

Approved Conferences & Symposia for Certificate of Merit Elective Credit in 2024

Up to six (6) elective hours can be earned from showing proof of registration and attending sessions for *one* of the conferences/symposia listed below. No more than six elective credits can be earned from non-Arboretum offerings at this time. A reflection will be required for credit to be earned.

These are the events that will be eligible in 2024:

[March 8-10: Organic Growers School Annual Conference](#)

Mars Hill University
Mars Hill, NC

[July 17 - 20: Cullowhee Native Plant Conference](#)

Western Carolina University
Cullowhee, NC

[July 29 - Aug 1: Perennial Plant Association National Symposium](#)

Embassy Suites - Asheville Downtown
Asheville, NC

[Aug 1-2: Speaking of Gardening Symposium](#)

Asheville, NC - Embassy Suites - Asheville Downtown
Asheville, NC

[2024 Native Plant Symposium: Connecting Place, People, and Plants](#)

September 13 – 14, 2024
Highlands Biological Station

[September 2024: Center for Native Health - 14th Annual Rooted in the Mountains Symposium](#)

Western Carolina University
Cullowhee, NC
2024 plans not yet announced

[October 2024: NC State Master Gardeners WNC Gardening Symposium](#)

Blue Ridge Community College
Flat Rock, NC
2024 plans not yet announced

Reflection Assignment Prompt: Please reflect on your learning in this core course. How have you applied it, and how do you anticipate applying what you have learned? How has your understanding of where you live -- whether in the Blue Ridge Mountains or elsewhere -- been enriched? Please provide specific examples in your written reflection. You may integrate photographs or field sketches to supplement your written reflection into your document.

Instructions for Generating & Submitting Reflections:

- Open a new document and title it with your name and the course (or conference) name.
 - Example: **Rebecca Caldwell - Organic Growers School 2024**

- Then respond to the prompt above.

- Save your reflection as a pdf with your name and the name of the event (as above) and submit in the folder pertaining to your [Certificate of Merit program](#). (Click on the active link; place your submission in the BREG or BRN folder. Note: You can only receive up to six hours of elective credit for one elective.)

Please Note:

If writing about one of the approved conferences or symposia, please reflect on the whole of the experience. You probably attended different sessions, for instance. What were your take aways overall and then focusing in on a particular bit of learning that made you see/understand more deeply. An aha moment. If there were no aha moments and you don't take away greater understanding, then please don't use this as an excuse to critique and consider another learning opportunity that is better suited as an elective credit for your course of study.

No one should feel compelled to write and illustrate a dissertation! The objective is to reflect on the value you make of the learning opportunity in your Blue Ridge Naturalist/Blue Ridge Eco Gardener program of study and the value of the impact you can have applying your learning in your community.