

# Polecat Creek

## bio

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**Polecat Creek** started small, much like the piedmont North Carolina stream that bears its name. In the mid 1990's Kari Sickenberger and Laurelyn Dossett, both natives of the south, were living in the Greensboro area. Through some mutual friends they ended up in a book club together. A guitar standing in the corner of Kari's apartment led to an evening of harmony singing – Carter Family songs and some early Gillian Welch. They haven't stopped singing since. Kari and Laurelyn started writing their own songs and eventually formed the roots duo known as Polecat Creek.



**Winners** of the neo-traditional contest at the 2006 Appalachian String Band Festival, Polecat Creek has featured many fine musicians over the years. Sugar Hill recording artist and veteran old-time banjo, guitar and fiddle player **Riley Baugus** joined the group in early 2001 after sitting in at a local gig. He added the distinctive old-time sound which is characteristic of Polecat Creek recordings, and he joins the group frequently for concerts. The most recent addition, fiddler **Natalya Weinstein**, joined after coming south to Asheville, North Carolina, and moving in next door to Kari. Natalya adds her heartbreaking fiddle to current Polecat Creek shows.

**Ordinary Seasons**, Polecat Creek's latest cd, showcases the talents of both Riley and Natalya, as well as young mandolin player Eric Robertson and veteran bassist Jeff Hersk – who bring another set of original songs to life. Made in the summer of 2007, it was recorded and co-produced by Grammy-winning **Steven Heller**, known for his work with artists ranging from Doc Watson to Toubab Krewe. *Ordinary Seasons* follows on the heels of Polecat Creek's critically acclaimed *Leaving Eden*, produced by **Dirk Powell** in 2004. The band's first cd, *Salt Sea Bound* was released in late 2001.

**Songwriting** has since become Polecat Creek's hallmark; Laurelyn's *Come by Here* won the Chris Austin Songwriting Contest in the gospel category in 2004. Kari's *Take What You Get* has been featured on several compilation cds and has had extensive play in the U.K. *Leaving Eden* has been featured on the **BBC** and by the **Atlanta Journal-Constitution** in articles about the decline of the textile industry. In recent years Laurelyn has written the music for **Triad Stage's** *Brother Wolf*, *Beautiful Star: An Appalachian Adventure* and will premiere *Bloody Blackbeard* in June 2008. Her song, *Anna Lee*, appears on **Levon Helm's** 2007 release, *Dirt Farmer*.

**Kari and Laurelyn** are perhaps best known for their singular style of harmony singing. They sang with **Garrison Keillor** on a recent show in Greensboro; Kari sang harmony on **Ginny Hawker's** "Letters from my Father" and "Draw Closer" cd. They have played festivals including Merlefest, Birmingham's City Stages, First Night Raleigh, Floydfest, and Shakori Hills, as well as concerts and harmony workshops around the southeast.

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