As the Fall Naturalists’ Rally fast approaches, we look forward to the opportunity of hearing from two men who are true friends of Roan Mountain. Ken Crouse, who has served as a hike leader at the rallies for many years will present the Friday evening program, “Mushrooms of the Southern Appalachians” Jamey Donaldson, whose numerous endeavors include inventorying and monitoring rare plants on the Roan as well as studying the effects of acid rain on Roan Mountain’s Fraser Fir, will present the Saturday evening program, “Rare Plant Rambles”.

This year we must say good-bye to two long-time friends of the Roan. Two familiar faces and hike leaders at the rally will no longer be with us. July witnessed the death of botanist, John Warden, and birder, Glenn Swofford. In this issue of our newsletter, Jennifer Laughlin and Bryan Stevens have provided memories of these two gentlemen who so graciously shared their knowledge with others.

Take note of a few changes for this year’s Fall Rally. Our evening programs will take place, September 10th and 11th, at the new Roan Mountain State Park Convention Center, located on the left just beyond the cabins. Our Saturday schedule has been broadened with field trips beginning at 7:00AM, 8:30AM, 10:00AM and 2:00PM. Also, a new offering is a nature photography field trip on Saturday morning.

**Upcoming Dates at Roan Mountain State Park**

Though the summer months are waning, we are still moving right along with a variety of activities. Mark your calendars and join us for our upcoming activities!

**Monday, August 23, 1999** – Dedication of new Convention Center and Office Building at Roan Mountain State Park.
   Please call the park for the time.

**Saturday, September 4, 1999** – Annual Camper’s Night Lights Contest
   7 PM The Dennis Cave Band
   8 PM The Rhododendron Cloggers

**Friday, Saturday, and Sunday- September 10, 11, & 12, 1999** – 37th Annual Roan Mountain Fall Naturalists’ Rally
   at the newly opened Convention Center in the State Park!

**Saturday and Sunday, September 18 and 19, 1999** – 19th Annual Fall Festival
   featuring old time music and clogging, traditional crafts and demonstrations and folkways, good food, and lots of interesting handmade items.

**Saturday, October 23, 1999** – Annual Haunted Halloween Trick or Treat Trail

For further information on these and other park events, please call or write:
   Jennifer Laughlin, Roan Mountain State Park, 527 Hwy 143, Roan Mt., TN 37687. 1-800-250-8620 or 423-772-3303.
A Tribute:  John Warden  1931-1999

When I first came to East Tennessee State University in the mid 1970's, John Warden was the first professor I met. Because of my interest in botany, he was assigned to me as an advisor. Little did I realize at the time what a profound influence his knowledge, teachings, and experiences would have on my life. I was constantly amazed at his vast understanding of the ecology of our environment, and his ability to identify every type of plant in our region. Working for him in the herbarium as a student worker was fortunate for me, as I was able to learn from him outside the classroom.

But the most profound influence John had on my life was the fact that he led me to Roan Mountain in many ways: through my Master's thesis, on field trips, through old photographs, and most of all, by sharing his love and appreciation of the Roan's magnificent beauty and rare habitats. I firmly believe that enthusiasm is contagious, and it didn't take much for me to realize that Roan Mountain was a special place - it had to be for John to love it so dearly. I remember so fondly the days that John, his son Charlie, and I, would wander all over the Roan, trying to re-photograph historic sites. While working on the same project, they traveled north with me to help gather additional photos for my thesis, a trip that ended in John and Charlie's first feast on Baltimore's steamed crabs. John enriched my life and encouraged me in so many ways, and without a doubt, there are countless others who have been touched by him either personally or professionally.

John was a man of great dedication, caring, and commitment to the work and lives of his family, students, and friends. His accomplishments and interests in life were many. Born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, he came to the Johnson City area after living several years in Danville, Illinois. He received his Bachelors and Master’s degrees from the University of Chicago, taught seven years at the University of Kentucky, and then came to East Tennessee State University. It was here he taught for 30 years in the Biology department, where he was professor emeritus, specializing in the botany of the Appalachian Mountains and surrounding ridges and valleys.

Being fully involved in the East Tennessee area, he annually led walks for the Spring Carter County Wildflower Tours and the Fall Roan Mountain Naturalists Rally; dedicated himself to botanizing the area and keeping records of special finds; and worked with the Shady Valley Ruritan Club and the Tennessee Chapter of the Nature Conservancy on behalf of ETSU to manage the Jess Jenkins Cranberry Bog. Working with the Ruritan Club, he also successfully propagated cranberries to start a new bog. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army, past president of the Tennessee Academy of Sciences, was selected to the Governors Committee on Endangered Species, and was currently serving as president of the Johnson City Metro Kiwanis Club.

I will always be so thankful to John for his support of my studies and leading me to an area that has become my life's work and love. I have often wondered what I might be doing today, if I had never met John Warden. Even though he will be dearly missed by his friends, family, and students, many good and happy memories will remain for all of us who knew him, worked with him, and shared time with him.

Jennifer B. Laughlin
Mushrooms - Myths or Facts?

The attitudes of most people to the natural world are seldom based on simple observation. Many natural living things have often inspired fear and loathing because they are somehow perceived as evil. Snakes, bats, spiders and toads all have been associated with the devil or despised as something to be avoided or often killed. Many members of the Plant Kingdom are also considered useless or very bad. Among these, none are more misunderstood than fungi. Many people see them as poisonous and associate them with death, disease and decay.

It is a well-known fact that some mushrooms, as well as some plants, can be dangerous if eaten. However, this alone does not explain the disdain with which many people view fungi. The way that mushrooms appear so suddenly and seem to favor dark, damp places where decomposition takes place seems to be the basis of some of the misunderstanding. Many of us were taught at an early age to not “touch those nasty toadstools.”

But, as is the case with many other aspects of nature, the negative association of fungi could not be further from the truth. They are the great "recyclers of nutrients," and their presence is essential to the health and well-being of our forests. The quantity and diversity of fungi in the forests of the Southern Appalachians equals that of the plants and trees that we all know are so unique.

Mushrooms fit into the nutrient cycle of the forests basically in three different ways. As saprophytes, the fungi's role is one of decomposer of dead wood debris, leaf litter and other waste materials such as dung left behind by animals. Secondly, the parasitic fungi usually attack weak or damaged trees and continue on in the role of saprophyte long after the tree is dead. Our common Honey Mushroom (Armillaria mellea) is a good example of this type of fungus. The third major group of fungi are also associated with trees in a way that is mutually beneficial or symbiotic for both organisms. These mushrooms are called mycorrhizal fungi and form an intimate relationship with the root system of trees which can be essential to the health of the tree as well.

Many species of mushrooms are very specific in their habitat. They may only grow on the wood of certain trees or form mycorrhizal associations with one type of plant. For instance, we have several species that seem to occur only under Eastern White Pine. Of course, once the associations are understood, it makes the process of identification somewhat easier.

Mushroom identification may seem a bit difficult at first, but the use of a good field guide and close attention to taxonomic details make it possible to begin to classify many of our fungi. The sheer diversity and number of different mushrooms make it impossible to publish a field guide that includes all the species one might encounter. Of course, the best and safest way to collect mushrooms is to go out with an experienced mycologist or one of the many mushroom groups or mycology clubs.

This is especially true if you plan to eat any of your collections. Although the number of deadly species is not that large, the seriousness of eating any wild food makes it wise not to leave anything to chance. However, once you have confirmed the identification of some of our best edible species, your perception of mushrooms as food will be forever changed. Indeed, around the world mushrooms are considered the ultimate gourmet food by many people.

Whether you are interested only in looking at mushrooms, understanding their ecology, or gathering for the table, I would encourage you to go out and look closely at the fungi you find. Maybe you could get one of the many field guides now available and begin to look at the taxonomic details. Or go out with a group and see firsthand what this "strange obsession" is all about. You will add one more facet to your enjoyment of this natural world we all love so well.

Ken Crouse is currently the Southeastern Regional Director of the North American Mycological Association. Ken will be speaking on Friday evening, Sept. 19, for this year’s Fall Fungi.
Mushrooms are one of nature’s most interesting creations. They can grow in damp, dark places. They have no roots, no leaves and no flower. But they come in a rainbow of colors from bright fiery reds and oranges to greens, blues and purples to snow-white (and of course, brown). And they grow in all kinds of neat shapes. They may resemble umbrellas, corals, funnels, balls, sea shells, and even brains! Instead of seeds, mushrooms release tiny dust-like spores. These spores are released from the mushroom and float through the air to the ground to form new mushrooms. There are more than 38,000 kinds of mushrooms. Many are good to eat, but some are poisonous. So when you are in the woods, never pick mushrooms to eat on your own. Leave that to the experts. But here is a fun activity you can do at home.

**MUSHROOM PRINTS**

**THINGS YOU NEED:**

- mushrooms from the grocery (choose different shapes)
- piece of paper or oaktag
- a glass for each mushroom
- non-aerosol hair spray

**NOW DO THIS:**

- Carefully break off the stem from the cap of each mushroom. You may want to trim away some of the outer edge of the cap if it hides too much of the gills on the underside.
- Arrange the mushrooms on the paper or oaktag and cover each one with an inverted glass.
- Let the mushrooms stand overnight.
- Then carefully lift first the glasses and then the mushrooms to reveal the spore prints.
- To preserve the design coat with a spritz or two of hair spray.
Glenn Swofford — Remembrances

Glenn W. Swofford, a longtime, faithful member of the Lee & Lois Herndon Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society at Elizabethton, died Saturday, July 3, at his residence in Erwin, Tennessee. He was 77 years old.

He became active with the Chapter in early 1976 and was a regular participant in chapter counts and birding in Northeast Tennessee. He enjoyed attending the naturalists' rallies at Roan Mountain State Park each spring and fall.

Glenn began birding about 1930 as a young boy in his native community of Ashford County, N.C. His grandfather had put up bluebird boxes and the young Swofford became fascinated with the birds. "I've been watching birds ever since," he once told fellow birders.

Swofford moved to Spartanburg, S.C. at the age of 10. His father was a foreman with the Clinchfield Railroad. Glenn moved to Unicoi County in 1948 and has lived there since. He was a retired assistant civil engineer for Clinchfield Railroad. He was an Army Air Corps veteran of WWII, having served as a pilot in the European Theatre. He also retired as a lieutenant colonel after 30 years in the Air Force Reserve.

He was a member of the Board of Directors of Clinchfield Credit Union. He was a member of Circle Left Square Dancing Club and a member of Erwin Presbyterian Church.

Glenn joined Dr. Fred Alsop and others on birding trips to Central and South America. He has also birded in Europe. In 1986 he spent two weeks with his fellow bird club members birding in Texas and also participated in a chapter birding trip to Florida.

He spent much time in the field birding in East Tennessee with friends from the Herndon Chapter of TOS. Rick Knight recalled that Glenn liked to introduce himself into a conversation by saying, "You know Rick, I'm 106 years old."

Shirley Wayland, a current resident of Killen, Alabama, told how she holds many fond memories of Glenn. "He was always so upbeat and cheerful," she said. Shirley recalled how she and Glenn, along with other chapter members, including Martha Dillenbeck, Brian Cross and Frank Ward, bired together often on Friday mornings while she was still living in East Tennessee. She also remembered Glenn's term for airplanes spotted during a bird count. "Every time I see an airplane going over I think of his 'gas hawk' remark," she shared. "He also said, 'Now describe the bird to me like Dr. Herndon taught us to do."

Many other chapter members, including Rick Knight and Janet Brown, told that Glenn's favorite bird was the splendid Black-throated Blue Warbler, a common resident of the mountains of East Tennessee during the summer breeding season.

Glenn was preceded in death by his wife, Helen Wall Swofford, in 1987. Survivors include a daughter, Janie Lew Swofford, Greenville, TN; and two sons, W.G. "Bill" Swofford Jr., Huntsville, Alabama; and James Van Swofford, Savannah, Ga. He is also survived by four grandchildren, one great-grandchild, several nieces and nephews, a sister and two brothers. Glenn will be missed by many people.

Bryan Stevens
Rally Photos

We are in the process of putting together a brochure for Friends of Roan Mountain which can be distributed throughout the region to inform the public of the organization and allow folks to join by mail. We are looking for a photograph or two depicting scenes from previous Naturalists’ Rallies. Preferably, the photo would include a hike leader with a group. If you have a photo which you think would be appropriate, please let us know. You can mail it to us, (we promise to return it) or send it by email to barrigargn@embarqmail.com.

Has Your Membership Expired?

Take a look at your membership card to see if the expiration date is at hand. If so, please take a moment to renew your membership by completing the information below and mailing it in. This will insure that you continue to receive the newsletter and updates on information concerning the organization. You will also continue support of naturalist activities on the Roan. An additional benefit is a 10% discount from our corporate sponsor, Mahoney’s Outfitters in Johnson City, TN.

Name______________________________
Phone (______) ____________________
Address ____________________________
Check ✓ appropriate membership category:
Individual ($10) _____ Family ($15) _____
Student ($5) _____ Corporate ($45) _____
Dues:$__________ Contribution: $ ________
Total Enclosed: $ __________