



The Quinnehtukqut Connecticut Chapter

The Monthly Newsletter for Events, Information, and Action



OCTOBER 2016

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EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION

Topic: White-nose Syndrome and Bat Conservation in Connecticut

Speaker: Kate Moran

Kate Moran is a Wildlife Biologist and Geographic Information Systems Professional for the Connecticut DEEP

Sponsor: Greater Hartford Sierra Club

Date: Thursday, October 13th

Time: 7:30pm

Location: Westmoor Park
119 Flagg Road, West Hartford

Open to club members and the public.

Cost: \$4 donation to defray hall rental

Refreshments: Provided

Activist Letter Writing: 7:00pm

Questions: Contact Renee at mchawigirl@yahoo.com



Photo Credit: [Fact Sheets - Bats](#)

Content: Connecticut DEEP wildlife biologist Kate Moran will discuss the species of bats in Connecticut and how white-nose syndrome has affected their populations. Attendees will also learn about the importance of bats, how we monitor bat populations in Connecticut and what they can do to help bats in their own neighborhood. Bat box plans will be available for the do-it-yourselfers in the audience.

Biography: Kate Moran's current work as a Connecticut DEEP biologist in the Wildlife Diversity program focuses on the use of acoustic technology to monitor bat populations in our state. For more than 10 years, she has worked as a Wildlife Biologist and Geographic Information Systems Professional for the Connecticut DEEP. She has an undergraduate degree in Zoology from the University of New Hampshire and a Master's degree in Geography from CCSU. She is a member of Bat Conservation International and regularly presents at the Northeast Bat Working Group Conferences.



Kate Moran on right in a bat cave.

REQUEST FOR CONTENT

All CT Sierra Club members are invited to contribute to The *Quinnehtukqut*. We accept articles, puzzles, events, photos, poems, etc.

If you post information to the website and want it in the newsletter, too, submit those postings separately to the newsletter.

The November *Quinnehtukqut* will distribute at the beginning of the month.

To contribute to the November issue: **Submissions are due the week of October 10th: Final deadline is October 17th.**

Comments, letters to the editor and all submissions may be sent to ctsierraq3@gmail.com for inclusion in future newsletters.

All decisions regarding use are made by the communications committee.

ARTICLES

September 2016 Sierra Club Council of Club Leaders Meeting

by Martha Klein, CCL Delegate

The annual national convention of the Sierra Club was held last month, September 2016, in Oakland, California. Every year, delegates from the 63 chapters across the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico gather for the Council of Club Leaders (CCL) meeting at national headquarters. This year I was the Connecticut chapter delegate.

The Council of Club Leaders conference is analogous to a shareholder meeting of the grassroots or the volunteers of the chapters of the Club. The Sierra Club Board of Directors (BOD) is the board of the staffed arm of the Club. Both arms meet at the same time, and CCL delegates sit in on a portion of the board meeting.

Delegates Vote on Resolutions, Attend Seminars

A main function of the conference is to provide an opportunity for CCL delegates to vote on resolutions raised by chapters throughout the year. Chapter resolutions that pass are sent to the Sierra Club BOD for their vote.

The Council of Club Leaders has an executive committee (excom) of delegates ranging from Vermont to Hawaii, who help to plan and organize this large event. CCL delegates vote for any excom vacancies at the meeting. In addition to the day spent voting on chapter resolutions, delegates attend full day seminars from Club staff. Topics this year included:

- capacity building for chapters
- sessions on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives
- developing leadership
- building movements and power for change
- fundraising
- the grassroots activist network
- reports on various national conservation campaigns

I attended the break out session on pipelines led by Lena Moffitt, Director of the Dirty Fuels campaign. The discussion was largely about the Dakota Access pipeline. Later that same day, we learned that the Army Corps of Engineers and other federal agencies, at President Obama's request, had put a stay on a small segment of the project. The halt allows for the first environmental report to be done on possible impacts from the project to Lake Oahe and the Missouri River. It is a helpful step, but not the victory we hoped for, and the water remains at risk from this fracked oil pipeline project.

Chapter Resolutions Voted Up and Down

A handful of chapter resolutions this year addressed improving communication between the national organization and the grassroots volunteers in the chapters and groups.

The Iowa chapter raised a resolution that national staff insure chapter awareness of any legal decisions they make within a state. After revisions, this resolution passed widely. Other resolutions that passed the CCL include: a recommendation to limit global heating to 1 degree celsius; a resolution introduced by Oklahoma, the "new earthquake capital of the world," to ban injection wells; and a resolution to include and emphasize public transit, biking and walking in any transportation initiative.

A few resolutions that failed were for Sierra Club involvement in the Children's Trust lawsuit, a ban on hunting on public lands, and one for Meatless Mondays. The Connecticut Chapter voted to support Meatless Mondays last year, and we encourage our members and friends to consider eating lower on the food chain, on at least that one day of the week.

President Mair Praises Grassroots

There were many high points at the conference, and appreciation for the work of the volunteers was evident and strongly emphasized, particularly by President Aaron Mair and Executive Director Michael Brune. President Mair spoke movingly about the grassroots heart of the Club, where he started, and insisted "This is not a top-down organization."

Executive Director Brune spoke with hope, but also soberly as he reminded us of the "213 proposed new gas plants" that we must fight. He asserted that we cannot just stop exploring for new fossil fuel sources and we cannot burn any more of the sources that we know already exist.

An exciting moment came when Edwin Montalvo, delegate from Puerto Rico, rose and addressed us all in Spanish, then in English, imploring the Club to take seriously the need to produce materials in Spanish.

Chapter Programs

The national Club has invested much time and money in the last year creating programs to provide chapters with the skills and tools we need to build volunteer membership and campaign strength.



Sierra Club President, Aaron Muir with Martha Klein

The majority of chapters across North America and the United States are confronting similar concerns:

- *pipelines carrying dirty fuels and oil trains*
- *protection of open spaces and wildlife*
- *encouraging children into nature*
- *creating a healthy environment with “equitable” as part of the definition*
- *obtaining funding for blighted fossil fuel dependent communities (i.e. coal towns, etc.)*
- *the creation of green jobs*

Since its inception in 1892, the Sierra Club has been based in the same building in San Francisco, but rising rents meant the Club needed to move. Although the old building was stately and impressive, it was also antiquated and hot. The new headquarters in the fantastic city of Oakland is LEED certified, sunny, cool, comfortable and highly efficient. The conference is a valuable and productive training ground for volunteer leadership in the grassroots Sierra Club organization.

Martha Klein is Communications Chair of the Connecticut Chapter of the Sierra Club

National Drive Electric Week in Connecticut

by Robin Woerner

Excitement buzzed across the state in September as Sierra Club, Plug in America, and the Electric Auto Association hosted eight events showcasing Electric Vehicles (EVs) as part of annual National Drive Electric Week (NDEW).

Electric Auto Association members and generous EV owners brought out their vehicles to educate the public on the benefits of Electric Vehicle technology and the accessibility of EV ownership.

Shiny and Glamorous EVs

Shiny all-electric Chevy Volts, Nissan Leafs, BMW i3s, and glamorous Tesla sedans - among other electric vehicle models - rolled up as their proud owners offered living proof that alternatives to exhaust-producing transportation do exist.

NDEW events were hosted at Central Connecticut State University, at a Big Y supermarket in Old Saybrook and at the Naval Base in Groton, among other locations. Interested participants were invited to sit inside the cars and in some cases go out for a spin on the main roads. From hearing daily commuter stories, to tapping on the lightweight carbon fiber of the i3s frame, or watching a Tesla “summoned” remotely to its owner - event participants had the chance to engage with EVs first-hand.



Electric Auto Association organizer, Dave Oliveria shares his passion for EVs with some young enthusiasts at our Old Saybrook tailgate party
Photo by Robin Woerner



EV owner Russel Hipplewitz poses with his stylish zero-emission BMW i3
Photo by Robin Woerner

This kind of exposure has been proven to increase positive outlook towards EVs and greatly increase the chances of a future EV purchase. The positive response is good news for Sierra Club's mission to expedite Connecticut's declared climate goal of getting 154,000 plug-in electric vehicles on CT roads by 2025 in an effort to dramatically reduce our state's greenhouse gas emissions.

EV Bill Signed

National Drive Electric Week arrived on the heels of CT's new Electric Vehicle Bill, signed into law over the summer by Governor Dannel Malloy. As one of eleven "Zero Emission Vehicle" states that follows regulations set by California's progressive Air & Resources Board, Connecticut is leading the nation in pioneering EV infrastructure and accessibility.

The Sierra Club Electric Vehicle Campaign is actively seeking volunteers to get involved in promoting Electric Vehicles in CT. Joining the campaign is an uplifting way to promote a viable solution to the transportation emissions issue.



Please contact Robin Woerner at robin.woerner@sierraclub.org or 203-641-0264 to volunteer or train as an EV Ambassador! You do not have to be an EV owner to participate, and there are many ways to get involved.

Sierra Club Electric Vehicle Campaign organizer Robin Woerner shares information with sailors at the Submarine base in Groton, CT
Photo by Dave Oliveria

Robin Woerner is an EV Campaign Organizer for Sierra Club, Connecticut

A Climate Ride from Bar Harbor to Boston

by Dennis Desmarais



Dennis Desmarais starts his Climate Ride in Maine's Acadia National Park.

I pedaled my fifth Climate Ride in September this year. Every year I've participated has been important to me as my participation allows me to raise money (money that this year went to the Sierra Club) and raise awareness about Climate Change.



A beautiful sky along the journey.

But this year's event was special. As 2016 is the National Park's 100th anniversary, I selected the Climate Ride event that started off in Maine's Acadia National Park.



A lighthouse on the Atlantic coast.

Over the course of the five day bicycle ride from Bar Harbor to Boston, Climate Riders covered hundreds of miles through Maine's forests, past lighthouses on the Atlantic Ocean and by farms and orchards. Yet none of scenery could hold a candle to the views from the Acadia departure on day one.

I returned from my five day journey with weary legs, but also with a heart full of inspiration. After spending those days with 60 or so Climate Riders, many of whom work full-time at jobs that strive to improve the

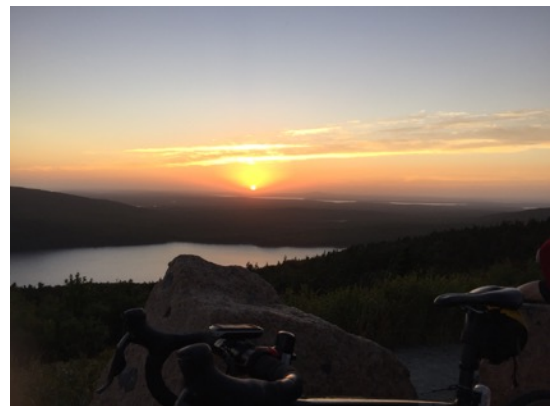
environment

or fight Climate Change, I am committed to spending more of my time volunteering here in Connecticut. And after spending just a day in one national park, Acadia, I'm committed to doing Climate Ride number six next summer in Glacier National Park.

Others interested in multi-day hiking and cycling charitable events to inspire sustainable and active transportation movements can learn more at:

<http://www.climateride.org/about-us/what-is-climate-ride>

Dennis Desmarais, IT volunteer, CT Chapter Communications Committee



The end of a beautiful day.

Pollinator Plants for Fall Gardens

by Michele MacKinnon

After summer's prolonged hot weather, homeowners may be feeling as spent as the fading flowerheads dotting our gardens. Pollinators, however, are at work foraging to end their season on a healthy note.



Wasp on an aster
Photo by Michele MacKinnon

To encourage pollinators to visit, there are two important plants you can grow in your home garden or around the edges of your property to attract and feed pollinators. They are New England aster (*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*) and Goldenrod (*Solidago*). In a study conducted by Dr. Kimberly A. Stoner for the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, these two wildflowers are among the top five most-visited by bumble bees. Both plants are sold by Earth Tones Native Plant Nursery in Woodbury, CT.

You can spot asters growing in clumps along our Connecticut roadsides beginning in late August when their flat white or various shades of purple flowers emerge from stem tips and beckon to pollinators. These native plants range from three to seven feet tall, having brittle dark green stems

completely encircled by hairy lance-shaped dark green leaves.

For gardeners with limited space shorter cultivars are available, such as the ground-hugging *Aster ericoides* "Snow Flurry," sold by Broken Arrow Nursery in Hamden, or Smooth Aster (*Symphotrichum laeve*.) As noted by xerces.org, the purple New England aster is a favorite of honey bees and bumble bee queens preparing for hibernation. Whichever type you select you will enjoy the long bloom period which results from the tiny daisy-like flowers smothering the plants with flowers at a time of year when most plants have finished blooming.

While goldenrod is often maligned for causing allergies, the usual culprit is Ragweed (*Ambrosia* spp.) which blooms around the same time with a greenish flower spike. Like asters, most varieties of goldenrod start their cheery yellow show in late summer and often bloom until a hard frost. Less familiar to most will be the summer-blooming variety, *Solidago bicolor*, which features creamy white flowers. Most plants grow two to three feet tall and the various species will tolerate a wide range of conditions, allowing almost everyone to grow one of these pollinator magnets.



Bumblebee with pollen clumped on hind legs on aster
Photo by Michele MacKinnon



Bumblebee with pollen clumped on hind legs pollinating golden rod
Photo by Michele MacKinnon

These plants also grow on sturdy stems. Some types have tight round clusters of tiny flowers emerging from leaf axils on the top part of the plant while other types feature flowers like a feathery headdress with sprays of flowers arranged in short arches at the tops of plants. Give goldenrod some room as most plants will spread over time to form large clumps. For more information on these plants visit websites of the plant nurseries mentioned or visit <http://www.wildflower.org>.

Michele MacKinnon, is a UCONN Certified Master Gardener, garden educator and speaker.

For a list of MacKinnon's fall programs, send an email to: Beehappygardener@Gmail.Com

The History of John Muir and The Sierra Club *A Serial in Seven Parts*

by Helen R. Applebaum

Part Five: The Lessons of Sierra Club Outings

The assignments to the 96 Sierra Club members who were to hike the first High Trip in 1901 were to read John Muir's book, "The Mountains of California" and Joseph LeConte's "Rambling Through the High Sierra." The Sierra Club outings were never simply hiking trips. Along the trail William Dudley lectured in forestry, C. Hart Merriam taught biology, Theodore Hitell discussed the history of Yosemite and Muir spoke on geomorphology which is the study of the physical features of the surface of the earth and their relations to its geological structures.

Science and Arts

In addition, representatives of the arts joined the hikes. In 1904 it was Harriet Monroe, the poet who began *Poetry* magazine. Harriet Monroe was from Chicago and recited her satirical poem, "The Ballad of Ritter Mountain." I can't locate that poem, but she relates her experience on the two outings in which she participated. Read at vault.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/life/monroe_tribute_scb_1916.aspx

Here's Harriet Monroe's poem "At the Summit." It seems appropriate to the outings although no date is available.

"At The Summit"

Where bold Sierras cut the sky
Mount Whitney, of the high most high,
Halts the pale clouds that wander by.

We crept and climbed with eager feet,
Until the world, fulfilled, complete,
Plunged like despair before his seat.

So high the peak was we had won
Earth's air wore thin, its woof undone,
And blue space darkened round the sun.

Yet as we trembled there and quailed,
Lo, higher yet an eagle scaled
Smooth steeps of air, and sunward sailed.



Harriet Monroe

<http://www.poetry.net/poem/16883>

For her second outing, in 1908, Monroe wrote and produced the play, "Idyll of the Forest" in which Muir was a reluctant forest invader who was welcomed by the wild creatures and the trees.

Development Threatens the Sierra

As you recall from previous articles in this series, the Sierra Club used its High Trips to expand membership. The value of a substantial membership became important as development increasingly threatened the wilderness.

The huge Sierra Forest Reserve was opened to logging and sheep grazing and in 1914 the Club conducted its last outing to Hetch Hetchy Valley before it was flooded as a reservoir. John Muir died on Christmas Eve 1914. Some said, it was from a broken heart as his beloved canyon on the Tuolumne River was lost.

Industrial tourism came to the wilderness and brought some good with the bad. Modern transportation allowed easier access to mountains even further away during the continuing High Trips. In the 1920s High Trips visited Glacier National Park in Montana, Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming and Jasper and Mt. Robson parks in Canada. The reverse was the conflicts that would develop between the Club and those who wanted to conquer the wilderness for industry.

New Trails Open

In exploring the Sierra, Club members opened new routes, led outings and advocated for a system of trails to improve back country access. They were now able to create a trail in John Muir's name along the Sierra crest which connected Yosemite to Mt. Whitney. To accomplish this memorial, the Club obtained appropriations from the California Legislature, but the members did much of the exploration and planning. It wasn't until 1938, 24 years after Muir's death that the trail was completed. To commemorate the event, the Club published "Walter Starr's Guide to the John Muir Trail." It has been in print ever since.

By the early 1930s, much of the Club's work in accessing the Sierra was accomplished. Travelers could now rely on Club developed maps and guides for trails that had been built by Club labor. A Club handbook indicates the outings used symbols such as the Sierra Club cup and bandana "as well as towel, sunsuit, lunch bag, neckerchief, wash cloth, creel, headdress, apron, scarf, pot holder and first aid bandage" possibly as a list of what to bring or maybe to identify a location the items could be obtained. There's one item I can't explain--"terminal protection in case of torn pants."

The Sierra Club could take credit for introducing a significant number of people to the wilderness, thereby getting them out of the "house Habit" and establishing an outings program that developed a communal spirit.

As High Trip climbers attempted and achieved more difficult ascents in the Sierra, technical achievement advanced and new routes were explored. It was standard for respected outings leaders to become directors and officers of the Club. John Muir's concept of the High Trip became a trained ground for emerging leaders of the Sierra Club. Muir's ideals continue.

Resource: vault.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/

POETRY

Throughout the Night

Throughout the night, Athena's avatar
Hoo hoots its wisdom if you understand
Its unique, breathy vocalization, but for
Those of us who are unable to translate,
It is a forlorn reminder of the darker hours
Of our day when any thought of an owl
Is dormant like the bird itself at that time.

It has been five years since I first heard
My backyard resident. Knowing that a
Hooting owl signals the stealth of death,
I was not sure I welcomed this star soloist
For the nocturnal symphony I usually heard.
Yet it was oddly comforting, even benevolent,
As if I was familiar to him from long ago.

Unlike the coyote scout that makes the
Hair on my neck crawl when he signals to
The others that a prey has been spotted,
The Great Horned Owl broadcasts its
Territorial double hoot not as a predator
With annunciatory alarm, but as a
Freeholder with gentle insistence on rights.

I've seen him once, watching me from
A large dead branch on a naked tree.
He was motionless and majestic and
Unmistakably great. The distance between
Us wasn't much so I spoke to him as if
We were acquaintances: "Can't you
Sleep? Are there many mice in my field?"

When he finally lifted his wings to fly,
It was like the unfolding of a gray-speckled
Shawl that had been draped on his shoulders.
At night whether he calls or not, I envision
Him wrapped in the shades of night,
Guarding his place and mine with penetrating
Vision that swivels from front to back.

Abby Ripley, New Milford, CT



Autumn Reverie

From the bower of my abode,
At dawn and twilight I strode.
Crispy leaves rustled as I passed,
Over frosty, shimmering grass.

Craving even paler sun on my face,
Amid stiff breezes I set a good pace.
Staying indoors all day I couldn't bear,
After a busy summer outdoors in fresh air.

The swimming pool is closed, my kayak soon to her shelf,
Bundling up, to keep moving I motivate myself.
No longer lazy dreaming on my deck amused,
With cooling drink and a book to peruse.

Yet longer nights offer pleasures that satisfy.
Pellet stove glow relaxes me as I philosophize.
Unlike me, my frisky dogs are eager for a cool spell,
Cheering me from doldrums on which I sometimes dwell.

M. Renee Taylor



The Q is brought to you by:

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SOLAR POWER

Have you ever considered going solar?

If so, **now is the time** because it's cheaper and easier than ever. Here's the proof: A new study just found that in 42 out of 50 of the largest U.S. cities, a typically-sized, \$0-down home solar system costs less than the energy purchased from a residential customer's local utility.*

Join more than 1,100 Sierra Club supporters in making the switch to clean energy.

With flexible financing through different Sungevity Energy Plans, you can get an efficient solar system without emptying your pockets. Plus you'll lock in your electricity rate for years to come! It sounds too good to be true, but it's not!

Now is the time to go solar.

Join the clean-energy movement today!

Check it out at: www.sierraclub.org/solarhomes



Solar energy lifts life on earth



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Create a Lasting Legacy

By creating a charitable bequest to benefit Sierra Club or your favorite Sierra Club Chapter, you remain in control of your assets during your lifetime and help protect the environment in years to come.

For confidential assistance, contact:

Sierra Club

Gift Planning Program

85 Second Street, Second Floor

San Francisco, CA 94105

gift.planning@sierraclub.org

(800) 932-4270



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To create your legacy go to:

sierraclubfoundation.org

or email: gift.planning@sierraclub.org