

January 2008

Sierra

North Alabama Group



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

Meet at Von Braun Planetarium
Thursday, January 17 at 6:30

Tuesday Night Downtown Hikes

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

January Meeting at Von Braun Planetarium

For the January meeting, Richard Norman will present a program about the Von Braun Astronomical Society and the Dark Sky initiative. The meeting will be at the Von Braun Planetarium on Monte Sano at 6:30pm, **Thursday, Jan 17.**

Monte Sano State Park has applied for the International Dark Sky Park (IDSP) award in an effort to reduce light pollution by raising public awareness and stimulating community involvement. IDSP is a new award program created by the U.S. National Park Service and awarded by the International Dark Sky Association. To earn the award parks must retrofit or replace fixtures to eliminate light pollution within the park and work with the surrounding communities to reduce sources of light pollution around the park. Community support and involvement in actively eliminating sources of light pollution is critical to reclaiming the beauty of the night sky and earning the award. The park cannot achieve this goal alone. The IDSP award would be a community achievement that we could all take pride in while we once again enjoy the stars.

To learn more about this award and the Dark Sky Initiative, come to the Planetarium on Thursday, January 17. You can also find out more at www.vbas.org/darksky

To reach the planetarium, take Nolan Drive into Monte Sano State Park. Once in the park, follow the road to the left at the first intersection until you reach VBAS's entrance on the left. There will be a gate with a sign that says Von Braun Astronomical Society. Make sure to bring a few dollars for the main gate to Monte Sano State Park.

- the Editor

Beginner's Backpacking Class to be Held

Let's face it – there are a lot of great wilderness areas you cannot get to on a day hike. Have you ever wanted to try backpacking but were intimidated by all the equipment and know-how necessary for spending a night or two out in the wilderness? What equipment do you really need? How do you pack food, clothing, a tent and sleeping bag for overnight trips without having to carry 100 pounds on your back? Come to the Beginners Backpacking class to find out. This is a class to introduce people to backpacking basics. Learn how to select tents, backpacks, stoves, sleeping bags, water purification, and clothing. The class will run approximately eight hours beginning at 9:00 am. You do not have to have your equipment to take the class.

The class will include a backpack in Savage Gulf on March 8th to test your new skills. Savage Gulf is a beautiful canyon that is part of the South Cumberland Wilderness area in Tennessee near Monteagle and Sewanee. It will be a wonderful spot to try out your new backpacking skills.

There is a \$20 fee for the backpacking class payable to the North Alabama Sierra Club. Pre-register with Tom Burley at 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@knology.net This has been a very popular class when it has been held in the past so sign up now to secure your spot.

- Tom Burley

Ivory-Billed Woodpecker Foundation Meeting

This is our first, second chance. That is the motto of the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker Foundation, a locally-based group whose mission is to Locate, Recover, Protect, Manage, Preserve, and Conserve the Ivory Billed Woodpecker and other rare, endangered, or threatened species populations and their habitats through scientific research, documentation, and by educating the general public.

Working with leading woodpecker experts, the foundation has set the following goals/objectives:

- Formulate low impact search protocols that provide a thorough and documented search throughout the Ivory-

Billed Woodpecker's historic range.

- Establish, through photographic and video proof, that the Ivory Billed Woodpecker still persists.
- Provide an educational resource library and database to educate the public and searchers on the Ivory Billed Woodpecker and its habitat needs.
- Develop a comprehensive conservation program for the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker.

The Foundation will be holding its second annual meeting in Huntsville the weekend of February 22, 23 and 24. The weekend will include birding tours at Wheeler Wildlife Refuge, presentations by Bobby Harrison and Jaime Hill who rediscovered the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker, lunch and dinner get-togethers for birders and others interested in saving threatened regional wildlife. Saturday night there will be a gala dinner with guest speaker Dr. Jerry Jackson, a recognized world expert on the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker. The Saturday evening gala is a fundraiser to help the Foundation continue its work. Events begin Friday, February 22 at 6:00pm with dinner at Gibson's Barbecue on South Memorial Parkway and continue through Sunday morning.

For more information about the weekend events and how to register, go to the Foundation web page <http://www.ibwfound.org/foundation.cfm> and click on the link for 2nd Annual Gala. You can also call Call: Bobby Harrison @ 256-337-3368 or 256-776-2003 evenings.

- the Editor

Indian Creek Watershed Protection

Rocket City Water Watch (RCWW) invites you to attend a public meeting to officially kickoff a grant project in the Indian Creek Watershed. The meeting will be held at the Monrovia Elementary School Art Building on January 15, 2008 beginning at 6:00pm.

Early in 2007 a partnership between NASA, TVA, and the Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) was formed to address sedimentation and organic loading in Indian Creek. The previously mentioned partners have hired Danny Williams (retired NRCS) to write the Indian Creek Watershed Management Plan and apply for/coordinate the grant. On October 22, 2007 the Madison County SWCD was awarded the grant. The grant includes education/outreach efforts, the implementation of best management practices (agricultural and urban), and pre/post water quality monitoring. Rocket City Water Watch needs your help to ensure pre/post water quality monitoring continues in the watershed. If you know of anyone interested in attending this meeting please pass this message along.

For more information on the meeting and on initiatives to protect the Indian Creek watershed, contact Ben Morrow, 256-544-5573 or ben.morrow@nasa.gov.

Learn About Local Nature Preserves

Dr. Doug Phillips of Alabama Public Television's Emmy-nominated series Discovering Alabama will take you on a journey to discover the wonders and importance of the Hays Nature Preserve and Goldsmith Schiffman Wildlife Sanctuary in south-central Madison County. Please make plans to attend this inspiring lecture.

You will also learn about membership and volunteer opportunities with the newly formed Friends of the Preserve and Sanctuary, an organization devoted to preserving these beautiful natural spaces for our enjoyment, for our children, and for future generations.

The presentation will be Tuesday, January 29 at 7:00 pm at the Monte Sano State Park Lodge.

For more information, contact Soos Weber (256) 427-5116 or susan.weber@hsvcity.com

North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

January – February 2008

2008 ExCom Members

Chair	Liz Poleretzky	461-5819
Vice-Chair	Mirko Rakigijja	772-8548
Treasurer	Sam Denham	539-1033
Conservation	Doug Horacek	772-6788
Fundraising	Judy Burley	883-4207
Membership	Dave Kostowny	325-2296
Outings	Tom Burley	883-4267
Political chair	Joe Imhof	858-3626
Publicity	Sandy Kiplinger	498-1023
Secretary	Linda Griffin	772-8653
Tuesday Hikes	Nancy Dudney	882-9408
Newsletter	Jack Drost	880-2644
Web Page	Steven Baty	489-0990

January Meeting at Von Braun Planetarium 6:30

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, Jan 12 – 2nd Annual Mountain Mist half marathon hike.

Part I Strenuous. Follow the trails of the runners but at a hiker's pace. The Monte Sano side is 13 miles, Land Trust 15. Weather dictates which side we hike first. Meet at the Monte Sano State Park Hikers' parking lot at 7:30am sharp (we don't want to finish this in the dark!). Bring snacks, water, good hiking boots and a few bucks for the entrance fee. Sandy Kiplinger, sandykip@juno.com.

Sunday, Jan 13 - Green Mountain hike. Easy. Meet in the Madison County Nature Trail parking lot at 2:00pm. We will walk around the lake a time or two. Optional dinner after. Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819 or hiker@knology.net

Tuesday, Jan 15, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Bruce Martin, 256-725-2168.

Thursday, Jan 17 – Jan meeting at Von Braun Planetarium on Monte Sano. Richard Norman will present a program about the Von Braun Astronomical Society and the Dark Sky initiative. 6:30pm. For more information, call Judy Burley, 883-4207.

Saturday, Jan 19 – 2nd Annual Mountain Mist half marathon hike. Part II. Strenuous. More of the above! See Jan 12 entry for details. Sandy Kiplinger, sandykip@juno.com.

Saturday, Jan 19 - Wolf Cove, Cave Cove hike. Strenuous. We will hike 7-9 miles, some off trail. This is a beautiful area with waterfalls, rock bluffs and caves. Bring flashlight, lunch, and water. Meet at Winchester Rd Publix at 8:00am. Joette 776-3551.

Sunday, Jan 20. Honeysuckle elimination party. Meet at 1:00pm across from Fagan Spring Apartments. Bring loppers and gloves. Sierra club will provide three loppers and honeysuckle popper, and water. Call Doug Horacek for information at 772-6788.

Tuesday, Jan 22, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819.

Excom Meeting

Thursday, Jan 24, 5:30. Liz, 461-5819.

Saturday, Jan 26 - Signal Point hike. Moderate. Signal Point is the highest point on Signal Mountain. The hike from Signal Point to Edwards Point is part of the Cumberland Trail with striking overlooks of the Tennessee River Gorge. The hike is about seven miles. Bring lunch and we will dine afterwards at a local restaurant. Meet at 8:30am at the Publix in Hampton Cove. Tom Burley at 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@knology.net

Saturday, Jan 26 – Monte Sano hike. Moderate. We will be hiking the Keith trail. Meet at 9:00am at the Hiker's parking lot at Monte Sano State Park. Bring water, snacks and wear sturdy hiking boots. Doug Horacek at 772-6788.

Tuesday, Jan 29, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Ken Shriker, 772-9442.

Sunday, Feb 3 - Wade Mountain Greenway walk. Easy. We will walk a couple of hours on paved and unpaved trails. Meet at 1:00pm at the Wade Mountain Greenway trailhead on Pulaski Pike (1/2 mile south of the Toyota Plant). Liz, 461-5819 or hiker@knology.net

Tuesday, Feb 5, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Nancy Dudney, 882-9408.

Saturday, Feb 9 - Down East hike. Strenuous. 12 miles. Meet 8:00am at the Monte Sano Hikers parking lot. We will go down to the Flat Rock, then southward to McKay Hollow, up to the Picnic Ground, and back to the parking lot. Bring lunch and water. Charlie Cohen, 837-3622 hm, 961-7901 wk.

Newsletter Labeling

Wednesday, Feb 13, 5:30pm. Stanlieo's Sub Villa, corner of Monroe St. and Governor's Dr. Liz, 461-5819.

Tuesday, Feb 12, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Bruce Martin, 256-725-2168.

Saturday, Feb 16 - Pigeon Mt hike, Strenuous. Pigeon Mountain is a spur off the east side of Lookout Mountain and is part of the Cumberland Plateau. We will hike the Pocket Trail past a picturesque waterfall, wildflowers, and a wide range of geological formations. Bring lunch and water. The hike is 8 miles with a 1200 ft elevation gain. We will eat at a local restaurant on the way back. Meet at Publix in Hampton Cove at 8:15am. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@knology.net

Sunday, Feb 17 - Rainbow Mt hike. Moderate. Rainbow Mountain is the home of Balance Rock and is in the heart of city of Madison. Directions - go south on Hughes road off Hwy 72 to Thomas Dr, go up Thomas to Concorde, turn left, make right at Stoneridge and go up to top of hill and turn right. Go to the water tower on Stoneridge. Meet at 1:30pm at parking lot near water tower. Contact Dave Kostowny at 682-1233 or daverave@knology.net

Sunday, Feb 17 - Wade Mt Greenway walk. Easy. We will walk a couple of hours on paved and unpaved trails. Meet at 1:00pm at the Wade Mt Greenway trailhead on Pulaski Pike (1/2 mile south of the Toyota Plant). Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819 or hiker@knology.net

Sunday, Feb 17 - Honeysuckle Elimination. Meet at 1:00pm at Land Trust property across from Fagan Spring Apartments. Bring clippers, loppers and gloves. Doug Horacek 772-6788.

Tuesday, Feb 19, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Judy Burley, 883-4207.

Saturday, Feb 23 - Beginners Backpacking Class. This is a class to introduce people to backpacking basics. Learn how to select tents, backpacks, stoves, sleeping bags, water purification, and clothing. The class will run approximately eight hours beginning at 9:00 am. You do not have to have your

North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

January – February 2008

equipment to take the class. The class will include a backpack on March 8th to test your new skills. There is a \$20 fee payable to the North Alabama Sierra Club. Pre-register with Tom Burley at 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@knology.net

Saturday, Feb 23 – Carter Mt hike.

Strenuous. 8 mile exploratory hike in the Carter Mt area in Tennessee near Walls of Jericho. Bring lunch, water. Meet at 8:30am at Winchester Rd Publix (by McDonalds). Joette Carter 776-3551.

Saturday, Feb 23 – Flat Rock hike.

Moderate. Meet at 8:00am at the Monte Sano Hikers' parking lot. Hike will be 8 miles and take about 8 hours. Bring lunch and water. Doug Horacek 772-6788.

Tuesday, Feb 26, 6:00pm - Downtown

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

Sat-Sun, March 8-9 - Savage Gulf

Backpack. Moderate. Although this is the backpack for the backpacking class everyone is welcome. We will follow the Big Creek Gulf rim trail that promises spectacular vistas to Alum Gap Campground. After setting up camp there will be an optional side trip to Greeter Falls. We return the next day by way of the Laurel trail. We will eat at a local restaurant on the way back Sunday. Meet at the Publix on Winchester Road at 9:00 a.m. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@knology.net

Sat-Sun, April 5-6 - All Ladies

backpack at Cane Creek Preserve.

Moderate. More details in the March newsletter. For more information, contact Sandy Kiplinger, sandykip@juno.com or Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819, hiker@knology.com

Thu-Sun, June 12-15 - Max Patch to Hot Springs Backpack. Strenuous.

This is a 20-mile backpack with significant elevation changes over two days. We will depart on Thursday at 8:30am arriving in Hot Springs around 3:00pm and take a shuttle to Max Patch. It a gentle climb across the southernmost bald on the AT and abounds with wildflowers that is reminiscent of the opening scene from the Sound of Music. 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 depend on the number of participants but will be approximately \$30 per person to cover shuttle, campsite,

and hot tub. Group size will be limited to a maximum of ten and participants must commit by June 1st.

For further information contact Tom

Burley at 883-4267 or

tdburleyhiker@knology.net

Fri-Sun, July 11-13 - Len Foote Hike

Inn. Moderate to Strenuous. We will depart at 8:00 am Friday to Amicalola State Park in GA and hike to the inn. On Saturday we will hike to Springer Mountain the southern terminus of the Appalachian Trail and back. We will hike out on Sunday via the AT approach trail and return. The Hike Inn has bunk beds and hot showers. Breakfast and dinner are provided each day with trail lunches available for purchase. Coffee, lemonade, and tea are provided. The cost is \$112 per person which covers both nights. If you want a room by yourself or if I cannot match you with a person the cost is \$153. Payment of \$52 guarantees you a room. After February this trip will be made available as a Sierra Club trip. Cancellations prior to two weeks will result in a \$10 cancellation fee. After this the deposit will be forfeited. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@knology.net