

HBF Committee Reports
Highlands Biological Foundation Annual Membership Meeting 2024

FINANCE

Members: Amy Patterson (Chair/Treasurer), John Mitchener, Frances Oakley, Tom Holmes, Vernon Skiles, Jim Milby, Jim Landon, Jamie Creola

See 2022 Audit Report - <https://highlandsbiological.org/foundation/>

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Members: Jennie Stowers (Chair), Karen Patterson, Jonnie Swann, Monte Galliard, Carol Stewart, Cathy Jones, Jason Love, Julie Thomson, Jamie Creola

Gift Shop: Melanie Mauldin, Lisa Armstrong

Zahner Lectures:

The 2024 Zahner series will kick off on June 13 and conclude on August 15. This summer's topics include mammals and birds, native plants, ecological sovereignty, geology, climate-informed forestry, NASA's Earth's Water mission, and apothecary. As always, generous donors are funding the lecture series.

If you have suggestions for speakers, please send them to Jamie or Winter. Some of you know amazing people who would be terrific Zahner guests.

2024 Zahner Conservation Lectures:

Date	Speaker	Title
13-Jun	Dr. Caleb Hickman	Ecological Sovereignty: Managing Natural Resources from a Cherokee Biologist
20-Jun	Patricia Howell	Appalachian Apothecary: Herbs of Yesterday and Today
27-Jun	Rick Wooten	2018-2020: Two Years, Eight Storms, 320+ landslides, and an Earthquake: What We Learned about the Connections Between Weather, Climate Change, Landforms and Geology
4-Jul	NO LECTURE: HOLIDAY	

11-Jul	Warren Byrd	Landscape Meanders: Design Ideas for the South Gateway Garden at the Highlands Botanical Garden
18-Jul	Dr. Sahas Barve	Fire, acorns, and kids that stay with you way too long: A natural history of the threatened Florida Scrub Jay
25-Jul	Adam Warwick	Climate-informed Forestry in the Southern Appalachians
1-Aug	Dr. Tamlin Pavelsky	The Surface Water and Ocean Topography Mission: NASA's New Eye in the Sky for Earth's Water
8-Aug	Dr. Aimee Rockhill	Roaming the Wilds: Exploring NC Mammals Shore to Summit
15-Aug	Lori Williams	All About Hellbenders!

Summer Camps and the Nature Center:

HBF's new Education Specialist, Julie Thomson, started on April 15th and we are thrilled to welcome her to the team. Julie officially opened the Nature Center for spring hours at the end of May.

In addition to Julie, we have 4 summer Naturalists and 1 part-time Educator staffing the Nature Center this summer. They will be leading 18 Nature Camps over the course of 9 weeks and leading daily programs, Nature Center Nights, assisting with Zahner Lectures, and leading some outreach programs.

This year, we will not have afternoon camp sessions, but we have added 5-7-year-old camps to the weeks we host our oldest kid camps. Thanks to a grant from Cullasaja Women's Outreach, we were able to provide \$2,500 in camp scholarships.

Many, many thanks to Melanie Mauldin and our gift shop volunteers for the work they have been putting into the shop so far this year. The merchandise kiosk is a great revenue generator. Its focused mostly on things for children, but also has books, t-shirts and hats, jewelry, hostess gifts, and more for adults.

A big "thank you" to several of our Foundation trustees and friends who volunteer at the Nature Center welcome desk. We couldn't do it without you!!!

Year-round Programming:

In response to requests from community organizations, our education specialists provided over 20 programs by mid-March including Highlands School, Highlands Community Child Development, Chestnut Hill, Methodist Church afterschool, Gordon Center, Mountain View Intermediate, French Broad River Club, and many more.

Thank you to Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust’s Hope Corbin and Jessica Blackburn for taking on HBF’s outreach programming in the community while we transitioned between educators this spring and to Karen Patterson for facilitating this partnership.

Support for Highlands Biological Station, the Institute of the Environment - UNC- Chapel Hill, and Macon County STEM:

HBF Grants to be Awarded in 2024:

2024 Grants-in-Aid	\$11,200
MAPS Bird Banding	\$5,000
Macon County STEM	\$13,950
BatPack Citizen Science Project	\$10,000
Bat Event in September 2024	\$9,500
Needmore Game Land Bioblitz	\$3,000
HBS Course Grants	\$5,400

This year, HBF will provide \$11,200 in Grants-in-Aid funding to 6 researchers conducting local research while in residence at the Station. This year will also mark HBF’s 5th year funding the MAPS bird banding program at the Station in partnership with Blue Ridge Bird Observatory. We hope to continue having educational opportunities available to the public to learn about this research.

HBF awarded a \$13,950 grant to the Macon County STEM program. The money will help fund projects during the ‘24- ’25 school year, including supporting the Migration Celebration, and providing salary for substitute teachers and bus drivers, as well as overhead for using the buses to transport children to various natural areas for field trips. This will also fund a professional development opportunity for local teachers to come to the Station and learn how to teach outside.

HBF has awarded \$10,000 to the BatPack Citizen Science Project this year supporting bat population monitoring along the Appalachian Trail. We have also granted \$9,500 to support a major bat research event scheduled in September. This will provide funding to support housing for ~20 bat biologists from several states who will be coming to the region for a few days to conduct bat research. This will have a public outreach component so that visitors can come learn about bats and the research.

HBF has granted \$3,000 to help support the Needmore Game Land Bioblitz which will be held in mid-May. This funding will help support the scientists participating in the event as part of a huge collaboration with Needmore, Mainspring Conservation Trust, and more.

HBF will also provide funding for HBS Course Grants, providing financial aid to students taking HBS academic courses.

Last year, HBF completed our 3-year commitment to UNC's Highlands Field Site program. 15 UNC students participated and presented their independent and group research projects in December. This year, HBF has provided the Station with approximately \$25,600 to fund two Research Assistants – one year-round assistant and one summer assistant. Both of these individuals are former field site students. The summer Research Assistant funding is covered by the Sanger Scholarship Fund set up by Frances Oakley. These assistants will help with local microplastics, small mammal, and bat research. They will also help lead the BatPack trips along the Appalachian Trail this summer.

DEVELOPMENT

Members: Bill Clarkson (Chair), Jennie Stowers, Lindy Harrison, Lisa Daily, Jim Landon, Martha Stibbs, Ruthie Edwards, David Martin, and Jamie Creola

HBF continues to successfully raise funds to support our programs and investments in research and education. We held our most successful fundraisers ever last year, the Cheney Lane Soiree and Highlands on the Half Shell. Each event had over 200 attendees! This year's Playmore Soiree, July 29th, is set to surpass that mark.

We raised over \$375,000 last year through contributions and grants (not including events). We continue to raise more money annually each year to support our ever-growing programs. These gifts reflect the commitment of each member to the vision of the Highlands Biological Foundation – *to inspire present and future generations to preserve and protect the unique environment of the Highlands Plateau by raising awareness through experiential learning.*

Another notable income source last year was our Nature Center Gift Shop. Spearheaded by Trustee Melanie Mauldin, this shop is a steady revenue driver for HBF.

MOU

Members: John Mitchener, Jennie Stowers, David Martin, and Karen Patterson

We are pleased to report that we have a fully agreed upon and executed MOU and FUA between HBS/WCU and the Highlands Biological Foundation. We appreciate the amount of time that Jennie Stowers, John Mitchener and the MOU committee members spent working through this process. We are looking forward to our continued work together.

NOMINATING

Members: Jennie Stowers (chair), John Mitchener, David Martin, Bill Reeves, Lindy Harrison, Lisa Armstrong

Many thanks to the following trustees who have completed a term. We are so grateful for your contributions to HBF and serving as strong leaders during a time of rapid growth - Monte Gaillard, Jim Milby, Amy Patterson (Treasurer), and Bill Reeves!!

Nominated for a second term: Karen Patterson, Ruthie Edwards

Nominated for a first term (please see attached Bios): Keller Torrey, Bill Bush, Gayle Watkins, Leslie Manning, Lori Heys, Bob Strickland, and Charley Tarver

Nominated Officers

Procedure for Nominating Trustee Candidates

The following criteria should be considered when making HBF Trustee nominations:

1. The nominee is supportive of the HBF mission.
2. The nominee is willing to share his/her volunteer time, talents, energy, and resources with

HBF.

3. The nominee will demonstrate a fiduciary responsibility to HBF.
4. The nominee will help fill HBF's need for a well-rounded board with balanced talents and professional experience.
5. The nominee will contribute the HBF annual fund.

Nominating Procedure:

Trustee nominations should be submitted a minimum of 30 days prior to the June Board meeting. Nominations will be accepted throughout the year, up to the 30-day deadline. Nominations will not be accepted from the floor of the Annual Meeting. The Nominating

Committee needs 30 days to properly vet the candidates, collect pertinent information, and allow time for the Board to review the nominees.

Members of the Foundation are encouraged to self-nominate, or to nominate other HBF or Highlands community members whom they know to meet the Trustee criteria.

The person making the nomination should send by email or hand-delivery to the Executive Director the following information: the name of the proposed candidate; a bio with all contact information; and a letter stating why he or she feels that this candidate is appropriate and would be an asset to HBF.

To encourage nominations, the Nominating Committee will send out a call for nominations to all HBF members, either as a notice with the spring email, or as an independent email notice.

Once an individual is identified and accepted by the Nominating Committee, the Board Chair with the Executive Director will approach the nominee to discuss board responsibilities and also to confirm the interest of the individual. *No member of the Nominating Committee should approach or discuss the nomination with the individual.*

The Nominating Committee will submit their nominations to the Executive Committee 20 days prior to the June Board meeting. The Executive Director will distribute the list of nominees and attached information to the Board of Trustees seven days prior to the June meeting. This will allow time for the Board to familiarize themselves with the candidates prior to the meeting. The Board members should direct questions about nominees to the members of the Nominating Committee. Board of Trustee nominees will be voted on at the June meeting.

Once the individual is confirmed at the June Meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Executive Director or Board Chair will contact the individual and a letter of congratulations will be sent to the individual with a reiteration of the board responsibilities, as well as the schedule for the Trustee Meetings. This is the appropriate time for the Chair or the Executive Director to meet with the individual to discuss their individual interests and to determine their committee options.

Upcoming Board Transitions:

Term 2 ending in 2025:

- Cathy Jones
- Melanie Mauldin (gift shop)
- Frances Oakley
- Vernon Skiles

Term 2 ending in 2026:

- Lisa Armstrong
- Bill Clarkson
- Frank Langford
- David Martin
- John Mitchener
- Alex Smith
- Carol Stewart
- Jennie Stowers