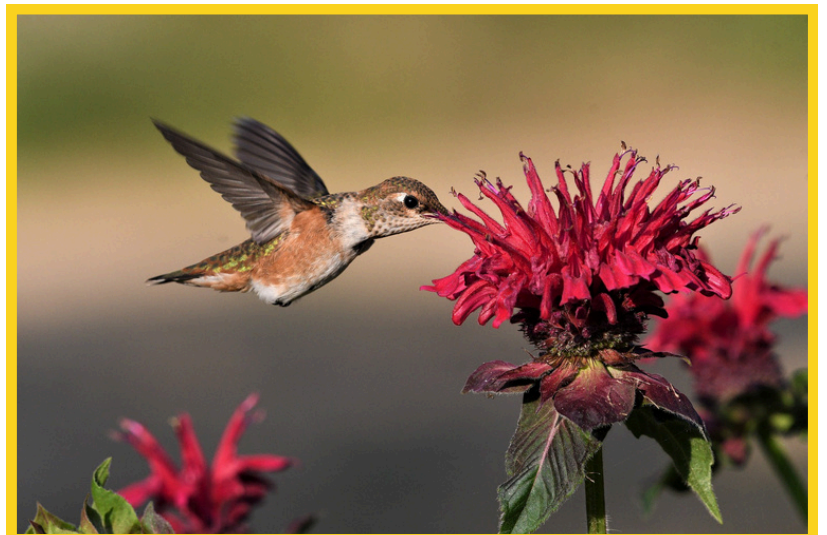
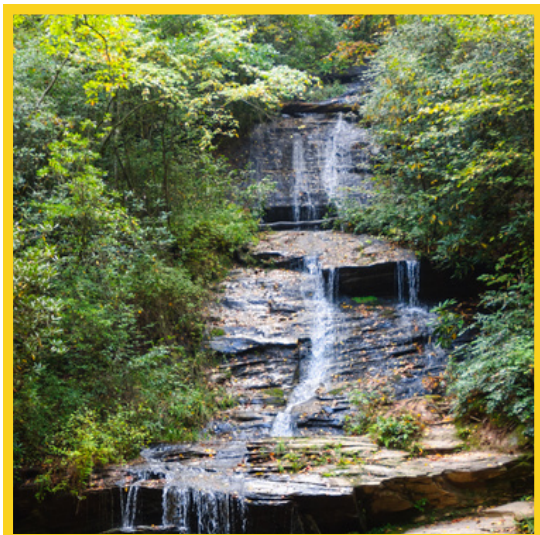




# TENNESSEE NATURALIST PROGRAM SUMMER 2026 NEWSLETTER



# TNP CORE COURSE

## UPCOMING CORE COURSES



### Wade Bourne Nature Center - NEW!

Clarksville, TN | Saturday classes

**August 1, 2026 - May 1, 2027**

[View full schedule here](#)

**Coordinator:** Katie Netti  
[knnetti@montgomerytn.gov](mailto:knnetti@montgomerytn.gov)

**Registration open now - only one spot left!**

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



### Bays Mountain

Kingsport, TN | Saturday classes

**August 1, 2026 - October 17, 2026**

[View full schedule here](#)

**Coordinator:** Laura Ellis  
[lauraellis@kingsporttn.gov](mailto:lauraellis@kingsporttn.gov)

**Registration open now - 3 spots left!**

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



### Owl's Hill

Brentwood, TN | Two session options

**Session A (Thursdays): August 13-May 6**

**Session B (Saturdays): August 15-May 8**

[View full schedule here](#)

**Coordinator:** Laura Smith  
[laura@owlshill.org](mailto:laura@owlshill.org)

**Registration opens July 1**

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



## Audubon Acres

Chattanooga, TN | Saturday classes

**September 12, 2026 - November 14, 2026**

[View full schedule here](#)

**Coordinator:** Jere Thompson  
tnpcoordinator@chattaudubon.org

**Registration opens July 17**  
<https://tnnaturalist.org/register/>

There will be a few more courses beginning this fall. Stay up to date with open registrations by watching for TNP announcements via email and social media and checking <https://tnnaturalist.org/register/> regularly.

## CORE COURSE RECAP

This spring, 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!



Friends of South Cumberland State Parks  
Photo Credits: Casey Davis



Frozen Head  
Photo Credits: Kelly Hanson



Owl's Hill  
Photo Credits: Deborah Lanius



Memphis at Pinecrest  
Photo Credits: Rod Starns

# TN2 - TNP CONTINUING EDUCATION

## UPCOMING TN2 WORKSHOPS



### **TN2: Mussel Biology and Ecology**

**Friday, August 21 9:00am-3:00pm CT**

Higher Pursuits - Columbia, TN

**Certified Naturalists:** registration open now, plus receive a \$10 discount

**Registration opens June 29 for all others**

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

TNP is teaming up with Higher Pursuits and TWRA on the Duck River to offer a kayak float trip with instruction on the life, ecology and conservation efforts of our native mussels. Join us as mussel biologist Amanda Rosenberger conducts a 6-hour field class on the diverse Duck River. Past surveys have found 35 species of mussels along one mile of refuge shoreline at this location, making it the perfect place to learn about and identify multiple species.



### **TN2: Ecology and Evolution of Wild Bees**

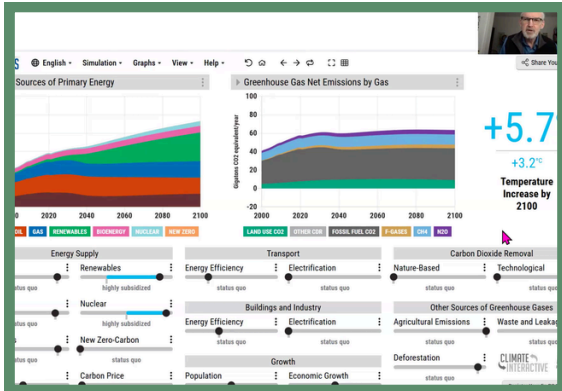
**Saturday, September 12**

Seven Islands State Birding Park

Learn about the natural history of wild bee communities and observe bees up close! Course components will include: 1) a lecture on the ecology, evolution, and behavior of wild bees, 2) a lab section where participants can learn about bee anatomy using microscopes and specimens, and 3) a field portion where participants can observe late-season wild bees interacting with plants.

# 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

Spring was an exciting time for TN2 workshops! Here are some photos of the best moments.

### TN2: WILD EDIBLES



### April 4 Cedars of Lebanon State Park

Students learned how to get started with foraging, from identification to ethical collection to preparation!

Photo credits to Karie Falder-Saeed

## TN2: ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTION OF WILD BEES



### April 26 Long Hunter State Park

Students learned about wild bee communities and got to observe specimens up close.

Photo credits to Margie Hunter

## TN2: EFFECTIVE PRACTICES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION



### May 2 Warner Park Nature Center

Students learned and practiced skills for engaging learners of all ages in meaningful, learner-centered nature exploration.

Photo credits to Margie Hunter

## TN2: SWAMPS ECOLOGY



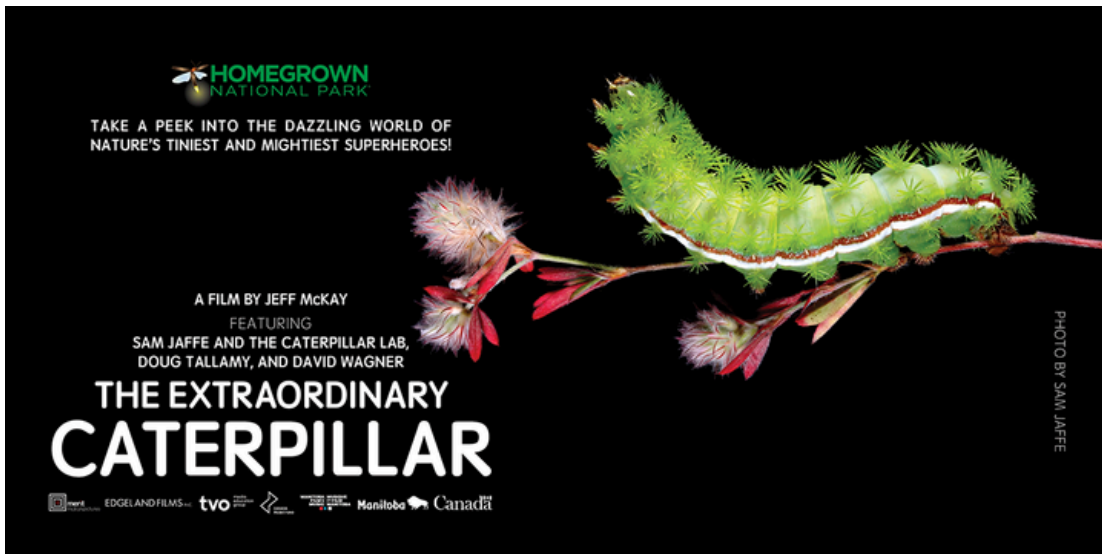
### May 16 Reelfoot Lake

It's always a good day when you get to explore the swamps and study unique organisms!

Photo credits to Kim Erickson

# SPECIAL GIFT FROM TNP BOARD!

## THE EXTRAORDINARY CATERPILLAR DOCUMENTARY FROM HOMEGROWN NATIONAL PARK



**Please enjoy a FREE gift from the Tennessee Naturalist Program Board of Directors.**

We're offering a special screening of *The Extraordinary Caterpillar*, a beautifully shot 60-minute documentary\* from Homegrown National Park that reveals the vital — and often overlooked — role caterpillars play in our ecosystems.

To access the film, visit [tnnaturalist.org/register](https://tnnaturalist.org/register), scroll down to the listing, and click "Register Now." Our license is valid for one year, so we encourage you to take advantage of this special gift while you can!

### **Documentary Description:**

From blooming meadows to city parks and backyard gardens, this inspiring film celebrates the magic of nature while showing families practical ways to make a difference. Along the way, you'll see the groundbreaking work of The Caterpillar Lab, entomologist David Wagner, and Doug Tallamy, co-founder of Homegrown National Park.

\*Please note: Documentaries are NOT eligible for CE hours, but this is still a wonderful learning opportunity!

# 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.

### TNP Outreach Events

#### Volunteer opportunities:

- TNP will have a table at several outreach events this fall. Volunteers will interact with visitors to promote TNP. Responsibilities include picking up and dropping off table materials, greeting visitors, handing out brochures and flyers, answering questions, and sharing your TNP experience.
- Please note the location, date, and number of volunteers needed.
  - **Garden Extravaganza - Murfreesboro - Saturday, July 11** - 3 volunteers needed
  - **Hummingbird Festival - Clarksville - Saturday, August 15** - 3 volunteers needed
  - **Hummingbird Festival - Nashville - Saturday, September 5** - 4 volunteers needed
  - **Rock the Ridge - Signal Mountain - Saturday, September 12** - 6 volunteers needed
  - **Sassafras Moon Herb Fest - Erwin - Saturday, September 19** - 5 volunteers needed
- Email [info@tnnaturalist.org](mailto:info@tnnaturalist.org) to sign up. More info will be sent closer to the event date.
- Log hours under Environmental Education > Outreach, sponsoring organization "Tennessee Naturalist Program"

### Forest Resilience Research - Adventure Scientists

Ongoing through September 2026

#### Volunteer opportunities:

- Adventure Scientists partners with academic and agency researchers to address conservation questions that require large-scale, field-collected data. Current projects include research focused on American beech and butternut trees, two ecologically important native trees facing serious disease threats across their ranges. Tennessee sits within the native range of both species.
- Now through September, Adventure Scientists will train **volunteers to assess and locate healthy beech and butternut trees in national and large state forests, assess tree health, and collect a small number of leaf or leaflet samples from each tree.** Those samples will be sequenced and analyzed by research partners to search for genetic markers of disease resistance and to understand how genetic diversity is distributed across these species' ranges.
- **Visit the [Adventure Scientists Forest Resilience webpage](#) to learn more and sign up**
- Log hours under Community Science > Animal/Plant Count, Survey, Monitoring

## LOOKING FOR MORE OPPORTUNITIES?



Join the **“Tennessee Naturalist Program: Students, Instructors, and Alumni” Facebook Group!**

The Facebook Group is run by Tennessee Naturalists, for Tennessee Naturalists! You'll find volunteer opportunities, continuing education events, and a community of like-minded naturalists. The group is statewide and open to any current or past TNP student.

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**WANT TO GET YOUR ORGANIZATION'S EVENT  
PRE-APPROVED FOR VOLUNTEER OR CONTINUING  
EDUCATION HOURS? FILL OUT THE FORM [HERE!](#)**



## 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 15 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 March 2026 - May 2026. We appreciate your dedication to TNP!

## CERTIFICATION

**Anna Clark** - Seven Islands  
**Kari Cox** - Paris Landing  
**David Turner** - Frozen Head  
**Lauren Johnson** - Discovery Park  
**Vicki Radford** - Audubon Acres  
**Ian Rosenwasser** - Long Hunter  
**Missy Smith** - Paris Landing  
**Kevin Poteete** - Paris Landing  
**Spice Preikschat** - Murfreesboro Barfield

**Corey Chatis** - Owl's Hill  
**Rachel Walker** - Owl's Hill  
**Anna McDonald** - South Cumberland  
**Shirley Breece** - Owl's Hill  
**Julianna Johnson** - Owl's Hill  
**April Shelton** - Ijams  
**Deborah Lanus** - Owl's Hill  
**Kim Kaplan** - Owl's Hill  
**Andrea Barach** - Owl's Hill

## MILESTONES

**John Cousino** - 150 hours  
**Sherry Gann** - 50 hours  
**Anne Padgett** - 400 hours; 500 hours  
**Marlee Mitchell** - 100 hours  
**Leslie Watts** - 400 hours  
**Amber Prater** - 150 hours  
**Amy Ritter** - 50 hours  
**Wendy Sadler** - 400 hours  
**Maureen May** - 100 hours; 150 hours  
**Lisa Petz** - 1500 hours

**Carla Blevins** - 100 hours; 150 hours  
**Karen Darlington** - 50 hours  
**George Hawver** - 1500 hours  
**Kren Teren** - 100 hours  
**Anita Smith** - 100 hours  
**Carol Blickenstorfer** - 200 hours  
**Phyllis Long** - 50 hours  
**Stephen Bryant** - 100 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!

The 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! Proceeds help support the Tennessee Naturalist Program. [Click here to shop now!](#)

