



CONNECTIONS

— **Kelby Ouchley**

If I could choose one concept to leave with readers of my books, it would be that of “connections” — links between humans and the natural world. Connections can also be links between plants or animals and their habitat. Everyone knows that fish need water, but few realize that many prairie plants need fire to survive. Spanish moss needs clean air, spring peepers need seasonal pools, and mud daubers need mud. Connections can be broad — all animals depend on plants either directly or indirectly, or very specific — red-cockaded woodpeckers need old pine trees infected with the fungus that causes red heart disease in the tree. Rare indigo snakes need the burrows of endangered gopher tortoises. In the pine plantation ravaged hill country near my home, beech drops grow only under the disappearing beech trees.

As a species and as individuals there is little that we do that does not impact other living things by affecting connections. The consequences of our actions on other life forms can be negative or beneficial. The scale can vary from global extinction of a species to preservation of entire ecosystems. Clearing bottomland hardwood forests in the Lower Mississippi Valley insured the demise of ivory-billed woodpeckers, but conservation efforts have likely preserved the greater Yellowstone ecosystem. The same action can be fatal to individuals yet essential to the well-being of a whole population, as in the use of hunting as a tool to maintain healthy deer herds. Most detrimental impacts are the result of cumulative actions. The fact that I drive a gasoline-powered truck each day doesn’t impact caribou in northern Alaska. The fact that 50 million people drive similar vehicles may seriously affect caribou as the demand for oil and its associated activities in the fragile Arctic displace the herds.

Knowing the connections is important. It is even more important to realize that we have not yet figured out most of the connections, and that many will always elude our comprehension. These in particular are no less significant to the players involved. Recognizing that unknown connections exist is as important as proven facts in making daily decisions that impact the natural world.



Beechdrops — Image by Renee Brecht

Kelby Ouchley, a biologist, author and award-winning conservationist and naturalist, managed National Wildlife Refuges for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for 30 years. His presentation, *Atop Your Mountain, Along My Bayou — Seeking the Connections*, will be Friday, Sept. 9th, 7:30 PM, at the park conference center.

Between Friends

GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

Friends of Roan Mountain gratefully acknowledges these charitable gifts

Memorial Gifts

Julie Poehlman for Bob Whittemore

Donations

Don Fisher

Linda Good

Welch Family Charitable Fund

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Amazon Smile Charitable Contribution

TWIN SPRINGS SUMMER PICNIC



Last month twenty Friends gathered at the Twin Springs picnic shelter and enjoyed grilled burgers & hot dogs, tasty side dishes and desserts. Everyone was grateful for the

mountain's cool temperature in July and the chance to spend time with good friends.

Many thanks to our grill masters, Gary and Ken!

Annual Membership Meeting

Friends of Roan Mountain will hold its annual membership at 6:00 PM Saturday, September 10, in the conference center. At the meeting you will receive information regarding the activities, projects and finances of the organization. The election of board members will be held.

The following have been nominated for this year's election: Aubrie Abernethy, Nancy Barrigar, Jennifer Bauer, Tracy Campbell, Larry McDaniel, and Tyler Wicks. Nominations from the floor may be made at the meeting.

The annual meeting provides an opportunity for the membership to give their input concerning the policies and activities of FORM. Any member wishing to submit an item for the agenda of the annual meeting may do so by contacting Gary Barrigar, friendsofroan@gmail.com.



The Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy conserves unique plant and animal habitat, clean water, farmland, scenic beauty, and places for people to enjoy outdoor recreation in the mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina.

"Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy thanks the many dedicated volunteers and NC BRIDGE crew for their hard work this summer, restoring over 18 acres of Appalachian grass balds. This work was supported by grant funding from our partners at the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the National Forest Foundation."

JUDY MURRAY RECEIVES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Judy Murray, who has led an inspired life dedicated to conservation in Southern Appalachia, has been named winner of the 2022 Robert Sparks Walker Lifetime Achievement Award. The award is part of the annual Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards administered by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation

— Kathy Glapa

There are few people who can truly be described as committing a lifetime of sacrifice and passionate hard work to an endeavor with modest monetary reward yet boundless benefit to the greater good of humankind and nature. Judy Murray, however, is just such a person. Judy was first inspired by nature on a quintessential family vacation in the 1950s when her family traveled by car from New York City to Canada. On the return trip, and especially as the family traveled through the Adirondack Mountains, Judy fell in love with nature and the mountains.

As a young lady, Judy joined and supported the Scenic Hudson organization in New York. Upon graduation from college in 1960, Judy sought a job that would enable her to further her interests in the outdoors and the mountains, accepting a chemist position with Tennessee Eastman Company (now Eastman Chemical Company) in Kingsport, Tennessee. Within days, she was hiking and enjoying the spectacular vistas from the grassy ridges of the Highlands of Roan and was soon a member of the Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club. An inspired life dedicated to conservation, Judy's early experiences with the Hiking Club led to her lifelong work in the Highlands of Roan.

Judy and six other members of the hiking club formed a working group to further protection of the Appalachian Trail and the magnificent grassy balds of the Roan massif. The entire area was threatened by development for resorts and vacation homes. The group of seven hiking club members started meeting at members' homes in Johnson City to discuss how to safeguard the vulnerable Roan lands for present and future generations. The group grew and was formalized in 1966 as the Roan Mountain Preservation Committee of the Appalachian Trail Conference with the goal to preserve the views and landscape surrounding the Appalachian Trail through the Highlands of Roan.

In 1974, the U.S. Forest Service and the Roan Mountain Preservation Committee created a landscape-scale "Highlands of the Roan Composite Plan". The plan identified tracts needed to protect the bald areas and the Appalachian Trail, established alternatives for acquisition if the tracts were not available in their entirety, identified the fragile resources of the bald areas, and described broad management direction of these lands.

To accelerate the protection of critical land across the Highlands of Roan and along the Appalachian Trail, Judy, and other members of the Roan Mountain Preservation Committee founded the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy (SAHC) as a Tennessee non-profit land trust. The organization was created to raise funds to purchase lands for which the Forest Service was not funded.

During this time Judy realized that she wanted to devote more of her time and energy to conservation. Judy resigned her position with the Tennessee Eastman Company to return to school. She knew that increased knowledge of the interaction of living organisms and their environment was key to protecting and managing the unique and fragile Highlands of Roan. Graduating with a master's degree in Ecology from the University of Tennessee, Judy became SAHC's first Roan Stewardship Director in 1974. A position she held for 40 years until her retirement in 2014.

SAHC's non-profit charter was expanded to include North Carolina and now, nearly 50 years later, the organization continues to



build on the foundational work of the Roan Mountain Preservation Committee. SAHC protected 1,644 acres of lands in 2021 including 1,050 acres in the Highlands of Roan, of which 150 acres have recently been added to Roan Mountain State Park. SAHC, its members and donors, and in partnership with many organizations and agencies, has protected over 19,000 acres in the Highlands of Roan and over 75,000 acres throughout the southern Appalachian Mountains. SAHC is a leading land trust nationally and is fully accredited by the Land Trust Alliance.

Judy has spent her life dedicated to preserving the beautiful and ecologically rare Highlands of Roan. This has been accomplished through hard work and personal sacrifice, vision and extraordinary communication skills, stubborn determination, and encyclopedic knowledge of the area and ecology. But perhaps more than anything, Judy was able to use her deep and genuine love and respect for nature and people to align interests and spur action. Continuing the early collaborative efforts of the Roan Mountain Preservation Committee with the Forest Service and other organizations, Judy, as SAHC's Roan stewardship director, established the Roan Stewardship Committee to bring together a larger community of interested parties. And through all of this, Judy was able to build trust and respect among landowners whose cherished land had been part of their families for generations, thus opening the door to conversations about conservation and ultimately protecting their land. Landowners have many fond memories of working with Judy and often ask about her years after her retirement. These relationships formed a bedrock of trust that has led to a conservation success story that was unimaginable when the small group of individuals met in Johnson City over 50 years ago.

Whether leading a day-long workshop, applying the power of persuasion, or rallying volunteers, Judy got results. Getting to shared goals and prioritized projects was just the start of Judy's work. Once plans were developed and projects agreed-to, the hard work of implementation began. One of Judy's strengths has been her ability to recruit and lead volunteers to carry out the many projects needed to protect and restore the Highlands of Roan. From restoration of Golden Wing Warbler habitat in the Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area, removing invasive Garlic Mustard from Roan Mountain State Park, to mowing blackberry and other woody growth from the grassy balds, legions of volunteers have accomplished herculean goals.

A wonderful example is the annual effort undertaken by multiple groups and agencies to remove blackberry and other woody plants slowly encroaching on the grassy balds, threatening not only the unique habitat but also the attractiveness of the region to many thousands of annual visitors. Volunteers use loopers, rakes, hand scythes, and heavy-duty power equipment to mow down the growth, manually replicating as best possible what was done for centuries by fire and grazing animals. Each summer dozens of acres of grassy bald are restored by these efforts. And for many, it is a cherished annual event.

Along the way, Judy has been repeatedly recognized for her tireless contribution to conservation and protection of the Highlands of Roan. She was twice awarded the Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club's Hiker of the Year Award and co-chaired the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's 50th anniversary biennial meeting. She contributed to Roan Seasonal Ecologists with mentoring and inspiration. She also added knowledge and guidance to numerous articles and scientific studies of the Highlands of Roan. Judy formally retired from her position as the SAHC Roan stewardship director in 2014, but her efforts to celebrate and protect the Highlands of Roan continue. And even at 84 years of age, she actively participates in strategy and planning activities as a member of the SAHC Roan Stewardship Advisory Committee. She's always willing to share her knowledge, offer perspective and advice and lend a helping hand. Her legacy is also evident in the continuing success of SAHC.

As a founder, Judy was instrumental in shaping and leading the organization. Mentoring and inspiring staff members and scores of volunteers has insured that SAHC's success is carried to other conservation challenges. This work has been accomplished using the same principles Judy embodied as she led stewardship of Roan – building trusting relationships with the community, partnering with state, federal, and other conservation organizations, and ensuring that the hard work gets done.

As a final testament to Judy's lifelong commitment to conservation and the protection of the Highlands of Roan, she commissioned Jens Kruger, a member of the Blue Ridge Music Hall of Fame and recipient of the Steve Martin Prize for Excellence in Banjo and Bluegrass Music, to compose a musical celebration of the Highlands of Roan and to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first meeting of the Roan Mountain Preservation Committee. The result, the *Roan Mountain Suite*, premiered on October 15, 2016, at the Paramount Center for Performing Arts in Bristol, Tennessee. [*Friends of Roan Mountain* was a contributing sponsor.] The performance of the Kruger Brothers and the Kontras Quartet was met with enthusiasm and multiple standing ovations. It was a thrilling evening that would not have been possible without Judy's vision, powers of persuasion and patronage.

"Sometimes I like to be the last one to turn in for the night, when I have the stars, the wind, and The Rock to myself. A time for silent reflection from the place I love most in the world." - Judy Murray

30th Annual Roan Mountain, TN Butterfly Count



Aphrodite Fritillary

We were fortunate to have lovely weather, and fortunate to have new and old friends joining together for the 30th annual NABA butterfly count on Roan Mountain.

We were particularly pleased to be lucky enough to see good numbers of Aphrodite Fritillaries this year in the Rhododendron Gardens in Pisgah National Forest. Some species numbers were on the low side, others near normal, anyone who knows why is smarter than me. You have to love these ephemeral little bugs that have survived and evolved so many millions of years longer than humans have existed, through ice ages, thermal maximum, and mass extinctions.

Next year the 31st annual butterfly count on Roan Mountain will be held on the third Saturday in the month, on July 15, 2023. You can find information about it and other NABA butterfly counts on the website www.naba.org by clicking on Butterfly Monitoring then on Butterfly Counts. You can also contact me by snail-mail or e-mail. I hope you will join us next year.

Don Holt, compiler
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RESULTS

Date and time held: July 16, 2022 from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM (which equals 8 hours)

Weather: % sunshine in AM 76-100% / % sunshine in PM 76-100% / Temperature 67 to 84 F / Wind 0 to 5 mph

Participants: G. Gilpatrick, D. Holt, V. Maddux, K. Malone

Field effort: 4 observers in 1 party totaling 8 party-hours covering 2 party-miles on foot

Adult butterflies observed by species: 21 Pipevine Swallowtails, 9 Eastern Tiger Swallowtails, 1 Spicebush Swallowtail, 14 Cabbage Whites, 13 Clouded Sulphurs, 5 Orange Sulphurs, 1 Cloudless Sulphur, 1 Gray Hairstreak, 35 Eastern Tailed-Blues, 2 Summer Azures, 2 Great Spangled Fritillaries, 103 Aphrodite Fritillaries, 28 Meadow Fritillaries, 27 Pearl Crescents, 1 Question Mark, 1 American Lady, 2 Red-spotted Purples, 7 Viceroy, 1 Monarch, 20 Silver-spotted Skippers, 1 Clouded Skipper, 5 Least Skippers, 6 Sachems, 2 Dun Skippers, 9 unidentified dark Swallowtail species, 4 unid. White sp., 7 unid. Colias (Sulphur) sp., 1 unid. Speyeria (Fritillary) sp.

Immature butterflies: 6 Appalachian Azure caterpillars on Black Cohosh flowers

Total adult species = 24 Total individual adult butterflies = 329

Kids Rally Fun!





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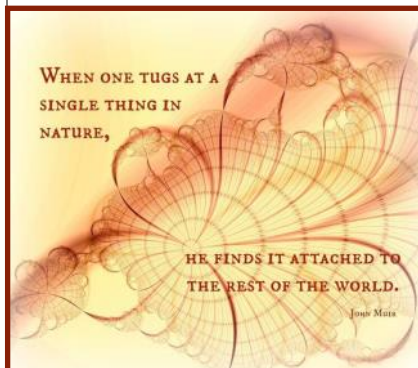
LUNCH Orders – Payment for rally lunch must be received by Tuesday, Sept. 6. No dinners will be served at this rally. The reservation form can be found in the brochure or on our website. Mail your check and reservation form to Nancy Barrigar, 708 Allen Avenue, Elizabethton, TN 37643.

You can now register online. Find the [link](#) and rally brochure on our website's homepage.



Door Prizes -- We gladly accept items donated for door prizes. These will be given away on Friday and Saturday prior to the evening programs. Ideas: nature-related books, photos or art, outdoor gear, plants, homemade goodies . . .

If you prefer to read your FoRM newsletters online (color version) email friendsofroan@gmail.com with your request.



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| Spring Rally | Last Friday - Sunday in April | April 28 - 30, 2023 |
| Youth - XRA | Last Friday—Saturday in July | July 28 - 29, 2023 |
| Fall Rally | Friday - Sunday in September after Labor Day | Sept. 9 - 11, 2022 |
| Winter Rally | Saturday in February near Valentine's Day | Feb. 11, 2023 |