

## Environment

### The Bartram Trail

by Nathan Jerkins, staff writer

Those interested in a challenging and gorgeous hike should try the Bartram Trail. This trail runs through North Carolina and northern Georgia as it attempts to retrace the steps of famed naturalist William Bartram.

Having completed the forty mile section in Georgia and shorter sections in North Carolina, I recommend this trail to experienced hikers who are tired of fighting the crowds at some of their favorite spots. During my last trip we only encountered one other hiker on the three day trip.

The Bartram Trail is ranked as most difficult on the maps and contains lots of up and down hiking and few places to camp near water. It is a strenuous hike when carrying a full backpack. But the trail pays off by delivering some of the best views of the Appalachian Mountains on any trail, especially during the fall season. As leaves slowly give way to the amazing panoramic views, one can imagine the wilderness as perhaps Bartram saw it.

In Georgia, the trail begins on the Chatooga River, which forms a natural border between Georgia and South Carolina, and terminates near Scaly Mountain, just south of Highlands. Here it is marked by diamond-shaped yellow blazes, and while it does have many intersections and turns, the trail is very well marked. On this section the trail crosses over Rabun Bald, the second highest mountain in Georgia. The trail also parallels the Chatooga on some of its flatter sections. Many scenes for the movie *Deliverance* were filmed on the Chatooga.

In North Carolina, the section I hiked began at Wallace Branch and ended at Nantahala Lake. This part of the trail was very steep and gained elevation quickly through the forest. The peak of this section is Wayah Bald, where an old, stone fire tower sits. Also, for about a mile and a half the Appalachian

### Is King's Creek Healthy?

by Laura Roop, staff writer



Dr. Mary Ellen Brown's Studies in Environmental Literature class, along with many other environmentally related courses, have been observing King's Creek on the Brevard College campus over the years. With the help of the organization Clean Water for North Carolina (CWFNC), the students in the class this semester were able to measure the overall health of the creek by recognizing certain physical and environmental characteristics.

Vegetation is important along the sides of streams to help shade and keep temperatures from getting too hot. Most aquatic life is only tolerant to a certain range of temperatures, and any extreme variations in heat could lead to disruption in the delicate ecosystem. Most of these organisms prefer cool, clean water that is rich in oxygen. As water temperature rises, oxygen could fall to dangerously low levels.

Vegetation also plays a key role in helping to prevent erosion. Severely eroded banks add