when taken with the two-hour online lecture.

Carlton Burke is a naturalist and educator who operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists, an educational service that offers wildlife and nature educational programs throughout Western North Carolina. He also was on the staff of the WNC Nature Center in Asheville for over 25 years as the Curator of Exhibits. Carlton co-hosts [Nature News](#), a weekly radio program on WTZQ, with Dan Lazar and is a NC state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

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A Growing Sense of Place: Keeping a Garden Blog or Journal

ONSITE | Tuesday, April 23, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Instructor: Lisa Wagner

\$55 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 3 hours | BREG - Elective, 3 hours

Limit: 10

Enrich your connection with nature through understanding and reflecting upon where you are "growing" in place. Ecologist and award-winning garden blogger Lisa Wagner encourages paying attention as the first step in starting a satisfying writing practice — whether journaling or blogging or just keeping notes on a planner — that you can sustain over time. Keeping a record of the land you steward or collecting observations on the routes or trails you walk become integral parts of your story. To help you get started, Wagner asks, "What inspires you now in your garden?" Or "What daily signs of spring do you see or hear or smell on your walks?" Participants will have opportunities to respond to writing prompts and experiment with combining words and images to produce reflective and connective personal narrative. Bring your lunch and your laptop, or come analog, bringing an old-fashioned journal and pen! The Bent Creek Bistro is open to purchase lunch onsite at the Arboretum. *Bring a brown bag lunch or order in from the Bent Creek Bistro.*

Lisa Wagner was the Director of Education at the South Carolina Botanical Garden, Clemson University for over 20 years. A plant ecologist by background (Ph.D. in Botany, UC Berkeley), she's interested in native plants, ecological gardening, and promoting habitat restoration, as well as encouraging engagement and creativity in mid-life and beyond. She continues to present and consult, while remaining a keen gardener and committed writer about the natural world. Her first blog, *Natural Gardening* (www.naturalgardening.blogspot.com), reflects her observations about gardening and the natural world. Her second blog, *Places of the Spirit* (www.placesofthespirit.blogspot.com), reflects a sense of place and broader observations about being at home in the world. Lisa and her husband Tim Spira spend roughly half the year in Asheville, N.C., where they've surrounded their in-town house with native gardens. They spend the other half of the year in the Northern Appalachians in their cottage in Quebec, where they're converting a horticultural landscape to a more naturalistic one.

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Landscape Design Fundamentals: Approaches to Design

ONLINE | Wednesday, April 24, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

Instructor: Preston Montague

\$24 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BREG - Core, 1 hour

Limit: 30

Consider a new way of approaching design that will empower you to be more creative, more decisive and more purposeful with landscape challenges, whether it is developing a property master plan or designing the perfect mailbox garden. This evening discussion provides an opportunity for case study, creative brainstorming, and consultation with Landscape Architect and Visual Artist Preston Montague. If you signed on for the two-session asynchronous course with Preston, you'll want to deepen the conversation in this engaging live-time design charrette, a fitting way to wrap up World Landscape Architecture Month in April.

This discussion session compliments the Asynchronous Landscape Design Fundamentals class.

Preston Montague is an artist, educator, and landscape architect who developed a passion for the natural world while growing up in the rural foothills of Virginia. He works in Durham, N.C., focusing on projects that encourage stronger relationships between people and their environment. Montague's latest body of work, Codex Carolinum, is a series of didactic botanical illustrations using art and storytelling to foster natural science literacy, which can be viewed on his website: www.prestonmontague.com

Registration and Participation in Online Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
- Make sure you enter your email address correctly when registering.
- Access to meeting information and Zoom links will be accessible upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section. To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).
- Links to recorded meetings will be sent via email within two business days following the live meeting date.

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Spring Ecology Walk: Advanced Topics in Ecology

ONSITE | Thursday, April 25, 1:30 - 3 p.m.

Instructor: Dan Lazar

\$24 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 1.5 hours

Limit: 12

The second in a new seasonal series of special topics in ecology continues a beloved Arboretum course. Naturalist Dan Lazar, who teaches the Ecology of the Blue Ridge course every fall, leads this walk and talk designed to point out signs of life awakening in springtime. Wildflowers are blooming, amphibians are mating, and birds are returning to their nesting habitats. Opportunities for learning in place are far from dormant in this or any season at the Arboretum!

Dan Lazar served for many years as the director of education at the Western North Carolina Nature Center, followed by several years as executive director of the Colburn Earth Science Museum. Dan has a degree in forest biology from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry and has been an instructor in the Blue Ridge Naturalist program since 2005.

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One Book, One Buncombe: Making a Musical Legacy from Native Tree to Violin

ONSITE | Thursday, April 25, 5:30 - 7 p.m.

Presenter: Kate Rickenbacker

\$12 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

Limit: 40

On any given day you will find Kate Rickenbacker adjusting, repairing, or restoring an old instrument or making a new instrument using the same time-tested techniques and traditional tools craftsmen of 200 years ago would have employed. With this year's One Book, One Buncombe focused on a community read of *The Violin Conspiracy* by N.C. author Brendan Slocum, we check in with Kate about the meaning of making music and the instrument on which it's played. Here for this Golden Hour talk in the Education Center Library, surrounded by native trees at an Arboretum, we learn about how the wood of a spruce or a maple becomes a resonant violin or a viola with the maker's touch and years of tradition.

Kate Rickenbacker began violin lessons at the age of two. Growing up she played in youth orchestras, eventually enrolling at the University of Kentucky, where she was a member of its symphony orchestra. Kate's dual interest in music and woodworking drew her to three intensive years of study at the Chicago School of Violin Making, followed by apprenticeship and work repairing and repairing instruments, all the while continuing to perform in a variety of genres in the greater Chicago area. Kate relocated to the mountains of Western North Carolina and opened her own shop in Black Mountain. Her attention to craftsmanship and continuing to learn is such that she makes four or five instruments a year, basing her violins on an instrument made by Stradivarius in 1703 and a Guarneri Del Gesu pattern dating from the mid 18th century.

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PENDING: Been Outside: Adventures of Black Women, Nonbinary, and Gender Nonconforming People in Nature -- Book Event with Malaprop's

Date TBD

Free | Suggested Donation \$12 Adult Non-Member

(***Arboretum Members* receive a 10% discount on all classes.)

Limit: 100

Encompassing identity, inspiration, ancestry, and stewardship, the essays and poems by leading Black women and nonbinary scientists in *Been Outside* explore how experiences in the natural world and life sciences shape the self. They contemplate the moments that sparked their love of nature, as well as the ways time in the field and outdoor adventures have enhanced or expanded their perspectives about what is possible. In this way, Join some of the writers and researchers whose works comprise this welcome anthology and become part of a collective action toward an outdoor community that welcomes everyone.

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May 2024

Spring Birding at Sandy Mush Game Lands

FIELD | Friday, May 3, 8 - 11 a.m.

Instructor: Aaron Steed

\$65 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 3 hours

Limit: 12

Enjoy an easy to moderate hike along the trails and paths at Sandy Mush Game Land. The mosaic of habitats here vary from open, managed cut-over areas to cove and riverine forests down along Sandy Mush & Turkey Creeks, and the French Broad River. Over the past few years, we've found them to be excellent for Prairie Warbler, Field Sparrow, Indigo Bunting and Yellow-breasted Chat, all of which are abundant. This is also the best spot in the county for Northern Bobwhite, which can often be heard calling from the fields and occasionally we get to see them. Other summer residents we'll also be looking for include Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Acadian Flycatcher, White-eyed Vireo, Northern Parula, Hooded Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Orchard Oriole, and Blue Grosbeak, and many others. Wild Turkeys are common year-round and several raptor species nest here as well. The woodlands and fields will be full of bird song and who knows what surprises we may find in this under-birded part of the county. Participants will be sent meeting instructions in advance.

Aaron Steed has been interested in birds and natural history his entire life. Originally from Wilmington, N.C., Aaron holds a B.S. in General Biology from the University of North Carolina at Asheville and has worked numerous ornithological field positions in North Carolina, Texas, Kansas, California and Arizona, focusing primarily on endangered or imperiled species (such as the Black-capped Vireo and Lesser Prairie-Chicken). He currently leads classes in the field and online for Ventures Birding Tours and for the Arboretum.

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Spring Warblers

FIELD | Saturday, May 4, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Instructor: Kevin Burke

\$85 Adult Non-Member

*(**[Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 5 hours

Limit: 12

Spring in eastern North America is the perfect time and place to find warblers. Many are arriving to breed, while others are on their way to breeding grounds farther north. At this time of year, their breeding plumage is stunning, and they are very vocal, with beautiful, easily recognizable songs. Join Kevin on the Blue Ridge Parkway to find migrating warblers and other neotropical migrants.

Kevin Burke is originally from the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia. He grew up running around in the woods and trails of Shenandoah National Park, where he spent summers camping and hiking with his family. Kevin was introduced to birding by his grandmother, who pointed out all the feeder birds and helped him identify them. This early exposure to the natural world helped foster a lifelong love of learning and birding! Inspired by his first formal ornithology class at Hocking College in Ohio, Kevin has been birding every day since. He went on to get a Bachelor of Science in Ecotourism and Conservation Ecology from the University of Idaho. He has been leading birding trips in some capacity for almost 20 years, traveling throughout the US, Costa Rica, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic. His birding journey has also taken him to some other spectacular locations including Portugal, Colombia, The Bahamas and Canada.

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Ecology of Insects

ONSITE | Two Sessions: Thursday, May 9 & May 16, 1:30 - 4 p.m.

Instructor: Dan Lazar

\$125 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 5 hours | BREG - Elective, 5 hours

Limit: 20

What's bugging you? In this two-part class and field trip taught by Naturalist Dan Lazar, we learn to recognize many of the region's common insects, from ants and ant lions to house flies and butterflies. The class will investigate insect life cycles and ecology, covering the basics of insect anatomy and evolution of each order of insect found in the Southern Appalachians. Take a close-up look at one of the most common and colorful life forms of the Blue Ridge!

This elective course includes an optional field trip to see Blue Ghost Fireflies, scheduled for Thursday, May 23, 8:30 - 10:30 p.m., with Instructor Dan Lazar. Some additional spaces might be available for registration separately.

Dan Lazar served for many years as the director of education at the Western North Carolina Nature Center, followed by several years as executive director of the Colburn Earth Science Museum. Dan has a degree in forest biology from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry and has been an instructor in the Blue Ridge Naturalist program since 2005.

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Landscape Design Fundamentals - In Person

ONSITE | Wednesdays, May 8, 15 & 22, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Instructor: Jennifer Verprauskus

\$125 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BREG - core

Limit: 12

Landscape Architect Jennifer Verprauskus teaches this in-person version of our fundamentals class that introduces participants to design principles, site assessment and planning, among other topics. Participants will gain a better understanding of what comes into play in creating and managing ecologically sustainable and aesthetically appealing landscapes. Participants will have the opportunity to apply learning to create a master plan for their landscape or focus on one area of their landscape then share plans in design charrettes. When time and weather allow, the class will explore the Arboretum for examples of plants and design elements. Come away empowered to be more creative, instinctive, decisive and purposeful in understanding good sustainable design and more adept at recognizing what's not. *This in-person version of Landscape Design Fundamentals can count as the core Design requirement for the Blue Ridge Eco Gardener Certificate of Merit program in 2024.*

Jennifer Verprauskus is a North Carolina Licensed Landscape Architect and a Permaculture Design Certificate Holder. She studied Landscape Architecture at the University of Massachusetts. Since graduating, she has traveled the world to help people grow trees and their own food. She is the founder of both UpBeet Landscapes and BareRoot Designs, PLLC.

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Azalea Expedition: Vaseyi on the Blue Ridge Parkway

FIELD | Saturday, May 11, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Instructor: Carson Ellis

\$65 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 6 hours | BREG - Elective, 6 hours | NCEE - Criteria, 6 hours

Limit: 12

All it takes is a short drive to discover botanical treasures, such as the bubblegum-flowered *Rhododendron vaseyi*, the pinkshell azalea! This endemic species grows only in a narrow range in the highlands of Western North Carolina. With bright trusses in colors ranging from snowy white to deep pink, the pinkshells put on one of the Blue Ridge Parkway's most spectacular flower displays. Early May is the best time to go looking for these beautiful *Rhododendron* and the fantastic plants that grow alongside them, including mountain andromeda and the Carolina rhododendron, and an array of ephemeral wildflowers like trilliums, trout lilies, and bleedinghearts.

Horticulturist and plant ecologist Carson Ellis, curator of the Arboretum's National Native Azalea Garden, will lead this day-long field experience to convey the exceptional plant diversity of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Participants will see multiple distinct plant communities as they climb from 2,000 to 5,500 feet in elevation, enjoying opportunities to get up-close and personal with numerous rare and endemic species. This field experience is recommended for hearty participants, who can expect two short but steep hikes during the day. Scenic drives with stops for lunch and up-close viewing of fantastic pinkshell azalea displays as well as an opportunity to see a vertical bog will be equally breath-taking but requiring less physical exertion!

Carson Ellis, born and raised in Asheville, N.C., has been a life-long explorer of the mountains of Western North Carolina. Her love for the natural world inspired her to pursue a career studying and cultivating native plants. Following undergraduate work in environmental science and horticulture, she recently completed her M.S. Biology at Western Carolina University, where she researched the pollination networks of high-elevation rock outcrop plant communities. As a horticulturist, she has worked with the Highlands Biological Research Station, Memphis Botanic Garden, and Tennessee Plant Conservation Alliance, and recently joined The North Carolina Arboretum as the Curator of the National Native Azalea Collection. A lover of the arts, she enjoys painting, ceramics, and messing around on the mountain dulcimer in her free time. She considers the natural world her biggest source of inspiration and celebrates horticulture as the ideal synthesis of art and science.

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Learning to See: Photography + Drawing

ONSITE | Two Sessions: Saturdays, May 11 & 18, 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Instructor: Julie Thomson

\$135 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 6 hours | BREG - Elective, 6 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 10 hours

Limit: 15

When was the last time you made a photograph or drew? Have you ever seen more in a photograph than you did in the moment you made it? Have you ever experienced how sometimes drawing allows you to see more in an organism or object? In this two-day, small-group workshop we will explore the ways both photography and drawing can help us learn to see, especially when it comes to what we're observing in the natural world. Each day will include a walk to practice our observation skills and collect photo notes. The instructor, Julie Thomson, will provide prompts and assignments for making photographs and for drawing. We'll also have the opportunity to observe and learn from the NC Arboretum's living ambassador animals. Each workshop day will include a wonder walk, prompts and exercises, and include a break for lunch. No previous art experience is required.

Julie J. Thomson is an Environmental Educator, Naturalist, Independent Scholar, Curator + Artist who lives in Western North Carolina. She studies and shares the natural and cultural history of places, and teaches seeing. Julie also researches and writes about artists at Black Mountain College. She is the co-author of *Weaving at Black Mountain College: Anni Albers, Trude Guermonprez, and Their Students*; editor of *That Was The Answer: Interviews with Ray Johnson*; and author of *Begin to See: The Photographers of Black Mountain College*. Instagram: @ncnaturalistjulie, juliejthomson.blogspot.com

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Botany Intensive

ONSITE | Saturday, May 11, 1 - 4 p.m.

Instructor: Marc Williams

\$55 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 4 hours | BREG - Elective, 4 hours | NCEE - Criteria, 2 hours

Limit: 15

Our botany intensive will focus on the families of plants found commonly in Appalachia. We will cover the differences in how plants look regarding leaves, flowers, fruits and other parts and how this may help in proper identification. The way plants are classified based on these features and more recently DNA will be discussed relative to how they are referred to scientifically. We will also look at the best book and web resources for the exploration of botany in the region. A comprehensive slide lecture will cover the major characteristics of botany in general and apply learning when examining various forms of collected plant material.

Marc Williams has taught hundreds of classes to thousands of people about plants, humans, other life forms and their interface in his work as an ethnobiologist. His training includes a B.A. in Environmental Studies/Sustainable Agriculture from Warren Wilson College with a minor in Business and a M.A. in Appalachian Studies/Sustainable Development from Appalachian State University with a minor in Planning/Geography. He has spent over 20 years working at various restaurants, farms, and travels throughout 30 countries in Central/ North/South America, Europe and all 50 states in the USA.

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Challenges & Opportunities with Exotic Invasive Plants

ONSITE | Sunday, May 12, 1 - 4 p.m.

Instructor: Marc Williams

\$55 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 3 hours | BREG - Elective, 3 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours

Limit: 15

Take away a better understanding of plant family patterns and what they indicate regarding identification and ethnobotanical application of exotic invasive plants for food, medicine and beauty. A big focus of this class led by Ethnobiologist Marc Williams will make clear the opportunities to employ these plants effectively, making use of a problem by turning it into a resource. Through a slide presentation and close up examination of collected plant material, we will become more familiar with some of the prime exotic invasive plants occurring in the southeastern U.S. as well as a more general exotic invasive plant list of over 150 useful species from the region.

Marc Williams has taught hundreds of classes to thousands of people about plants, humans, other life forms and their interface in his work as an ethnobiologist. His training includes a B.A. in Environmental Studies/Sustainable Agriculture from Warren Wilson College with a minor in Business and a M.A. in Appalachian Studies/Sustainable Development from Appalachian State University with a minor in Planning/Geography. He has spent over 20 years working at various restaurants, farms, and travels throughout 30 countries in Central/ North/South America, Europe and all 50 states in the USA.

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Introduction to Natural Dyeing & Planning a Dye Garden

ONSITE | Saturday, May 18, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Instructors: Joyce Tromba, Pat Strang

\$95 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BREG - Elective, 4 hours

Limit: 12

Learn the basics of natural dyeing in this introductory class with fiber artists Joyce Tromba and Pat Strang. Participants will explore how to prepare fiber for dyeing, which plants are best to use for natural dyeing and how to extract color from them. Hands-on time for the class includes setting up a dye pot and practicing some simple resist techniques for a silk scarf. Then, while our cloth is simmering, we'll head out to the Arboretum's Heritage Garden to learn about dye plants commonly grown in Southern Appalachia and discuss ways to incorporate these in your garden planning!

Joyce Tromba is happily settled into life in lovely Western North Carolina after living and teaching around the world for 30 years. Her travels have exposed her to many fiber traditions and she has always found groups of fiber folks wherever she was to share her making with. Joyce has 20+ years teaching design, sewing, knitting, quilting and bookmaking to High School students and adults. She has studied fiber and book and fiber arts at Penland, Arrowmont, John C Campbell Folk School and the Center for Book Arts in New York City. Her work can be found at Local Cloth where she also teaches natural dyeing, bookmaking and sewing classes.

Pat Strang has been sewing since she was 12 while crocheting and knitting came a little later. Her love of working with textiles, primarily natural fibers, has grown over the years.

Pat has been gardening almost as long as she has been sewing. She became a Master Gardener in Fairfax County, Va., in 2007 and transferred to the Buncombe County Master Gardener program upon moving to Asheville. When it comes to growing and using dye plants, Pat considers Joyce a mentor and source of inspiration to continue learning about natural dyeing. They have taught a number of classes together for the Extension Services' Learning Garden and elsewhere in the region.

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Emergence: Spring Wildflower Walk

ONSITE | Saturday, May 18, 1 - 3 p.m.

Instructor: Alexandra Holland

\$35 Adult Non-Member

*(**[Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours

Limit: 15

Spring is here, and the natural world is waking from its winter rest! Naturalists and botanists Alexandra Holland leads this wildflower walk at the Arboretum, pointing out the array of spring wildflowers emerging and in bloom. Learn some basics of wildflower ecology and identification while taking in the beauty of spring.

Alexandra Holland graduated from Duke University and earned her Master's degree in botany from the University of Texas at Austin. She was in the first class of students to be certified as Blue Ridge Naturalists. Alexandra managed the UTEX Culture Collection of Algae at UT Austin and spent many hours working with education programs at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. She has taught botany for over a decade and leads nature hikes in Western North Carolina for groups of all ages.

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The Bonsai Exhibition Garden in Spring - Curator's Talk & Tour

ONSITE | Tuesday, May 21, 5:30 -7 p.m.

Instructor: Arthur Joura

\$24 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BREG - Elective, 1 hour

Limit: 24

Established in October 2005, the Bonsai Exhibition Garden is a signature feature of the Arboretum and a unique environment displaying up to 50 specimens at a time. Of particular importance are the plants native to the Blue Ridge, including American hornbeam, red maple and eastern white pine, which bring the thousand-year tradition of bonsai home to the mountains of Western North Carolina. Join this after-hours tour of the garden with Bonsai Curator Arthur Joura for a personal and informative overview of the art of bonsai and the Arboretum's own creative approach. Foliage is at its freshest at this time of year, and flowers will likely be blooming in the garden landscape and on select bonsai. *Participants must register in advance to attend this small-group experience hosted by Adult & Continuing Education Programs.*

Arthur Joura has been the bonsai curator at the Arboretum since 1992 and oversaw the design and development of the Arboretum's Bonsai Exhibition Garden. Joura augmented early training in fine art and studied bonsai with some of the leading bonsai authorities in the United States and in Japan. His greatest teachers are trees, however. His love of hiking and photographing trees in nature has shaped the Arboretum's collection and firmly rooted it in a regional identity -- one that elevates naturalism in art and the use of traditional bonsai species alongside species native to the Southern Appalachian mountains -- creating in the process one of the most acclaimed public collections of bonsai in the country.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
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- Registrants will be sent a reminder email the day prior to class with the meeting location, current [Safety Guidelines](#), and additional details.
- Access to more information will be available upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section (if applicable to your class). To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).

Please add adulteducation@ncarboretum.org to your contacts to ensure our emails do not end up in your spam folder.

Fluvial Systems from the Blue Ridge to the Ocean

ONLINE | Four Sessions: Tuesdays and Thursdays, May 28 - June 6, 10 - 11 a.m.

Instructor: Anton DuMars

\$80 Adult Non-Member

*(** Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core

Limit: 30

Water flow across a diverse geological framework shapes the Earth's surface. The process of surface water flow and the earth's response to this flow is investigated across three physiographic provinces, including the Blue Ridge, Piedmont, Coastal Plains/Continental Shelf. Processes and responses include erosion, sediment transport, and formation of associated depositional environments.

Anton DuMars, a resident of Black Mountain, NC, is an adjunct professor at the College of Charleston. His geological interests include fluvial, deltaic, and coastal processes. He spends his spare time building (simple) furniture and fixing his Mercedes diesel. Ideally, he's spending time on a hiking trail or aboard his sailboat.

Registration and Participation in Online Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
- Make sure you enter your email address correctly when registering.
- Access to meeting information and Zoom links will be accessible upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section. To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).
- Links to recorded meetings will be sent via email within two business days following the live meeting date.

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Bugs Outside the Box Exhibit Walkthrough

ONSITE | Thursday, May 30, 2 - 3 p.m.

Instructor: Dan Lazar

\$18 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 1 hour | BREG - Elective, 1 hour | NCEE - Criteria II, 1 hour

Limit: 15

You'll be bug-eyed at the oversize insects on display in *Bugs Outside the Box*. Naturalist Dan Lazar, who teaches the Arboretum's Ecology of Insects class, leads an engaging walkthrough the exhibit, where you'll see the exceptionally detailed and extraordinarily large insect sculptures of Lorenzo Possenti of Ecofauna. Showcasing the delicate beauty and intricate details not visible to the naked eye, Bugs Outside the Box educates about insect ecology and taxonomy, magnifying what might easily be overlooked!

Dan Lazar served for many years as the director of education at the Western North Carolina Nature Center, followed by several years as executive director of the Colburn Earth Science Museum. Dan has a degree in forest biology from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry and has been an instructor in the Blue Ridge Naturalist program since 2005.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

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Late Spring Ethnobotany and Tree ID - Intensive

ONSITE | Friday, May 31, 1 - 5 p.m.

Instructor: Marc Williams

\$75 Adult Non-Member

*(**[Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core or Elective, 4 hours | BREG - Elective, 4 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours

Limit: 15

Spend an afternoon learning about woody plants with Ethnobiologist Marc Williams. This in-person intensive class begins with a presentation about major tree and shrub families. Then the class will head outside for a plant walk to learn how to identify a woody plant by fruits, leaves and other characteristics in the spring. Though identification can be more challenging once most of the woody plants are done blooming and leafing out, participants will learn confidence-building tips and techniques. Common and obscure uses for woody plants that may support overall health, well-being and sustenance will also be discussed. Participants should wear appropriate clothing for walking outside.

This class combines classroom lecture and field experience to count as the Spring Native Tree ID core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit.

Marc Williams has taught hundreds of classes to thousands of people about plants, humans, other life forms and their interface in his work as an ethnobiologist. His training includes a B.A. in Environmental Studies/Sustainable Agriculture from Warren Wilson College with a minor in Business and a M.A. in Appalachian Studies/Sustainable Development from Appalachian State University with a minor in Planning/Geography. He has spent over 20 years working at various restaurants, farms, and travels throughout 30 countries in Central/ North/South America, Europe and all 50 states in the USA.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
- Make sure you enter your email address correctly when registering.
- Registrants will be sent a reminder email the day prior to class with the meeting location, current [Safety Guidelines](#), and additional details.
- Access to more information will be available upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section (if applicable to your class). To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).

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June 2024

Fluvial Systems from the Blue Ridge to the Ocean Field Experience

FIELD | Friday, June 7, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Instructor: Anton DuMars

\$40 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Field Experience or Elective, 2 hours

Limit: 30

Understand the importance of healthy natural water systems through application of learning about processes and responses in the field. Participants will meet and travel to different locations to consider processes and responses such as erosion, sediment transport, and formation of associated depositional environments.

*This class counts as a field experience requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit when taken with the four-session online lecture series *Fluvial Systems from the Blue Ridge to the Ocean*.*

Anton DuMars, a resident of Black Mountain, NC, is an adjunct professor at the College of Charleston. His geological interests include fluvial, deltaic, and coastal processes. He spends his spare time building (simple) furniture and fixing his Mercedes diesel. Ideally, he's spending time on a hiking trail or aboard his sailboat.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
- Make sure you enter your email address correctly when registering.
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Beginning Bonsai A

ONSITE | Two Sessions: Friday, June 7, 5 - 8:30 p.m & Saturday, June 8, 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Instructor: Rebecca Ayres
\$235 Adult Non-Member
BREG - Elective, 4 hours
Limit: 8

Although it has its roots in ancient Asian traditions, the living art of bonsai now enjoys enthusiasts throughout much of the world. This class will provide the basic concepts and skills for novices to begin growing and shaping their own miniature trees. The first class will cover the fundamental horticultural and aesthetic principles of bonsai. It will include such topics as tree selection, watering, pest control, pruning, wiring, and styling. In the second class, each participant will receive a pot, scissors, wire, and planting medium. With guidance from the instructor, the students will create their own bonsai to take home. *All supplies and plant material are included in the class registration.*

Rebecca Ayres is a ceramic artist and gardener. A longtime Arboretum volunteer, she is the assistant to the bonsai curator and helps with overseeing the exhibition garden, the collection and the Carolina Bonsai Expo. She is a member of the Blue Ridge Bonsai Society, where she has taught workshops and classes, and is a graduate of the Arboretum's Blue Ridge Naturalist program.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
- Make sure you enter your email address correctly when registering.
- Registrants will be sent a reminder email the day prior to class with the meeting location, current [Safety Guidelines](#), and additional details.
- Access to more information will be available upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section (if applicable to your class). To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).

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Leading a Nature Walk

ONSITE | Saturday, June 8, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Instructor: Jessie Wilder

\$24 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 3 hours | BREG - Elective, 3 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 1.5 hours

Limit: 15

Learn simple tips for leading engaging walks that encourage curiosity and discovery. Naturalist Jessie Wilder, who was certified as an interpretive guide through the National Association of Interpretation, leads this skill-building session in the Arboretum forest. She helps participants deepen their own awareness of the natural world and practice interpreting so as to evoke wonder in others. Whether you are leading a walk as a professional or out for a stroll in the woods with your children or grandchildren, you can learn simple tips for leading engaging walks that encourage curiosity and discovery. You will see how using stories, props, analogies, poetry, "I spy" or even breaking into song can make your walks more fun and meaningful. Simple strategies will be covered that can help your walk participants deepen their own awareness and evoke a sense of wonder in the natural world.

Jessie Wilder, a native of North Carolina, founded the Blue Ridge Naturalist in 2005 to allow others the opportunity to learn more about the natural world of the Blue Ridge Mountains. She has taught natural history interpretation and led walks at the NC Arboretum, served as an instructor in an herbal medicine school and worked as a wild food guide. She enjoys foraging and cooking wild foods, hearing and telling a tall tale, and helping others connect with the peace and adventure that wild places have to offer.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
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African American Agricultural, Botanical and Horticultural Traditions

ONSITE | Saturday, June 8, 1:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Instructor: Marc Williams

\$35 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 3 hours | BREG - Elective, 3 hours

Limit: 24

Gain a better understanding and appreciation for the multitude of contributions from African Americans to the farm, garden, herbal, horticultural and scientific traditions of the U.S. We'll consider crops brought to this country from Africa, traditional diets combining those plants with the native plants of the Americas, and the food as medicine practices that have grown from this synthesis. We'll also explore African American garden aesthetics, innovations in plant science and landscape practices.

Marc Williams has taught hundreds of classes to thousands of people about plants, humans, other life forms and their interface in his work as an ethnobiologist. His training includes a B.A. in Environmental Studies/Sustainable Agriculture from Warren Wilson College with a minor in Business and a M.A. in Appalachian Studies/Sustainable Development from Appalachian State University with a minor in Planning/Geography. He has spent over 20 years working at various restaurants, farms, and travels throughout 30 countries in Central/ North/South America, Europe and all 50 states in the USA.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

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Meet a Remarkable Tree: The Big Leaf Magnolia

FIELD | Thursday, June 6, 1 - 4 p.m.

Instructor: Dan Lazar

\$55 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 3 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 3 hours

Limit: 10

Meet the remarkable *Magnolia macrophylla*. Join us for this short, easy hike to learn about the ecology and natural history of the bigleaf magnolia, a fascinating new member of the local flora. We will visit a newly naturalized population growing in the Haw Creek Valley. Noted for having the largest simple leaves (up to 30 inches in length) and flowers (up to 12 inches in diameter) of any dicotyledonous tree native to North America, the bigleaf magnolia naturally occurs in central Mississippi and Alabama, with outlying populations in the Cumberland Mountains of Tennessee, eastern Kentucky, and the piedmont of Georgia and North Carolina. You'll be pleased to make the acquaintance of this impressive new resident of Western North Carolina.

Dan Lazar served for many years as the director of education at the Western North Carolina Nature Center, followed by several years as executive director of the Colburn Earth Science Museum. Dan has a degree in forest biology from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry and has been an instructor in the Blue Ridge Naturalist program since 2005.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
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Summer Native Tree Identification - Online

ONLINE | Wednesday, June 19, 1 - 3 p.m.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$40 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core (With Field Experience) | BREG - Elective, 2 hours

Limit: 30

Western North Carolina's lush mountain forests are home to dozens of species of trees and woody shrubs. In this online class, participants will learn how to identify many of the region's tree species based on habitats, individual characteristics, including leaves, and uses both by humans and wildlife. Participants are encouraged to sign up for the Summer Native Tree ID Field Experience for practical application.

This class counts as a core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit when taken with a two-hour field experience.

Carlton Burke is a naturalist and educator who operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists, an educational service that offers wildlife and nature educational programs throughout Western North Carolina. He also was on the staff of the WNC Nature Center in Asheville for over 25 years as the Curator of Exhibits. Carlton co-hosts [Nature News](#), a weekly radio program on WTZQ, with Dan Lazar and is a NC state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Registration and Participation in Online Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
- Make sure you enter your email address correctly when registering.
- Access to meeting information and Zoom links will be accessible upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section. To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).
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Meet a Remarkable Tree: Hope for the Eastern Chestnut

FIELD | Thursday, June 20, 1 - 4 p.m.

Instructor: Dan Lazar

\$55 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 3 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 3 hours

Limit: 10

A hundred years ago the American Chestnut was the dominant tree on many low- to mid-elevation slopes and ridges in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. Trees more than a hundred feet tall with trunk diameters of over four feet provided abundant annual crops of highly nutritious nuts for wildlife and humans. Then during the first half of the twentieth century the Chestnut Blight, caused by an introduced fungus, killed virtually every mature Chestnut tree in Eastern North America. But the American Chestnut is not gone. The blight fungus does not kill the roots of the tree and these surviving roots have been producing stem sprouts continuously for the past century. These surviving roots have preserved much of the genetic diversity of the species and offer hope of the eventual return of this magnificent tree to our Appalachian forests.

We will hike a short section of the Mountains to Sea Trail through a forest formerly dominated by American Chestnut, stopping to examine some of these Chestnut sprouts while discussing the history and biology of the Chestnut Blight disease, assessing the current status of the American Chestnut in the forest ecosystem, and speculating on the possible return of this remarkable native tree to Southern Appalachian forests.

Dan Lazar served for many years as the director of education at the Western North Carolina Nature Center, followed by several years as executive director of the Colburn Earth Science Museum. Dan has a degree in forest biology from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry and has been an instructor in the Blue Ridge Naturalist program since 2005.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
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Summer Native Tree Identification - Intensive

ONSITE | Friday, June 21, 1 - 5 p.m.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$80 Adult Non-Member

*(**[Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

**BRN - Core or Elective, 4 hours | BREG - Elective, 4 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours
Limit: 12**

Western North Carolina's lush mountain forests are home to dozens of species of trees and woody shrubs. In this intensive in-person class, participants will learn how to identify many of the region's tree species based on habitats, individual characteristics, including leaves, and uses both by humans and wildlife. Naturalist Carlton Burke combines classroom lecture with time in the Arboretum Forest for practice identifying native trees in the summertime. Participants should dress comfortably for the weather and be able to make short walks on moderate and some uphill terrain without assistance. Recommended: Participants should bring a hand lens and field journals to record observations!

This class combines classroom lecture and field experience to count as the Summer Native Tree ID core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit.

Carlton Burke is a naturalist and educator who operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists, an educational service that offers wildlife and nature educational programs throughout Western North Carolina. He also was on the staff of the WNC Nature Center in Asheville for over 25 years as the Curator of Exhibits. Carlton co-hosts [Nature News](#), a weekly radio program on WTZQ, with Dan Lazar and is a NC state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

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Summer Native Tree ID - Field Experience A

ONSITE | Saturday, June 22, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$40 Adult Non-Member

*(**[Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Field Experience or Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours

Limit: 12

Western North Carolina's lush mountain forests are home to dozens of species of trees. Participants in this field-based class will use the Arboretum forest as a great learning laboratory to consider ways to identify many of the area's tree species based on habitats, individual characteristics, including eaves, and their uses both by humans and wildlife. Participants should dress comfortably for the weather and be able to make short walks on moderate and some uphill terrain without assistance. Recommended: Participants should bring a hand lens and field journals to record observations!

This class counts as a core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit when taken with the two-hour online lecture.

Carlton Burke is a naturalist and educator who operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists, an educational service that offers wildlife and nature educational programs throughout Western North Carolina. He also was on the staff of the WNC Nature Center in Asheville for over 25 years as the Curator of Exhibits. Carlton co-hosts [Nature News](#), a weekly radio program on WTZQ, with Dan Lazar and is a NC state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

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- Access to more information will be available upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section (if applicable to your class). To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).

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Summer Native Tree ID - Field Experience B

ONSITE | Saturday, June 29, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Instructor: Carlton Burke

\$40 Adult Non-Member

*(**[Arboretum Members](#) receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Field Experience or Elective, 2 hours | BREG - Elective, 2 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 2 hours

Limit: 12

Western North Carolina's lush mountain forests are home to dozens of species of trees. Participants in this field-based class will use the Arboretum forest as a great learning laboratory to consider ways to identify many of the area's tree species based on habitats, individual characteristics, including eaves, and their uses both by humans and wildlife. Participants should dress comfortably for the weather and be able to make short walks on moderate and some uphill terrain without assistance. Recommended: Participants should bring a hand lens and field journals to record observations!

This class counts as a core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit when taken with the two-hour online lecture.

Carlton Burke is a naturalist and educator who operates Carolina Mountain Naturalists, an educational service that offers wildlife and nature educational programs throughout Western North Carolina. He also was on the staff of the WNC Nature Center in Asheville for over 25 years as the Curator of Exhibits. Carlton co-hosts [Nature News](#), a weekly radio program on WTZQ, with Dan Lazar and is a NC state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

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- Access to more information will be available upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section (if applicable to your class). To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).

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Summer Native Flora Identification - Blended

BLENDED | Five Sessions: FIELD - Saturday, June 22 & July 27, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.; ONLINE - Tuesdays, June 25, July 9 & 16, 10 - 11 a.m.

Instructor: Scott Dean

\$90 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core | BREG - Elective, 6 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 6 hours

Limit: 24

This version of our popular Flora ID class, taught by Naturalist Scott Dean, blends two botanizing walks with three convenient online sessions to give participants practice identifying native mountain flora and learning the characteristics of plant families. While the focus is on summer wildflowers, participants can also pick up a wealth of information on the natural and cultural history of the native flora of the Blue Ridge. Includes a hike to begin and end the class. A fully field-based version of this class is also available in Spring, Summer and Fall each year. Also included is an asynchronous introduction for an overview of the non-technical keying system Scott uses for teaching how to recognize and accurately identify wildflowers.

Newcomb's Wildflower Guide and Wildflowers of Tennessee, the Ohio Valley and the Southern Appalachians are recommended as references.

This class combines classroom lecture and field experience to count as the Summer Native Flora Identification core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit.

Scott Dean was born and raised in the mountains of southern Appalachia, specifically the coalfields of West Virginia and southwestern Virginia. He developed the original Ecology, Botany, and Zoology curricula for the Blue Ridge Naturalist Program, and has been both a classroom and field instructor with the program since its inception. He has led walks for UNC Asheville and the Cullowhee Native Plants Conference, been a featured speaker at the Great Smoky Mountain National Park Wildflower program, and spoken at various social and civic events in the Asheville area over the last twenty years.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
- Make sure you enter your email address correctly when registering.
- Registrants will be sent a reminder email the day prior to class with the meeting location, current [Safety Guidelines](#), and additional details.
- Access to more information will be available upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section (if applicable to your class). To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).

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Summer Native Flora Identification - Field

FIELD | Five Sessions: Wednesdays, June 19 - July 24 (Note: No Class July 3), 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.+ (Hikes may go longer.)

Instructor: Scott Dean

\$285 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Core | BREG - Elective, 6 hours | NCEE - Criteria II, 10 hours

Limit: 12

In this entirely field-based class led by Naturalist Scott Dean, you will learn to identify native mountain flora on the trail by training your eyes and using a non-technical dichotomous keying system. You will study the characteristics of plant families and the basics of plant communities all in place. While the focus is on summer wildflowers and trees, you will also pick up a wealth of information on the natural and cultural history of the native flora of the Blue Ridge. Participants in the field class have access to the online class and may attend the live-time meeting or access course materials and recordings on their own time.

Newcomb's Wildflower Guide and Wildflowers of Tennessee, the Ohio Valley and the Southern Appalachians are recommended as references.

This field-based class counts as the Summer Native Flora Identification core requirement for the BRN Certificate of Merit.

Scott Dean was born and raised in the mountains of southern Appalachia, specifically the coalfields of West Virginia and southwestern Virginia. He developed the original Ecology, Botany, and Zoology curricula for the Blue Ridge Naturalist Program, and has been both a classroom and field instructor with the program since its inception. He has led walks for UNC Asheville and the Cullowhee Native Plants Conference, been a featured speaker at the Great Smoky Mountain National Park Wildflower program, and spoken at various social and civic events in the Asheville area over the last twenty years.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
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Please add adulthoodeducation@ncarboretum.org to your contacts to ensure our emails do not end up in your spam folder.

Beginning Bonsai B

ONSITE | Two Sessions: Friday, June 21, 5 - 8:30 p.m. & Saturday, June 22, 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Instructor: Rebecca Ayres

\$235 Adult Non-Member

BREG - Elective, 4 hours

Limit: 8

Although it has its roots in ancient Asian traditions, the living art of bonsai now enjoys enthusiasts throughout much of the world. This class will provide the basic concepts and skills for novices to begin growing and shaping their own miniature trees. The first class will cover the fundamental horticultural and aesthetic principles of bonsai. It will include such topics as tree selection, watering, pest control, pruning, wiring, and styling. In the second class, each participant will receive a pot, scissors, wire, and planting medium. With guidance from the instructor, the students will create their own bonsai to take home. *All supplies and plant material are included in the class registration.*

Rebecca Ayres is a ceramic artist and gardener. A longtime Arboretum volunteer, she is the assistant to the bonsai curator and helps with overseeing the exhibition garden, the collection and the Carolina Bonsai Expo. She is a member of the Blue Ridge Bonsai Society, where she has taught workshops and classes, and is a graduate of the Arboretum's Blue Ridge Naturalist program.

Registration and Participation in In-Person Classes through the Arboretum:

- Registration for this class will close two days before the class start date.
- Make sure you enter your email address correctly when registering.
- Registrants will be sent a reminder email the day prior to class with the meeting location, current [Safety Guidelines](#), and additional details.
- Access to more information will be available upon registration via your account's Supplemental Content section (if applicable to your class). To learn how to view this information, please use [this helpful guide](#).

Please add adulthoodeducation@ncarboretum.org to your contacts to ensure our emails do not end up in your spam folder.

Azalea Expedition: Flame Azaleas at Elk Knob State Park

FIELD | Saturday, June 22, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Instructor: Carson Ellis

\$75 Adult Non-Member

*(**Arboretum Members receive a 10% discount on all classes.)*

BRN - Elective, 6 hours | BREG - Elective, 6 hours | NCEE - Criteria, 6 hours

Limit: 12

The flame azalea, *Rhododendron calendulaceum*, is one of the most familiar native azaleas in Western North Carolina. Around Asheville, these beautiful plants are typically seen lighting up the understory in early May. At higher elevations, however, they bloom weeks later and often grow in dense thickets atop open-canopy balds. Elk Knob, one of North Carolina's newest state parks, is a fantastic location to see a unique high-elevation bald plant community and has expansive stands of *Rhododendron calendulaceum* that bloom en masse in mid-June.

Horticulturist and plant ecologist Carson Ellis, curator of the Arboretum's National Native Azalea Garden, will lead participants up the two-mile trail, stopping to admire and discuss plants along the way. Gentle switchbacks ascend through shady forest, carpeted by sedges and dotted by wildflowers, to the sunny 5,500 foot summit. Once at risk of being developed, the Nature Conservancy and community fought to protect this special site, in part because of the rare and distinctive species that grow there! Participants will have the opportunity to look for plants like purple fringed orchid and Gray's lily, both of which bloom around the same time as the *Rhododendron calendulaceum*.

Carson Ellis, born and raised in Asheville, NC, has been a life-long explorer of the mountains of Western North Carolina. Her love for the natural world inspired her to pursue a career studying and cultivating native plants. Following undergraduate work in environmental science and horticulture, she recently completed her M.S. Biology at Western Carolina University, where she researched the pollination networks of high-elevation rock outcrop plant communities. As a horticulturist, she has worked with the Highlands Biological Research Station, Memphis Botanic Garden, and Tennessee Plant Conservation Alliance, and recently joined The North Carolina Arboretum as the Curator of the National Native Azalea Collection. A lover of the arts, she enjoys painting, ceramics, and messing around on the mountain dulcimer in her free time. She considers the natural world her biggest source of inspiration and celebrates horticulture as the ideal synthesis of art and science.

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