

March 2008

# Sierra

North Alabama Group



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

**Backpacking the Grand Canyon**  
**Downtown Huntsville Library,**  
**Wednesday, March 19 at 6:30**

### **Tuesday Night Hikes**

Meet at 6:00pm at the Monte Sano  
Hiker's Parking lot.

### **Backpacking the Grand Canyon**

Dreaming of an adventure trip somewhere? How about backpacking in the Grand Canyon? Come to the March meeting of the North Alabama Sierra Club and find out just what it takes to hike down into the Canyon with all your gear and spend several days and nights in one of the most spectacular places in the country.

Dr. Ron Dykes, a retired physician from Scottsboro, has been to the Grand Canyon multiple times, making five backpacking trips there. Each time he spent 5-6 days in the more remote areas of the Grand Canyon. Dr. Dykes has been on most of the trails on the South Rim, has hiked the North Rim, and has hiked down to the bottom of the canyon on every trip. He has also made two rafting trips through the Grand Canyon.

Dr. Dykes plans to talk about his experiences backpacking in the Grand Canyon and what he has learned. He will share his knowledge with us, explaining how to prepare for a hike into the canyon, what to expect, and how to get the most out of it. He will also have slides from his hikes to show.

Come join us for what should be a wonderful talk. You might just get the encouragement you need to finally plan that trip to the Grand Canyon.

The North Alabama Sierra Club meets monthly at the Huntsville Madison County Public Library in the main auditorium. The library is on Monroe St. just off Governor's Drive. The meeting will be Wednesday, March 19 at 6:30pm. Everyone is invited to attend.

- the Editor

### **Turn off Your Lights for Climate Change**

World Wildlife Fund's Earth Hour is catching on across America following the tremendous success of last year's event in Sydney, Australia. This global phenomenon will spread across six continents in 2008, including hundreds of communities like ours in the United States.

Chicago will serve as the U.S. flagship city for Earth Hour in 2008, with Atlanta, Phoenix and San Francisco joining as leading partner cities. But everyone throughout the U.S. and around the world is invited and encouraged to turn off their lights for an hour on March 29 at 8:00 pm local time--whether at home or at work, with friends and family or solo, in a big city or a small town.

What will you do when the lights are off? Why not change out those old energy-wasting light bulbs to new, inexpensive and efficient compact fluorescents. Earth Hour is also a great time to consider what you and your family can do in the days and months to reduce emissions and live more sustainably.

To alter the course of climate change we must act now. The U.S. is the world's leading emitter of carbon dioxide—over 20 tons per person every year. One person committed to reducing energy consumption can make a difference, and millions of us working together can change the world. To find out more about the Lights Off hour and get ideas on what you can do to help slow our effects on climate change, go to the web site at <http://www.earthhourus.org/>.

Climate change is not just something to talk about; it is a problem we must all do something about. We all contribute to the problem and we can all make small changes in the way we consume and live our lives. A small effort by millions of people can make a huge difference.

- Steven Baty

### **You Can Help Reduce Light Pollution**

As more and more of the old mercury vapor street lamps are replaced with the sodium variety, the orange glow of our cities at night gets worse and worse. Light pollution is drawing increased attention resulting in movements like the

Dark Sky Initiative <http://www.darkskyinitiative.org/> It's all well and good to support such programs, but what can you do about that glaring street lamp outside your window?

Below are the steps you can take to get your local street lamp shielded in such a way that it properly illuminates the street and surrounding areas to provide visibility and security, but cuts down drastically on the light pollution.

The City of Huntsville has a program to install shields over street lights, primarily for the purpose of eliminating intrusive or obnoxious lighting into residents' homes. Light pollution abatement is not the primary purpose of the program, but the shield does accomplish this as well. The shield costs \$50 which you will need to pay. You could split this with your neighbors. If you have a problem with a street light glaring into your home, a partial or full shade may be installed.

To get a street light fully shielded, you must get the agreement of your neighbors. Write a simple letter to Huntsville Utilities explaining how the glare from a nearby street lamp is intrusive in your home, for example that the lamp glare in your bedroom window prevents you from getting a good night's sleep. Then get your neighbors to sign the letter. This is important, as having multiple signatures on the letter will give it more weight. This letter, a phone call, and \$50, will get a shade installed on the street lamp outside your home.

Here are the steps:

1. Call Jamie Patterson at Huntsville Utilities (535-1370). Describe where you live and the street light that's bothering you so he can look it up on a map.
2. He can either send you a form to fill out to get your neighbor's approval, or you can write a letter yourself and obtain your neighbor's approval that way.
3. Send in the form or letter, along with a check for \$50. Huntsville Utilities is very responsive to these requests.

- Jeff Delmas. Reprinted with permission from Via Stellaris, the newsletter of the Von Braun Astronomical Society, Vol. 35, Issue 9, September 2007

### **Sewanee Lecture on Environmental Activism**

The University of the South in Sewanee is holding a series of lectures entitled "How Then Shall We Live?" The series addresses topics of global awareness and personal social responsibility. Monday, March 24 at 7:00pm, there will be a panel discussion on Environmental Activism. One of the speakers, Hunter Lovins, is co-author of "Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution" and is a contributor to many other green revolution articles and studies. Her areas of expertise include sustainable development, globalization, energy policy, climate change and land management.

Eban Goodstein, another speaker, is the organizer of the Focus the Nation project <http://www.focusthenation.org>. His writings include Economics and the Environment, (John Wiley and Sons: 2007; The Trade-off Myth: Fact and Fiction about Jobs and the Environment (Island Press: 1999); and Fighting for Love in the Century of Extinction: How Passion and Politics Can Stop Global Warming (University of Vermont Press: 2007). Goodstein's current research focuses on the economics of global climate change, a subject on which he has spoken widely.

Come hear these speakers talk about how we can act locally in small ways to help preserve our environment. For directions see: <http://www.sewanee.edu/map/>

- Steven Baty

# North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

## March – April 2008

### 2008 ExCom Members

Chair	Mirko Rakigijja	772-8548
Vice-Chair	Liz Poleretzky	461-5819
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

### Wed, March 19 Meeting - Mushrooms of North AL Downtown Library 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.

**Sunday, March 16 - Monte Sano hike and rockhop. Moderate.** Hike through the Big Cove Creek Forever Wild addition to Monte Sano State Park. Some off trail, with a 45-minute rock hop, right here in our own backyard. 3-4 hours, rated moderate, but hike leader approval required. Meet at Sam Denham's house, 4333 Chickasaw Dr SE 539-1033(h), 961-0436(w).

**Tuesday, March 18, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.** 3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. Nancy Dudney, 882-9408.

**Saturday, March 22 - Reuben Creek hike. Moderate.** We will hike 7-8 miles in a beautiful area near Sherwood, TN. Numerous creek crossings, wild flowers, small falls, interesting rocks. Meet at 9:00am at Publix on Winchester Rd. Bring lunch and water, possible early dinner afterward in Sewanee. Joette, 776-3551

**Tuesday, March 25, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.** 3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. Ken Shrider, 772-9442.

#### Excom Meeting

**Thursday, March 27, 5:30.** Mirko, 772-8548.

**Sat-Sun, March 29-30 - 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. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net)

**Saturday, March 29 - Buck's Pocket hike and Car Camp. Easy.** Join us just for the day or come prepared to car camp at Buck's Pocket State Park. Bring a lunch since we will hike the trail and then visit High Falls and the slide rapid. Meet at the Franklin Building at 8:00am. Doug Horacek, 772-6788.

**Tuesday, April 1, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.** 3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. Judy Burley, 883-4267.

**Sat-Sun, April 5-6 - All Ladies Backpack. Cane Creek Canyon Nature Preserve. Easy.** Let's go girls! Dust off those packs and check out this hidden jewel that was featured in Alabama Living magazine. After setting up camp, relax with your favorite book or explore the canyon through a guided tour. For more info, contact Sandy Kiplinger ([sandykip@juno.com](mailto:sandykip@juno.com)) or Liz ([hiker@knology.net](mailto:hiker@knology.net)).

**Tuesday, April 8, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.** 3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. Virgil DeStefano, 539-0348.

#### Newsletter Labeling

**Wednesday, April 9, 5:30pm.** Stanlieo's Sub Villa, corner of Monroe St. and Governor's Dr. Liz, 461-5819.

**Fri-Sun, April 11-13 - Smoky Mountains backpack. Strenuous.** This is a 26 mile backpack with a 3,100 ft elevation changes over two days. We will begin on the Lakeshore Trail and traverse Jonas Creek, Welch Ridge, and Bear Creek Trails back to Lakeshore Trail with a side trip to High Rocks from which we will have an expansive view to the south of Fontana Lake. We will depart early Friday and return on Sunday. Bring food for two days. Group size limited to eight and leader approval is required. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net)

**Sat-Sun, April 12-13 - Sipsey canoe camp-over. Moderate.** Canoe the Sipsey River from the Cranal road recreation area put-in to the Mims take-out on Hwy 33. Normally this is a day trip but we will venture into a side canyon, explore it and camp over. Canoe and camping gear required. Class 1 water with one small rapid. Call ahead, leader approval required. Lee Hollingsworth, 461-4613wk, or 520-6659.

**Tuesday, April 15, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.** 3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. Alan Greene, 534-7849.

**Saturday, April 19 - Borden Creek/Big Tree hike. Strenuous.** This 14 mile hike is in the Sipsey Wilderness and we will begin at the Borden Creek bridge hiking up the old logging road and down to the Big Tree. We continue along the Sipsey River to the intersection with Borden Creek and return to the trailhead. Bring lunch and we will dine afterwards at a local restaurant. Meet at the Cracker Barrel in Madison at 8:00am or at 7:00 if you want to join us for breakfast. Optional meeting place at the Warrior Mountain Trading Post in Wren at 9:00 am. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net)

**Tuesday, April 22, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.** 3-4 mile hike.

Different location each week. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. Gerdi Keyser, 922-2251.

**Saturday, April 26 - 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 is a unique area that 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 an extraordinarily diverse array of plants and animals. We enter at the Tennessee trailhead and exit on the Alabama trailhead. The hike is approximately 10 miles but rated strenuous due to the 1000 feet elevation gain. Bring lunch and we will dine afterwards at a local restaurant. Meet at 9:00 am at the Publix in Hampton Cove. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net)

**Saturday, May 3 - Fiery Gizzard 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 passing the 500-year-old hemlock, Blue Hole Falls, Sycamore Falls, and the Fruit Bowl rock formation before beginning our arduous climb to Raven Point, a spectacular overlook, and return via the Doghole Trail. The hike is about ten miles and definitely strenuous. Bring lunch and water and we will dine afterwards at a local restaurant. Meet at 8:00am at the Publix on Winchester Road. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net)

**Saturday, May 10 - Monte Sano hike. Strenuous.** We will hike 10-12 miles around the west side of Monte Sano. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot on Bankhead Parkway at 8:00am. Bring lunch and water. Charlie Cohen, 837-3622 (home), 961-7901 (work)

**Saturday, May 17 - Carolina Larkspur hike. Moderate.** We will hike Rainbow Mountain looking for the Carolina Larkspur. Meet at 9:00am. Bring water and sturdy hiking boots. Rated moderate for rough trails. Call Doug Horacek for more information at 772-6788.

**Saturday, May 31 - Stonedoor hike. Strenuous.** The Great Stone Door is a 150-foot deep crevice at the crest of the plateau by which we will enter Savage Gulf. We will follow the Big Creek Gulf trail with a side trip to Ranger Falls and return by way of the Big Creek Rim trail that promises spectacular vistas. 8-10 miles. Bring lunch and water. We will eat at a local restaurant on the way back. Meet at the Publix on Winchester Road at 8:00 a.m. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net)

**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. 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. Group size will be limited to a maximum of ten and participants must commit by June 1. Hike leader approval is required. For further information contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net)