

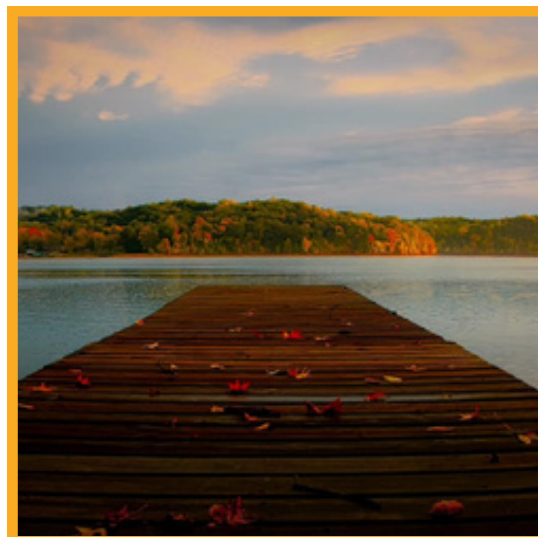


TENNESSEE NATURALIST PROGRAM

FALL 2025 NEWSLETTER



Cades Cove; Photo by Betty Blanton



McKinnon, TN; Photo by Stephanie Fisher



CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF TNP!

FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN SEPTEMBER 15-19

In September 2010, the Tennessee Naturalist Program held its very first core course. Now, 15 years later, we have grown into a thriving statewide network.

This year, we are celebrating **15 Years of TNP**, and we invite you to be part of this milestone moment. From September 15–19, we are launching a weeklong fundraising campaign with a goal of raising **\$15,000 to support the future of TNP.**

Plus, our Board of Directors has come together to offer a matching gift challenge: **the first \$4,600 will be matched dollar-for-dollar, doubling your impact.**

Your donation will help us invest in new projects, expand the TN2 program, and support our chapters so that we can serve you even better in the years ahead. TNP does not receive any outside funding from grants, sponsors, or subsidies; we are completely self-sustaining. Your support is crucial in our mission.

If you'd like to give early, you don't need to wait until September 15.
Make your early donation [here](#) - it will still qualify for the match!

Thank you for being an essential part of the TNP story. Together, we can build on 15 years of impact and invest in a future with even more growth, learning, service, and connection to the natural world.



TNP CORE COURSE

NEW CHAPTER ANNOUNCEMENT!

The Wade Bourne Nature Center in Clarksville is joining TNP as our 15th chapter! The first course will be held Fall 2026. Until then, get to know our newest chapter [on our website](#).

From chapter coordinator Katie Netti:

"We are thrilled to be included among such a strong group of conservation organizations, and we look forward to bringing this hands-on learning experience to the Montgomery County community. The Tennessee Naturalist Program has been instrumental in shaping the way our department views natural resources and outdoor learning, and we are excited to share that passion with others."



UPCOMING CORE COURSES



Memphis at Pinecrest

Moscow, TN | Weekday classes
Only 1 hour from Memphis and Jackson

September 12, 2025 - April 17, 2025

[View full schedule here](#)

Coordinator: Charity Siebert
charity@camppinecrest.org

Registration open until September 11

<https://tnnnaturalist.org/register/>



Paris Landing State Park/TNWR

Buchanan, TN | Saturday classes

September 20, 2025 - June 6, 2025

[View full schedule here](#)

Coordinators:

Brandon Baker brandon.baker@tn.gov;

Christa Davidson christa.davidson@tn.gov

Registration open until September 15

<https://tnnaturalist.org/register/>

CORE COURSE RECAP

This summer, several TNP chapters finished up their core course. It's a bittersweet feeling when classes come to an end, but there are plenty of opportunities to stay involved with TNP! Dig deeper into your favorite class topics with TN2 Continuing Education workshops, or keep volunteering to earn TNP milestone pins, or reach out to your chapter about helping with classes next year. Your TNP experience doesn't end with your last class!

LONG HUNTER STATE PARK

Hermitage, TN | Next course begins February 2026



BEAMAN PARK NATURE CENTER

Ashland City, TN | Next course begins February 2026



Photo Credits: Kim Cheffins

CORE COURSE RECAP CONT.

PARIS LANDING STATE PARK/TNWR

Buchanan, TN | Registration open now for Fall 2025 course - [register here!](#)



Photo Credits: Margaret Gray

IJAMS NATURE CENTER

Knoxville, TN | Next course begins spring 2026



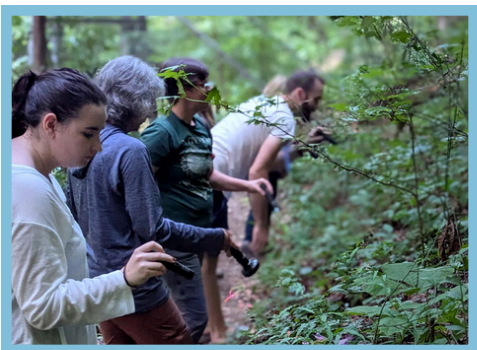
Photo Credits: Pamela Barras



Photo Credits: Pamela Barras

AUDUBON ACRES

Chattanooga, TN | Next course begins fall 2026



TN2 - TNP CONTINUING EDUCATION

UPCOMING TN2 WORKSHOPS



TN2: Interpretation (two-day)

Saturday, October 4 9:00am-5:00pm CT

Sunday, October 5 8:00am-3:00pm CT

Cumberland Mountain State Park

Instructor: Dr. Phillip Smartt

Price: \$165 CE Hours: 14

Registration open now!

<https://tnnaturalist.org/register/>

This two-day immersive workshop will teach you the important elements that will make your hikes, programs, classes, and presentations more exciting, engaging, relevant, and meaningful to all the people who attend.



TN2: Spiders

Saturday, October 25 4:00pm-9:00pm CT

Pinecrest Camp and Retreat Center

Instructor: Pat Miller and Gail Stratton

Registration opens September 15

<https://tnnaturalist.org/register/>

This TN2 course will include a general introduction to Tennessee's spiders, including how to distinguish spiders, spider characteristics, habitats, and behavior, and common and harmful spiders.



TN2: Waterfowl and Wetlands

Saturday, November 15 9:00am-3:00pm CT

Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge

Registration opens October 6

<https://tnnaturalist.org/register/>

This TN2 consists of classroom instruction, followed by an exploration of the Duck River Bottoms. The field portion of the class will travel via hayride to discuss wetland habitat, waterfowl identification, and conservation management for the system and species.



TN2: Winter Tree ID - NEW!

Beaman Park

Saturday, December 6

Saturday, December 13

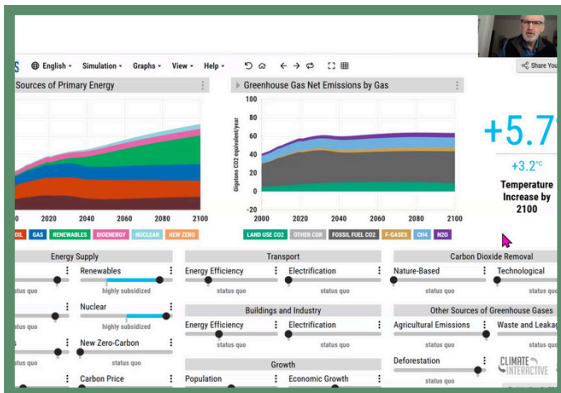
(two presentations of the same class,
not a two-part class)

Registration opens October 27!

<https://tnnaturalist.org/register/>

TN2 ON-DEMAND WORKSHOPS ALWAYS AVAILABLE!

Did you know TNP offers online on-demand workshops? These workshops are video recordings of past virtual workshops and are always open for registration. Currently there are two offerings, with plans to add more in the future.



TN2 On-Demand: Climate Change

Price: \$20 CE Hours: 1.5

<https://tnnaturalist.org/register/>

Learn about climate change using En-ROADS, a user-friendly model similar to those used by climate scientists. Recorded from the January 2025 virtual workshop.



TN2 On-Demand: Environmental Advocacy

Price: \$20 CE Hours: 1.5

<https://tnnaturalist.org/register/>

Learn effective skills to advocate for environmental issues in the private or public sector at local, state, and federal levels. Recorded from the August 2024 virtual workshop.

TN2 RECAP

We beat the summer heat while spelunking, mussel digging, and coneflower spotting!
Here are some photos of the best moments from our summer TN2 workshops.

TN2: CEDAR GLADES COMMUNITIES IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE



June 14 Cedars of Lebanon State Park

The sunny weather and blooming coneflowers made for a perfect day!

Photo credits to Katy Ginanni and Richard Hitt

TN2: CAVES AND KARST IN TENNESSEE



July 19 Cedars of Lebanon State Park

Students had fun exploring several caves and learning about unique geological features.

Photo credits to Kren Teren

TN2: MUSSEL BIOLOGY AND ECOLOGY



August 6 Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge

Students got to toe dig for mussels and learn about their unique biology and ecology.

Photo credits to George Hawver and Kat Albrecht

VOLUNTEER AND CE OPPORTUNITIES

PRE-APPROVED HOURS

The following events have been pre-approved for TNP volunteer or continuing education hours. You will still need to enter your hours into the database for approval.

Wild Edibles Workshop - Pandy Upchurch

Friday, October 3 10am-3pm CT

Montgomery Bell State Park

Continuing Education opportunities:

- This will be such a great day because the venue is wonderfully rustic, and the setting is fantastic for foraging. You will not be harvesting from the State Park but will learn how to identify many edible and medicinal plants. There will be a presentation, display and sampling items, a hike, and tips to get you started.
- Cost: \$50; Limited to 25 people (only 7 spots left as of September 1)
- To register, email pandyupchurch@gmail.com
- Log continuing education hours as Foraging Education

Turtle Transport - Little River Wildlife Rehabilitation

Ongoing through October

Volunteer opportunities:

- Little River Wildlife Rehabilitation needs help transporting rehabilitated turtles back to their home range. They are centered in Maryville, but the turtles sometimes need to be transported up to two hours away.
- Contact Michelle Wilson at michellefaywilson@gmail.com or 865-268-9414 for additional information and training.
- Log volunteer hours as Stewardship > Animal Care/Wildlife Rehabilitation

TN Serves and National Public Lands Day - Tennessee State Parks

September 19-28

Volunteer opportunities:

- Tennessee State Parks all over the state will be hosting volunteer events from September 19-28 for TN Serves and National Public Lands Day.
- To view a full list of volunteer opportunities and sort by park, [**click here.**](#)
- Most hours will be Stewardship > Habitat Improvement/Maintenance, but make sure to read the description to make sure this category is the best fit for your activity.

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The organizations listed below frequently have volunteer and/or continuing education opportunities. Visit the linked websites for more information. Remember to check with environmental organizations in your community about opportunities. You can also ask your chapter coordinator and instructors.

TNP Chapters

TNP has 14 chapters across the state that often need volunteers and offer continuing education opportunities. Visit the link for a list of our chapters and contact information. <https://tnnaturalist.org/chapters/>

Tennessee State Parks

There are state parks all over Tennessee that need volunteers and provide continuing education opportunities. Visit the link for up-to-date opportunities and events. <https://tnstateparks.com/get-involved/volunteering>

Friends Groups at Tennessee State Parks

Many state parks in Tennessee have Friends groups that offer volunteer and continuing education opportunities. Visit the link to see a list of Friends groups. <https://tnstateparks.com/get-involved/friends-groups>

Tennessee Environmental Council

The Tennessee Environmental Council has opportunities in a variety of environmental sectors. Visit the link for up-to-date volunteer opportunities and events. <https://www.tectn.org/getinvolved.html>

Wild Ones

There are four Wild Ones chapters in Tennessee. Visit the link to find a chapter near you and view events. <https://wildones.org/events/?state=TN>

Tennessee Native Plant Society

TNPS conserves and celebrates native plants. Visit the link for up-to-date opportunities and events. <https://www.tnps.org/events/category/calendar/>

Cumberland River Compact

The Cumberland River Compact has a variety of hands-on volunteer opportunities dedicated to protecting the waters of the Cumberland River. Visit the link for up-to-date volunteer opportunities. <https://cumberlandrivercompact.org/get-involved/volunteer/>

Harpeth River Conservancy

There are several ongoing volunteer opportunities. Visit the link for more information. <https://harpethconservancy.org/get-involved/volunteer/>

CERTIFICATIONS AND MILESTONES

Congrats to all the TNP students who earned their certification or reached a TNP milestone from June - August 2025. We appreciate your dedication to TNP!

CERTIFICATION

Alanna Shapiro - Owl's Hill
Zena Wileman - Cummins Falls
Karl Hackenbrack - Beaman Park
Anna Howard - Beaman Park
Sherri Hanson - Paris Landing
Kathleen Bark - Paris Landing
Dave Knapp - Paris Landing
Lisa Stevenson - Owl's Hill
Michelle Nicholson - Long Hunter
Mac Kelton - Paris Landing
Phyllis Long - Beaman Park

Sherry Gann - Long Hunter
Joanna Huffman - Frozen Head
Cynthia Tolsma - Owl's Hill
Sapphire Hamblin - Long Hunter
Debbie Nelson - Murfreesboro Barfield
Marlee Mitchell - Long Hunter
Sarah Ali - Murfreesboro Barfield
Dale Blakely - Bays Mountain
Elbie Blount - Frozen Head
Anna Harden - Beaman Park

MILESTONES

Paul Prill - 300 hours
Jennifer Cox - 50 hours
Carla Blevins - 50 hours
Maureen May - 50 hours
Joe Gordon - 100 hours; 150 hours
Leah Berry - 100 hours
Tammy Gross - 300 hours
Betty Blanton - 500 hours
Richard Hitt - 2500 hours
Copper Jackson - 500 hours
Anne Padgett - 200 hours
Kathy Veazey - 200 hours

Brian Hendrix - 1000 hours
Greg Tomerlin - 100 hours
Carol Elliot - 100 hours
Leslie Watts - 300 hours
Kren Teren - 50 hours
Emily Culbertson - 300 hours
Wendy Sadler - 300 hours
Aprele Griffin - 200 hours
Matt Koenig - 50 hours
Melissa Berry - 150 hours
Brandy Schnettler - 50 hours

HOW CLOSE ARE YOU TO YOUR CERTIFICATION OR NEXT MILESTONE?

[Log in to the TNP database here](#) and click the "Tracks" tab on your homepage to see how many hours you have remaining. **You might be closer than you think!**

CONNECT WITH TNP ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



Facebook

Tennessee Naturalist Program

[Click here to follow TNP on Facebook!](#)



Instagram

@tnnaturalist

[Click here to follow TNP on Instagram!](#)

DONATE TO TNP!

Tennessee Naturalist Program is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to inspiring the desire to learn and share Tennessee's nature. We do not receive funding from any state or federal sources. All donations are appreciated and go towards furthering our mission. You can donate to TNP by following the link below. Thank you for your support!

[Click here to donate to TNP](#)

TNP MERCH

Shop TNP apparel and accessories on our website! Our sweatshirts, beanies, and mugs are perfect for fall hiking and camping. Proceeds help support the Tennessee Naturalist Program. **[Click here to shop now!](#)**

