



georgiarocks.us

PO Box 33522, Decatur GA 30033
Phone: 770-934-5644 Web: georgiarocks.us/events

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Geology and Natural Communities Talk November 14 at Oxbow Meadows Environmental Learning Center

Two authors will team up on November 14 to reveal the geology of the Coastal Plain and how it influences plants and animals. Geologist Dr. Bill Witherspoon, co-author of *Roadside Geology of Georgia* and biogeographer Dr. Leslie Edwards, co-author of *Natural Communities of Georgia*, will present a slide talk, “Georgia’s Younger Half: the Diverse Geology and Natural Communities of Coastal Plain Georgia” followed by a book signing. Both *Roadside Geology of Georgia* (Mountain Press Publishing) and *Natural Communities of Georgia* (University of Georgia Press) “take the general reader to Georgia’s natural wonders and explain the science that lies behind the scenery,” according to Witherspoon.

Geologically, the Coastal Plain is the younger half of Georgia by far. The newest layers of sediment are still being laid down at the coast, and the oldest layers, though they bear dinosaur fossils, are only a third as old as the youngest rock in the rest of Georgia. The name “Coastal Plain” belies the broad range of fascinating landscapes and natural communities: clay-capped uplands with deep ravines sheltering northerly plant species; sandhills and plains that host longleaf pine forests shaped by fire; riverine sand dunes covered in stunted, bonsai-like forests; mysterious Carolina bay wetlands; the great Okefenokee Swamp; coastal deltas and marshes, and a complex, shifting array of Sea Islands.

The free event is from 11:00 to 12:30 at Oxbow Meadows Environmental Learning Center near Columbus. Information on Oxbow Meadows events is at http://oxbow.columbusstate.edu/public_programs_and_events.php. At 2:00, the two authors will lead a walk at Providence Canyons State Park, about a 45-minute drive away in the Coastal Plain.

Witherspoon, who taught geology to K-12 teachers and their students for 17 years at DeKalb County Schools’ Fernbank Science Center, says *Roadside Geology of Georgia* appeals to families who travel in Georgia. “If you’ve visited an overlook in north Georgia, left tracks in the sand on Tybee Island, or floated the rapids along the Columbus Riverwalk, you’ve had a rock adventure. This book lets you spice those adventures up with a little science, by understanding the geology behind the landmarks we encounter whenever we go outside in Georgia.”

Natural Communities of Georgia teaches the public to recognize and protect Georgia's many treasures of the natural world. "You will be amazed to learn of Georgia's diversity, from high mountain peaks that host species that are typically found much farther north, to the incomparable Okefenokee Swamp, where alligators and plants combine to form a lush, tropical feel," according to Edwards, who retired this year from Georgia State University.

Attendees who register for *Roadside Geology of Georgia* author events can pick up the COOL BILLION-year-old rock described at georgiarocks.us/corbin. Register at georgiarocks.us/events or "Join" in facebook.com/RoadsideGeologyGA/events. Contact for information: Dr. Bill Witherspoon, bill@georgiarocks.us.