

May 2008

Sierra

North Alabama Group



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

Pat Byington on the Changing South - Downtown Huntsville Library, Thursday, May 15 at 6:30

Tuesday Night Hikes

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

Special Places in the Changing South

Pat Byington, Senior Associate at the Wilderness Society will be giving this month's presentation on the changing South and the special places we must save in the coming years and decades. He will talk about the need for strong federal, state and local conservation measures to combat urban sprawl and uncontrolled growth. The U.S. loses 6,000 Acres of open space a day – at our current growth rate, by 2030 the United States will have lost 26 million more acres to development.

Pat Byington has been working on Alabama environmental issues for nearly 20 years. Born in Montgomery, Alabama and raised in the Shoals area, Pat's wife Kathy and his 4 year old daughter presently live in Birmingham. Pat currently is the Southeast Senior Associate for the Wilderness Society and consults with Auburn University's Center for Forest Sustainability. He has been Executive Director of the Alabama Environmental Council and Program Manager for the Southern Environmental Center at Birmingham Southern College. Along with these paid positions, Pat volunteers for many environmental efforts including writing the Bama Environmental News – BEN, serving on boards for Scenic Alabama, the Waste Reduction and Technology Transfer Foundation, the Alabama Forest Resource Center and Forever Wild.

Pat Byington has spent many years furthering the conservation efforts in Alabama and he should give an informative and exciting lecture about the Alabama's growth and how we can help ensure that our state both grows and protects its unique natural resources.

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, May 15 at 6:30pm. Everyone is invited to attend.

- the Editor

Speak Up About Light Pollution in Huntsville

The Von Braun Astronomical Society is working with Monte Sano State Park and civic groups like the North Alabama Sierra Club on a community improvement project to preserve the natural environment of the park by reducing light pollution in and around the park as part of the International Dark Sky Park (IDSP) program.

The two main goals to reduce light pollution are to stop making the problem worse and to fix the existing polluting inefficient street lights.

Huntsville City Councilman Russell represents the area around the park, and he and Mayor Spencer have been contacted about the IDSP project and its two main objectives. Councilman Russell is interested in the possibility of doing a street light retrofit on Monte Sano around the park, but he needs to hear from people in the area that eliminating light pollution is important. The new Harris Hills development just got brand new drop down lens cobra head lights along the new street that Huntsville City is building. These new lights are located just North of the Park and the Observatory, and will send light skyward for no useful reason.

The nationally recognized standards for roadway lighting call for the elimination of light above horizontal where ever feasible. The City Council, in particular Councilman Russell, and Huntsville Utility Board need to hear from the citizens that they work for that you support the two objectives above to minimize light pollution, both glare and skyglow. Contact information for Huntsville city officials can be found on the Huntsville City Web site: <http://www.hsvcity.org>

The IESNA standard RP-8-00, Roadway Lighting, Section 4.6, page 15:

"Unless it is essential to have luminous flux aimed above the horizontal... non-cutoff luminaires should not be used for new roadway lighting. ... Roadway lighting luminaires should be at least semi-cutoff. Cutoff and full cutoff should be strongly considered..." Also IESNA RP-33-99, Lighting for Exterior Environments, Section 5.1, page 10:

"Street and area-lighting systems... should be designed to minimize or eliminate direct upward emissions..."

If this city is to become green, we need to act green and not just talk about it. Eliminating light pollution is the green thing to do on many levels. For more on the Dark Sky initiative, go to <http://www.darksky.org>

- Richard Norman, Dark Sky Rep
Von Braun Astronomical Society
astrodude@mchsi.com

Alabama Progress on Environmental Initiatives

There have been a number of significant successes for the environment in Alabama recently. All of these are the result of lobbying by environmental and water conservation groups and ordinary citizens. Speaking up about protecting our resources is important and it does have an effect. If you have written a letter or email or spoken to one of your representatives, or helped with a lobbying initiative, thank you. If you don't speak up because you think your voice will not be heard, read on. We can make a difference.

- ADEM Commission Lowers Cancer-Causing Pollutants. After a yearlong effort, the ADEM Commission voted 3 to 1 to establish stronger standards for more than 50 cancer causing pollutants. The new rule passed by the Commission will change the cancer risk level used to calculate human health criteria from one cancer per 100,000 residents to one cancer in a million. The stronger regulation will bring Alabama in line with neighboring states - Mississippi, Florida and Georgia. Cindy Lowry, executive director of the Alabama Rivers Alliance stated, "This is an important step toward cleaner water in Alabama, which will reduce the risk of harmful health effects to aquatic species and citizens around the state.

- Governor Signs Solid Waste/Recycling Legislation Into Law. Governor Bob Riley celebrated Earth Day signing Alabama's most comprehensive solid waste law in nearly two decades. The Solid Wastes and Recyclable Materials Management Act, sponsored by Rep. Frank McDaniel of Albertville, passed both houses of the Alabama Legislature earlier this month. The new law imposes a statewide tipping fee of \$1 a ton on solid waste disposal which will adequately fund ADEM's solid waste regulatory activities, and provide funds to clean up illegal dumps and support statewide and local recycling efforts.

According to a December 2007 Birmingham News story, records showed that solid waste volume rose in Alabama from 2.79 million tons in 1995 to 4.39 million tons in 2007, a 57% increase. The rise in solid waste volume occurred despite an early 1990s state legislative goal to reduce solid waste by 25%.

- Statewide Water Planning Resolution Passes. Led by State Senator Kim Benefield and Representative Greg Canfield, both the House and Senate passed a resolution, earlier this month that establishes the Alabama Permanent Joint Legislative Committee on Water Policy and Management to develop the Alabama Water Management Plan. This action is the first step toward a comprehensive water policy in Alabama.

- Bama Environmental News. April 24, 2008 #302
<http://www.bamanews.com/>

North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

May – June 2008

Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. Ken Shrider, 772-9442.

Excom Meeting

Thursday, May 22, 5:30. Mirko, 772-8548.

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.

Tuesday, May 27, 6:00pm - Mountain

Evening Hike. Easy. 3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. Michael Stewart, 656-5836.

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

Tuesday, June 3, 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.

Tuesday, June 10, 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, June 11, 5:30pm. Stanlieo's Sub Villa, corner of Monroe St. and Governor's Dr. Liz, 461-5819.

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. A gentle climb across the southernmost bald on the AT, this hike abounds with wildflowers 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 to cover shuttle, campsite, and hot tub. Group size will be limited to ten and participants must commit by June 1st. Hike leader approval is required. For further information contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net

Saturday, June 14 - Fifteenth Annual Pisgah Gorge Rockhop. Strenuous.

Waterfalls, swimming, boulders as big as houses, spiders as big as dinner plates, ticks, snakes, poison ivy, everything! The most beautiful scenery in Alabama is worth it! This year, we will also do an unexplored side canyon. Leader approval required. Sam Denham 539-1033(h), 961-0436(w).

Tuesday, June 17, 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, June 21 - 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

Sunday, June 29- Wade Mountain hike.

Easy. Wade Mountain and Rattlesnake Master. Bring water and sturdy hiking boots. Meet at Spragins Hollow trail head at 2:00pm. Call Doug Horacek for more information at 772-6788.

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.

Sierra Cahaba Group

Saturday, May 17 - Paddle Terrapin Creek. We will paddle either the full 8 mile stretch or if the water is down paddle the lower 6 miles of Terripan creek. Terripan creek is located near Anniston. The paddling is relaxing and easy and beginners are encouraged to come. So pack the sun screen, the bottled water, pack a lunch and join us for a relaxed day on the water. You can bring your own boat

i2008 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 Dudley	882-9408
Newsletter	Jack Drost	880-2644
Web Page	Steven Baty	489-0990

Thursday, May 15 - Pat Byington on the Changing South

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.

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 Dudley, 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.

Tuesday, May 20, 6:00pm - Mountain

Evening Hike. Easy. 3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at the

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

or rent one from the canoe shop. Rentals and shuttle are \$25.00. Bring your own boat and the shuttle is \$5.00. Optional dinner afterwards. We will meet at Kmart on Crestwood Blvd at 8:00am. Trip leader is Jim Binnings. 205-746-3266 or jbinnings@bellsouth.net.

Saturday, May 31 - Bike Ride Chief Ladiga Trail. The Chief Ladiga trail is a rails to trail project located in NE Alabama. The 20-mile section we will bike runs between Germania Springs Park and Piedmont. The scenery along the trail is rural so we may see a variety of late blooming wildflowers and the occasional critter or two. As we approach Piedmont there is a great view of Duggar Mountain. The trail is level, wide, and paved so any type of bike will work. Bring water and a snack. We will meet at the Kmart Parking lot on Crestwood Blvd. at 8AM. Trip leader Jim Binnings at 205-746-3266 or email jbinnings@bellsouth.net. Please sign onto our e-mail list at cahabagroup@yahoo.com for special updates on speakers and activities.

Shoals Environmental Alliance

Saturday, May 17 - Sipsey Wilderness

Day hike. Led by Charles Rose for Alabama Outdoors. Meet . 8:00am, Sheffield Holiday Inn, or 9:00am, Warrior Mtn. Trading Company store, AL-33 at its junction w. AL-36. Take lunch, water. Moderate level. (256) 764-1809.

Saturday, May 31 - Gee Creek Wilderness / John Muir Trail hike.

Led by the inimitable Leon Bates for Alabama Outdoors. For more details, call **A.O. at (256) 764-1809.**

Saturday, June 7 - National Trails Day Hike, Devil's Racetrack at Wade

Mountain Preserve. Meet 8:00am at Sheffield Holiday Inn. See Indian Pink, Rose Vervain, Fringed Loosestrife, Downy Wood Mint, Wild Bergamot & Fire Pink. Led by Charles Rose (366-1937) for Alabama Outdoors (764-1809).

Sierra Tennessee Mid-State Group

Saturday, May 10, Virgin Falls State

Natural Area Day Hike. This strenuous eight-mile trail descends from the Cumberland Plateau near Sparta and meanders along a creek, offering spectacular views of caves, sinks, and waterfalls. Participants will stop for lunch at the falls, where they also can feast their eyes on a truly remarkable sight. Water

ascades from a cave mouth at the top of a bluff and falls more than 100 feet to form Virgin Falls. Participants should bring WATER, snacks, BOOTS, and dress in layers. For more details and to register, contact Dave Bordenkircher at dabordenkircher@mindspring.com or 615-333-3377

Sat-Sun, June 7-8 – 6th Annual Wilderness First Aid Training

Where: Fall Creek Falls State Park
Who: Training conducted by NOLS Wilderness Medicine instructors
Cost: \$165/participant includes course materials and lunch/snacks both days
Contact: Katherine Pendleton at [katibug1959 @ aol.com](mailto:katibug1959@aol.com) or 615-943-6877