

# Northeast Environmental Studies Group NEES 2005

## In the Southern Appalachian Mountains

Hosted by the Environmental Studies Department at Warren Wilson College,  
Asheville, North Carolina

November 4-6, 2005

**PLEASE REGISTER BY SEPTEMBER 15.  
(use registration form)**

This year's annual NEES meeting will take place at Warren Wilson College located eight miles east of Asheville amidst the highest of the Appalachians. Meetings and meals will take place at WWC on what has been voted one of the prettiest campuses in the U.S. Housing will be available on campus and at the nearby Blue Ridge Assembly which is a YMCA camp located between Swannanoa and Black Mountain, North Carolina. The college will run a shuttle from the Asheville airport to the college and the Blue Ridge Assembly.

<http://www.blueridgeassembly.org/>

One of only six work colleges in the U.S., Warren Wilson College has its own extensive farm, forest, gardens and grounds maintained with student labor. The college is unique in requiring a triad of academics, work, and service of all its students and has a strong commitment to environmental responsibility and cross-cultural experiences. With six concentrations, Environmental Studies is the largest major at the college and was started in the 1970's. The triad, a required senior capstone experience, and paid summer internships provided by the college's Environmental Leadership Center provide experiential and scholarly training in the major. <http://www.warren-wilson.edu/main/>

### *The schedule:*

Friday November 4:

Registration 3-6 pm; Blue Ridge Assembly

Dinner and evening meeting 6-9; Warren Wilson College

Saturday November 5:

Morning: Breakfast and breakout sessions; Warren Wilson College

Afternoon: Field trips (see below)

Evening: Dinner and meeting, Warren Wilson College

Sunday November 6:

Breakfast in the Warren Wilson College Cafeteria

Participants are encouraged to take advantage of the seemingly unlimited opportunities for hiking on campus and in the surrounding mountains on your own before departure. Descriptions of hiking trails are below.

**Registration:** \$70 (meals and sundries).

**Lodging:** Registration will be available beginning April 1. Send reservations to Lou Weber or Natasha Shipman at Warren Wilson College, ENS Department.

Doubles available at Blue Ridge Assembly \$59/night.

Yes, this is the same Blue Ridge Assembly that you've seen on television and movies. *Twenty-eight Days* starring Sandra Bullock, and other fancy productions have been filmed there. Nestled in the beautiful Blue Ridge mountains, the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly is a conference center situated on 1200 acres of woodland beautified by mountain streams, wildflowers, ridges, valleys and spectacular views. Rooms are available in the stately Abbott Hall. No dogs are allowed on the grounds or in the buildings of the Assembly. No smoking is allowed in the buildings.

Additional lodging in the area is extensively available. Holiday Inn (Asheville Tunnel Road) is pet-friendly and the closest motel. There are several other motels, hotels, B&B's, campgrounds, and RV lots close by. To be close to campus look for facilities on Tunnel Road of east Asheville or in Black Mountain or Montreat.

**Transportation:** Asheville Airport is served by several airlines. Check other nearby airports to get the best airfare, but the shuttle will run only to the Asheville airport. The Greenville/Spartanburg, South Carolina airport is 60 miles away. Charlotte airport is 120 miles away and the drive from there is easy and peaceful. Knoxville airport is 150 miles away and takes you through steep, high, mountains with harrowing interstate curves. The Atlanta airport is a four hour drive from Warren Wilson.

### **Field trips :**

#### **Pontoon Excursion on Lake James (\$15 fee)**

County Planner, Judy Francis, will lead a tour on this scenic mountain lake as a demonstration of progressive conservation development along a popular shorefront. The project serves as a model of a major partnership, years in the making, with public land management agencies. Guests will hear about the new 3,000 acre state park, the Linville Gorge Wilderness Area, and the Pisgah National Forest, all aspects of the partnership, as well as hear about the Over-the-Mountain Victory Trail linear park.

#### **One Hour Drive to Canada**

This will be a leisurely hour drive (one way) along the Blue Ridge Parkway to Mount Mitchell, at 6,680 feet, the highest point in eastern North America. The van will stop at several overlooks to examine the forest changes from deciduous to spruce-fir, and to discuss the interesting natural and cultural history of the Parkway and the mountains of western North Carolina. At the top participants can walk a 1/3 mile trail to Elisha Mitchell's grave and ascend the sightseeing tower that gives you stunning multi-state views of the Appalachians.

## **Warren Wilson College Forests**

Dr. Greg Ettl, forestry professor at WWC, will guide a three hour walk through the extensive forests on our property covering several miles of trails.

## **Warren Wilson College Garden and Farm**

Trip leaders will show us the extensive gardens and farm on campus and visitors will meet our two work horses and see our entirely grass-fed cattle herd, free-range chicken flock, piggery, dairy cow, and goat. This is a 275 acre mixed crop and livestock farm managed in a sustainable way, focusing on practices that do not harm the environment, are highly productive and efficient, and incorporate student crewmembers into the work and decision making process. Although educational by nature, the farm is to be run as a working farm, making decisions that working farms make, and as much as possible run as a viable business with strong contributions to the local food economy.

## **Biltmore House** (\$39 entrance fee)

Vans will drop you off and pick you up from this, America's largest home. Built by the Vanderbilts and with grounds designed by Fredrick Law Olmsted your entrance fee will allow you to explore the house, vineyard (yes, there is wine-tasting), gardens on the banks of the French Broad River, horse barn, Deer Park Inn, and of course gift shops. Buy tickets on-line for discounts or buy at the gate. <http://www.biltmore.com/>

## **Tardigrade Workshop** (Paul Bartels)

Dr. Paul Bartels, Division Chair of Sciences and the Environment at Warren Wilson, is participating in the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory at Great Smoky Mountains National Park. He is in charge of cataloguing all the water bears (animals of the Phylum Tardigrada) and will demonstrate methods of preparing and identifying water bears. This workshop will be mostly indoors. So far, he and his tardigrade colleagues have found several species never before recorded in The Park and several other species new to science.

## Warren Wilson College Trails

Self-guided tours are also available and could include the farm, forest, gardens, ponds, or more than 30 miles of trails on campus. We'll supply maps and hints on where to see the most bears.

*Nearby opportunities for Sunday on-your-own hikes:*  
maps to all these locations will be available at the meeting.

**Blue Ridge Parkway:** Located within five miles of campus, the Mountains to Sea Trail follows the Blue Ridge Parkway for dozens of miles. There are several easy access points near the Folk Art Center located on the Blue Ridge Parkway just a few minutes drive from WWC. In the spring this is the best site in the county to see Cerulean Warblers. In the fall this deciduous forest trail is more interesting for the salamanders found under rocks in the streams. Bring your herp guide with you for identification. The southern Appalachians are the world's capital for salamander species diversity.

**Shining Rock Wilderness:** Take an hour drive south on the Blue Ridge Parkway and enjoy late fall foliage and magnificent overlooks. See Cold Mountain (it's a real mountain and the book was based on it) and Shining Rock and stop to hike the Investor Gap or Black Balsam Trails. Walk through miles of balds at 6,000 feet and look down on the rest of the world. This is a stunning wilderness trail that is mostly in low shrubby vegetation and isolated stands of spruce-fir. After walking this trail, you will know why they call them the Blue Ridge Mountains. This is a good bird trail in the fall with all the species characteristic of spruce-fir forests.

**Table Rock State Park:** The Asheville Airport is 30 miles south of Warren Wilson, and this park is 30 miles south of the airport. It is one of the loveliest parks in the southern Appalachians. Table Rock State Park is actually just over the border in South Carolina, located on Highway 11, but an easy drive off the interstate. The six mile hike to the top of Table Rock and back is a good workout and provides a fine day of birding, salamandering, and botanizing. The view at the top is spectacular where you may watch ravens, black vultures, and peregrines. Wear shorts or zip-offs and a tee shirt in November. Table Rock is the southern-most ridge of the Appalachians so temperatures are 15 degrees (Fahrenheit) warmer than whatever it is in Asheville.

**Cataloochee Wilderness (Boogerman Trail):** Drive 45 minutes west on Interstate 40 to the road that leads to the N. Carolina side of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This is designated wilderness area where you can get away from the crowds that come in through the main entrance at Dollywood. In the Cataloochee Wilderness you'll see elk that have recently been reintroduced, and old-growth hemlock on the Boogerman Trail, a trail adopted by Warren Wilson to provide maintenance.

### *Contacts:*

Lou Weber, Environmental Studies, [lweber@warren-wilson.edu](mailto:lweber@warren-wilson.edu) , 828-771-3071.

Natasha Shipman, [nshipman@warren-wilson.edu](mailto:nshipman@warren-wilson.edu) , 828-771-3096.

**Environmental Studies Department**

**Warren Wilson College, CPO 6226**

**P.O. Box 9000**

**Asheville, NC 28815-9000**

[www.warren-wilson.edu/main/](http://www.warren-wilson.edu/main/)

**REGISTRATION FORM — NEES 2005 MEETING**  
**Warren Wilson College**

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**PLEASE REGISTER BY SEPTEMBER 15.**

**Registration is \$70 for meeting and meals. Housing is \$59/night at the Blue Ridge Assembly.**

Name:

Title:

Institution:

Mailing Address:

E-mail:

Telephone:

**LODGING AT THE BLUE RIDGE ASSEMBLY: \$59/night for a double at Abbott House. Please check below which nights you will need lodging.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Friday, November 4 with check-in after 3 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_ Saturday, November 5 with checkout by 10 a.m.

my roommate will be \_\_\_\_\_

**NEES MEETING REGISTRATION COST: \$70**

Included: Friday dinner; all meals Saturday; Sunday breakfast; field trips (except Biltmore House). Lodging is separate.

Please indicate your participation plans:

**FRIDAY**

\_\_\_ dinner and meeting at Warren Wilson College (6-9 pm)

**SATURDAY**

\_\_\_ breakfast

\_\_\_ morning breakout sessions

\_\_\_ lunch

\_\_\_ afternoon field trip

\_\_\_ dinner

**SUNDAY**

\_\_\_ brunch at student cafeteria

**List your 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday afternoon field trip choices:**

- \_\_\_ Pontoon Excursion on Lake James
- \_\_\_ One Hour Drive to Canada (Mount Mitchell – the highest point in eastern North America just off the Blue Ridge Parkway)
- \_\_\_ Biltmore House (\$45 entrance fee)
- \_\_\_ Garden/Farm Tour at Warren Wilson
- \_\_\_ Forest Tour at Warren Wilson – three hour hike on trails
- \_\_\_ Tardigrade Workshop
- \_\_\_ Self-guided hike on campus

**Idea(s) for breakout session conversation:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you willing to facilitate the discussion? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ Would rather not \_\_\_\_\_

**Please print out and return this form with a check for \$70 and housing costs payable to the Warren Wilson College.**

Mail to:  
Natasha Shipman  
Warren Wilson College  
CPO 6226  
P.O. Box 9000  
Asheville, NC 28815

**Receipt to be provided at the meeting.**

If you have questions or special needs, contact  
Natasha Shipman ([nshipman@warren-wilson.edu](mailto:nshipman@warren-wilson.edu) 828-771-3096),  
or  
Lou Weber ([lweber@warren-wilson.edu](mailto:lweber@warren-wilson.edu); 828-771-3071).