

Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

Hiking Clawhammer Mountain

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

Clawhammer Mountain, in Pisgah National Forest, forms part of the dividing line between the Davidson River Valley to the south and the Mills River Valley to the North. Both of these watersheds host some of the most popular trout fishing spots in western North Carolina, while the Mills River system is a source of drinking water for Hendersonville and Asheville, and home to the endangered Appalachian elktoe, a freshwater mussel.

This mountain loans its name to Clawhammer Oktoberfest, the latest in Highland Brewing Company's seasonal beer line-up. In partnership with the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Highlands is using their seasonal beers to bring attention to the conservation of Southern Appalachian Mountains. The recent release of Clawhammer Oktoberfest saw a party at the brewery and then a Saturday hike to the summit of Clawhammer Mountain with representatives from the land conservancy and the wildlife service. It was a good turnout, with hikers ranging in age from about one-year old to retirees, escorted by a small pack of friendly dogs. This was the second hike in the Highland Beer series, and I've been on both. On both hikes I've been impressed with the fascinating people who have come out – the amateur astronomer, the lawyer turned author even an orthopedic surgeon. The common denominator for them is their love of and devotion to the mountains of Southern Appalachians. For information on future hikes, visit Appalachian.org.

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peeples.