

Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

Bat Blitz 2011

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

In a tiny meeting room in Nebo, North Carolina, at the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, planning began in earnest for the 2011 Bat Blitz – an effort that will bring dozens of biologists from across the Southeast to North Carolina's Avery County for an intensive three days of collecting information on the area's bat populations.

Nearly 10 years old, the bat blitz is becoming a tradition among southern biologists. Held on a different southern National Forest each year, biologists descend on an area to spend three nights collecting data on the area's bats – collecting in three days what would usually take a single biologist an entire field season. The biologists will probably look not only at what kinds of bats are in the area, but also take hair and tissue sample for additional research.

The 2011 Bat Blitz comes to Pisgah National Forest and will be based out of Crossnore, with biologists collecting bats from a number of sites in the area each night. The effort should provide biologists with a lot of information about an area that historically lacked in bat data. The staging of the bat blitz is even more important now considering the deadly bat malady white nose syndrome has spread across Virginia and Tennessee, but is yet undocumented in North Carolina. Data collected during the blitz should provide biologists with a clearer picture of white nose syndrome impacts, should the affliction enter the state in the future.

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