

Volume 18 No. 1

Spring 2014

## Sampling Spring Wildflowers

— Bob Hale



Pink Lady's Slipper

How many wildflowers have you seen? How many wildflowers can you identify? How many orchids are found in the southern Appalachians? The Saturday evening Spring Rally presentation will give you a “sampling” of some of the spring wildflowers from the mountains of southwest Virginia, to eastern Tennessee and western North Carolina, plus some of our native orchids. Our native orchids are somewhat secretive and are disappearing from the forests for many reasons. The reasons for losses of wildflowers and orchids include man (especially the ones with bucket and shovel), drought, forest fires, loss of habitat due to development, invasion of non-native plants, logging, and flooding, to name a few. Come and enjoy a different look of spring.



Gray's Lily

Bob Hale will present Spring Wildflowers and Native Orchids on Saturday evening, April 26th at RMSP Conference Center at 7:30. Bob has been photographing flowers since the late 1960's. He has served as president of the Eastman Camera Club and taught numerous photography classes. A chemist by vocation, Bob is also an avid gardener



White Trillium

Wildlife biologist, naturalist and author, Dan Dourson, will present the Friday evening program at the Spring Rally, *Of Ice Thorns, Tree Crotches and Love Darts: Shelled Creatures of the Southern Appalachians*.

Dan will share with us his passion for the intriguing natural history of land snails, including the recently described globally endangered Roan Mountain endemic, Roan Covert, *Fumonelix roanensis*.



You can listen to an interview with Dan and his wife, Judy, conducted by Ken Turner on [Roan Mountain Radio](#).



## Friday Night Invite - Xtreme Roan Adventures - Friday, July 25

The success of the past couple of years of the Friday Night Xtreme Roan Adventures makes it a no-brainer for this year. The Friday before the Saturday of Xtreme Roan Adventures has turned out to be a great introduction for families to the XRA experience.

This year the Xtreme Roan Adventures is on Saturday July 26. Many families and groups will be taking advantage of the free group camping for the event. They will be camping in the Roan Mountain State Park Campground on Friday night, July 25. The group camping is located right behind the R.M.S.P amphitheater.

These campers are ready for Adventure. This is a great opportunity for the Friends of Roan Mountain to provide some Xtreme Roan Adventures to them and the many visitors in the campground.

To get the word out, just before the scheduled 8:30 p.m. start time, we will visit each campsite and personally invite everyone to the Roan Mountain State Park amphitheater. The campers are very receptive to an invitation to Adventure. Last year a hundred Adventurers attended.

The start time is late enough in the evening so that nighttime activities are only a few minutes away.

The variety of Adventures means that there is something of interest for everyone and usually more. Families will be able to set their own pace for Adventure. Some of the choices for this year will include the Nature at Night Hike (must bring flashlight. Rain gear is a good idea too.) Bats: Flying Mammals of the Night, National Moth Week Moth-Party, Night of the Skulls, and a Hunt for Luminous Snails.

But wait! What if you are not camping or cabin-ing? You are still invited to join us for an evening of Xtreme Roan Adventures: Friday night July 25. There is no charge or registration for the Friday Night Adventures.

All of this is just a sample of the Adventures on Saturday, July 26. So if you want a sample of Adventure, come out Friday. Then come back for a full day of Xtreme Roan Adventures on Saturday. Day registrations will be accepted Saturday morning before the Adventures start at 9:00 a.m.

For updates and more information go to <http://XtremeRoanAdventures.org> or email: [Ken@XtremeRoanAdventures.org](mailto:Ken@XtremeRoanAdventures.org)



2013 XRA Owl Prowl with Mark Hopey

*Congratulations!*  
**Jennifer Hughes**

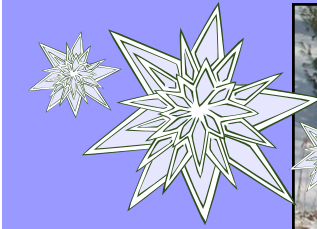
**CITY MARKET**

City Market of Elizabethton has been catering the meals for our Naturalists' Rallies since 2000. Jennifer Hughes, owner of City Market, and her husband Robert are Life Members of Friends of Roan Mountain. Their oldest son, Nathaniel, who is a college student, is also a Life Member. Their other two sons, Mibby and Matthew, often show up amid the bustle of family members and City Market staff who set up and serve the delicious meals we enjoy on Friday and Saturday evenings at the rally.

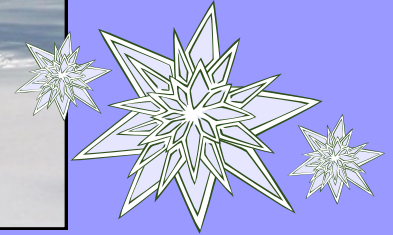
Last September City Market garnered multiple placements in the Elizabethton Star's Annual Readers' Choice Survey. Five of those were first-place rankings! Those were *Best Independently Owned Restaurant*, *Best Lunch Spot*, *Best Dessert*, *Best Caterer* and *Best Waitress (Patty Russell)*. In addition, City Market won two second-place rankings for *Best Deli* and *Best Sandwich* and a third-place ranking for *Best Breakfast*.

Jennifer, an alumna of Hampton High School, graduated from the College of Culinary Arts at Johnson & Wales University in Charleston, SC. She has owned and operated City Market, located on East E Street, for 17 years. City Market has many regular local customers as well as folks who travel from other counties to enjoy the food. So, Friends, if you are in Elizabethton on a weekday and looking for a good breakfast or lunch, stop by City Market, the best independently owned restaurant in town!

## A Snowy Valentine for 7<sup>th</sup> Winter Rally



Jeremy Stout (green cap) leads animal trackers at the Winter Rally



Snow once again brought its beauty to the late winter of February 15; mountain roads and highways were often impassable, though a surprising crowd made its way to the Roan Mountain State Park for our winter rally. The day grew sunny; deer came down to investigate the goings-on, and even a few bobcat tracks were seen on Jeremy Stout's hike. Buds were tight on the maples and oaks, but Tim McDowell (ETSU) on the Park's 'Blue 2 Trail' pointed out their differences on his tree ID hike.

Bryan Stevens kicked off the rally with a program devoted to birds of the Roan and its adjoining areas. From the late winter invasion of long-tailed ducks on Holston Lake to the small golden-winged warblers of Hampton Creek Cove, his presentation told a story of history and beauty. For those who missed it, visit his blog <http://ourfinefeatheredfriends.wordpress.com/>.

Jerry Greer, (<http://www.jerrygreerphotography.com/>) whose many books refuse to stay on the coffee table, gave us incredible views of the mountains we want to protect for generations to come. Long past this writer's Canon/Nikon wars of old, Jerry gave us great hints for the digital capture of beauty.

Jay Leutze, though snowed-in on Friday, managed to drive down on Saturday to join us in celebrating his fight to save the eastern balds from a gravel mine disaster. Jay's book, *Stand Up That Mountain*, is a great celebration of mountain people holding on and fighting to save the beauty they love.

Jacob Young who heads up the crew at Roan Mountain State Park is perhaps the best friend of Friends of Roan Mountain; we are lucky to have the best.

--David Hall, Winter Rally Director

## Roanwoman

You might guess one of her passions if you knew her email address includes *Roanwoman*. Judy Murray, a founding member of the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, has worked to protect the Roan Highlands for more than four decades. After serving as volunteer Land Stewardship Coordinator for SAHC, she joined the staff as Stewardship Director in 1980, spending countless hours both behind a desk and doing hands-on work to conserve the beauty and biodiversity of Roan Mountain for present and future generations. As of March 9th Judy officially retired as Highlands of Roan Stewardship Director. Judy will continue in an advisory capacity in the Pisgah Plan Revision process, Grassy Balds Management, and other programs where she can provide information and support. Her new title is SAHC Volunteer Highlands of Roan Advisor.



We salute Judy as a staunch Friend of Roan Mountain, thank her for her years of service and wish her all the best in retirement. If you see Judy at one of our Naturalists' Rallies, be sure to give her a well-earned pat on the back!





## **What's New in the Park?**



### **Search for Sasquatch!**

There's something lurking in the woods... recent Ranger reports have suggested the presence of a large, furry creature described as "Bigfoot" in Roan Mountain. Have you seen it? Well if not, here's your chance! Join the "Search for Sasquatch" adventure game hosted by Roan Mountain State Park for the opportunity to earn a free T-shirt and the glory of discovering the Roan Mountain 'squatch. Enjoy some exercise, fresh air, and the thrill of the hunt as you hike along park trails. Clues to the wandering yeti's recent whereabouts will be posted throughout the park, and the first person to locate the Sasquatch and return to the Park Headquarters with the corresponding tag, wins! Locations will change and new clues will be posted as more Sasquatch sightings are made. For more information, contact Park Ranger J.R. Tinch at (423)772-0190 ext. 106 or [James.Tinch@tn.gov](mailto:James.Tinch@tn.gov).



### **Miller Farmstead Considered for Registration as State/National Historic Place**

The Miller Farmstead, originally settled in 1870 by Dave and Louise Miller, has been preserved as part of Roan Mountain State Park since 1969. Now, the beloved farmstead with its century-old farmhouse is being considered by the State Historical Commission for inclusion on Tennessee's Register of Historic Places. The application is currently being reviewed and will be decided upon on May 28. If approved, an application for the Miller Farmstead to be added to the National Register of Historic Places will follow and a federal determination will be made within 90 days. Registration as a Historic Place will help provide critical funding for the future maintenance and preservation of this important historical and cultural resource within Roan Mountain State Park.

### **WANTED: "Weed Warriors" to Help Combat Non-Native Invasive Species**

Ah, the signs of spring are popping up everywhere. Birdsong, bursting tree buds, blooming wildflowers, and... ALIENS?!? Yes, unfortunately Roan Mountain State Park has been invaded by some dangerous intruders, and we need YOUR help to keep them under control. Park Staff and volunteers will be organizing work days in the upcoming weeks and months to pull Garlic Mustard, remove Japanese Knotweed, and treat trees suffering the effects of Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. If you would like to join the battle against these insidious threats to the park's ecosystem, please contact Park Ranger Meg Guy at (423)772-0190 ext. 107 or [Meg.Guy@tn.gov](mailto:Meg.Guy@tn.gov).



# BATS : Update on White-Nose Syndrome

-- Anne Whittemore



White-Nose syndrome is named for the fungus that infects the skin of the muzzle, ears and wings of hibernating bats.

Despite the aversion for people, bats are invaluable in controlling the vast populations of insects plaguing the planet. Bat Conservation International was organized because bats were not getting the support deserved. The mission of BCI is to conserve the world's bats and their ecosystems to ensure a healthy planet.

In February 2006 a fungus, now identified as *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*, was found on the muzzle of bats in a cave in New York. Bats in the entrance and outside the cave lay dead. Named for the cold-loving white fungus typically found on the faces and wings of infected bats, White-Nose Syndrome causes bats to awaken more often during hibernation and use up the stored fat reserves that are needed to get them through the winter. Infected bats often emerge too soon from hibernation and are often seen flying around in midwinter. These bats usually freeze or starve to death.

Mortality rates approaching 100 percent are reported at some sites. The Syndrome threatens some of the largest hibernation caves for endangered Indiana myotis, gray myotis, and Virginia big-eared bats. According to Wendi Weber, co-chair of the White-Nose Syndrome Executive Committee and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service northeast regional director, "It is one of the most devastating diseases affecting wildlife in eastern North America." Recent sightings (2014) have been made in Arkansas and Missouri. All bats of North America are imminently at risk.

The fungus has killed more than 5.7 million cave-dwelling bats since 2006! Even in remote sections of Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, White-Nose Syndrome has been found during the last year. Tours and research continue at Mammoth Cave National Park, accompanied by extensive research and education, and adherence to approved cleaning methods recommended by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Visitors must walk through bio-security mats as they exit cave tours. There are special procedures for anyone who explores any cave. Checking for bats, their numbers and condition, and reporting to a local chapter (Grotto) of the National Speleological Society or local US F&WS is heartily recommended.

# Between Friends



**Deadline for Rally Meal Reservations** – All dinner and lunch meals must be prepaid. If you plan to eat a catered dinner or purchase a bag lunch at the Spring Rally, you must send your check in advance. The deadline is ***Tuesday, April 22***. 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. We greatly appreciate your cooperation in helping us plan accurately!



We are gladly accepting items to be given away as door prizes at our Rally events on Friday and Saturday evenings. Ideas: nature-related books, photos or art; outdoor gear; plants; homemade goodies . . .



**NEW** Friends of Roan Mountain T-shirts will be on sale at the spring rally. Look for them in the lobby of the Conference Center.

## Roan Mountain Naturalists' Rallies

Spring	Last Friday - Sunday in April	April 25-27
Youth	Last Saturday in July	July 26, 2014
Fall	Friday - Sunday in September after Labor Day	Sept. 5-7, 2014
Winter	Saturday in February nearest Valentine's Day	Feb. 14, 2015



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