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A Peak Ahead: The Great Eastern Alpine Zone: Expanding Our Scope

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The Great Eastern Alpine Zone: Expanding our Scope

Based as we are in the northeastern United States, Appalachia can get a bit myopic about the extent of the Eastern alpine zone. A pair of biologists will sharpen our vision in the next issue.

Michael T. Jones and Lisabeth L. Willey, who are mapping all of the mountains of eastern North America, will introduce their list of the ten great alpine peaks of the region, which extends way north into Canada. Some of these are famous; others are obscure. One in Labrador has no name. Jones and Willey are two of the founders of the project Beyond Ktaadn, which uses science to promote biodiversity and understanding of the eastern alpine zone. They believe that its ecosystem ought to be looked at as a whole.

Charles V. Cogbill, mountain researcher, will provide us with context for Jones's and Willey's work.

Ken Kimball, the head of research for the Appalachian Mountain Club, will write an essay on the alpine zone, drawing on his decades of work.

Also in the next issue will be the winning essay of the fourth Waterman Fund contest, a project to encourage new writing on wild places; I'm proud to have helped nurture this.

More climbers are climbing, and dying on, Half Dome, the iconic granite peak in Yosemite National Park. Bob Manning, the Appalachia Committee's resident social scientist who studies mountain behavior, will write about the controversy surrounding managers' attempts to control the crowds.

Canadian alpinist and writer Ron Dart will describe the love of the mountains shared by Jack Kerouac and other Beat writers. Lisa Densmore will recount her quest to find the rare golden trout in remote tarns in Montana. Douglas W. Rankin will look back on his work in 1953 building a bridge—now gone—in New Hampshire's Great Gulf Wilderness.

Expand your mountain horizons with us when the journal next comes out in December 2011.

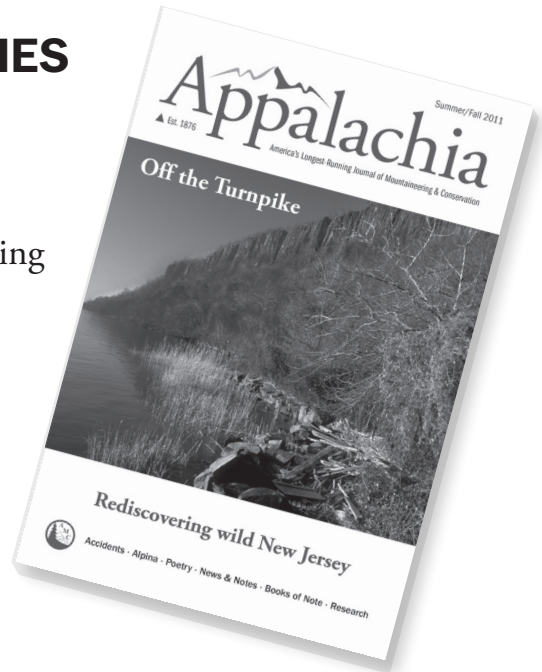
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