



Shawnee Trails



<http://www.sierraclub.org/illinois/shawnee>

Sierra Club – Shawnee Group

June – August 2023 QUARTERLY

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Tree Equity: Jackson County Housing Authority's Bridgewood Estates By Jane Cogie

On March 24th 2023, 52 native trees were planted at the Jackson County Housing Authority's Bridgewood Estates in Murphysboro, thanks to the Tree Equity Group of the Clean Jobs Coalition's Downstate Caucus-- especially southernmost Illinois Tree Equity members from the Shawnee Group Sierra Club; Wade Halva of Faith in Place; and Marilyn Tipton of Carbondale Spring's Food Autonomy. The trees were sourced from Tabor Wholesale Nursery (<http://www.taborwholesalenursery.com/>), and were paid for by a Trees Forever "Recover, Replant, Renew" grant (<https://treesforever.org/recover-replant-restore>). Central to the planning and carrying out of this venture were Jackson Housing Authority (JCHA) staff. Indeed, they have committed to the essential role of caring for the young trees into the future, through weekly waterings over several years, particularly needed during the hot summer months.

The planning for this project involved seeking the matching in-kind and cash donations the grant required, obtaining the needed tools and supplies, and recruiting volunteers for Planting Day. The collaborative process during these months was important for the project's success, including connecting with persons from a diverse set of community groups. Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority members Faith Miller, Markea Haywood, and Cerra Goree, who were fully engaged during both the planning and the planting, helped transform the event into a celebration for the broader community, as did the Planting Day Event speakers, who included Murphysboro Mayor Will Stephens and JCHA Board member Deb Woods. Also crucial were the in-kind and cash donations from many groups—Egyptian Electric, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Food Autonomy, Faith in Place, Shawnee Group Sierra Club, Tabor Nursery (offering the wholesale discount), and Illinois State Senators Terry Bryant and Dale Fowler, who paid for the box lunches for the Planting Day participants. A number of vendors also donated treats: Cristaudo's and Neighborhood Co-op in Carbondale, Heather's Bakeshop in Carterville, and One Hot Cookie in Murphysboro.

This planting project was a promising test-run for advancing the goal of the Tree Equity Group to bring the benefits of trees to underserved neighborhoods. The Murphysboro Bridgewood site was a good beginning for the first tree planting project in our area, in part because the property, housing economically disadvantaged folks, was almost entirely lacking the restorative effect that trees have been found to provide (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34731949/>).

While a particular focus during the time of climate change is the ability of trees to sequester carbon, their benefits extend well beyond: their cooling shade offers relief and buffers noise from traffic, and they offer habitat for wildlife including birds and other pollinators. (Continued on Page 2)

(Tree Equity, Continued from Page 1)

If you are a member of a community or municipal group interested in initiating a similar tree planting project, you are welcome to contact Jane Cogie, the Shawnee Group Chair and Tree Equity Group member (jane.cogie@gmail.com) to obtain further information. Also, helpful would be connecting with Emily Ehley, Trees Forever representative for central and southern Illinois, who helped with the Bridgewood project at every stage (eehley@treesforever.org). And for facts to help determine priority locations for tree equity projects, you may find of interest American Forests Tree Equity Score tool, which calculates which neighborhoods lack trees and are also home to socioeconomically disadvantaged residents. <https://www.americanforests.org/tools-research-reports-and-guides/tree-equity-score/>).



Bridgewood tree planting project photos, provided by Sarah Lewison.

Big Future Changes?

Book review by John Magney

We have good reason to worry about the state of our natural environment. Earlier this year, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reported that rising greenhouse gas emissions are pushing the world ever closer to the "brink of irrevocable change." Scientists warn us that we are facing a continuing extinction of wildlife on the planet; over 500 species of land animals are likely to be lost over the next 20 years. And recent years have brought a surge of highly unusual -- and life-threatening -- "weather events" around the world. Here in U.S., atmospheric rivers of rain and snow drenched California this year while a record number of tornados have been tearing up the landscape across the south and Midwest.

For those of you who worry about how we'll ever deal with these interlinked environmental threats, I would suggest spending some quiet reading time with Kim Stanley Robinson's [The Ministry for the Future](#). Technically, it's a work of science fiction -- a speculative future history focusing on efforts to manage climate change over the next several decades. But it's also a novel that one can learn from. Robinson is a good explainer of things, and you get a lot of thoughtful commentary about climate science, geo-engineering, sustainable agriculture, wildlife habitat restoration and complex banking and economics issues.

The novel opens with a riveting description of a horrific heat wave in India. After a brief word from a godlike entity, you next learn, from an imagined piece of United Nations bureaucratese, about the creation
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of a new "Subsidiary Body... established to work with the International Panel of Climate Change, and all the agencies of the United Nations, and all the signatories to the Paris Agreement, to advocate for the world's future generations of citizens, whose rights, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are as valid as our own." The year is 2025 and the new agency -- dubbed the "Ministry for the Future" by news reporters -- is given a headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland.

As you move through the novel, you get periodic reports about the work of the Ministry and its intrepid female director (a former foreign affairs officer from Ireland) interwoven with bits and pieces about subsidiary characters, policy issues and other material related to the main storyline of change. From the outset, the Ministry's central concern is with the need to drastically reduce the world's output of carbon emissions. To do this, it proposes that a new "carbon coin" be created to pay fossil fuel owners to sequester their holdings; it would be "money like other money, but backed by central banks working together, and securitized by the creation of really long-term loans." Initially, none of the central bankers like the idea, but after much lobbying and reminders of the dire consequences of doing nothing, they finally opt for the carbon coin.

The adoption of the carbon coin is followed by a tumultuous period of political and environmental change around the world: governments impose new carbon taxes, eco-terrorists attack the airline and container ship industries, unions launch waves of strikes, the Saudi dictatorship in Saudi Arabia is toppled, a powerful democracy movement emerges in China, scientists start up massive geo-engineering projects to slow the loss of glaciers in Antarctica and Greenland, numerous reforestation projects are launched, local sustainable agriculture becomes more commonplace and there's a major push to greatly expand wildlife sanctuaries.

As the novel winds down, you get a big picture assessment -- at an imagined COP meeting of the Paris Group signatories -- of how the world has changed. The biggest news is that "the Big Number, meaning the parts per million of CO₂ in the atmosphere...had now dropped 27 parts per million in the previous five years. It was down to 451 now, same as in the year 2032, and it was on a clear path to drop even further, maybe all the way to 350." Measures by the Global Footprint Network "had the world working at par in relation to the Earth's bioproduction and waste intake and processing. World civilization was no longer using up more of the biosphere's renewable resources than were being replaced by natural resources." And the Ginni Index (which measures the gap between high- and low-income populations) "had flattened considerably. Every continent was showing improvement. The pay justice movements, the wage ratio movements, and the central bank's recommended tax plans, plus political movements everywhere supporting job guarantees and progressive taxation...had powerful effects everywhere."

When you reach the end of [The Ministry for the Future](#), one possible response is "whew, very interesting, but isn't this a rather utopian vision of the future?" Well, it is utopian, but I don't see that as a problem. Utopias are models of something to strive for, which we really need to think about. Too often, I think, environmental activists tend to dwell on the negative; if we don't do something, all of this bad stuff is going to happen. But why not also give some thought to the positive, utopian things we'd like to see happen? In any event, do check out [The Ministry for the Future](#). Kim Stanley Robinson is a very talented storyteller and his imaginative take on our future in the Anthropocene is definitely worth pondering.



Create Your Own Backyard B 'n Bee

By Patty Weyhrich, Shawnee Group Sierra Club

You can help provide the food and shelter that pollinators need. Either in your own back yard or community garden, ranging from a few plants all the way to acres of wildflowers, you can welcome pollinators to eat and rest just like a good Bed 'n Breakfast.

Native bees have historically found nectar, pollen, and shelter in the winter in grasslands across Illinois. Unfortunately, corn and soybean fields and a growing number of roads, parking lots, malls, and lawns have erased bees' native homes. Your own yard can help fill been the gap where bees' habitats once were.

Since lawns cover 40 million acres, they also have potential to support habitat needed for pollinators. Some communities have adopted **No Mow May**, which encourages homeowners to delay mowing until May to give lawn dwelling flowering plants a chance to bloom and provide pollinators with food sources. A pilot program in Appleton, Wisconsin found increased numbers of bees and bee species when mowing was delayed.

Additional options may be to incorporate native plant areas in the front yard to promote awareness of the benefits for pollinators with a traditional lawn that's in harmony with neighborhood stewardship. Naturalize the back yard to a more diverse habitat with less turf grass. Ann Baskerville from Sierra Club Illinois Chapter states "No Mow May" is not all or nothing, everything counts when it comes to creating and protecting habitat for pollinators. Limit herbicide use, raise your mower blade, and perhaps leave parts of your backyard unmowed during May. Everything that creates and protects food for pollinators is important." Also consider longer intervals between mowing, leaving patches of bare ground to allow access for ground nesting insects, allowing perennial stems stand as many insects use them for habitat to overwinter. *(Continued on Page 5)*

- ✚ **What to plant.** As far as wildflowers, some of my favorites include wild bergamot / bee balm and mountain mint. They are perennial, hardy, deer resistant, pollinator magnets, pretty and aromatic. In Carbondale seeds will be available as supplies last at the Shawnee Group Member meetings and Confluence Bookstore. Also consider including trees and shrubs The white oak, while in a long-term plan, provides food for more animals than any other species, and is majestic as well.
- ✚ **Gardening tips.** Choose a sunny location, loosen and enrich soil with compost, select deer resistant plants and/or protect plants from deer browse. Consider a diversity of plants that will bloom at different times of the year to provide a long-term food source. Monarchs need milkweed for egg laying and pupae food, and pollinator flowers to provide nectar. See seed resources below.
- ✚ **Monarch Pledge.** Good news for Carbondale! The City signed the Monarch Pledge to provide support and education in planting for pollinators. This includes:
 - raising awareness about pollinator decline
 - reviewing City code to encourage pollinator-supportive landscapes
 - correcting landscape maintenance practices that harm pollinators, and
 - creating a community "pollinator yards" pilot program to educate/support re: pollinator landscapes.
- ✚ **Why is this important?** Many species are not doing well. Monarch populations are down 90 percent in the last 50 years, American bumblebees down 90% since 2000. <https://therevelator.org/insects-climate-change/> NatureServe reports [over one-third of biodiversity in the U.S. is at risk of disappearing](https://www.natureserve.org/articles/story/over-one-third-of-biodiversity-in-the-u-s-is-at-risk-of-disappearing).
- ✚ **What we eat.** Center for Biological Diversity [notes](https://www.cbdc.org/notes) to conserve biodiversity and protect vulnerable species and habitats, we must shift to a food system that prioritizes diverse plant foods and reduce animal protein. Adopting a whole-food, plant-based diet isn't just good for your health: It's also one of the best things you can do for the environment. <https://www.forksoverknives.com/wellness/vegan-diet-helps-environmental-sustainability/>
- ✚ **Taking Action.** Pollinators are integral to a healthy and balanced environment. You can help by buying local organic food and increasing a plant-based diet. Plant native plants and integrate pollinator habitat in your yard and/or community spaces, educate, support environmental policies, and volunteer your time to nurture supportive native landscapes.

The Monarch Act and Monarch Pledge are big steps to support habitats and repopulation. But it is up to us to implement behaviors that will enact change, from our diet, what we consume, and stewardship of the land we share with all species. Let's work together to support local pollinators and preserve the natural environment.

Resources:

No Mow May. <https://www.sierraclub.org/michigan/blog/2023/04/explore-enjoy-no-mow-may>

Seeds: <https://shop.stoverseed.com/collections/wildflower-regional-native-pollinator-mixtures/products/midwest-native-pollinator-wildflower-mixture>

Trees and shrubs: <https://www.washtenaw.org/DocumentCenter/View/15250/Native-Trees-Shrubs-for-Pollinators>

Project Wingspan <https://www.pollinator.org/wingspan>

Schools and educational nonprofits may apply for a free flat of native

milkweed: <https://monarchwatch.org/bring-back-the-monarchs/milkweed/free-milkweeds-schools-nonprofits/>

Monarch Watch free milkweeds for large-scale 2-acre+ habitat restoration: <https://monarchwatch.org/bring-back-the-monarchs/milkweed/free-milkweeds-for-restoration-projects/>

The destruction of ecosystems for croplands and pasturelands is the largest factor threatening wildlife

extinction <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9024616/>

ourworldindata.org. Livestock takes up nearly 80% of global agricultural land, yet produces less than 20% of the world's supply of calories (as shown in the visualization).

Recommended reading: [Regenesis: Feeding the World Without Devouring the Planet](#). George Monbiot.

SUMMER 2023 – SHAWNEE GROUP SIERRA CLUB MEMBER PROGRAMS

Note our **in-person** Shawnee Group member program, following national Sierra Club directions, because of COVID precautions. Do also consider other Illinois Sierra groups' virtual presentations, as well as our own, listed on www.sctrips.org.

No Shawnee Group member programs will be held during June & July 2023

Thursday, August 10, 2023, 7 pm

Presentation: "Fostering Community Wellbeing, Economic Prosperity, and Ecosystem Health: Vision for a more Sustainable and Resilient Carbondale and Southern Illinois"

Presenter: Lauren Becker, Carbondale Planner/Sustainability Coordinator

Location: In-Person, Carbondale Township Hall, 217 E Main St., Carbondale IL (**Masks required**)

SUMMER 2023 – SHAWNEE GROUP SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS

Given ticks, weather, vacations, and other factors, no Shawnee Group Sierra Club outings have been scheduled for summer 2023. However, browse the lower right Index on our old blog page for numerous southern Illinois hiking trail descriptions, and explore some of these during your own time:

<http://shawneegroup.blogspot.com/>. Check the Illinois Chapter listings for other outings across the region: <https://www.sierraclub.org/illinois/events-calendar>. Or consider a national outing for your summer vacation: <https://www.sierraclub.org/get-outside>.



Children's nature related books distributed at Carbondale's Earth Day event at Shawnee Group Sierra Club's table.

Service Outings – Help Save High Quality Natural Areas

Shawnee Group is committed to helping rid high-quality natural areas of non-native invasive plants (NNIS) that are threatening to crowd out our native plant communities at La-Rue Pine Hills Research Natural Area (Snake Road) and at Fern Rocks Nature Preserve (Trillium Trail) in Giant City State Park.

Shawnee Group) for further developments in 2023 or contact Barb at 618-549-9684, babitaji@aol.com or text 618-534-7440.

Piasa Palisades Group Outings Chair:

Carol Klinger, 618-288-5506, ciklinger@yahoo.com
<http://www.sierraclub.org/illinois/piasa-palisades>

Eastern Missouri Group Outings Chair:

Doug Melville, 636-288-1055
douglas.k.melville@gmail.com
<http://sierraclub.org/missouri/eastern-missouri>

Future Outings TBA:

Updates listed on our or Illinois Chapter websites:

<http://www.sierraclub.org/illinois/shawnee>

<https://www.sierraclub.org/illinois/events-calendar>

Other short notice outings and events may be announced on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/SierraClubShawnee>

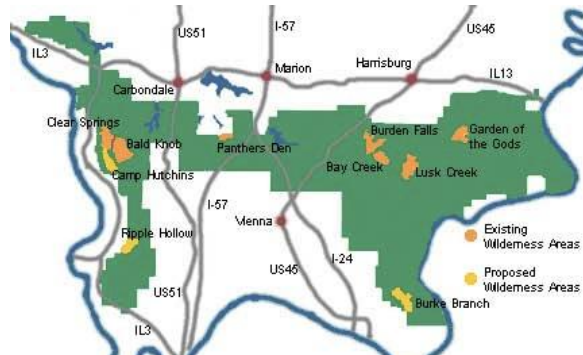
Shawnee National Forest Update from Illinois Chapter Shawnee National Forest Committee

The Illinois Chapter Shawnee National Forest Committee continues to advocate for protecting the [three areas](#) of the Shawnee National Forest that Sierra Club has deemed worthy of wilderness protection. However, instead of wilderness designation, we are now advocating for their designation as [National Conservation Areas](#) (NCAs), which would allow the level of management needed to protect and restore high quality Natural Areas within the three NCAs while keeping wilderness level protection. Senator Durbin has expressed a willingness to put forward legislation to protect these three areas as National Conservation Areas. Meanwhile, the [Environmental Law and Policy Center](#) (ELPC) is still advocating for full wilderness protection, which we, Sierra Club, are opposing because their proposal does not accommodate our concerns regarding management needs of high-quality sensitive areas. Also, Sierra Club does not want to encourage weakening of Wilderness designation in general by allowing exceptions to a Shawnee Forest Wilderness management prescription, thus the innovative designation as NCAs.

Senator Durbin is considering both approaches and our committee has briefed his aide on our approach. Durbin has charged both groups with the task of resolving our differences and has already introduced a “shell bill” as a “place holder” for any bill that Sierra Club and ELPC agree on. The current plan is to attach the bill to the must-pass 2023 Farm Bill. Our committee is presently educating staff at ELPC, who have never even been to Shawnee National Forest and who seem not to realize the ever-increasing threats caused by invasive species which necessitate the increased management.

Read more about it: Illinois Chapter Sierra Club [2023 Priority Legislation](#)

- ✓ [Nuclear](#)
- ✓ [Polystyrene](#)
- ✓ [Coal ash](#)
- ✓ [CO2 transport](#)



Proposed NCAs:

- Camp Hutchins
- Ripple Hollow
- Burke Branch

Illinois Legislative Contacts: [CALL YOUR LEGISLATORS TODAY!](#)

State Dist. 109 – Charles Meier: 618-651-0405; 217-782-6401; repcmeier@gmail.com
State Dist. 115 – David Riess: 618-282-7284; 217-782-1018; friess@ilhousegop.org
State Dist. 116 – David Severin: 618-440-5090; 217-782-1051; severin@ilhousegop.org
State Dist. 117 – Patrick Windhorst: 618-294-8703; 217-782-5131; windhorst@ilhousegop.org
State Dist. 118 – Paul Jacobs: 618-559-7018; 217-782-0387; Jacobs@ilhousegop.org
Senate Dist. 55 – Senator Jason Plummer: 618-283-3000; 217-782-5755
Senate Dist. 58 – Senator Terri Bryant: 618-684-1100; 217-782-8137; Sec’y.: cbrown@sgop.ilga.gov
Senate Dist. 59 – Senator Dale Fowler: 618-294-8951; 217-782-5509; senatorfowler59@gmail.com
Governor J.B. Pritzker: 217-782-6830; <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/gov/contactus/Pages/default.aspx>
Speaker of the House Emanuel Chris Welch: 217-782-5350; 708-450-1000; repwelch@emanuelchriswelch.com
Senate President Don Harmon: 217-782-8176; 708-848-2002; <http://www.donharmon.org/contact-senator-harmon>

Congressional Contacts: [CALL YOUR CONGRESSMEN TODAY!](#)

Senator Dick Durbin: 618-351-1122; 202-224-2152; <http://www.durbin.senate.gov>
Senator L. Tammy Duckworth: 202-224-2854; <https://www.duckworth.senate.gov>
Representative Mike Bost: 618-457-5787; 202-225-5661; <https://bost.house.gov>
Representative Mary Miller: 618-240-3155; 202-225-5271; <https://marymiller.house.gov>

President Joseph R. Biden, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C.
202-456-1111; <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact>

Has Your Email Address Changed?

To receive notification when the latest Shawnee Group newsletter is posted online, be sure to inform the Group when you change your email address. Send email address updates to: crusso1957@yahoo.com.

Read current and past newsletters on our website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/illinois/shawnee>. The website also lists information on upcoming local programs and outings, plus state and national Sierra Club issues.

Leadership Opportunities

Run for the Board! We need a few good women and men. Join the board of directors (the executive committee, also known as the ExCom) in overseeing the Shawnee Group's strategic direction and economic health. Board members meet monthly for about 2 hours. Board terms are for two years. We are always interested in potential candidates. Contact Jane Cogie, 618-549-4673, jane.cogie@gmail.com.

Call for articles and photographs for Shawnee Trails! The next issue will be published in August. Please send your Word, PDF or JPG files to sabrina@midwest.net by **Monday, August 7th**.



Shawnee Group Sierra Club T-Shirts for Sale!

Show your support for our local group's activities. Contact Mike Covell at 618-201-4928 or emike@siu.edu.

White logo on blue T-Shirt \$15
Medium Large or X-Large

Native Plant Sale

On April 8, Shawnee Group of the Sierra Club held its 9th Native Plant Sale at the Carbondale Pavilion. The sale was listed in the events for Earth month activities in the city of Carbondale. The vendors, Southernwood Gardens, owned by Ann and Eric Stahlheber, had many plant varieties from which to choose. They brought 540 plants to sell and only had 42 left at the end of the day. Thank you to the local residents and Sierra Club members for such a successful sale! The efforts by the many volunteers paid off with this sale. The residents helped too by purchasing so many types of plants. Thank you to all!



EV and Hybrid Car Show

Saturday April 15 brought a thunderstorm and several new EV cars from dealers in Marion to town. The Green Team from First Christian Church, the city of Carbondale and Shawnee Group of the Sierra Club planned and executed a successful event. The event was held in tandem with Earth month celebrations in the city. New EV cars from Ford, Nissan, Subaru and Volkswagon were displayed. Members of the community brought their own Bolts, Telsas, Camrys, a Lucid, BMW, plus an electric Motorcycle and an Ebike. The weather disrupted but did not erase this event. Attendees were able to view the cars/truck and ask questions of the dealers and personal owners. The dealers had sign-up sheets for those folks who wanted to schedule a future test drive. There was a handout giving list prices for various EVs and Hybrids, tax credit information and articles on the pros of electric vehicles.