

January 2006

# Sierra

North Alabama Group



Visit our website  
<http://alabama.sierraclub.org/na.html>

**General Meeting Thursday,  
January 19, 6:30 p.m.**

David Hayes from the North Alabama Mushroom Society will speak

**Tuesday Night Downtown Hikes**

Join us at 6 p.m. at the Land Trust Office Parking lot, 907 Franklin St. for a hike around downtown Huntsville.

### Mushrooms and Fungi of North Alabama

Based on personal observation, North Alabama and Middle Tennessee are habitat for an infinite variety of mushrooms. In various sizes and colors they peek at us from trailside and from our own backyards. Some of them appear overnight and stand conspicuously in the morning sunlight; others demurely hide under leaves. White ones, brown ones, orange ones and polka dotted ones thrive all around us. It's time to learn about them, to learn about the characteristics the various ones have in common and in what ways they differ (they are not all alike under their umbrellas.)

A group of Huntsville area people have begun the study of mushrooms—mycology, and have organized the North Alabama Mushroom Society. One of their members, David Hayes, has agreed to be our presenter at the January 19 Sierra Club meeting. He is excited about the fungi, the NAMS organization and the opportunity to share information with us. Please join us in the big meeting room at the main library downtown on January 19. Meeting begins at 6:30, program at 7:00.

Brenda Cummings

### The Endangered Species Act Threatened

Congressman Richard Pombo pushed a bill through the House that would gut the Endangered Species Act and threaten biodiversity in North America. There is something you can do about this. As a Sierra Club Member you can sign the petition to the Senate sent out by the National Sierra Club in the mail. Sending money is optional, but please sign and return the petition in the green envelope sent out with the petitions.

When similar attempts were made to open up the Arctic wilderness areas for oil drilling we made our voices heard and for now drilling for oil in the Arctic wilderness has been stopped. It is time to make your voice heard again. Please do your part in protecting biodiversity in North America and sign the petition the Sierra Club has sent out. Thank you in advance from the protectors of wildlife communities and the Sierra Club.

Doug Horacek

calendars will be available for sale at the general meeting Thursday, January 19 at the main library downtown. Or you can call Judy Jones at 852-6179.

the Editor

### Green Power

Purchasing two blocks of Green Power for one year is the environmental equivalent of planting an acre of trees in the Tennessee Valley or not driving your car for four months, according to the Green Power Switch News. Huntsville Utilities customers can buy electricity generated by clean, renewable resources like solar, wind, and methane gas by signing up for \$4 monthly blocks: Call HU at 535-1255.

Sam Denham

### Alabama Hiking Trail Conference

The annual Alabama Hiking Trail Society conference will be held March 24-26, 2006 on Cheaha Mountain at Bald Rock Lodge. The weekend will be packed with presentations on hiking gear, tips and techniques, hiking destinations, leave no trace practices and ethics, trail building and maintenance. Plus hikes, food, entertainment, photocontest, raffles for prizes, and much more.

For registration information, go to <http://hikealabama.org/conference/conference.htm> or contact the AHTS at 334-244-1579.

Tom Burley

### Walden/Baird Logging Bill a Threat

Representatives Walden (R, OR) and Baird (D, WA) have introduced a bill, deceptively called the "Forest Emergency Recovery and Research Act" (HR4200) that throws out normal protections for forests, fish and wildlife to rush logging and roadbuilding following natural destructive events in National Forests. The bill eliminates environmental review and cut the public out of decisions affecting our public forests. This will damage forest ecosystems and cannot be defended scientifically.

Representative Tom Udall (D, NM) has introduced an alternative bill called the "National Forests Rehabilitation and Recovery Act" (H.R. 3973). The Udall collaboration bill is a common sense approach, which tries to identify the best responses to natural disturbances on forest ecosystems based on science and community collaboration.

Please call Members of the House of Representatives at 202-224-3121 and tell them to oppose the Walden logging bill (Forest Emergency Recovery and Research Act, FERRA) and urge them to cosponsor the Udall bill (H.R. 3973, The National Forests Rehabilitation and Recovery Act). Find out more about it at:

<http://www.americanlands.org/>

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### New Members Wanted!

The new member contest is still under way! Remember, the club member who signs up the most new recruits will receive a cash prize of \$100.00. All new checks (\$25.00) should be mailed to:  
David Kostowny  
116 Pebblebrook Circle, Madison, AL 35758.  
Phone: 325-2296. E-mail: [divadlk@msn.com](mailto:divadlk@msn.com)

### Join the Sierra Club or Renew your Membership for \$25

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1.00 for your chapter newsletter.

Enclose check and mail to:

David Kostowny  
116 Pebblebrook Circle  
Madison, AL 35758.



### Sierra Club Calendar

Didn't find the new Sierra Club calendar under your tree this year? Fortunately we still have some available. The 2006 Sierra Club Wilderness Wall Calendar and Engagement Calendar are still just \$10 each. The

For more information about the Alabama Land Trust visit their website at <http://www.allandtrust.org>.

BAMA Environmental News, Dec 20 2005, #254

# North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

## January – February 2006

### 2006 ExCom Members

Chair	Liz Poleretzky	461-5819
Vice Ch/Conservation	Bruce Martin	256/725-2168
Treasurer	Sam Denham	539-1033
Fund Raising	Judy Jones	852-6179
Membership	Dave Kostowny	325-2296
Newsletter	Jack Drost	880-2644
Outings	Lee Hollingsworth	461-3060
Publicity	Sandy Kiplinger	256/498-1023
Programs	Tom Burley	883-4267
Prgm Logistics Coordinator	Doug Horacek	772-6788
Secretary	Judy Burley	883-4267
Tuesday Hikes	Liz Poleretzky	461-5819
Web Page	Steven Baty	489-0990

### General Meeting

#### Thursday January 19, 6:30pm. Downtown Library auditorium.

David Hayes will speak on mushrooms and fungi native to North Alabama.

### Hike Ratings

**Easy**-Less than 5 miles, no serious elevation changes, no trail obstacles.

**Moderate**-5 to 10 miles, some elevation changes or rough trail (rock hopping), or trail obstacles such as creek crossings.

**Strenuous**-More than 10 miles, substantial elevation change (1000 ft or more), trail may be rocky, obstructed or nonexistent.

**Exploratory**- event the leader has not experienced before, may fit any class above.

#### Friday - Monday, Jan 13<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> - Big South Fork Backpack. Strenuous.

Covering 31 miles total, passing the two largest natural arches in the eastern U.S., we will be hiking 16.2 miles of the John Muir Trail, encountering abandoned structures of generations ago, and possibly seeing lots of cliff-hanging icicles. May be cancelled / modified due to travel through flood areas. Depart Friday 8:00am, return Monday by 5 pm. Contact Steven Baty, 489-0990.

#### Saturday, Jan 14<sup>th</sup> - Fiery Gizzard Day Hike, Strenuous.

Perhaps one of the most diverse and beautiful trails in Tennessee, the terrain is steep and extremely rocky. We will follow the Fiery Gizzard trail passing the 500 year old hemlock, Blue Hole Falls, Sycamore Falls, and the Fruit Bowl rock before beginning our climb to Raven Point and a spectacular overlook. We return via the Doghole Trail. The hike is about ten miles and definitely strenuous. Bring lunch and water; dinner afterwards at a local restaurant. Meet at 8:00am at the old Winn Dixie location on Winchester Road. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburley@knology.net](mailto:tdburley@knology.net)

**Tuesday, Jan 17, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at Huntsville Land Trust Office, 907 Franklin St. Leader: Bruce Martin, 256-725-2168.

**Saturday, Jan 21 - Monte Sano dayhike. Moderate.** Mountain Mist trail, Sinks, Stone Cuts, Logans Point, Super Cuts, the Keith trail. Bring a lunch, water and sturdy hiking boots. Meet at Monte Sano hiker's parking lot 9:00am. Cost \$1.00. Call Doug Horacek at 772-6788 for more information.

#### Saturday-Sunday, Jan 21-22 - Hobbs Cabin Backpack. Moderate.

Approximately 17 total miles. Call for meeting location & time. Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819 or [hiker@knology.net](mailto:hiker@knology.net).

**Tuesday, Jan 24, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at Huntsville Land Trust Office, 907 Franklin St. Leader: Nancy Dudney, 882-9408.

### Excom Meeting

**Thursday, Jan 26 - Outings 5:15, Excom 5:45.** Doug Horacek, 772-6788.

**Saturday, Jan 28 - Carter Mountain hike. Moderate.** New area for an easy to moderate 6-8 mile hike with bluff view, huge boulders. Bring lunch, water. Meet 9:00am at Winchester Rd Winn/Dixie parking lot. Joette 776-3551.

**Sunday, Jan 29 - Trough Springs Hike. Easy.** Easy with moderate change in elevation. Meet 1:30pm at entrance to Natural Well Trail across from Burritt Museum entrance. Info B. Cummings 881-7447.

**Tuesday, Jan 31, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at Huntsville Land Trust Office, 907 Franklin St. Leader: Helga, 534-5656.

**Saturday, Feb 4 - Guntersville State Park hike. Moderate.** Approximately 9 miles. Let's try for the lower half of the park map again (and hope for good weather), starting and ending at the Tom Bevill Trailhead. Meet at the Wal-Mart Super Center gas station on South Memorial Parkway at 7:50am. Bring lunch, snacks, water and good hiking shoes. For more info Sandy Kiplinger, [sandykip@juno.com](mailto:sandykip@juno.com) or 256/498-1023(w)

**Sunday, Feb 5 - Honeysuckle Jihad!!** Meet at the trailhead on Toll Gate Road. Bring gloves, sling blades, limb loppers or whatever. We'll have drinks and water for everyone. 2 hours work to help maintain our adopted acre. Rated "work". Bruce Martin 256-725-2168.

**Tuesday, Feb 7, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at Huntsville Land Trust Office, 907 Franklin St. Leader: Judy Burley, 883-4267.

### Newsletter Labeling

**Wednesday, February 8th, 5:30pm.** Down South Condominiums clubhouse. South Memorial Parkway. Judy Burley, 883-4267

**Sat-Sun, Feb 11-12 – Dayhike and backpack to the Sipsey Wilderness. Strenuous.** We'll traverse the Quillan Creek gorge and enjoy the primitive cross country experience of one of our last truly wild areas. Rated strenuous due to difficult terrain, multiple stream crossings, rock hops and lack of a developed trail. 8 miles for the dayhike portion. Optional stay overnight with a visit to the Big Tree and Bee Branch. 15 miles for the backpackers. Bring lunch and water. Meet at Hardee's on South Parkway at Weatherly Road at 8:00am or the Trading Post at Wren at 9:15. Be prompt – we have a long day! Bruce Martin 256-725-2168.

**Tuesday, Feb 14, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at Huntsville Land Trust Office, 907 Franklin St. Leader: Virgil DeStefano, 539-0348.

**Fri-Sun, Feb 17-19<sup>th</sup> - Thunder Rock Carcamp/Dayhike, Exploratory.** We will depart Friday at noon (meeting place to be determined) and camp at Thunder Rock campground which borders the Ocoee River site of the 1996 Olympic venue. On Saturday we will explore trails in the Cherokee National Forest hiking 9 to 10 miles. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburley@knology.net](mailto:tdburley@knology.net).

**Tuesday, Feb 21, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at Huntsville Land Trust Office, 907 Franklin St. Leader: Bruce Martin, 256-725-2168.

**Saturday, Feb 25 - Flat Rock Hike, Moderate.** We will hike 8.4 miles doing Mountain Mist, Sinks, Stone Cuts, Logans Point, Super Cuts, Flat Rock and Black Warrior Ridge. Bring lunch, water and sturdy hiking boots. Meet at Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot at 8:00am. Cost \$1.00. Call Doug Horacek at 772-6788 for more information.

**Sat-Sun, May 20-28 - Natchez Trace Bicycle Trip. Strenuous.** We'll bike from Nashville, TN to Natchez, MS (444 miles). Sag wagon, all food en route and campgrounds provided. Fee \$150. Limited to 10 participants. Bruce Martin 256-725-2168.

**Wed- Sun, June 21<sup>st</sup> -25<sup>th</sup> -Devils Fork Gap to Hot Springs Backpack, Strenuous.** This is a 35 mile self-sufficient backpack with significant elevation changes over three days. We will depart on Wednesday at 7:30am arriving in Hot Springs around 2:30pm. We will spend Saturday night at the Hot Springs campground on the French

Broad River with a one hour soak in the mineral hot springs. Cost will be about \$35 each. Group size is limited. For further information contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburley@knology.net](mailto:tdburley@knology.net)

### **Other Outings / Events**

*The following activities are not sponsored or administered by the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club has no information about the planning of these activities and makes no representations or warranties about the quality, safety, supervision or management of such activities. They are published only as a reader service because they might be of interest to the readers of our newsletter.*

### **Hays Nature preserve**

Privet Round-Up Volunteers! Your efforts are making a difference in restoring the forests at the Hays Nature Preserve, but I need your help again. We have 4 Privet Roundups scheduled soon, and I hope you will come out. Here are the dates:

- January 14<sup>th</sup> 1 pm-4 pm
- February 11<sup>th</sup> 1pm-4 pm
- January 28<sup>th</sup> 1 pm-4pm
- Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> 1pm-4pm with a Weeny Roast and Bonfire afterward. Thanks so much for your past work! I hope to see you again on some of these workdays!

Soos Weber, City Ecologist, Hays Nature Preserve. 427-5116 (w) 509-1219 (c)

### **Birmingham Canoe Club**

<http://www.birminghamcanoecub.org/>

#### **Saturday, Feb 4 - Locust Fork Invitational Canoe and Kayak race.**

Call Vicky (205) 681-4751 Join the Birmingham Canoe club and Friends of the Locust Fork River for a fun day on the river. If it's chilly, there's a bonfire; if it's mild, you can dangle your toes in the river. The canoe/kayak races are very "kid friendly". We encourage you to bring the kids: they'll witness world-class white-water paddling and racing skills, and get to see "how to" competition. Come as a spectator or volunteer with The Friends of the Locust Fork River. We need volunteers as race starters, judges, timekeepers, scorers, etc. We'll train you properly and pair you with an experienced volunteer. The volunteer shifts for the Locust Fork Races are 9:00am-1:00pm and 1:00pm-5:00pm. In case you just can't leave, pack your camping gear so you can enjoy the awards ceremony, the after party, and sleeping under the stars to the river's music. TO VOLUNTEER: call Sam Howell at 205-681-4751 or e-mail at [showell@brescoinc.com](mailto:showell@brescoinc.com). For more information about either race, go to [www.flfr.org](http://www.flfr.org) or [www.birminghamcanoecub.org](http://www.birminghamcanoecub.org)

### **Sierra Cahaba Group**

<http://alabama.sierraclub.org/cahaba/index.html>

#### **Saturday, Feb 11 - Ruffner Mountain Day Hike.** Call 205-556-3330.

Ruffner Mt. is a 1000 acre nature preserve close to Irondale, AL and offers a spectacular view of downtown Birmingham. This will be a 5.5 mile, moderate hike with 1,000-ft elevation gain. The trails we will hike are the Five Mile Trail, which is only 3.8 miles long, the Quarry Loop (1.2 miles), and the Ridge Trail (1.4 miles). We'll meet at the Ruffner Mt. Nature Center at 9:00 am and estimated trail time will be @ 4 hours. Directions: From Shelby Co. take I-65 north to I-20. Turn right and take I-20 east. Take the Oporto-Madrid Blvd. exit (#132). Turn left onto Oporto-Madrid Blvd. Go to Rugby Ave. and turn right. Go to 81st Street and turn right. Look for a small brown sign that marks the entrance of RMNC. For more information, contact Sonja at 205-556-3330 or [smath2casa@aol.com](mailto:smath2casa@aol.com)

#### **Saturday, Feb 18 - Odum Scout Trail hike.** Call (205) 746-3266

ODUM SCOUT TRAIL: Many people believe the Odum Scout Trail is Alabama's most scenic mountain trail. The trail is situated in Cheaha State Park and was built by a joint effort of boy scouts and the US Forest Service. One tenth of a mile into the hike we will go past High Falls- a three tiered cascade that leaps from ledge to ledge next to the trail. Then we will climb steel and wooden steps to get up the steepest part of the trail which runs next to and past the falls. On down the trail we will come to the edge of a bluff on Cedar Mountain which has a panoramic view of the surrounding mountains. Then on to a second bluff on Big Caney Head and another broad view of the surrounding mountains. This hike is rated strenuous because of a total distance of 10 miles and a steep first mile climb. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet at the Kmart parking lot on Crestwood Blvd at 8:00AM. Jim Binnings 746-3266 [jbinnings@bellsouth.net](mailto:jbinnings@bellsouth.net)

#### **Saturday, Feb 25 - Pinhoiti Trail Hike.**

Call 205-792-3847. This is the Pinhoiti Trail north of Cheaha State Park on parts of sections 6 and 7. It begins on a 2.5 mile stretch of CCC Road and then ascends Blue Mountain and travels south past Bald Rock into Cheaha State Park. It concludes at the Cave Creek intersection and parking. There 1000 feet of elevation change (uphill) for a moderate to strenuous 7 miles through the hollers of Talladega National Forest. Bring water, lunch, sturdy boots. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Kmart Parking Lot at the corner of Crestwood Blvd and Montclair Rd. Just off exit 132B on I-20. Leader,

Tammy Dodson. Home: 205-477-4070 or Cell: 205-792-3847. Email: [tcmkbeauty@juno.com](mailto:tcmkbeauty@juno.com)

### **Alabama Hiking Trail Society, Inc.**

<http://www.alabamatrail.com>

#### **Saturday, Jan 28 - Bartram Trail Hike**

(River Region) Join us for a day hike along the rolling hills of the southern section of the Bartram National Recreation Trail in the Tuskegee National Forest. We will also check on the progress of Boy Scout Jamal Brown's Eagle Project on the trail. Meet at 9am at the Ranger Station, hike until about 1pm. Bring a day pack with water and snacks. AL Skip Essman (334) 324-0339 or [lessman@bellsouth.net](mailto:lessman@bellsouth.net)

#### **Fri-Sun, Feb 3-5 and Feb 11-12 Leave No Trace Training Course**

Hikers and campers can pick up some new environmental protection skills in February. Learn the principles and practical applications of Leave No Trace. The ideas on how to leave the least impact on our environment while enjoying the outdoors will surprise even the most veteran hiker!

Feb. 3-5 training will be led by Roxann Edsall at Camp Comer in North Alabama. Call Roxann at 205.663.4337 or [redsall@bellsouth.net](mailto:redsall@bellsouth.net)

Feb 11-12 training will be led by LNT state advocate Skip Essman at Camp Tukabatchee. Contact Skip at 334.324.0339 or [lessman@bellsouth.net](mailto:lessman@bellsouth.net)

#### **Saturday, Feb 4 - Flagg Mt. Day Hike / Car Camp**

Enjoy the beauty, serenity, and history of Flagg Mt as we day hike the new trail and GPS it. Meet at 10am at the trailhead. Stay for the day or join us for a car camp at the CCC Tower and Hall on top of the mountain with a roaring fire in the fireplace. If you day hike, bring day pack with water, snacks, lunch and dress warm. If you plan to car camp, bring car camp gear, warm clothes, breakfast and plenty of water (there's none at the top of the mountain). We will have a "traditional" Flagg spaghetti dinner that night. AL Joe Cuhaj (251) 533-1812 or [jcuhaj@bellsouth.net](mailto:jcuhaj@bellsouth.net)

#### **Sunday, Feb 5 - Cherokee Ridge Trail Day Hike**

We'll check out some of the new trail created by the Cherokee Ridge Alpine Trail Association since last year's National Trails Day event. Meet at the trailhead at 10am. This is an easy to moderate hike. Bring day pack with plenty of water, snacks, and dress warm. AL Joe Cuhaj (251) 533-1812 or [jcuhaj@bellsouth.net](mailto:jcuhaj@bellsouth.net)