

Tallgrass Sierran

May/June 2002 Volume 30 No. 3

THE HEART OF ILLINOIS GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB ♦ P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614 ☎ (309) 637-1393

HOI Group Meetings

WED
MAY 15

The Lower Illinois River Basin Water Quality Study

Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

George Groschen, Study-Unit Chief of the U.S. Geological Survey, will present the eye-opening findings of the USGS's recently completed study of the Illinois River "below the bend" and the streams that feed it. The conclusions of this study are profound and uncompromising; our rivers are overloaded with nutrients and toxics that impair aquatic habitats and may pose a risk to human health. Come and learn what the government knows about the water quality problems of our rivers. In addition, hear the latest results from the HOI Group's water monitoring activities on the Illinois River. *All are welcome! Refreshments served after the meeting.*

WED
JUNE 19

Annual Potluck Picnic & White Elephant Auction

Detweiller Park – Moose Shelter, 6:30 p.m.

Join us for our annual summer potluck picnic, presentation of the **Conservationist of the Year Award**, and fundraising auction of unusual, useful, and tasty items donated by our members. Bring a main dish or other food to share, plus your own table service. Iced tea and lemonade will be provided.

This year's picnic will be held at the **Moose Shelter at the south end of Detweiller Park, Peoria**. Enter the park from Rt. 29 and follow Detweiller Drive toward the bluff. Turn left before ascending the bluff and follow the park road to the far south end of the park. Turn right at the Moose shelter sign. Or, from Knoxville Ave. (Rt. 40) take Detweiller Drive east, turn right at the park entrance sign, and then turn right twice immediately after descending the bluff. If you'd like, don't forget an item to donate to the auction. *And bring a friend! Everyone is welcome!*

Illinois House Keeps Wetland Destruction Loophole Open

PLEASE Contact Your State Representative

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Peoria area Sierrans should send a big "THANK YOU" to State Representative Ricca Slone for all her efforts to pass House Bill 6013, "The Illinois Wetlands Protection Act." Sadly, many area legislators voted against the bill or voted "present" and doomed the bill to fail. H.B. 6013 would require a permit from the state before anyone could destroy a wetland in Illinois. 90% of Illinois wetlands have been destroyed and no protections are in place to prevent the destruction of small wetlands in the state. The economic value of Illinois' remaining wetlands is over \$7.5 billion, according to the Clean Water Network. Wetlands protect our families from flood damage by absorbing rainwater, they filter pollutants out of our water supplies, and they provide critical habitat for many species of wildlife. Illinois has 57 rare animal and 11 rare plant species that are wetland-dependent for at least part of their lives. Also, wetlands provide habitat for popular game species of waterfowl and fish.

Please send a letter to state Representative David Leitch to state your disappointment in his vote against wetland protection and to urge that he support efforts to protect Illinois' wetlands in the future.

Write to your state Representative at:

Illinois House of Representatives,
Springfield, IL 62706

For information on how your Representative voted, check the Internet at <http://www.legis.state.il.us> or phone 688-0950 and leave a message.



Great Group at Macomb Area Sierra Gathering

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

If you live in the Macomb area and did not get to attend the April 20th Sierra meeting, contact Joe Laszlo at 637-4692 or use the email address on the back of this newsletter. Further efforts at holding Sierra meetings in Macomb depend on the willingness of area individuals to participate.

About 30 people attended the April 20th Heart of Illinois Sierra Group get-together in Macomb. This event was held to reach out to HOI Group Sierrans in the far western reaches of the group and to find out if they would like to meet on an organized basis. Thanks go to Barb Gurtler, who raced to Macomb after running in a morning event at Wildlife Prairie Park. Barb was the featured program, and she gave a fantastic slide-show on her climb of Mt. Denali. Thanks also go to HOI Chair Joe Laszlo and Conservation Chair Ralph Ginn for putting the event together.



Illinois Legislature Has Some REALLY Bad Bills

PLEASE! Phone and Write a Letter about these issues today!

By JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

House Bill 5793: You could be arrested on a Class 3 Felony for trying to bring animal abuse to light or for taking photos of pollution problems without permission. H.B.5793 is called the "Farm Animal and Agricultural Crop and Research Facilities Protection Act" and it hides major legal penalties for taking citizen action to report on animal factory environmental or animal abuses. PLEASE phone and write to your State Senator. Ask that the provision in H.B. 5793 that makes it criminal to photograph or video tape information pertaining to animal facilities without the permission of the owners be struck from the bill. The video and photo ban provisions of H.B. 5793 must be removed, or efforts to shed light on factory farm practices will be severely curtailed.

ILLINOIS SENATE Peoria Contacts:

Senator George Shadid
309-H State House
Springfield, IL 62706
Phone 217-782-8250
Fax 217-782-3242

Senator Carl Hawkinson
623 State House
Springfield, IL 62706
Phone 217-782-1942
Fax 217-782-0016

Senate Bill 2155: This bill will immunize off-road vehicle users from noise pollution and trespass laws. S.B. 2155 has passed the Judiciary Committee and had no opposition. The House version passed in Committee 13-0 with no opposition and is now pending in the House. S.B.2155 covers motorcycles, snowmobiles, drag racing, tractor pulls, mud runs, dirt track, short track, and any other off-road event. It is sponsored in the Illinois Senate by Brad Burzynski, Shawnee National Forest area Senator, and you can infer what problems this bill could cause in efforts to protect the Shawnee and other rural residents from noise pollution caused by off-road recreational use.

S.B. 2144 is titled "Premises Liability Act" and amends the Premises Liability Act to provide that the owner or operator of an off-road riding facility, a facility used for recreational activities or sporting events involving off-highway vehicles, is not criminally liable for any noise emission is not subject to nuisance or trespass action based on noise emissions. "Off-road riding facility" is defined as a thoroughfare across land or snow used for off-highway motorcycles (as well as for all-terrain vehicles).

Support the National Forest Roadless Area Conservation Act of 2002

By JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Please phone and write to your federal Representatives and ask that they support the "National Forest Roadless Area Conservation Act of 2002." Ask your Representative to be an original cosponsor of the National Forest Roadless Area Conservation Act of 2002.

The long-term goal of this legislation is to reduce logging allowed under existing Forest Plans. It will also stop the construction of an estimated 623 miles of new logging roads over five years. This legislation is needed to stop a renewed assault on roadless areas. Currently the Bush Administration and the U.S. Forest Service are working on ways to abolish the roadless area conservation rule and get back to large-scale logging in roadless areas. It is critical that Congress intervene to insure all remaining roadless areas are protected. The bill is sponsored by Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY) and Jay Inslee (D-WA). PLEASE CONTACT (Peoria area):

Rep. Lane Evans
2211 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515
Phone 202-225-5904
Fax 202-225-5396

Rep. Ray LaHood
1424 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515
Phone 202-225-6201
Fax 202-225-9249

Phone your local public library if you do not know your federal or state legislators or try an Internet search at <http://www.vote-smart.org> and click on the left tab for Legislative information.



Antibiotic Overuse

BY RALPH GINN

A friend and fellow teacher died a few months ago, the victim of a antibiotic resistant bacteria that literally consumed his internal organs. Not a common occurrence, but one becoming more frequent with each passing decade. Herb, was in good health, contacted an infection that resisted all medical treatment and was gone within three months. The rise of antibiotic resistant bacteria is complex but generally can be attributed to two human abuses. First, is the profligate use of antibiotics by physicians for viral caused disease (common cold, flu). Antibiotics are ineffective against viruses, doctors know this and so should we patients. But, let's not lay the entire blame on the doctor, the patient often insists on an antibiotic prescription.

Bacteria are remarkably versatile critters and, given time and exposure, will develop resistance to any antibiotic.

The second source of bacterial resistance is the widespread use of antibiotics in agriculture, primarily in the U.S. The American Medical Association has adopted a formal resolution opposing the nontherapeutic use of antibiotics (use in healthy animals). The Union of Concerned Scientists estimates that 70% of the antibiotics used in the U.S. are fed to healthy pigs, cows, and chickens to promote growth and prevent disease.

The use of antibiotics in the feed and water of livestock animals has increased in direct proportion to the appearance of CAFO's (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations) during the last 20 years. The enclosure of large numbers of animals in a confined space is an open invitation for the spread of bacterial disease. Hence, the use of "preventive" antibiotics.

Resistant bacteria can be vectored to humans in a number of ways. The bacteria, which usually reside in the gut of the animal, may contaminate meat or be released into the environment during slaughter and processing, or be transmitted to meat products by workers. These resistant microbes can also pass through the animal and taint waste lagoons and pits. Runoff from lagoons and pits may contaminate crops, ground water, surface water and drinking water. There is good evidence that some types of bacteria can also become airborne from waste lagoons and be carried miles from the source.

Livestock raised in large numbers, and in a confined space, have become a risk, not just to immediate neighbors, but to the general public as well. Antibiotic resistant bacteria are a threat to us all, and another reason to abhor the ever increasing and ubiquitous mega-livestock scourge.



" Full House"



Book Review

BY RALPH GINN

The title of a mostly boring book by Harvard paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould. I wouldn't recommend a buy, but rather a library checkout. Read the first two chapters. The author expresses ideas and insights that may help an environmentalist put the present day's rush to extinction in perspective. Gould points out that the human species appeared in the last few seconds of planetary time and that fossil records show many species that were seemingly better equipped to survive than others died out anyway, discrediting Darwin's theory of survival of the fittest. "Humans must accept this factual status or we will seal a speedy extinction through a false arrogance about our environment," says Gould.

Gould asserts that humans have developed a misequation of evolution and progress. The most populous and dominant form of life on Earth has been and will always be bacteria. Bacteria inhabit, in

abundance, the surface of the earth, the atmosphere upward to eight miles, and below the surface to unknown depths. There is little doubt that bacteria will survive us, refuting the idea that evolution "progressed" along a line from simple to complex, bacteria to invertebrates to vertebrates to mammals to humans. Instead, Gould argues that species survive by chance in the greatest lottery every held on the planet. He views evolution as chaotic, with even successful species at the mercy of chance events that can dump them into the extinct trash pile within a few decades.

Gould disdains those who argue that conservation doesn't matter in the long run. "It is like arguing that we shouldn't treat childhood illness because the person will die eventually anyway." He advocates a Golden Rule for caring for the Earth, "If we treat the planet nicely, she'll keep us going for a while in return."

Membership

☐ **Yes**, I want to help safeguard our nation's precious natural heritage. My check is enclosed.

Name

Address

City

State ZIP

email

☐ Check enclosed, made payable to Sierra Club

☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa Exp Date

Cardholder Name

Card Number

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
SUPPORTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
LIMITED INCOME	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

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P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO, 80322-2968

HOI Group Calendar

May


1 Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.
WED Ralph Ginn's home, 20822 N. Blue Ridge Rd., Chillicothe. Call 274-3289 for directions.

15 **Group Meeting, 7 p.m.**
WED Forest Park Nature Center. *George Groschen, The Lower Illinois River Basin Water Quality Study*. Everyone is welcome!



June

5 Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.
WED John Wosik's home, 12409 N. Blackhawk Ct., Dunlap. Call 243-2230 for directions.

15 SAT **Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup,**
9 a.m.  Meet at the Fry Farm at the intersection of Rt. 40 and Singing Woods Road. Gloves and hard-soled shoes are recommended. Sorry, no helpers under 10 years due to safety concerns. For more information, or if you have not viewed the safety video (required), call Rudy Habben at 685-5605.

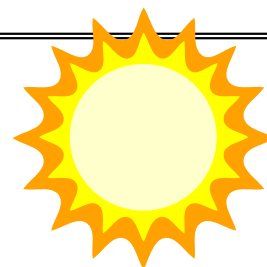
Other 2002 Adopt-A-Highway dates:

Sept 21 • Nov 1

19 Annual Potluck Picnic & White
WED **Elephant Auction, 6:30 p.m.**
Detweiller Park, Moose picnic shelter.
See front page for more details.

21 Newsletter Deadline
FRI Send articles for July/August to: John
Wosik, 12409 N. Blackhawk Ct.,
Dunlap, IL 61525, or
johnwosik@insightbb.com.

26 Newsletter Mailing, 7.p.m.
WED Peoria Pizza Works; *Everyone welcome.*



Other Events: (Not sponsored by the Sierra Club but provided as a public service.)




Forest Park Nature Center Book Club

May 23, 7 pm – *Prodigal Summer*,
by Barbara Kingsolver

Copies of all chosen books may be purchased at the Trailhead Nature Store at a 25% discount. For more information, call Kristin Jacobson at 686-3360.

Prairie Dawgs Work Crew

 Work includes prairie burns, brush cutting, eradicating alien plants, native plant seeding, and planting root stock. Call Doug Franks at 691-7993 for more information.



Conservationist of the Year Nominations Sought

The HOI Executive Committee is seeking nominations for the **Heart of Illinois Conservationist of the Year**. The nominee does not have to be a **Sierra Club** member.

This individual's conservation efforts should have been pursued on a volunteer basis, not for pay. Your nomination should include a brief explanation of why you feel this person should be considered. The deadline for nominations is June 5. The winner will be announced at our annual potluck picnic on June 19. Send nominations to **Joyce Blumenshine, c/o HOI Sierra Club, 120 W. Arcadia Ave., Peoria, IL 61604; or call 688-0950.**

Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

Hotline: Local Meetings & Outings • Action Alerts
Contacts • Leave Messages (309) 637-1393

Executive Committee

Chair	Joseph Laszlo	637-4692	laszloja@excite.com
Vice-Chair	Rudy Habben	685-5605	
Secretary	Joyce Blumenshine	688-0950	joblumen@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Grayce Mesner	246-8397	
Conservation Chair	Ralph Ginn	274-3289	
Outings Chair	Richard Klatt	274-3792	
Newsletter Editor	John Wosik	243-2230	johnwosik@insightbb.com

Membership Chair Norman Ewing686-4122

Calendar Sales Emiko Yang 691-5213

HEART OF ILLINOIS

Sierra Club 
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