

October 2007

# Sierra

North Alabama Group



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

Photo Tour of the Galapagos Islands

Wednesday, October 17

Tuesday Night Downtown Hikes

Meet at 6:00pm at the Land Trust Parking lot.

## See the Galapagos Islands!

This month, North Alabama's own Freddie DiPlacido will show us films of her recent visit to the Galapagos Islands and talk about the wonders she saw there. Come join us Wednesday evening, October 17 and see the remarkable wildlife and terrain of these storied islands.

The North Alabama Sierra Club meets at 6:30pm on the third Wednesday of the month at the Huntsville Public Library auditorium at 915 Monroe St. in downtown Huntsville. Everyone is invited to attend.

**Note:** In November, the monthly meeting will be on Thursday evening, November 15. We will meet at the Huntsville recycling facility for a tour. Check for more details next month.

- the Editor

## Partnering With the Community for Change

A recent initiative of the National Sierra Club is to get local groups to work more closely with their communities. On Thursday evening, November 8, people from faith communities across Madison County will gather for a program titled "Justice, Poverty and Public Policy: The Faith Community Responds, 2007." The event features an opening talk by Jim Williams, Executive Director of the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama (PARCA), 10 separate workshops and a closing keynote by Roy Herron, a Tennessee state senator, former minister and professor at Vanderbilt.

The program will be at Trinity United Methodist Church, 607 Airport Rd SW in Huntsville. A box dinner begins at 5:00 p.m., with the opening presentation scheduled for 5:45 p.m. These will be followed by 10 separate workshops on healthcare, education, public transportation, family structure, predatory lending, mental health, the Alabama tax system, the Alabama constitution as well as climate change and environmental justice. Each 45-minute session will be given twice, so individuals can attend any two during the evening.

Through education and conversation, event attendees will discuss overall strategies and specific steps for helping to change public policy in Alabama. The \$15 cost includes materials and a box dinner with childcare at the church for no charge. Reservation deadline is Tuesday, Nov. 6 at 12:00 noon. For reservations or more info, call IMS at 256-536-2401 [www.interfaithmissionservice.org](http://www.interfaithmissionservice.org)

Changing policy to better protect the environment is one of the core missions of the Sierra Club. Come see how you can be a part of change here in Alabama.

- the Editor

## 2008 Sierra Calendars are In!

The Sierra Club calendars for 2008 are in and will be available for sale at the meetings. We will have the large format wall calendars as well as the desk calendars. The calendars make great gifts so get some of your shopping done early and help support the activities of your local and national Sierra groups.

## Have You Made the Switch?

At the monthly meeting in September, Linda Bowen from Huntsville Utilities talked about the Green Power Switch program that allows utility customers to request that a certain amount of their power come from renewable resources such as wind and solar generated power. Ms. Bowen also told us that Huntsville Utilities only has about 540 Green Power Switch customers! For a somewhat upscale city our size with a large population of educated outdoor enthusiasts, this is an awfully low number. The local Sierra group alone has about 1,000 members, so obviously all of us aren't doing our part.

Green Power is a little bit more expensive, but we all are going to have to sacrifice a bit to help out. Green Power can be bought from the Utility in 150kw-hour blocks, which adds about \$4 to your bill each month. That's not a lot to show that we want more energy coming from renewable resources.

To find out more and join the switch, go to <http://www.tva.gov/greenpowerswitch/> or call 535-1200 and ask about the Green Power Switch.

Let's do our part.

- the Editor

## Tuesday Night Hikes Are Downtown

Starting October 2, the Tuesday night hikes moved downtown as the days have grown shorter. Downtown Huntsville and the historic district is a great area for walking and you can still get in your regular 2-3 mile walks on Tuesday nights. We meet at 6:00pm at the Land Trust parking lot on 907 Franklin St.

For more information, call Nancy at 882-9408.

## Having Trouble Seeing the Stars Lately?

The International Dark-sky Association is working for more efficient outdoor lighting to help conserve energy and protect nocturnal habitats. Monte Sano State Park is working to become an International Dark Sky Park to raise awareness of the need to conserve energy and protect inspiring view of the night sky by using outdoor lighting more efficiently, intelligently, and responsibly.

People are beginning to recognize that light pollution wastes money and energy, interferes with celestial observations, destroys nocturnal wildlife habitats, and creates nuisances and safety hazards for the community, drivers, and aviators.

The Sierra Club encourages its members and other concerned citizens to support the IDSP project by eliminating light pollution sources around their homes and encouraging others to do the same.

For more information on the Dark Skies program, go to [www.darksky.org](http://www.darksky.org). To see what Monte Sano State Park is doing, go to [www.nature.nps.gov/air/lightscapes](http://www.nature.nps.gov/air/lightscapes)

- Doug Horacek

## Muddy Waters Campaign

On Tuesday, November 13, come learn about the Muddy Waters Campaign, encouraging developers to do a better job installing barriers in their site clearing and development. There is a lot of development going on in the Huntsville area and much of it causes large amounts of soil runoff that chokes streams killing much of the wildlife. There is a simple set of standards that builders can use when developing property to limit runoff and protect our waterways.

If you are concerned about the quality of our streams come to the next meeting of the Flint River Conservation Association to learn more about this topic and what you can do to help. The meeting will be November 13 at 6:30pm with a potluck, so please bring a dish to share. The meeting will take place at the Engineering Annex, 320 Fountain Circle, across from the Bicentennial Children's Fountain. For more information call Soos at 427-5116.

- the Editor

## Alabama Water Watch Workshop

The next workshop for citizen water monitors will be on Friday, November 30, and Saturday Dec. 1. The workshop will cover chemical analysis on Friday and analysis for macro invertebrates and E. Coli on Saturday. Call Soos for more info and to register at 427-5116.

- the Editor



### NA Sierra Club Chicks Storm Len Foote Hike Inn and Springer Mountain

On a recent trip seven members of the somewhat dubious club known as the NA Sierra Club Chicks descended on the Len Foote Hike Inn. The vigorous five mile hike to the inn was enjoyed by all and included wildflowers, butterflies, and one rattlesnake. The evening program at the inn was on butterflies and moths. After a memorable night, the next day they hiked to Springer Mountain the Southern Terminus of the AT. Many photos were taken as they posed and made plans for an upcoming calendar.

After returning to the hike inn and a delicious dinner they made their way to the Star Base to observe the annual Perseid meteor shower. The descent on Sunday was by way of the AT approach trail after which the group visited Amicalola Falls a cascading waterfall at the park. They then proceeded to the quaint Dahlonega General Store at which one member of the group was so overcome with joy that she began to dance to the tunes on the player piano. Another stop was made at Neels Gap at the Walasi-Yi center which houses the Mountain Crossings outfitter store and is the only building that the AT goes through. During the trip home plans were made for the next adventure of the NA Sierra Club Chicks.

### Conservation Fundraising

The Institute for Conservation Leadership's popular one-day fundraising workshop is coming to Huntsville on November 17th. "Big Money for Small Organizations" will be held Saturday, November 17, from 9:30am-4:30pm at the Huntsville Public Services Building, 320 Fountain Circle, across from the Bicentennial Children's Fountain at the Corner of Williams Street and Fountain Circle.

Facilitator Andy Robinson, a member of ICL's Consultant Network, has been raising money for social change since 1980. He brings to his trainings contagious enthusiasm, fundraising expertise, and practical suggestions for participants.

Cost: \$110 for the first person; \$70 for each additional person from the same organization. This fee includes the one-day workshop, all materials, and lunch. Organizations are encouraged to send teams of two or more staff and board members, so they can work together and support one another in implementing changes after the workshop. Register online by October 26th. For more information contact Quentin Samuels at ICL at [quentin@icl.org](mailto:quentin@icl.org) or 240-638-3599.

Sponsored by Institute for Conservation Leadership, Alabama Rivers Alliance, and the Flint River Conservation Association.

- the Editor

### Carpooling Etiquette

We are all paying more for gas these days. If you carpool with someone on a hike, please remember to offer the driver some money for gas.

Also keep in mind that people volunteer to carpool because they want to help save gas on outings. The Sierra Club is not obligated to provide carpooling so if you show up for a hike, be prepared to drive your own car, and offer to drive others once in a while. Thanks!

- the Editor

### Honeysuckle Eradication Needs Your Help

The Sierra Club is serious about helping to prevent the spread of invasive plants which crowd out native plants and adversely affect the animal populations that live in those habitats. Here in North Alabama, honeysuckle and wild privet are particularly noxious plants. They crowd out young trees all over Monte Sano, the Hays Preserve and other areas.

The local Sierra group has been working to eradicate honeysuckle from an area on eastern Monte Sano for the last few years and they could use your help. Please watch the newsletter and note when there is an eradication effort and try to come down and donate an hour or two of your time. This is not difficult work and it is a good opportunity to get outside and help take care of the areas where you go to hike, bike and relax. Other groups such as the Huntsville Land Trust and the Hays Preserve sponsor eradication projects as well and can always use volunteers. There are usually beverages provided and the volunteers have a good time while they work.

Make a commitment to come out a couple of times a year and do your part.

Thanks – the Editor

# North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

## October - November 2007

### 2007 ExCom Members

Chair	Liz Poleretzky	461-5819
Vice-Chair and Treasurer	Sam Denham	539-1033
Conservation chair	Doug Horacek	772-6788
Fund Raising	Helga Sowa	534-5656
Membership	Dave Kostowny	325-2296
Newsletter	Jack Drost	880-2644
Outings	Lee Hollingsworth	461-3060
	And Tom Burley	883-4267
Publicity	Sandy Kiplinger	498-1023
Programs	Judy Burley	883-4267
Secretary	Linda Griffin	772-8653
Tuesday Hikes	Nancy Dudney	882-9408
Web Page	Steven Baty	489-0990

### Huntsville Utilities Green Power Switch program at September meeting

#### Hike Ratings

**General Note:** Saturday outings may take all day and last into early evening. The Sierra Club encourages carpooling to save fuel, but you should be prepared to drive your own car on club outings.

**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-** Over 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.

#### Saturday, October 13 - Monte Sano

**History Hike. Moderate.** Join us for our annual trip around Monte Sano visiting the historic Lily Pond, O'Shaughnessy home site, Chalybeate Spring, The Stone Cuts, Tollgate Road, Cold Spring, The Railroad Bed and Three Caves. 8 miles of moderate downhill hiking. Meet at the hiker's parking lot at 8:00am. Bring lunch and water. Bruce Martin 256-725-2168.

#### Saturday, October 13 - Cloudland

**Canyon hike. Moderate.** Located on the western edge of Lookout Mountain, this park straddles a deep gorge cut into the mountain by Sitton Gulch Creek with an elevation change from 800 to 1980 feet. We will hike to the bottom of the gorge where there are two waterfalls cascading into pools below and then hike the rim trail that should provide spectacular vistas. Bring lunch; we will have dinner (optional) at a local restaurant. Meet at the Publix in Hampton Cove at 9:00am. Tom Burley, 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@knology.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@knology.net)

#### Tuesday, October 16, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Bruce Martin, 256-725-2168.

#### Sunday, October 21 - Wade Mountain

**Wildflower hike. Easy.** Meet at 1:00pm at Wade Mountain at Spragins Hollow parking lot. We will be looking for Great Plains Ladies Tresses. Bring water, sturdy hiking boots and bug spray. Call Doug Horacek, 772-6788.

#### Tuesday, October 23, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Virgil DeStefano, 539-0348.

#### Excom Meeting

**Thursday, October 25, 5:30.** Liz, 461-5819

#### Sat-Sun, October 27-28 – Sipsey

**Backpack. Easy.** We will hike 4 miles and camp near the Sipsey River. There will be opportunities for exploring the area as well as additional hiking. Return on Sunday. Contact Liz Poleretzky, [hiker@knology.net](mailto:hiker@knology.net) or 461-5819 for meeting location and time.

#### Sunday, October 28 – Honeysuckle

**Elimination.** Meet at 1:00pm at trail across from Fagan Spring Apartments. Bring tools and gloves. Call Doug Horacek at 772-6788 for information.

#### Tuesday, October 30, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Nancy Dudney, 882-9408.

#### Saturday, November 3 - Walls of Jericho

**hike. Strenuous.** The Walls of Jericho is a large, bowl-shaped natural amphitheater that shoots water out of holes and cracks in the canyon wall during times of high water flow.

This unique area consists of more than 21,000 acres of rivers, forested uplands and caves spreading across the Alabama and Tennessee state line. This beautiful tract, which was once the hunting grounds of Davy Crockett, contains a diverse array of plants and animals. The hike is 7 miles and strenuous with a 1000 feet elevation gain. Bring lunch and we will dine afterwards at a local restaurant. Meet at 10:00am at the Publix in Hampton Cove. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@knology.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@knology.net)

#### Sunday, November 4 - Wade Mountain

**Greenway hike. Moderate.** Meet at 1:00pm at the Greenway on Pulaski Pike. Moderate 5 mile hike beginning on the paved greenway then on unpaved trails beyond. Liz Poleretzky, [hiker@knology.net](mailto:hiker@knology.net) or 461-5819.

#### Tuesday, November 6, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Helga Sowa, 534-5656.

#### Newsletter Labeling

#### Wednesday, November 7, 5:30pm.

Stanlieo's Sub Villa, corner of Monroe St. and Governor's Dr. Liz, 461-5819.

#### Saturday, November 10 - Alabama

**Heritage Wild & Rural Art Show.** We will caravan to the Blackwood gallery in Springville (near Birmingham) for this Alabama Sierra Club sponsored art show. We will stop for lunch along the way. Please contact Liz Poleretzky, [hiker@knology.net](mailto:hiker@knology.net) or 461-5819 for meeting location and time.

#### Fri-Sun, November 9-11 - Cold Mtn

**Backpack. Strenuous.** Join us on this strenuous trip to a great campsite at 6000 feet in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. Ten backpacking miles on Saturday with significant elevation gain. Depart noon Friday, campground stay that night. Steven Baty, 489-0990.

#### Sunday, November 11 – Honeysuckle

**Elimination.** Meet at 1:00pm at trail across from Fagan Spring Apartments. Bring tools and gloves. Call Doug Horacek at 772-6788 for more information.

#### Tuesday, November 13, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819.

#### Saturday, November 17 – Wade

**Mountain Evening hike. Moderate.** Meet at the Olive Garden at 4:00pm or at Wade Mountain at the Spragins Hollow trailhead at 6:00pm for quarter moon outing. Cancelled if overcast or rain. Bring flashlight, warm clothes and sturdy hiking

boots. Call Doug Horacek for more information at 772-6788.

#### Saturday, November 17 - Mt. Cheaha

**Fall Color hike. Moderate.** We will hike the Pinhoti Trail, 8 miles total, from the Cheaha trailhead (parking lot) along the ridgeline to Caney Head. Beautiful panoramic views of the mountains and valleys in their autumn splendor. Then descend on the Chinnabee trail to the Turnipseed campsite to pick up shuttle vehicle. Bring water, lunch, sturdy boots or strong ankles. Optional dinner afterwards at the state park restaurant and watch the sunset. Meet 7:00am at Hampton Cove Publix parking lot at McDonalds or 9:30 at Oxford Shoneys. Lee Hollingsworth, 461-3060.

#### Tuesday, November 20, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Judy Burley, 883-420.

#### Saturday, November 24 – Monte Sano

**perimeter hike. Strenuous.** We will hike around Monte Sano without reaching the summit. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot on Bankhead Parkway at 7:45am.

Bring lunch and water; the hike will last all day. For more information, call Charlie Cohen 837-3622 hm, 961-7901 wk, or [charlie.cohen@nasa.gov](mailto:charlie.cohen@nasa.gov)

#### Tuesday, November 27, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Bruce Martin, 256-725-2168.