

## NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Fall will soon be upon us. The club has a busy next few months with campouts, backpacking trips, hikes, meetings, and the grand finale of the annual Christmas Dinner.

Our next club meeting will be at Charleston City Park Pavilion at 6:00 pm on September 12. Rob and Janet Coombs will present a program at the meeting.

Begin thinking about the events you would like to lead for next year; or, if you just have ideas, do not hesitate to drop a note to either Rob or myself. January will be here before we know it!

Remember to be extra careful in the woods as the wasp nests are at their maximum populations right now, and they do get angry. Keep an eye on open drink cans...yellowjackets will climb down into the opening and come out with the next mouthful. Also, at a trail intersection, wait until the entire group has caught up before proceeding on.

As always, be safe and stay hydrated!

*Jack Callahan, Club President*

# PAST EVENTS

## KIRKLAND CREEK TRAIL JULY 27, 2024



*With Benton MacKaye Trail Association*

Six miles. Hike Leaders were Rick and Brenda Harris. Shuttle Drivers were Sue and John Robinson. On this Saturday, which started out sunny and clear and ended in heavy rains just after we got off the trail, four hikers hiked mostly downhill from Sandy Gap to the Bald River crossing. Thanks to the Robinsons for shuttling us.



The trail was fairly clear. Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS) had logged and brushed out the trail last summer, but now there are several blowdowns, especially near the Waucheese Creek campsite. The blowdowns and brush were so bad in the area of the campsite that we had a hard time finding the really nice campsite for lunch, then finding where the trail left the campsite area. You might say we were discombobulated (lost) for a while.



There was also a massive blowdown further down the trail that we had a hard time getting around. In working our way around the tree, Rick came upon a copperhead that he almost stepped on. A little urging from his hiking pole got the snake to slither away.



In toto, we had 13 creek crossings, only one of which was dicey. Even though we have had several inches of rain in the past few days, the water was not too high. Even the Bald River crossing was an easy ford. We had only four hikers. There were two no-shows. And again, much thanks to Sue Robinson shuttling us, saving us a long shuttle at the end of our hike. As we piled into our vehicle at the end of the hike, the skies opened up into a deluge. We lucked out. • Rick Harris



### HIWASSEE RIVER FLOAT TRIP JULY 30, 2024

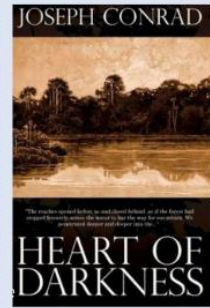
Canceled. • Sue Robinson

### HEART OF DARKNESS | BMTA TN WORK TRIP AUGUST 3, 2024

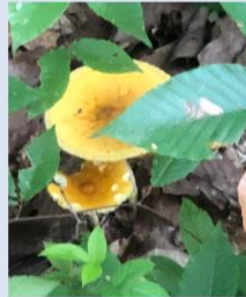


Leaders: Richard and Brenda Harris. Location: BMT Sections 16a-b Sledrunner Gap (Beaverdam Bald) to Sandy Gap. Number of Participants: 24. Back in June, we had scheduled the Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA) work trip in TN on the Heart of Darkness, but the trip was rained out by a thunderstorm that came through just as we were beginning our work day up on Beaverdam Bald. We waited for the storm to end, but it did not. So, we drove to Sandy Gap and the storm by then had passed us by. We logged and brushed out the BMT two miles northbound to Moss Gap and southbound to Six Mile Gap. We knew we would need to reschedule the work trip. Then Luke Collins, a thru-hiker who spent a night at our house, said he would like to bring up his soccer kids to help clear the trail. He is an organizer for soccer teams in Atlanta. We arranged a work trip with them to occur August 3, but he called me a few days before the work trip stating that he was going to have to reschedule because of a family emergency. We already had several BMTA, Cherokee Hiking Club, and Southern Appalachian Back Country Horsemen (SABCH) folks lined up, so we decided to run the trip anyway. Three of the soccer folks came up to join us for this work trip. They and several other BMTA folks camped out on Friday night at the Big Oak Cove Campground along the Tellico River close to where the road leaves Tellico River Road and goes up to Beaverdam Bald. We all met at 8 am at the campground to organize the work trip and for the tailgate safety meeting. We then drove to Beaverdam Bald. The weather was supposed to be wet and hot, but we lucked out. The weather was dry and cool. We split into five teams: a saw team and four brushcutter teams, with each brushcutter team working on about a one-mile stretch of the trail. We all left to do the work. As expected, the trail was very overgrown, especially north of Round Top. Two teams returned to Beaverdam Bald and shuttled cars back to the campground and from there to Sandy Gap. The other teams continued to

Sandy Gap, arriving there at 6:30 pm very tired and hungry. Also, there was a crew which went northbound from Sandy Gap to Moss Gap and brushcut from there north a mile or so. Almost all the maintainers descended onto Sandy Gap between 5:00 and 6:30 pm, and were treated to burgers, hot dogs, chips, etc., cooked by the SABCH who regularly do trail maintenance in the South Zone of the Cherokee National Forest every Thursday. After the hearty meal, we returned folks to the Big Oak Cove Campground where some left for home and some spent another night at the campground. Though the trip was long and hard, we accomplished all we planned to do. The entire seven-mile stretch between Beaverdam Bald and Sandy Gap, known "affectionately" as the Heart of Darkness, is now completely brushed and logged out (42 trees removed). So, we are good, at least until next summer. Some of the maintainers had stated in previous years they would never this work trip again because of the grueling nature of the trip, but guess what, they were back again this year for another year of suffering! That is real dedication, or stupidity, not sure which! Thanks to all the workers, shuttlers, and food guys and gals for their hard work on this trip. It was satisfying to finish this section once again. By the way, the soccer kids and their leaders want to reschedule with us, perhaps in October, to work on another section of the BMT. They were sorry they had to cancel. The three soccer folks who came I think had a good time and we hope to see them return in October with all the other soccer kids and parents. • Rick Harris



**WALK IN THE WOODS AUGUST 6, 2024**



A hike at Johnston Woods with Hike Leader James Anderson, Phyllis Anderson, Janet and Rob Coombs, Cathy Doss, Carol Guhne, and Carin Taber! • James Anderson





**THERE WAS NO CLUB MEETING IN AUGUST.**

**WEDNESDAY WALKS ON THE CLEVELAND BRADLEY GREENWAY**



Every Wednesday Jack Callahan leads a 3.75-mile walk on the Cleveland Bradley Greenway. • Jack Callahan

**THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH BREAKFAST**



We had a great turnout at breakfast. Thanks to everyone for joining in. • Jack Callahan

# UPCOMING EVENTS

NOTE: Event schedule subject to change according to guidance from governing agencies and offices regarding health and safety, weather, or other conditions.

## **BACKPACKING TRIP IN WEMINUCHE WILDERNESS**

**SEPTEMBER 4 - 15, 2024 | WEDNESDAY - SUNDAY | SOUTHERN COLORADO**

Forty-four mile, six-day/five-night backpacking trip with the majority of trail above 10,000 feet. This is a difficult hike and the slots are limited. The maximum limit is 12 hikers. If you are interested, contact Hike Leader Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 for more information.

## **MONTHLY CLUB MEETING**

**SEPTEMBER 12, 2024 | THURSDAY 6 PM | CHARLESTON TN CITY PARK PAVILION**

Bring your favorite dish for the potluck dinner. The club will furnish drinks, cups, and eating utensils. Topic: **What We Learned on our First Time as Hike Leaders** by Rob and Janet Coombs. Event Leader Rob Coombs.

## **FALLS BRANCH FALLS**

**SEPTEMBER 21, 2024 | SATURDAY | CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST**

*Great Hikes and Backpack Trips near Tellico Plains TN Pages 70, 78*

With Benton MacKaye Trail Association. Moderate, 2.4 miles with a 50-foot climb out of the gorge of the falls. We will drive on the Cherokee Skyway to mile 22.5 at the West Rattlesnake Trailhead. From there, we will hike down an old roadbed for about a mile, then steeply descend into the gorge, cross the creek (usually not requiring water shoes), then hike up to the base of the falls on a difficult trail. We will eat lunch there, then return the way we came, mostly uphill. The falls are spectacular and are about 90-feet high. Text Hike Leaders Rick and Benda Harris at 513-260-1184 if you plan to attend.

## **ROAN MOUNTAIN STATE PARK BIRDING EVENT AND CAMPOUT**

**SEPTEMBER 23 - 26, 2024 | MONDAY - THURSDAY | CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST**

Join us for several day hikes to the balds and other nearby locations to watch and learn about many of the migratory birds that will be passing through the area. The state park has numerous cabins and there is camping available also. If you plan to reserve a cabin or campsite, it is suggested you do so quickly as the sites fill up. If you camp, consider the first loop on the right as you enter the campground as it is on flat ground. Individual day hikes will be determined on the evening of the first night. We will have our club birding specialists the Duchams and the Dornfelds to share their expertise with us. Contact Event Leaders Kelly Ducham, Bob Dornfeld, and Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885.

## **TRAIL MAINTENANCE ON CHILDERS CREEK TO BIG BEND SECTION**

**SEPTEMBER 28, 2024 | SATURDAY | CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST**

We really need club members to come out for this annual trail maintenance event. Cherokee Hiking Club is considered the official maintainer of the section of the Benton MacKaye Trail/John Muir National Recreation Trail from Childers Creek to Big Bend. This is a beautiful section that meanders along the Hiwassee River just upstream from Reliance, TN. In order to keep it in good shape, as it is pretty heavily-used, we need at least two trail maintenance days each year. This is our pre-winter maintenance date. **We will meet at the Big Bend parking lot at 9 am.** Please wear boots, long sleeves and pants, and bring plenty of water and lunch and/or snacks. Also, you will need gloves and eye protection. Our main activities will be to brush out the trail with string trimmers and do some needed lopping as well. We hope to have some string trimmers from BMTA but if people have one of their own they can bring it. We will try to supply hard hats and other equipment if it is available. **Text Work Leader James Anderson at 423-715-8824 if you plan to attend, for more information, or if you have a question. It is important that folks who are interested and planning to help contact James so he can plan the day.**

## **THE HANGOVER**

### **SEPTEMBER 30, 2024 | MONDAY | NANTAHALA NATIONAL FOREST**

With Benton MacKaye Trail Association. **Warning: this is a demanding hike.** This difficult, 7.5-mile hike will start from the Wolf Laurel Trailhead in NC, about an hour drive from the Cherohala Skyway Visitor Center. We will first climb steeply about 500 feet to the ridge crest to meet the Haeo Lead Trail and the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT). We will turn right (north) and steeply descend 500 feet to Naked Ground, a great camping area. Then, we will steeply climb up 500 feet to Haeo and down to the Hangover itself. On the stretch between Naked Ground and Haeo, the trail in places is often very overgrown with sticker bushes due to a fire several years ago at the same time as the Gatlinburg Fire. So, wear long pants. The views are incomparable with a 360-degree range of mountains, including the Smokies and the valley of the Little Tennessee, the Tennessee, and the Cheoah Rivers. We will eat lunch at the Hangover, one of the most scenic spots in the Southern Appalachians. Text Hike Leaders Rick and Brenda Harris at 513-260-1184 or email [harrisri@aol.com](mailto:harrisri@aol.com) if you plan to attend.

### **WEDNESDAY WALKS ON THE CLEVELAND BRADLEY GREENWAY**

Every Wednesday Jack Callahan leads a 3.75-mile walk on the Cleveland Bradley Greenway, meeting at the lower end of the parking lot across from Perkits and the Gondolier restaurant adjacent to Keith Street. Meet time is currently 4:30 pm. A note on the walk is sent out the beginning of each week on Messenger. Contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 if you want to be included in the messages.

### **THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH BREAKFAST**

Join us for conversation over breakfast at 8:30 am at Old Fort Restaurant on 25th Street in Cleveland. For more information, contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885.

# NON-CLUB OPPORTUNITIES

## **TELLICO/OCOEE VOLUNTEER TRAIL CREW**

Check the Facebook page for future work days.

## **BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION**

See the calendar for upcoming events and trail maintenance sites. Trail maintenance is held the second Saturday of the month.

## **33<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL CHEROKEE FALL FESTIVAL**

**SEPTEMBER 7 - 8, 2024 | SEQUOYAH BIRTHPLACE MUSEUM | VONORE TN**

## **SITTONS CAVE WILD CAVE ADVENTURES**

**SEPTEMBER 7, 8, 14, 22, 28, 29, 2024 | CLOUDLAND CANYON STATE PARK**

## **CUMBERLAND TRAILS CONFERENCE TRAIL MAINTENANCE**

**SEPTEMBER 13 - 14, 2024 | PINEY RIVER MANAGEMENT AREA**

## **OHIO PAWPAW FESTIVAL**

**SEPTEMBER 13 - 15, 2024 | LAKE SNODEN | ALBANY OH**

## **PINHOTI FEST**

**SEPTEMBER 27 - 29, 2024 | SYLACAUGA AL**

## **FALL MIGRATION BIRD WALK | FRIENDS OF THE CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST**

**SEPTEMBER 28, 2024 | WHIGG MEADOW**

## **BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL | THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE ARBORETUM SOCIETY**

**SEPTEMBER 28, 2024 | OAK RIDGE TN**

**As always, go to the specific sponsor web page for more information on these events if you plan on attending.**