

Nickipedia - North Carolina Environment

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The Environment and Natural History of North Carolina

Welcome to North Carolina, your home for the next 2 or 3 years. As environmental management students, it is only natural that we should introduce you to the ecology, geology, and environmental politics and issues of your new surroundings.

Getting to know North Carolina's natural resources and environment will benefit the MEM student greatly. Many courses here at the Nicholas School draw heavily on local case studies or use local geography as practice examples. Your summer internship will also likely be with an NC environmental organization or local branch, working on local environmental issues.

It may surprise many out-of-state students how well North Carolina serves as a case study for environmental management for scenarios around the country and around the world. The 10th most populous and the 3rd fastest-growing state in the U. S., North Carolina is at the intersection of rapid urban development and a prominent but transitioning agricultural industry. Additionally, there are pressing problems in the management of freshwater resources, waste disposal, coastal development, and carbon emissions here in North Carolina. From hog-waste impacts on water quality to continental shelf oil drilling, how North Carolina responds to its ecological issues will create lessons for regions and nations around the globe.

Finally, North Carolina has a hidden wealth of natural beauty and wilderness escapes. Its outdoors offer whitewater rafting, fishing, backcountry hiking, climbing, canoeing, surfing, birdwatching, and more. Moreover, in pursuing them you'll find yourself traveling over a great diversity of biomes and ecosystems, from the barrier islands of the Outer Banks, inward to the Sandhills, and following the loblollies up to the Appalachian range.

In your two years as an MEM, you'll be cooped up in the computer lab and the classroom a lot, and it will be frustrating. But don't forget that you are a nature-lover first, and desk jockey/GIS stooge second. Go out there and recharge your soul, and remember why you came to the Nick School in the first place.

Here's how...

[Ecology of North Carolina](#) | [Biomes and Ecological Regions of North Carolina](#) | [Environmental Issues in North Carolina](#) | [Other Documents and Links](#)

Ecology of North Carolina

I have created this section for people who want to learn more about the unique ecosystems of North Carolina during your stay here at Duke. The Duke Forest is obviously a great outdoor resource for local naturalists, offering great opportunities for birding, botany, and herping. I recommend that if you are really looking to get involved with the "naturalist community" here at Duke, you should get to know Jeff Pippen and Will Cook. Jeff is the head research technician at the FACE site, and Will Cook is a lab technician in Rob Jackson's lab. Both of them know incredible amounts of information about North Carolina ecology and they will be happy to offer you advice on good places to go to experience all that NC has to offer. Additionally, each of them have their own respective websites, both of which are great resources. --KV

Ecology and Natural History Links

- Jeff Pippen's site: <http://www.duke.edu/~jspippen/nature.htm>
Will Cook's site: <http://www.carolinanature.com/>
- For students who are interested in field trip opportunities, there is a natural history email list serve that you can sign up for by following the instructions at this website: <https://lists.duke.edu/sympa/info/natural-history>
- Also, for those of you who have a fondness for birding, there is a carolina bird club email list that keeps everyone up to date on everything from rare bird sightings to migration news. If you're interested, you can sign up by going to the following website: <https://lists.duke.edu/sympa/arc/carolinabirds>

- Contribute to a citizen science project and track your personal reptile and amphibian observations at the Carolina Herp Atlas: www.carolinaherpatlas.org
See the Amphibians and Reptiles of North Carolina web pages for more on species identification: www.herpsofnc.org
- The Triangle Environmental Network explores the natural areas in the Triangle, works to conserve our local resources, and looks at alternative energy issues and solutions. Meet with like-minded individuals to take action that makes a difference in our local community. <http://www.meetup.com/triangle-environmental-network/>
- The Triangle Hiking & Outdoors Group is for people who enjoy hiking, camping, backpacking and other outdoor activities (skiing, kayaking, climbing). <http://www.meetup.com/Adventures/>
- The Chapel Hill-Durham Hikers Meetup Group offers group hikes year-round at area parks, including Eno River State Park, Battle Park, Oconeechee Speedway and Mountain, The American Tobacco Trail, Little River, Jordan Lake and West Point on the Eno. <http://www.meetup.com/Chapel-Hill-Durham-Hikers/>

Biomes and Ecological Regions of North Carolina

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Environmental Issues in North Carolina

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- Yard Waste and Biofuels
- [Waste Disposal](#)
- Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater

Other Documents and Links

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