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Dallas Sierra Club
Lone Star Chapter

Dallas Sierra Club News - March 2017

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Important Notice: The Sierra Club General Meeting is normally on the second Tuesday of the month, but our meeting location, Brookhaven College, is closed for spring break that week. So, for this month only, our meeting will be on the first Tuesday, March 7. Update your calendars now so you don't miss this excellent program.

General Meeting Program - March 7, 7:00 pm - Refreshments at 6:30

Woodpeckers

Knock-Knock! Who's There? Woodpeckers, sapsuckers, flickers, oh my! Join The Dallas Zoo and discover the incredible story of the woodpecker. From shaping entire ecosystems with the tip of their bill to a call like no other, these birds are more than meets the eye. Find out the threats they face and how you can help ensure their survival. From drumming to snake fights, don't miss your chance to learn fascinating facts about this quirky family as Jenna Hanson and Ben Jones explore the wild world of woodpeckers.

Jenna Hanson has spent over ten years acquiring experience and fostering her own passion for conservation, specifically through environmental education. She received her B.A. in Biology from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and her Masters in Natural Science and Environmental Education through Hamline University in Saint Paul, MN. She has worked for a variety of organizations including The Dallas Zoo and the National Audubon to help nurture environmental stewardship and action throughout diverse communities. She enjoys sharing nature with others and believes that shared experiences build stronger connections to one another and the natural world.



Benjamin Jones grew up in southeast Texas spending much of his childhood happily lost in the Big Thicket and adrift along the marshes and beaches of the upper Gulf Coast. He graduated from Texas A&M University with bachelors and master's degrees in the sciences, then worked for Arthur Andersen as a business analyst. Ben served the National Audubon Society in multiple roles including state director of education for Texas and center director of the flagship, Trinity River Audubon Center. For 10 years he has served the Dallas Zoo in various capacities and now as senior director and dean of the Wild Earth Academy. In this role, Ben is responsible for the creative and strategic direction of the Academy including new conservation engagement programs, leadership training, and citizen science

initiatives. Interested in science, education, and conservation, especially as they intersect; Ben is passionate about nature as a context for life-long learning, stronger communities, and enriched life.

Everyone is welcome. FREE! You don't have to be a Sierra Club member. Just show up. We'd love to meet you.

Our General Meeting starts at 7:00 pm, but come at 6:30 for snacks, information and fellowship. Click over to our [General Meeting page](#) for more information and a map.

Camp and Hike at Colorado Bend State Park - March 17-19

We've reserved the group campsite by the Colorado River for tent camping on Friday and Saturday nights. Drive to this park near Bend, Texas, west of Lampassas. This large park features miles of trails through environmental zones as varied as the creekside trails and pools of Spicewood Springs and the cedar breaks leading to Gorman Falls. Join a guided hike with a Sierra Club leader, hike on your own or simply enjoy lounging in camp. This overnight camp offers good opportunities to prepare for summer hiking and backpacking, besides adventures in itself. Families, couples and singles are invited. More information, including cost and sign-up information are in [this PDF document](#).



New Member Picnic - Saturday, March 25, 11:00 am to 2:00 pm

Save the Date! This is the picnic to beat all picnics sponsored by the Dallas Sierra Club. Why you ask? Because now we have so many new members (Facebook and Meetings, 700 plus!) that it is astounding! Since I am the new Membership Chair, (Ginger) I'd like to invite all the new members and want-to-be members to the picnic that is happening on a beautiful Saturday afternoon this March. The weather will be perfect, I assure you. Bring the kids and the whole family!

The Picnic is scheduled for March 25 at Churchill Park in Dallas, starting at 11:00 am. There will be good food, cool people, drinks, lots of stuff to discuss, and some fun and games. Think lawn darts, croquet, kickball, basketball, who knows? So who's ready to get together, discuss the environment, join the Dallas Sierra Club officially, and other fun things?

The new Membership Chair will help you to become a Sierra Club member, and I can guarantee a good time, and also some free swag.

We'll have a covered pavilion, grass and space, free food, free drinks, and a great guy who will be cooking hamburgers and hotdoggies. Also, vegetarian fare will be available, veggie burgers, veggies, salads, chips, etc. Come enjoy the great outdoors with us and find out how to go further and more often into the wilderness that is our wonderful state of Texas and beyond.

And, we've got door (outdoor) prizes. We have a \$100 gift card to give away and lots of other cool stuff such as Sierra Club cooler, backpack, bandannas, and some other random picnic prizes. And we have darts, soccer ball, basketball, and Croquet in the hopper, ready to play.

See you there, March 25, from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm, or later. Churchill Park in Dallas, right off of Hillcrest and 635. [Here is a map](#). Bring your friends, family, and good attitude and be ready to eat and have some fun.

Feeling Tired? Go Camping!

By Bill Greer

Scientists (yes, those enemies of the people) have long known about the circadian rhythm. This cycling of our hormones influences when we feel rested and refreshed and when we feel sleepy. They have also known for a long time that our plentiful artificial lights and computer screens can get this rhythm out of step with our waking and sleeping periods. Dr. Kenneth Wright, a professor of integrative physiology at the University of Colorado says it's "like constantly being a little jet lagged." Several hours after you get up your internal clock is saying you should still be asleep.

Recent research by Dr. Wright has uncovered a simple fix for this problem. A weekend camping trip where you see only natural sunlight and starlight can reset your circadian rhythm by 69% of the mismatch. This means you must leave the technology at home! A weeklong trip gives a complete reset. But a weekend trip can shift the rhythm as much as an hour and a half. Dr. Phyllis Zee, director for the Center for Circadian and Sleep Medicine at Northwestern University, says that natural light, particularly morning sunshine, has a very powerful influence on setting internal clocks. Dr. Zee says "We see people who can't fall asleep until 4 am. So you say, okay, there's this camping thing."

The summary to Dr. Wright's research concludes "We demonstrate that earlier circadian timing can be rapidly achieved through natural light exposure during a weekend spent camping." Again, this means you don't spend the evening staring at your cell phone!

Now I know why I've always felt so rested and refreshed after a backpack trip. In addition to the camaraderie, great scenery, and wonderful exercise, my internal clock was back in sync with the busy schedule.

I know I've never felt more rested and refreshed than I did after an 18-day river trip in Grand Canyon. We went to bed at sunset and got up at sunrise. Aside from an occasional headlamp the only light was from the sun. But you don't need 18 days! Just a weekend will do wonders for you. If you needed another reason to go on a Sierra Club outing, here it is. So, go on over to the Sierra Club website and pick out your favorite clock resetter. You'll find weekend backpack trips, a 3 day river trip, a 4 day bus trip, and a 5 day backpack trip. If you've never done anything like this before, check out our beginner backpack class this fall and the beginner trips that will follow it.

Web Resources:

[BBC.com](#)

[NPR.org](#)

[Current Biology sleep study](#)

[Dallas Sierra Club Outings List](#)

Future Programs You Won't Want to Miss

April 11 - The Beneficial Garden

Insects and wildlife are the best indicators of garden health. Learn about insects that keep your garden

healthy and how to attract them. Presented by John Watts, Entomologist at Texas Discovery Gardens at Fair Park.

May 9 - Building Resilient Cities, One Park at a Time

Think about your favorite neighborhood park. It's probably a beautiful place to spend an afternoon, perhaps play a game of soccer, or ride a bike. But have you ever stopped to consider the other ways your park helps your neighborhood? Well-designed and close-to-home parks can provide benefits to the surrounding community that go beyond beautification and recreation, from reducing flood risks to growing the local economy.

June 13 - Gardening on a Shoe String

Learn how to have a fantastic garden without spending a fortune.

July 11 - Citizen Science and iNaturalist

What if you find something outside but don't know what it is? How do you find out? What if you could share that discovery with others to excite them about nature as well? Citizen science is one way to address each of those questions.

Calendar

Here is our calendar for the next two months. For complete listings, visit us at www.dallassierraclub.org.



Mar 4 (Sat) Pilot Knoll Trail Dayhike Highland Village, TX.

Come join us as we day hike 6 miles (10K) on the northern reaches of the Elm Fork. This is a packed dirt trail used by hikers and horse riders heading to Lewisville Lake. No pets, please. Bring water and a snack as we will be walking all morning. We will leave the trail head promptly at **9 AM**. This will be an out and back to the vicinity of Pilot Knoll Park in Highland Village. To reach the trailhead from I-35E, take the Swisher Road (FM 2181) exit and head west approximately 4 miles. Turn left onto Old Alton Road. The park will be approximately 100 yards down the Old Alton Road on the left. No signup necessary just show up. The trail could be muddy so bring extra shoes. Optional lunch afterwards. Leader: Mark Adams [Send Email](#) 940-231-8482



Mar 4-5 (Sat-Sun) Big Thicket National Preserve, Turkey Creek Trail

Big Thicket National Preserve is 112,250 acres of land and water spread over 7 counties in southeast Texas. It's a convergence of ecosystems which occurred here during the last Ice Age. In 1981, it was designated an International Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This trip is a 2-day 15-mile backpack hike of the Turkey Creek Trail from north to south, limited to 8 people. Leader approval is required before you arrive at the trailhead. Trip details will be sent to participants. Leader: Pat Johnston [Send Email](#) 214-450-1342



Mar 7 (Tue) Dallas Sierra Club General Meeting

Woodpeckers. Learn fascinating facts about the incredible story of quirky woodpeckers. Everyone is invited. Full details are on our [home page](#) now.



Mar 11 (Sat) White Rock Lake Clean-up

Walk and talk while picking up trash and recyclables at the Sierra Club's adopted section of White Rock Lake Park. Meet at 8:15 AM this second Saturday of the month at the Love of the Lake office, northeast corner of Garland Road and Buckner Boulevard. Look for the crowd drinking free juice and coffee. Gloves, trash bags, etc. will be provided. Our area includes one of the wonderful

prairie restoration areas, so there are always birds and wildflowers to enjoy. Brunch afterwards.
Leader: Carol Nash [Send Email](#) 214-455-2115



Mar 11-12 (Sat-Sun) Beginners Backpack Trip in Ouachita National Forest, Arkansas

We'll hike a portion of the Little Missouri River Trail and the Viles Branch Trail in the Ouachita National Forest in SW Arkansas. Camp at Shady Lake Campground Friday night. Drive to the trailhead Saturday morning and hike about 6 miles to camp near one of many streams in the area Saturday night. Hike out about 4 miles on Sunday morning. This hike is rated moderate with a few hills and stream crossings. Some spots will be reserved for members of the January 21 Backpacking 101 class. Leader: Mark Adams [Send Email](#) 940-231-8482



Mar 15 (Wed) Outings Committee Meeting

Tonight the Outings Committee meets upstairs at Whole Foods Market, SE quadrant of Preston Road and Forest Lane, Dallas, at 6:30. Anyone interested in outings is invited. Reply to Mark to be added to the advance agenda email list or to suggest an agenda item. Organizer: Mark Stein [Send Email](#) 214-526-3733



Mar 17-19 (Fri-Sun) Camp and Hike at Colorado Bend State Park

We've reserved the group campsite by the Colorado River for tent camping on Friday and Saturday nights. Drive to this park near Bend, Texas, west of Lampassas. This large park features miles of trails through environmental zones as varied as the creekside trails and pools of Spicewood Springs and the cedar breaks leading to Gorman Falls. Join a guided hike with a Sierra Club leader, hike on your own or simply enjoy lounging in camp. This overnight camp offers good opportunities to prepare for summer hiking and backpacking, besides adventures in itself. Families, couples and singles are invited. More information, including cost and sign-up information are in [this PDF document](#). Coordinator: Bill Beach [Send Email](#) 214-662-3224



Mar 18 (Sat) Trail Maintenance at Cedar Ridge Preserve

Come to the hilly terrain of Cedar Ridge Preserve to help maintain one of the better trail networks in Dallas. The Sierra Club is responsible for the Possum Haw Trail. We work here on third Saturdays of almost every month, starting at 9 AM, working until approximately noon. The Preserve's address is 7171 Mountain Creek Parkway, Dallas. For directions and general information about Cedar Ridge Preserve, click [this link](#). If you need more information or want to carpool, call or email me. Contact: Ginger Bradley [Send Email](#) 469-223-7902



Mar 25 (Sat) Dallas Sierra Club New Member Picnic

All new and prospective Sierra Club members are invited to a special picnic just for you. If you're not a new member, you are invited also. We'd love to see everyone. We'll be serving hamburgers and hot dogs, vegetarian fare, salad and drinks. And we have fun events for all. The picnic will be from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm (or later) at Churchill Park, on Churchill Way, just south of the intersection of Hillcrest and I-635 LBJ. [Here](#) is a map. We have a covered pavilion, so the picnic is on rain or shine. RSVP with a quick email (below) so we know how much food to provide. Organizer: Ginger Bradley [Send Email](#) 469-223-7902



Apr 1 (Sat) Day Hike at Spring Creek Nature Preserve in Garland

Meet at 9 am at parking lot at 1770 Holford Road (east side). We will explore both old-growth blackland forest and prairie (natural surface trails). Optional lunch/coffee afterwards. Leader: Lynn Marple [Send Email](#) 972-345-5528



Apr 5 (Wed) Dallas Sierra Club Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee (or Excom) is the elected governing body of the Dallas Sierra Club and meets upstairs at Whole Foods Market, southeast corner of Preston Road and Forest Lane, in Dallas at 6:30 pm. Contact the [Dallas Group Chair](#) for more information.



Apr 6-9 (Thu-Sun) Paddling Trip On The Wild Neches River

It's time to get those dusty boats wet. This flat water canoe/kayak trip provides an opportunity for solitude while paddling the beautiful Neches River through the heavily wooded Big Thicket National Preserve in southeast Texas. The Neches River is considered by experts to be one of the top 10 flat water rivers in the lower 48 states. The trip starts at highway 1013 near Spurger and ends 39 miles downstream at highway 96 near Silsbee. The exact section paddled could change depending on river flow. Big Thicket Preserve is managed by the National Park Service. Leader: Bill Greer [Send Email](#) 972-247-0446



Apr 11 (Tue) Dallas Sierra Club General Meeting

Learn about insects that keep your garden healthy and how to attract them. - Everyone is invited. Full details are on our [home page](#) now.



Apr 15 (Sat) Electronics Recycling - FREE - 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Electronics recycling and document shredding, Richardson Square Mall, east parking lot, free for everybody. [Click here](#) for a link to details about items accepted, a map, etc.



Apr 22 (Sat) Cedar Ridge Preserve Dayhike

Join us for a great time at one of the best dayhike places in the area. We will meet at the parking lot at 9 AM and hike about 6 miles (2 to 2.5 hours). Afterward, we plan to have lunch at a restaurant nearby. The Preserve is a not-for-profit natural habitat of 633 acres featuring 10 miles of hiking trails, a native plant nursery and butterfly gardens. Find your way to IH 20 in Dallas, just east of Grand Prairie and take exit 458 for Mountain Creek Parkway. Go south for a few miles and you will see the entrance to the Preserve on your right. Leader: Bill Beach [Send Email](#) 214-662-3224



Apr 26 (Wed) Wilderness Navigation Class--Part 1

Come to a comprehensive and fun two-night class to help you navigate in the backcountry with map and compass. Part 1 is Wednesday night at 6:30. Part 2 is Thursday night at 6:30. Both sessions are upstairs at the Whole Foods Market, SE quadrant of Preston Road and Forest Lane. The fee for the two-night class is \$35 for Sierra Club members, \$40 for non-members. An optional field lab for class participants will be set on Saturday or Sunday. Pay in advance by [clicking here](#) or pay at the door. Bring a compass if you have one. If not, we'll have an extra you can use and we'll advise what to look for when you buy your own. Both sessions will run until approximately 9:00. Coordinator: Liz Wheelan [Send Email](#) 214-368-2306



Apr 27 (Thu) Wilderness Navigation Class--Part 2

Join us for this second night of a two-part class that begins Wednesday, April 26. Both sessions are at Whole Foods Market, Preston Road at Forest Lane. Coordinator: Liz Wheelan [Send Email](#) 214-368-2306

The Dallas Sierra Club News e-newsletter, sent monthly (and occasional for late-breaking news or events), keeps you up-to-date on meetings, activities, issues and special events. Visit us at www.DallasSierraClub.org.
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