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Geology and Natural Communities Walk July 16 at Anna Ruby Falls

Geologist Dr. Bill Witherspoon, co-author of *Roadside Geology of Georgia* and biogeographer Dr. Leslie Edwards, co-author of *Natural Communities of Georgia*, will team up July 16 to lead a nature walk at Anna Ruby Falls near Helen. Both books “take the general reader to Georgia’s natural wonders and explain the science that lies behind the scenery,” according to Witherspoon.

The event will begin at 1:00 at the Visitor Center, with an activity geared to teach young and old to recognize local rocks and minerals. Geologic structures in bedrock along the walk to the falls reveal how these rocks were once under enough heat and pressure to flow like taffy. The lush vegetation along the steep ravine slopes and its adaptations will be observed. At the twin cascades of Anna Ruby Falls, the difference in origin of a cascade versus a sheer-dropping waterfall, and the unusual challenges and opportunities for plants and animals at the spray cliffs will be explained. A book signing at the Visitor Center will follow the walk.

The event is free of charge with \$3 Anna Ruby Falls admission (under 16 free). Attendees who register for this and other upcoming *Roadside Geology of Georgia* author events are eligible for a COOL BILLION-year-old rock. Register at georgiarocks.us/events or “Join” in facebook.com/RoadsideGeologyGA/events.

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 Chattahoochee, 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 in 2015 from Georgia State University.

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