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2016 Newsletter - Second Quarter

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**Happy 100th Birthday to the National Park Service!**

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Your tax-deductable gift to DLIA is a gift toward the support of Biodiversity. Not only will you help insure that our important work continues, you'll be supporting the most important conservation work happening in your own backyard.

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### Know Your Park Life: Dermaptera - Earwigs

Earwigs make up an order of insects that the park considers priority for research and inventory. Scientifically classified as members of the Order Dermaptera, earwigs are a relatively small group of the insects of the "underworld" (under bark, under rocks, under logs, etc., that is ...). Their habit of hiding in dark places (even shipping crates, etc.) has enabled many foreign species to cross the US borders and make themselves at home, mostly in the warmer parts of the U.S. In fact, currently, out of an estimated 25 species known from North America, there are more non-native species of earwigs than native.



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flattened body, 2) two large, pincer-like cerci at the end of the abdomen, and 3) two bead-like antennae. Their diet consists of either small animals, like soil arthropods, for instance, or live or decaying plants, depending on the earwig species.

Discover Life in America views these little inhabitants of dark, under-cover places, as one of many valuable and interesting parts of the Smokies web of life.

[\(More on Dermaptera ...\)](#)

### *A New Program*

## Science at Sugarlands - 2016

Discover Life in America, together with Great Smoky Mountains National Park, is offering "**Science at Sugarlands**" on the third Friday of each month through October of 2016.

"The 'Science at Sugarlands' series of programs is designed to provide an inside look at some of the unusual and important biodiversity found in Great Smoky Mountains National Park," said DLIA Executive Director Todd Witcher.

We'll also discover ways that a citizen-scientist can help us gather information on the varied species of the park. Please see "DLIA Events 2016" below for specific dates as of the publishing of this newsletter.

*annual events*

## DLIA Events 2016

### **Discover Life in America's 2016 Events Calendar**

(Please visit our website at [www.dlia.org](http://www.dlia.org) to stay up to date on happenings and events in 2016)

- **Fireflies at Norton Creek Fund Raiser, June 3, 4, and 5**-Norton Creek Sanctuary outside Gatlinburg

Why don't fireflies in the average backyard synchronize? What makes the fireflies in the park so special? These questions and more will be answered at a DLIA fundraising event that also features the firefly. With exclusive access to the property and a firefly expert on site, attendees will learn the answers to their questions while enjoying the amazing "flashing" display firsthand.



**Tickets are going fast with only a few left.** Please contact Todd Witcher at [todd@dlia.org](mailto:todd@dlia.org) to inquire if there are still spaces available.

\* [Website Link](#)

- **Biodiversity Days in the Smokies, June 16-18 – GSMNP**

Biodiversity Days provides the platform for visitors to have a fresh outlook on various obscure species and their importance.

\* [Website Link](#)

- **Science at Sugarlands Series - The Hows and Whys of Using the iNaturalist Cellphone App with Naturalist, Jonathan Carpenter - Friday, June 17th.**

From hikers to hunters, birders to beach-combers, the world is filled with naturalists, and many of us record what we find. What if all those observations could be shared online?



You might discover someone who finds beautiful wildflowers at your favorite birding spot, or learn about the birds you see on the way to work. If enough people recorded their observations, it would be like a living record of life on Earth that scientists and land managers could use to monitor changes in biodiversity, and that anyone could use to learn more about nature.





*Jonathan talking about the nature of mushrooms  
and how to use iNaturalist to document them.*

That's the vision behind iNaturalist.org. So if you like recording your findings from the outdoors, or if you just like learning about life, join us! The bonus to these events is that they will help prepare you for future bioblitzes where this technology is used.

**Note:** there will be two iNaturalist sessions taking place on June 17th.

At 1:00 to 3:00 pm a session will be at the Great Smoky Mts National Park Visitors Center.

Then at 5:00 to 7:00 pm a second session will be at the Ijams Nature Center near Knoxville.

\* [Website Link](#) - [Registration Link](#)

### • **TVA Wild Area Bioblitzes of 2016 - June 18 and July 16**

A BioBlitz is a short (usually one-day), intense team effort to discover as many different life forms as possible in one location. Teams of volunteer scientists, families, students, teachers, and other community members work together to find and identify as many species of plants, animals, microbes, fungi, and other organisms as they can. Discover Life in America (DLIA) has partnered with Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) along with regional scientists to hold these Bioblitz events.

The first bioblitz will take place at **Melton Hill Dam**, just North of I-40 364 exit in the Oak Ridge area on June 18th.

The second bioblitz will be about 25 miles West of Chattanooga, at the **Little Cedar Mountain** Wild Area, near the I-24 exit 128, on July 16th.



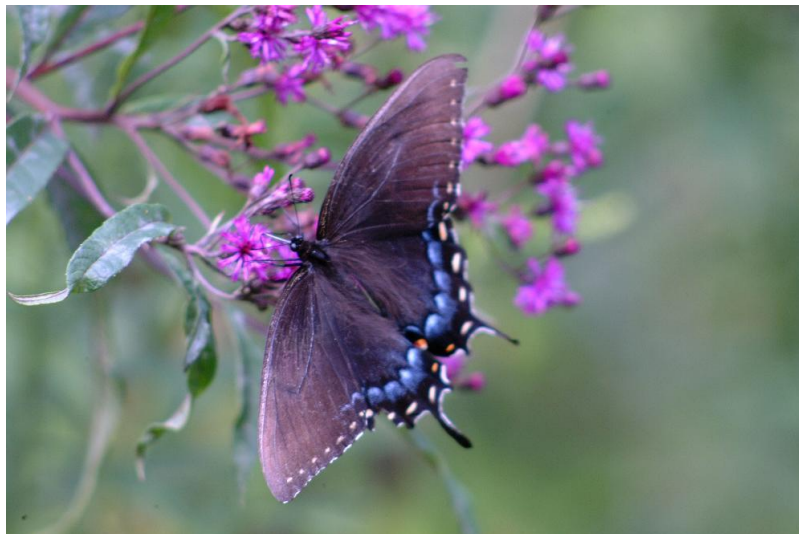
Melton Hill Dam Recreation Area

\* [Website Link for Melton Hill Bioblitz](#) - [Registration Link](#)

\* [Website Link for Little Cedar Mt. Bioblitz](#) - [Registration Link](#)

- **Science at Sugarlands Series - The Trouble With Pollinators and The Pollinator Garden - Friday, July 15th**

Pollinators are essential to our environment. The ecological service they provide is necessary for the reproduction of over 85% of the world's flowering plants, including more than two-thirds of the world's crop species. The United States alone grows more than 100 crops that either need or benefit from pollinators, and the economic value of these native pollinators is estimated at \$3 billion per year in the U.S. Beyond agriculture, pollinators are keystone species in most terrestrial ecosystems.



The fruits and seeds derived from insect pollination are a major part of the diet of approximately 25% of all birds, and of mammals ranging from red-backed voles to black bears. In many places, the essential service of pollination is at risk from habitat loss, pesticide use, and introduced diseases.

Please join us to learn more about what's happening to pollinators in and out of the park. You

- **Annual biodiversity hike to LeConte Lodge, August 5 and 6.**



Have you ever wonder what it would be like to stay overnight at the highest elevation lodge in the eastern united states? How about doing so with a guided hike up one of Mt. LeConte's most scenic trails? Then join DLIA for all this and more on our annual biodiversity hike to Mt. LeConte. There are only a few openings left. Email [todd@dlia.org](mailto:todd@dlia.org) to reserve your place today!

\* [Website Link](#)

- **Science at Sugarlands Series - Biodiversity in the Park - What is It and What is Happening to It?**  
**Where: Great Smoky Mountains National Park Sugarlands Visitors Cntr.**  
**Date: Friday, August 19th, from 1:00 to 3:00 PM**  
**Lead By: Todd Witcher, Executive Director of DLIA**

Great Smoky Mountains National Park is known for the biological diversity found within the boundaries. What does this biodiversity do for all of us, and how is it changing?

Biodiversity underpins the health of the planet and has a direct impact on all our lives. Put simply, reduced biodiversity means millions of people face a future where food supplies are more vulnerable to pests and disease, and where fresh water is in irregular or short supply.

Learn the latest about the Park's biodiversity and an organization (Discover Life in America) focused on documenting and preserving biodiversity in the Park and around the world.

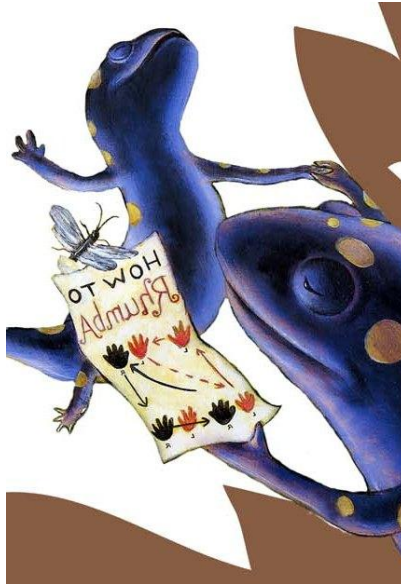
[Website Link](#)



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If you've ever marveled at the depth, breadth, or beauty of wildlife in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park, you are invited to one of the region's premiere fundraising events that directly supports the conservation and science of our most beloved park. This family friendly evening encourages you to dress as your favorite Smokies critter and join the staff and board of DLIA (and a few surprise guests!) to celebrate the wondrous biodiversity in GSMNP.

[Website Link](#)



**Please visit us on [Instagram](#), and on [Facebook](#)!**





## #VoteYourPark and help the Smokies win \$250,000

Perched atop the highest point in the park at the North Carolina-Tennessee state line, **Clingmans Dome Observation Tower** has been iconic symbol of Great Smoky Mountains National Park since its construction in 1959.

Now, this engineering marvel needs your help -- and your vote.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Friends of the Smokies are competing to unlock **our share of \$2 million** in funding from American Express to restore and preserve Clingmans Dome Observation Tower.

Now thru July 5th, we need you to ***vote every day*** for our project at [VOTEYOURPARK.ORG](http://VOTEYOURPARK.ORG)



Here's the details:

- You can vote once every day from May 25th through July 5th.
- Voting can enter you for a chance to win a 6-day getaway to Yellowstone from National Geographic.
- You just need an email address or Facebook profile to vote.
- We'll send a few reminders on our current standing, but we need you to vote EVERY DAY.

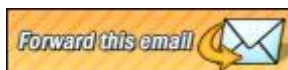


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Tell your neighbor's mama's favorite cousin to vote!

**We need your help!!**

Click below to share on Facebook and Twitter — it's easy!



### Want two easy ways to support DLIA?

1. Kroger shoppers can sign up for "Kroger Rewards" that will contribute to DLIA every time you shop! Click [HERE](#) to sign up.
2. Amazon Smiles program will donate to DLIA every time you purchase from Amazon. Click [HERE](#) to sign up.

There ... wasn't that easy?

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