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The Fierce Green Fire

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# The Fierce Green Fire

A Newsletter of the Wofford College Environmental Studies Program



*Game cameras record images of the wolverines so that Corn's group, Wolverine Watchers, can trap them and collect DNA.*

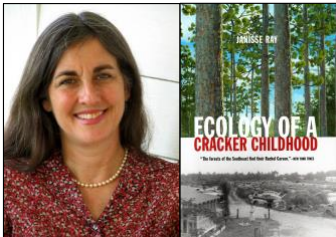


Volume 9, Issue 17

*Dispatches: occasional reflections from graduates and friends...  
Trapping and Shooting Wolverines for Science by George Corn '69*

## Janisse Ray

*"Over story & Under story: Longleaf Pine of the Long Run"*  
The Tyson Family Lecture on the Preservation and Restoration of Southern Ecosystems



Janisse Ray will speak on the 20th anniversary of the publication of her landmark book, "Ecology of a Cracker Childhood." Thursday, March 7, 2019 7 p.m. Leonard Auditorium, Main Building

*Ecology of a Cracker Childhood: Three Eco-Perspectives* Thursday, March 7, 2019 2:30-4:30 p.m. Anna Todd Wofford Center, Andrews Field House

A panel discussion featuring Dr. Peter Brewitt, Wofford College assistant professor; retired University of Georgia professor Dorinda Dalmeyer and University of South Carolina poet and ecocritic Tara Powell. Reception will follow.



*Join us for the upcoming Tyson Family Lecture - an afternoon panel discussion and evening lecture featuring Janisse Ray and the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her landmark book, Ecology of a Cracker Childhood.*

I've been trapping and shooting wolverines for the last five years thanks to the Endangered Species Act. For reasons necessitated by the Act, nonprofits and state and federal wildlife agencies need a science-based estimate of the number of wolverines in the lower 48. The current rough estimate is 250-300 in the continental US, primarily in mountains of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and the Washington Cascades.

The natural habitat of these non-hibernating carnivores, so emblematic of wilderness, are areas of deep winter snow and long-lasting spring snow pack. Given their reclusive nature, naturally low population density, notoriously large individual territories and the remote and enormous mountain landscapes they inhabit, a method of "trapping" them by "shooting" them with a game camera and snaring DNA was developed. This is done in winter when they are likely to be attracted to bait. The trap sites, set at specific locations of likely wolverine habitat, allow trained researchers to

extrapolate reasonably sound population estimates.

But given the size of the wolverine's suspected range, how do you set up enough camera traps in likely locations to have a valid estimate?

One solution in the Bitterroot Valley in western Montana, where I live, has been to ask winter outdoor enthusiasts to volunteer as citizen scientists. The program, organized and run primarily by [Defenders of Wildlife](#), attracted 150 volunteers. Dubbed [Wolverine Watchers](#) and broken into teams of 5-7, the teams, depending on their site location, either snow shoe, ski or snowmobile to it once a month from December through April. There are approximately 25 sites in the mountains flanking our valley. I've been an avid backcountry skier and hiker for years, but I've never been lucky enough to see a wolverine, so I jumped at the chance to volunteer. Here are [pictures from my team's trap site](#). To learn more, THE book on wolverines is called *The Wolverine Way* by Doug Chadwick.

*This week's reflection is from our friend George Corn who is a 1969 graduate of Wofford and majored in history. After graduation he lit out for the Territories and has been holed up in Montana since 1980.*



## Upcoming Events and Opportunities

*\*These count toward your two required extracurricular events for the semester.*

March 7<sup>th</sup>  
2:30-4:30pm  
Anna Todd Wofford

**Tyson Family Lecture presents *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood – Three Eco-Perspectives\**:** A panel discussion featuring Peter Brewitt (*Wofford*), Dorinda Dallmeyer (*UGA, retired*), and Tara Powell (*USC*). Reception to follow.

March 7<sup>th</sup>  
7:00pm  
Leonard Auditorium

**Tyson Family Lecture presents *Overstory & Understory – Longleaf Pine for the Long Run\**:** Janisse Ray will speak on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of her landmark book, *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*.

March 14<sup>th</sup>  
7:00pm  
Leonard Auditorium

**Speaker Jessica Mills AKA 'Dixie'\*:** Experienced hiker of the Appalachian Trail, Pacific Crest Trail, and the Continental Divide Trail will speak on her journeys.

March 20<sup>th</sup>  
7:00pm  
Olin 101

**GC Waldrep – Wofford Writers Series\***: Poet, historian, [Bucknell Professor of English](#), Acting Director of the Stadler Center for Poetry & Literary Arts, and Editor of West Branch, will visit Wofford for a public reading. He will also be visiting classes and staying at the TLAR house in Glendale and reflecting on the landscape while he is there.

March 21<sup>st</sup>  
7:00pm  
Rosalind S Richardson  
Center for the Arts

**Gallery Talk by Dawn Williams Boyd\***: Join us for a talk by the artists on her exhibition *Scraps from My Mother's Table*. Reception to follow.

April 15<sup>th</sup>  
Application Deadline

**Summer 2019 Research Experience for Undergraduates:** The University of Iowa will host a [National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates](#) (NSF-REU) in Geography and Spatial Sciences. A 10-week summer program (May20-July26) will explore human-environment interactions. Participants will receive a stipend and housing in UI residence halls.

April 30<sup>th</sup>  
Application Deadline

**The Goat Island Boat Club Merit Scholarship Program:** The one-year scholarship will be awarded in the amount of \$2000. Eligible student must be from South Carolina enrolled in an institution of higher learning in the state of South Carolina studying marine biology, forestry, fisheries, wildlife management, or other related field focused on environmental protection of the Santee Cooper lakes and river systems. Stop by Wofford Office of Financial Aid to pick up an application.

## PROFILE OF THE WEEK:

### *University of Wisconsin – Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies*

[The University of Wisconsin's Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies](#) offers three options for graduate degrees.

Environment & Resources offers a MS and PhD and prepares students with knowledge of the environment and the ability to find creative solutions to environmental problems.

Environmental Conservation offers two accelerated, professional master's programs. The program is built on the legacy of pioneering environmental leaders such as John Muir, Aldo Leopold, and Gaylord Nelson. *"It helps early-career working professionals*

*advance their leadership, conservation and environmental management expertise through campus learning and remote experiences."*

The MS in Water Resources integrates biological and physical sciences with engineering, law, and the social sciences.

Students can also work directly with conservation organizations such as Conservation International, International Crane Foundation, the Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Society, and World Wildlife Fund.