

July 2008

Sierra

North Alabama Group



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

Cookout and Hike in Monte Sano State Park, Thursday, July 17, 6:00pm

Tuesday Night Hikes

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

Cookout and Hike on Monte Sano

For the July 17th general meeting we will meet at 6:00 pm at the overlook in Monte Sano State Park for a cookout followed by a hike on the mountain at 6:30 pm. The Sierra Club will supply hamburgers, hot dogs, buns and fixings and the grill of course. So bring something to drink, maybe some chips or a side dish or dessert to contribute and come relax on the mountain.

The overlook is at the south end of the Monte Sano State Park picnic area. From the picnic area parking lot, walk past the large pavilion through the trees until you come to the stone wall at the overlook. Remember to bring \$3.00 for entrance to the park.

The August meeting will be the annual pool party at the Monte Sano pool, Thursday, August 21.

- the Editor

Rock Hopping and Wandering in Pisgah Gorge

The experience of hiking Pisgah Gorge actually began with a phone interview days prior: What hiking experience have you had? Can you identify poison ivy? Do you have any problems hiking in wet boots - because we we're going to get wet? ... And so it went. However, the hike leader was justified in grilling new hikers - the Pisgah Gorge outing was not your average day hike.

The Gorge is a steep valley cut into the rocks of northeastern Alabama by Bryant and Little Bryant Creeks. Emphasis should be placed on *steep* because the majority of the hike took place along the creek bed, but the hike started at the valley's rim. Numerous times on the descent we either dropped to our behinds to scoot down steep inclines, or dangled our legs over house sized boulders, trusting the people below to guide us to a safe foothold. The copious amounts of poison ivy, stinging nettle, and face hugging spider webs just made the feat more interesting.

As we descended, it was impossible not to notice the Gorge's beauty. The scenery was almost a distraction during the challenging points. Tall canyon walls, boulders the size of trucks, towering arches of stone, achingly lush and green trees; we were a dozen Jack's picking through the Giant's playground.

The fun did not end at the creek bed which offered its own array of obstacles. We traversed by hopping, crawling on all fours, slipping, sliding, and slogging. Many of the rocks along the riverbed were deceptive, covered in a black substance which was slick as ice when wet. By lunch we had all lost count of how many times we fell, and shortly after we stopped worrying about our boots getting wet. It was often easier and cooler to hike up the creek in the water.

It took us a little over three hours to hike the mile to our destination - the Patterson Waterfall. A thirty-foot tall waterfall with a large pool, it was the perfect spot to swim and lounge in the sun. It did not surprise anyone that after an hour of enjoying the falls few of us wanted to make the trek back out the way we came. Luckily, thanks to a friend of the Sierra Club whose property abuts the falls, there was a quick and easy route out of the canyon.

Challenging, beautiful, tiring, relaxing, the Pisgah Gorge delivered it all. As difficult as it was, if you ask the hikers, most of them will be signing up again for the next hike.

- Nathan Ellsworth

10 Ways to Save Water This Summer

Despite the rain this spring, we are still in the middle of an extreme drought. Here are a few tips to help conserve water. Given the population growth in our area, even if the drought ends, it would be a good idea to start using water more wisely.

1. Grab a wrench and fix that leaky faucet. It's simple, inexpensive, and can save 140 gallons a week.

2. Put food coloring in your toilet tank. If it seeps into the toilet bowl, you have a leak. It's easy to fix, and you can save more than 600 gallons a month.

3. Reduce the amount of grass in your yard by planting drought resistant shrubs, and use rock and granite mulching for ground cover. This attractive method of landscaping, called xeriscaping, also saves you from having to mow!

4. Use a rain bucket to irrigate your yard. Make one yourself or purchase one of the variety of styles available from stores like Red Rain (www.RedRainStore.com).

5. Turn off the water while you brush your teeth and save 4 gallons a minute. That's 200 gallons a week for a family of four.

6. Install low-flow shower heads and make sure there are aerators on all faucets.

7. Use your dishwasher and clothes washer only for full loads.

8. When washing dishes by hand, turn water off while rinsing.

9. Install low-flow toilets, which use less than half the water of their older counterparts.

10. Teach children about the need to conserve water and about ways that they can help. Make it a mission for the whole family!

More water-saving tips are available online:

www.WaterUseItWisely.com

www.AmericanWater.com

www.EarthEasy.com

- Reprinted with permission Alabama Rivers Alliance
<http://www.alabamarivers.org>

Eat Local and Help Reduce Oil Use

There has been a lot in the news lately about reducing our carbon footprint. One of the points raised is the amount of fuel it takes to bring produce and other items to our grocery shelves. Just in the last 50 years we have gone from buying produce and meats grown locally to getting a large percentage of our fresh foods from across the country and even overseas. It takes an enormous amount of fuel to transport those peaches here from Chile.

It is nice to get (relatively) ripe, fresh peaches in February, but many people are wanting to move back to buying locally grown produce and meats. This is more difficult as produce markets and butcher shops have mostly been replaced by national grocery chains.

One alternative in our area is the Clean Food Network, a group of farmers from northern Alabama and southern Tennessee who are dedicated to providing clean unadulterated food fresh from their fields to your dinner table. They have come together to create markets at which they can collectively sell their produce, meats, eggs, and other products through area farmers markets, restaurants and online.

Each Friday evening, a list of available products is emailed to registered customers. Customers place their order for the week online or by responding to the e-mail. You order what you want, in the quantities that you want. For more information, go to <http://cleanfoodnetwork.locallygrown.net/> or call 256-891-9856.

- the Editor

North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

July – August 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	682-1233
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, July 17 - Cookout and Hike, Monte Sano, 6:00pm

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.

Sat-Sun, July 12-13 – Elk River Canoe and Car Camp. Easy. Drive up to Kelso, TN Saturday morning and spend the day canoeing the beautiful Elk River. Optional car camping Saturday night in the riverside campground at Elk River Canoe Rentals. Or you can spend the morning canoeing and swim in the river or play volleyball after lunch. To reserve a spot and a canoe, call Doug Horacek at 772-6788 by Thursday evening, July 3. Or make your own arrangements by calling Elk River Canoe Rentals at 931-937-6886. Canoe rental, transport and camping fee all for \$20. Rain date will be July 19-20. Meet at the Franklin Building at 8:00am or at Elk River Canoe Rental at 9:00am. Doug Horacek, 772-6788.

Tuesday, July 15, 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, July 19 - Sewanee Day hike. Strenuous. This approximately 11 mile hike is the east section of the 21 mile Perimeter Trail which follows the perimeter of the Sewanee domain. The perimeter trail features beautiful overlooks and interesting geological formations. This section features Morgan's Steep, the Memorial Cross, and Shakerag Hollow. This hike completes the perimeter trail. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Optional dinner afterwards. Meet at the Publix on Winchester Road at 8:00 am. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net

Tuesday, July 22, 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.

Thursday, July 24 - Excom meeting. 5:30pm. Mirko Rakigijja, 772-8548.

Saturday, July 26 - Collins Gulf hike. Strenuous. This 13 mile loop in the South Cumberland descends into the Collins River Gorge and has many beautiful geological features including waterfalls, overlooks, and rock formations. We will descend into the gorge and climb out by way of the Stagecoach Historic trail and return along the Collins Gulf Rim trail. This is a difficult but rewarding hike. Bring lunch and water and we will dine afterwards at a local restaurant. Meet at the Publix on Winchester Road at 8:00am. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net

Tuesday, July 29, 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, August 2 – Land Trust hike. Moderate. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot on Bankhead Parkway at 7:30am. The length of the hike will depend on the weather. Bring water and a snack. Call Charlie Cohen for more information at 837-3622 (home) or 961-7901 (work).

Sunday, August 3 - Little River Canyon Rockhop/Swim/Hike. Strenuous. Two separate hikes: Wolf Creek and the mile below Hwy 35. Bring lunch, water, sunscreen, hat, and be ready to get wet. Meet at the Publix in Hampton Cove at 8:30am. Sam Denham, 539-1033(h), 961-0436(w).

Tuesday, August 5, 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, August 12, 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, August 13, 5:30pm. Stanlieo's Sub Villa, corner of Monroe St. and Governor's Dr. Liz, 461-5819.

Saturday, August 16 - Pinhoti Trail Work. Easy-Moderate. We'll travel to a point between Piedmont, Ala. and the Georgia state line to help the Alabama Trails Association with the construction of a trail shelter on the Pinhoti Trail, the trail that connects Alabama to Georgia and the Appalachian Trail. Bring lunch and work gloves. On the way back to Huntsville, the North Ala. Sierra club will treat all participants to supper. Meet at 7:00am at Publix in Hampton Cove. Call Sam Denham for more details 539-1033(h), 961-0436(w).

Sunday, August 17 – Spider Lily Walk. Easy. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot at 2:00pm. Bring water, a snack, and sturdy hiking boots. We will hike for 3 hours at most. \$3.00 donation for park entrance. Call Doug Horacek for more information at 256 772-6788.

Tuesday, August 19, 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.

Tuesday, August 26, 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.

Sat-Mon, Aug 30-Sept 1 - South Cumberland backpack, Strenuous. We will depart at 9:00am on Saturday, backpacking 8 ½ miles to Hobbs Cabin where we will spend the first night. On Sunday will backpack 6.3 miles via the connector trail to the Stage Road camp area. The connector trail is the most strenuous trail in the Savage Gulf area. On Monday we backpack 7 miles via the South Rim trail back to the Savage Gulf Ranger station. We will dine afterwards at a local restaurant. Contact Judy Burley at 883-4267 or jcburley@bellsouth.net

Dress Down for Hikes

Do you seem to attract bees or other insects when you are hiking? It could be something you are wearing. Flowers use bright colors and scents to attract insects for pollination. When you get ready for a hike, don't wear bright colors like yellow or orange. And don't wear colognes or aftershaves with strong scents.

Ticks don't really care what you wear, so some tick repellent might be a good idea.

- Lee Hollingsworth

North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

July – August 2008

Ranger Chase at the Greeter Falls parking lot for a difficult 1.5 mile hike through beautiful hemlock forests to breath-taking waterfalls.

Thursday, July 24, 2008

7:30 PM Meadow Evening Hike - Join the Ranger for a relaxing stroll around “the meadow.” Come to the Visitor Center pavilion with walking shoes and prepare for the sights and sounds of an evening at South Cumberland.

Saturday, July 26, 2008

9:00 AM Cave Program - Need to cool off from the summer sun? Meet Ranger Jacob at the Carter State Natural Area parking lot for a strenuous 5-mile roundtrip hike. Bring two sources of light, water, and a light snack.

10:00 AM Savage Falls and

Rattlesnake Point Hike - Join Ranger John Miller at the Savage Gulf Ranger Station for this 4-mile nature hike to Savage Falls and then up to Rattlesnake Point. Wear sturdy shoes and bring plenty of water and a snack. Don't forget your camera!

2:00 PM Stone Door Hike - See the Great Stone Door with Ranger Chase. Meet at the Stone Door Ranger Station for an easy 2-mile hike featuring amazing views of the South Cumberland.

4:00 PM Sueter Falls Hike - Hike with Ranger John Miller from the Collins West parking lot down to beautiful Sueter Falls. This is a 1-mile strenuous nature hike to the base of Sueter Falls and back.

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

10:00 AM Rappelling at Stone Door - Sign up for a beginner rappel off the Stone Door Bluffs. Participants must first sign up by calling the Visitor Center at (931) 924-2980 as there will be only 12 spots available. Equipment will be provided. Meet at the Stone Door Ranger Station and bring water and snacks.

Thursday, July 31, 2008

7:30 PM Meadow Evening Hike - Join the Ranger for a relaxing stroll around “the meadow”. Come to the Visitor Center pavilion with walking shoes and prepare for the sights and sounds of an evening at South Cumberland.

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.

Wild South Hikes

Wild South staff-members and volunteers lead hikers into the hills and deep canyons of the Bankhead National Forest and Sipsey Wilderness in northwest Alabama the last Saturday of every month.

Everyone 12 years and older is welcome (contact us about hikes for kids and families!). Hikers meet at the Warrior Mountains Trading Company in Wren, Alabama (intersection of Hwy 33 and 36, 3 miles south of Moulton) at 9:00am. Bring lunch, water and snacks. For more information contact Janice Barrett, janice@wildsouth.org or 256-974-6166

South Cumberland Recreation Area

Thursday, July 17, 2008

2:00 PM Stone Door Hike - See the Great Stone Door with Ranger Chase. Meet at the Stone Door Ranger Station for an easy 2-mile hike featuring amazing views of the South Cumberland.

Friday, July 18, 2008

7:30 PM Night Hike - Join Rangers John Miller and Chase Howell at the Visitor Center shelter for this moderate 2-mile hike through the Meadow Trail. Be ready to use all five senses and for a lesson on night life for animals. Bring a flashlight and bug spray.

Saturday, July 19, 2008

10:00 AM Nature Hike to Rattlesnake Point - Meet at the Savage Gulf Ranger Station to hike along the Savage Gulf day loop trail with Naturalists Chase Howell and John Miller for this informative 4-mile moderate hike to learn some great facts of nature. This hike will include talks about trees, animals, and basic outdoor skills.

3:00 PM Survival Skills - Meet Ranger John Miller at the Savage Gulf Ranger Station for this informative program about the basics of outdoor survival. Learn everything from campfires, first aid, and edible nature.

Sunday, July 20, 2008

10:00 AM Greeter Falls Hike - Join