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The Fierce Green Fire

A Newsletter of the Wofford College Environmental Studies Program

Volume 14, Issue 14



Caving for Terrestrial Ecology by Alex Burnett '26

On Sunday, February 25, Dr. Bradham's Terrestrial Ecology class went to Worley's Cave in Elizabethton, TN. This experience was one of a kind! Thirteen of us hiked through the cave for about three hours. We saw bats, albino crayfish, and salamanders. This cave was full of history. A long time ago this cave was used for salt mining, so we were able to see spots where they had previously mined. This cave also has the largest flowstone (also known as a curtain) east of the Mississippi! Exploring this cave allowed us to understand how natural and beautiful caves are. No changes have been made to this cave since the mouth of it was blown out for the salt mining. No water or food is allowed in, so the only water we had for the three hours was the water dripping into the cave. We climbed up to different levels of the cave, crawled and rolled through very small spaces, walked through rivers, and slid down many different rocks.

The week prior to going spelunking we learned how different and delicate the ecosystem in a cave is. Many animals that live in caves do not have melanin, because caves are such dark environments. We were able to see this and relate it back to the scientific paper we read when we saw an albino crayfish. The albino crayfish had much longer antennas than crayfish we would see in the river because the cave is completely dark, so it needed to sense the environment without being able to see. Interestingly, we read that it can still use melanization to heal wounds despite being albino! This also related back to our class discussions on adaptations and evolution and how species fill specific roles in the environment (the ecological niche!). At the end of our four-mile hike we were all muddy, wet, and exhausted but this experience is not one that we could have ever had in the classroom.



Dr. Bradham's ENVS338 Terrestrial Ecology class spent the day crawling and rolling through small spaces and different levels of Worley's Cave in Tennessee.

Upcoming Events and Opportunities

Follow the [Goodall Center Instagram](#) page.

March 1st
Application Deadline

Communications Coordinator for ENVS: We are seeking a student communications coordinator to help develop and implement a content calendar across multiple platforms, including campus channels and social media, for the spring 2024 semester. Interested candidates should submit a resume, a brief statement of interest, and contact information for one reference to Professor Kocher, kocherep@wofford.edu.

March 1st
Application Deadline

Summer Camp Counselors Needed at [Adventure Camp](#): Camp runs mid-May through early August. Job Description and application instructions on ENVS Moodle page.

March 5th
Application Deadline

[Lowcountry Land Trust Summer Internships](#): Four internship positions are available for summer 2024.

March 9th
9:00-11:00am
Goodall Center, 351
Broadway St, Glendale, SC
29346

Second Saturdays Volunteer Day in Glendale: Join us on the second Saturday of the month to help beautify the garden and surrounding areas at the Goodall Center. [Register here to let us know you're coming.](#)

March 23rd
9:00-2:00pm
County Administration
Building, 366 N Church St,
Spartanburg, 29303

16th Annual Hazardous Household Waste Collection Event: Spartanburg County residents can bring their household hazardous materials to be recycled. [See list of acceptable items.](#)

PROFILE OF THE WEEK:

American University – Environmental & Energy Law Program

American University's Washington College of Law (WCL) offers Juris Doctor and graduate admissions. Various JD degrees, domestic and international, are offered in international affairs, business, public administration, and public policy, along with their Master of Law degree (LLM) or Doctor of Juridical Science degree (SJD). *US New & World Report* includes Washington College of Law as one of the top ten international law programs in the country.

Their [Environmental & Energy Law Program](#) was established in 1990 and continues to grow. In the

Program on International and Comparative Environmental Law, WCL students are integrated with lawyers and practitioners in the field to focus on learning opportunities in client-based research and expanded support for student research projects. Students also benefit from the program's internships and externships since there are many participating environmental institutions and agencies in the Washington, DC area.
