

April 2008

# Sierra

## North Alabama Group



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

**Southwest Canyons and  
Canadian Rockies Downtown  
Huntsville Library, Thursday,  
April 17 at 6:30**

### **Tuesday Night Hikes**

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

### **Southwest and Canadian Rockies Exploration**

Hiking in the snow-covered Canadian Rockies to canyoneering in the American Southwest. The April meeting of the North Alabama Sierra Club will take you from one extreme to another as local members Fred Kilmeyer and Randy Piggott narrate slides of their hikes through these vastly different terrains.

Fred Kilmeyer has spent many years exploring slot canyons in the Southwest and going on day hikes to unusual places. He has been a Sierra member for many years and along with hiking, he also enjoys caving, windsurfing and skiing.

Randy Piggott made trips to Jasper National Park in the Canadian Rockies, in April 2007 and February 2008, and will show us slides of his hikes in this beautiful area. Jasper is the largest and most northerly Canadian rocky mountain national park, part of a spectacular World Heritage Site. Comprised of delicate and carefully protected ecosystems, Jasper's scenery is rugged and mountainous.

Randy has been a Sierra Club member since 2005. He says that the harder (likely to be more scenic, less disturbed and out of the way places) the hike, the more likely he is to attend. Randy has been a Grotto member since 2003 and is currently their webmaster. He is a member of Cave Research Foundation and has spent time surveying and exploring the Mammoth Cave/Flint Ridge cave system in Kentucky.

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 next meeting will be Thursday, April 17 at 6:30pm. Everyone is invited to attend.

- the Editor

### **Earth Day at the Hays Preserve**

Come celebrate Earth Day at the Hays Nature Preserve by the beautiful Flint River. There will be hikes and displays of local animals, a Native American drumming ceremony, exhibitors, food and fun for the whole family. Come prepared for hiking and bring your binoculars. A partial schedule of events follows:

7:30 Birding Hike with Drs. Dick Modlin & Marian Lewis

10:00 Reptile Show with Bill Cruger

11:30 Rare and endangered mammals with Dr. Bloome who will have two very small baby black bears this year

1:00 Ecohike with Forestry professionals

1:30 Release of rehabilitated hawks or owls (tentative)

2:00 Cherokee Indian Mother Drum--A Native American Spirituality Ceremony. Gene Thomas, of Cherokee descent, will have friends join him in honoring the earth with ceremony using a mother drum. Especially for children, they will also offer a "candy dance" experience.

2:30 Ecohike with at Hays Preserve.

Ecohike to Goldsmith Schiffman Wildlife Sanctuary.

All Forestry hikes will begin at the SAF exhibit. Exploratory ecohike at Goldsmith Schiffman Wildlife Sanctuary with Ecologist Soos Weber will begin at the big tent. Earth friendly exhibitors, vendors and conservation groups are set up in the Exhibit Area, as well as Earth Scope Teachers with games for young children. Food is available courtesy of the Boy Scouts of America—Jarrod and Korey Hardy aspiring to their Eagle Scout badges by doing trail projects at the Preserve. Please buy your lunch or drinks from them at the Coke Wagon.

The Hays Nature Preserve is just south of Hampton Cove on Hwy 431 South. Look for the brown sign that says Hays Preserve. For more information, call Soos Weber at 427-5116.

- Soos Weber

### **Action Day for Alabama Rivers**

Tuesday, April 8 was River Action Day in Alabama. Water conservation group staff members as well as other concerned Alabama citizens met in Montgomery for a day of lobbying on behalf of Alabama's rivers and watersheds. The annual action day is sponsored by the Alabama Rivers Alliance along with the Alabama Sierra Club, AL Environmental Council, Conservation Alabama, WildSouth and the Southern Environmental Law Center. The aim of the day was to personally talk to as many Alabama state representatives as possible about the state of Alabama's waters and to inform them about the Alabama Water Agenda, a plan for building policy in Alabama to protect our rivers and streams.

Policy change at the state level is the most effective way to affect change in critical water-related issues. By working with government and elected officials to develop new policy and strengthen existing policy, the citizens of Alabama can improve the conditions of our waters and ensure healthy rivers and streams for future generations. The Alabama Water Agenda is designed to prioritize targeted water policy needs in coordination with grassroots groups and other stakeholders. Each issue will undergo a strategic planning process that will identify the most effective methods for improving state policy to reduce the threats associated with that issue. The Rivers Alliance, in coordination with partner groups, advisors, and stakeholders, will then work to develop state policy or policy changes.

**You can help** by writing your Alabama representative. It is one thing for groups to lobby at the capitol, but a letter from a constituent carries a lot more weight. Write your representative and let them know you are concerned. Go to [www.legislature.state.al.us](http://www.legislature.state.al.us) or call 334-242-7800 (senate) or 334-242-7600 (house) to find out who your representative is. Then write them a letter. Some suggested talking points follow:

- Have they read the Alabama Water Agenda? Send them a copy.
- Our waters are used for many purposes including drinking water, irrigation, navigation, recreation, support of fish and wildlife, and others.
- Describe or list some of the rivers, streams, lakes in your area (in their district) and how you value them.
- The health of our communities and economies can be linked to the health of our waters, therefore it is important to protect these natural resources.
- The Alabama Water Agenda was designed by citizens as a pro-active way to improve the health of our waters, thereby protecting our communities and economies, by improving water policy.
- Comprehensive state-wide water policy is needed in Alabama to protect our water supplies, promote sustainable water uses and conservation, and protect our instream ecosystems and aquatic biodiversity.

To sign up as a volunteer, view the Agenda brochure, or find out more about volunteer opportunities, visit [www.AlabamaWaterAgenda.com](http://www.AlabamaWaterAgenda.com) or contact the Alabama Rivers Alliance at 205-322-6395, toll free 1-877-862-5260

- the Editor

### **Shoals Earth Day Fest**

Following a dedication ceremony on the railroad bridge, the first ever Shoals Earth Day Fest will be held on April 19 in Wilson Park, Florence, from 12:00-5:00pm and will feature artists, music, children's art and science contests and activity tent, exhibits from businesses that promote environmental responsibility, TVA environmental education

booths, renewable energy and recycling displays, educational speakers.

The entire month of April will be filled with nature walks highlighting local wildflowers, birds, and hiking trails. Other events include songwriters in the round with a dinner featuring organic wine and gourmet vegetarian cuisine, tours of a solar home and the new North Alabama Biodiesel plant, a visit to the Entrepreneurial Center and Jack-O-Lantern Farms promoting local products, children's story times, a native plant sale, trail rides, free movie showings and other events at UNA just to name a few. A rigorous anti-litter campaign will be launched by local governments in conjunction with all events.

To find out more about Earth Day in the Shoals area or to get involved, go to <http://www.shoalsearthday.com/>

- the Editor

### **Tuesday Night Hikes on Monte Sano**

Tuesday night hikes are back up on the trails of Monte Sano where the wildflowers are in full bloom right now. See the hike schedule for details and come join us.

Tuesday night hikes leave at 6:00pm, from the Monte Sano State Park Hiker's parking lot. There is a small hiker fee. All dogs must be on a lease while in the parking lot and while on the trail.

North Alabama Sierra Club  
P.O. Box 1893  
Huntsville, AL 35807

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## North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar April – May 2008

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### 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

### Thursday, April 17 Meeting - Downtown Library 6:30

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#### 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, Apr 12 - Quarter moon outing on Wade Mountain. Easy.** Bring flashlight, water and binoculars. Eat at Olive Garden at 6:00pm and meet at the trailhead on Spragins Hollow Drive at 8:00pm. Call Doug Horacek for more information at 772-6788.

**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.

#### Earth Day

##### Saturday, April 19

Hays Nature Preserve in Huntsville. See

article on front page for details.

**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. You may also join us 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.

#### Excom Meeting

**Thursday, April 24, 5:30.** Mirko, 772-8548.

**Saturday, April 26 -Walls of Jericho hike. Strenuous.** This unique area consists of more than 21,000 acres of rivers, forested uplands and caves. We enter at the Tennessee trailhead and exit on the Alabama trailhead. The hike is 10 miles and rated strenuous due to the 1000 feet elevation gain. Bring lunch and we will dine after at a local restaurant. Meet at 9:00am at the Publix in Hampton Cove. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net)

**Tuesday, April 29, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.** 3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. Charlotte Buening, 772-7348.

**Saturday, May 3 - Fiery Gizzard hike. Strenuous.** Perhaps one of the most diverse and beautiful trails in Tennessee, the terrain is steep and 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 3 - Children's First Wildflower Identification Course.** Meet at the Wade Mountain trailhead on Spragins Hollow Road at 8:30am. Bring water and either ankle-high tennis shoes or sturdy hiking boots, a sketch book,

pencils and a camera. Length of hike will be 2-4 hours. We will stop frequently to identify and sketch flowers. RSVP by Thursday evening May 1. Each child will get a daypack and a wildflower identification card. Children must be accompanied by parents. No cost. In case of rain we will reschedule to Saturday, May 10. Call Doug Horacek at 772-6788 to reserve your place.

**Tuesday, May 6, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.** 3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. Randy May, 687-7558.

#### Newsletter Labeling

**Wednesday, May 7, 5:30pm.** Stanlieo's Sub Villa, corner of Monroe St. and Governor's Dr. Liz, 461-5819.

**Saturday, May 10 – Monte Sano hike. Moderate.** 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)

**Tuesday, May 13, 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, May 17 - Rainbow Mountain wildflower hike. Moderate.** We will be looking for the Carolina Larkspur. Meet at 9:00am. Bring water and sturdy hiking boots. Rated moderate for rough trails. Call Doug Horacek at 772-6788. Saturday,

**Monday, May 26 - Tennessee lake party.** 11 am until ? Bring lunch and drinks. Gas grill provided, also paddle boats, canoes, hiking, and swimming. North on Winchester Road to Huntland, TN stop sign. Turn left, go 2 miles to another stop sign and turn right on Hwy 64 East. Go toward Winchester, TN and after you pass UNDER an overpass, turn right onto Hwy 16 South. Go about 10 miles and turn left onto Jehovah Jireh Lane between mile markers 22 and 23 and follow paved road to lake. Call Joette (256) 776-3551 before Monday, May 26.

**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 8:00am. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net)

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**North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar**  
April – May 2008

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**Other Outings / Events**

The following are not sponsored or administered by the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club has no information about the planning 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 our readers.

**Flint River Conservation Association**

**Saturday, April 26 - Cane Creek**

**Canyon Preserve.** Cane Creek Canyon is a wonderful 400+ acre site near Florence that the Nature Conservancy has protected with a conservation easement. Jim and Faye Lacefield bought and protected the area around their home and will host this outing. Registration is required but there will be no fee as we will be carpooling. Call Soos Weber at 427-5116 by April 24 at COB to register.