

Great Smoky Mountain National Park LSAM Spring Excursion March – April 2007

Day 1

Chris, Victoria, Dmitry, Alexey, and I all piled into the Suburban. Its 10:15am on Thursday and Dmitry just got out of class. We have a 12 hour drive in front of us. I put about 250 geocaches on my GPS that lie within one half mile on either side of our intended route. I want to be ready just in case we stop for gas at a site with a cache. Our first stop for gas yielded no caches, but our stop for dinner, at a Ruby Tuesday (the lesser of many evils) did. We arrived at the Greenbrier Field Station in good spirits about 11pm.

Day 2

We met Rich, a mycologist collecting in the park. He was living in the small house on the other side of the station compound. We played phone tag with Adriean about the presence of some special hanging traps that had been ordered and shipped to him here. Rich was the intermediary. After a breakfast of bagels ("The False Doughnut") we headed over to Sugarlands to meet Adriean, get our traps, and pick him up for the ceremonial Hanging of the First Trap. We collected Adriean and stopped by Twin Creeks to get some Propylene Glycol, the preservative used in the traps. After that we were off!

Windy, windy road, never ceasing, not much up and down, but always side to side, the park to the right, and the nether-lands to the left. We were headed to where the Appalachian Trail leaves the park, in hopes of using that as a portal to find a suitable place to install our hanging trap.

Up the trail, we spent about three hours putting up the trap. Our setup included a fishing pole, sling shot, rope, and lead weights. Actually projecting a small lead weight tied to a fishing line up and over the preferred limb, while avoiding other limbs, then getting the weight to fall down, and then actually getting the rope up and over the limb turns out to not be as easy as possible, especially when there are so many chiefs and so few Indians. Alexey busied himself collecting a litter sample. Adriean started picking up and tearing apart pinecones looking for bark beetles.

After we added some 50 lb test line to the reel we finally accomplished our goal. Victoria got the trap put together and it looks great.

