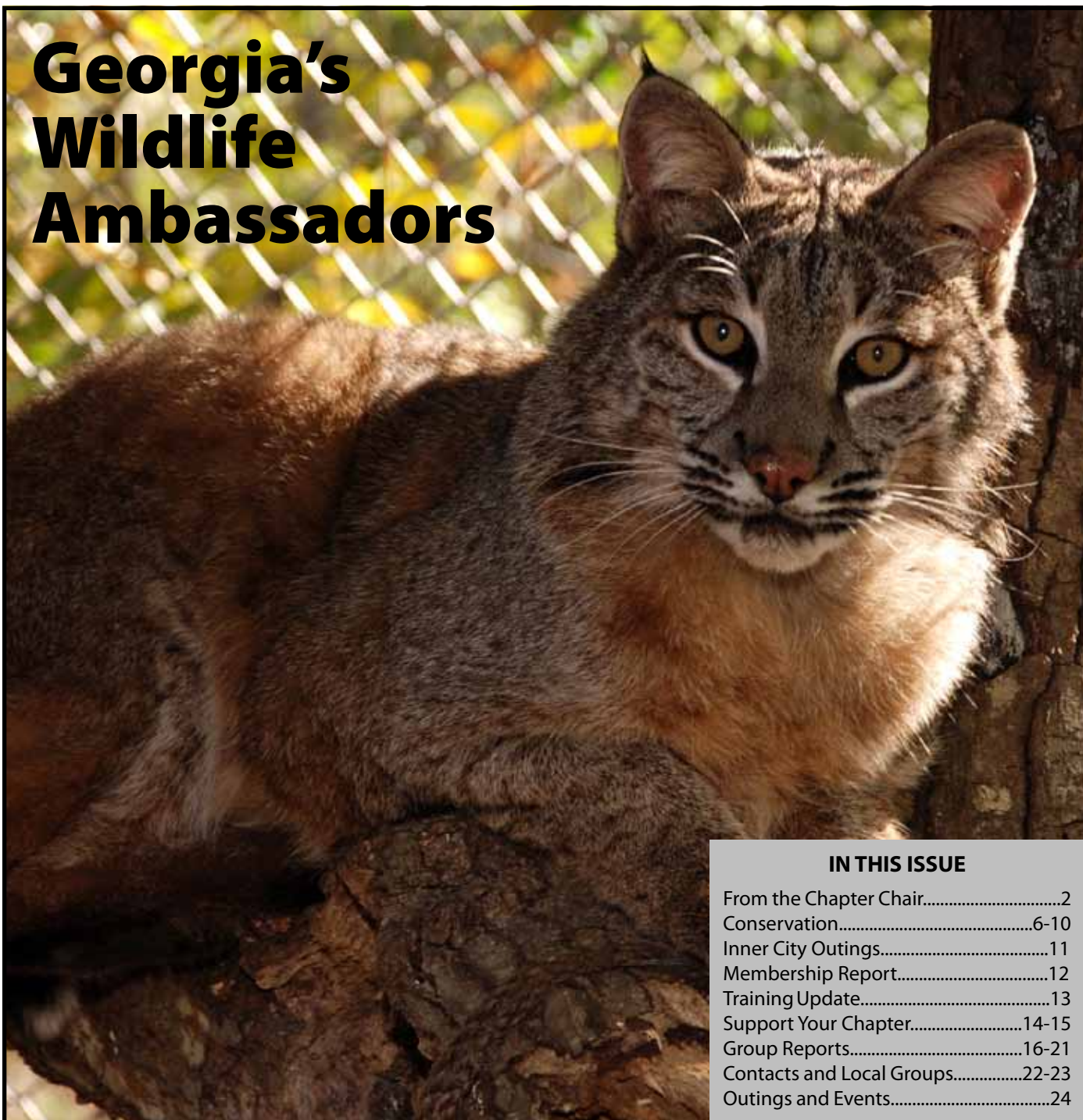




Sierran

To Explore, Enjoy, and Protect the Planet

Georgia's Wildlife Ambassadors



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The Fierce Urgency of Now

By Mark Woodall

This Georgia *Sierran* goes to press as four days remain in the 2010 session of the Georgia Legislature. The remarks earlier today of Rep. Pat Gardner (D-Atlanta) brought to mind a line from Dr. Martin Luther King's I Have a Dream speech: "We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now."

Rep. Gardner's remarks were made in the House Natural Resources Committee in response to those who said that now is not the time to pass an amendment regulating inter-basin transfers of water. The amendment being debated was designed to establish a fundamentally fair water policy for all Georgians. As an Atlantan and as a member of the House Transportation Committee, Rep. Gardner said she knew transportation solutions were needed now so she understood the urgency of those advocating for the passage of the river protection amendment this session.

Judge Manuson's ruling in the water wars litigation certainly gives us a fierce urgency to protect and conserve water. Already this session, Senate Bill 370, the Governor's Water Stewardship Act, has passed and awaits the Governor's signa-



Mark Woodall, Chapter Chair

ture. This bill puts into place many important water conservation measures which the Sierra Club and its allies in the Georgia Water Coalition have supported for years.

Recent events have given a fierce urgency to the legislative efforts to address the transportation funding crisis. The Clayton County bus system, C-TRAN, was allowed to shut down at the end of March. MARTA, the backbone of the Metro mass transit system, faces severe service cuts and the layoff of a 1000 employees. Legislation allowing MARTA funding flexibility is needed now. Legislation allowing a vote on a regional tax for transportation is needed

now. Legislation shifting the fourth penny of the current sales tax on motor fuels from the general fund to any transportation purpose including mass transit is needed now.

Failure of the Georgia General Assembly to act on the transportation crisis would be an economic and environmental disaster. Let us hope our elected officials feel the fierce urgency of now.

More information on water issues can be found on the Georgia Water Coalition website at www.gawater.org. Sign up for the latest alerts at the Georgia Environmental Action Network website at www.protectgeorgia.net.



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Sierra Club Outings are a terrific way to meet new people and enjoy the great outdoors. Whatever your interests - hiking, canoeing or birdwatching - there is an outing for everyone. If you are new to the area, let your local Chapter or Group show you around. Join today and become part of America's largest environmental organization with the most enjoyable outings.

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ON THE COVER

Gato, a bobcat, is an ambassador animal at AWARE, Atlanta's Wild Animal Rescue Effort, a nonprofit, all-volunteer wildlife center committed to the preservation and restoration of wildlife and its habitat through education and wildlife rehabilitation. See pages 8-9 for details.



About Georgia Sierran

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Lichen Giving Signs of Air Quality



By Christy Mansfield

Late February 2010 lichen was discovered growing plentiful and thick along the trails of green luscious wooded Griffin Ridge Interpretive. Laying undisturbed and in high abundance, this lichen stretched out in large patches about 10 to 12 feet in over 5 locations. It lay about 2- 3 inches tall, tucked beneath the shade, and buried between hundreds of pine and oak leaves. This was not only a bewildering experience from beauty, but it clearly showed the conditions of the environment. The plant was thriving and observed to be in well condition in it's environment as it grown in numerous areas around the interpretive.

Lichen is a type of growth associated with fungus in a grayish or greenish tinge. This spongy looking organism can be seen growing in many places from tree branches, soil, around plants, around wood, leaves, rock formations, and in many other places as well. The most common places to find lichen growing would be in the forest, however they can be found in many other places as well, including your backyard. But what is astonishing is the fact that a few of these fluffy lichen tell about our environments conditions and give away information that we could all benefit from. Lichen not only tells us that it is habitual to a certain area or climate, but some lichen can give us knowledge of our air conditions and quality. These

organisms are very vital to us because air quality is a major concern, as environmentalist try to promote safe air and good quality air.

At the Griffin Ridge Interpretive in Lidowici, Georgia, among the woods *Cladonia rangiferina* or Reindeer moss was the lichen which caught attention for my observation for that moment. This particular lichen had a sponge like texture with tiny holes around the mass. It was very light to hold and grew upon moderately dry and land. It was pleasing to view such growth, which could have been a sign of good quality air without nutritious deletion.

According to The Institute of Homœopathy in Bristol England, The reindeer moss lichen moss is long lived and can last up to around 100 years or more. The lichen is in threat from forest fires and heavy over eaten by animals can diminish or reduce the organisms tremendously. Although the lichen are long lived, live in high acid soils, and can live in extreme environments, they still have their threats of grazing, air pollution, and forest fires. Their vulnerability should always be considered when taking in consideration of wildlife protection and care. There is much value in these plants, and they can sometimes provide science with alerts of how our air quality is from one environment to another.

Some may also wonder how *Cladonia rangiferina* lichen can also benefit

individuals. Not only is this organism a source to science in helping observe oxygen quality, but lichen can help us internally as well. Certain kinds of lichen have been know to help peoples digestive system, whooping cough, respiratory illness, colds, skin inflammations, and mouth inflammations. In addition science has found lichen to be poison, cause allergic reactions, and is not regulated by the FDA. However, according to Gale Alternative Medicine lichen is sold in Europe in cough suppressants, medicines, tea, and sometimes in powder.

While going out and boiling lichen wouldn't be a great idea, preserving and protecting lichen is something that should be taken seriously. All plants that grow on the earth play a vital role in helping us in some way or another. When looking at the lichen plant, one can find that it is a vital plant for animals, humans, and the ecosystem. Its vulnerability to the air and land give us signals of our changing environment, and that can help us. Therefore, lichen is a organism that lives among the other plant life, thriving, growing, and helping us as the other plants help us too. All of our environment plays a significant role in providing us helpful information in which we can research further and learn the wonders of the world around us. Lichen is a friendly reminder that all living things have an importance to all.

In the Wrong Hands, Trash Burning Biomass Is a Dangerous Step Backward

By Stacey Kronquest

While biomass as an alternative energy source can both reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as methane from landfills, and provide non fossil fuel energy, it is not a panacea for eliminating foreign energy dependence and reducing climate change pollution.

Yet in Georgia, private waste companies have convinced state legislators and local elected officials that biomass is in fact the answer to the renewable energy question.

In essence, the solid waste industry has hijacked biomass in Georgia, turning it into a profit stream that subordinates truly green practices such as composting and recycling.

As composting has moved into the mainstream and been promoted as a best practice by the EPA, Georgia legislators are readying to repeal a law that mandates yard waste be composted for reuse.

That's right. Instead of being composted yard trimmings would end up in the landfill.

And as municipal waste incinerators have gone the way of the typewriter, there are twenty in various stages of the application process in Georgia.

If they are built, forget about recycling.

Why are our elected state and local officials so eager to forgo the two best practices—composting and recycling—for reducing not only trash, but also pollution and greenhouse gases?

Something stinks. And if you follow your nose, it'll lead you right to the bank.

The waste-management companies that own private landfills stand to make a lot of money from land filling yard waste. They'll substantially increase the amount of revenue from tipping fees; a fee a waste-hauler pays to dump its trash in the landfill. Then, they'll sell the methane gas produced from the hundreds of millions of tons of decomposing organic matter.

Proponents claim a win-win situation. They're using the waste for energy. What can be wrong with that?

It turns out quite a lot, actually.

The composted yard waste is not only rendered inert in terms of releasing greenhouse gas, it has a real value in the marketplace.

Georgia farmers, landscapers, and other small businesses depend on composted material for their livelihoods.

Environmentally speaking, while turning landfill gas into energy is not a bad idea, it has been proven to not be an effi-

cient source of renewable energy. Disregarding the philosophical and moral issues surrounding throwing it away over reusing it, landfill bio-energy captures less than half of the methane released, which means by throwing yard waste in the landfill rather than composting, we are contributing one of the most destructive greenhouses gases into the atmosphere.

Combine that with landfills filling up more quickly, and you have to wonder who is running this state. Looks like the garbage companies to me.

The bevy of new incinerators being proposed is following the same playbook, on a local level.

For the companies that produce and market them, municipal waste incineration is a great business model. Not such a great deal, though, for the local community. Taxpayers fund the construction—to the tune of several hundred million dollars.

They pay the maintenance costs—millions annually. Yet, the majority of the private-public deals between local governments and incinerator companies are partnerships.

So after the taxpayers foot the enormous capital costs, and pay for the extensive upkeep, the incinerator company sells excess capacity to burn foreign trash. That's right, they sell the service of burning trash. So the community is not only breathing their own trash, they're also breathing trash from other states. Then they landfill the toxic ash, too.

Local politicians who support this, and there are many of them across the state, say incineration that turns garbage into electricity is the ultimate in renewable alternative energy sources.

But what about the pollution? Incinerators spew a nasty cocktail of hazardous air particulates, dioxin, and, yes, greenhouses gases into the air. IN terms of greenhouse gases, they are slightly less polluting than coal-fired energy plants, but much dirtier than natural gas.

And because they are so expensive to operate, communities are left with little financial reserve for programs like recycling. (The plastics and paper help the incinerator burn more efficiently anyway.)

Both biomass schemes—landfill gas and incineration—would induce importation of trash from across the Southeast into the Peach State to be buried and burned.

The Georgia Chapter continues to work at the state capital and with local communities to keep yard waste out of the landfill and incinerators from polluting our air and water.



Landfills could fill faster under proposed "biomass" schemes

Don't Know Much About Right Whales?

By Karen Grainey

During the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, European and American whaling fleets mercilessly slaughtered the North Atlantic right whale, calling the species the "right" whale to kill because their thick blubber conveniently caused their dead bodies to float. Time proved that this harvest was unsustainable when whaling came to an end in 1935 because there were no longer enough right whales remaining in the North Atlantic Ocean to support the industry. The population has never recovered and the right whale is counted as the most endangered great whale in the world.

Throughout the whaling period



A right whale with calf off of Georgia's coast

people knew little about these magnificent animals beyond what they needed to successfully hunt them and derive products from their massive bodies. Today scientists and conservationists are working hard to catch up and learn as much as possible about the whales and hopefully save them from the brink of extinction.

It wasn't until 1985 that we discovered that the pregnant females migrate every winter from their feeding grounds off the coast of Canada and New England to the warm, shallow, near-shore waters of coastal Georgia and North Florida to give birth and nurse their calves.

Sadly, most people in Georgia have never heard of the right whale and don't know that our coastal waters provide critical habitat. This is a problem because public awareness is needed to encourage public policy makers to protect the whales from human causes of mortality and provide the funding needed to study and monitor the whales.

The Georgia Chapter can help improve public awareness by first educating ourselves and then working to encourage the large institutions which purport to educate the public on marine matters to raise the profile of Georgia's state mammal. Where in Georgia is there an eye grabbing life size model of this 50ft. leviathan and a display which tells its compelling story? I had to go to the National Estuarine Research Reserve visitor's center in St. Augustine, Florida to find the closest high quality educational display about the right whale.

Does your public library have a copy of *The Urban Whale: North Atlantic Right Whales* at the Crossroads? Much to my dismay the public library system in Savannah doesn't have a single copy of this definitive book edited by prominent whale researcher Scott Kraus. While this book probably contains more information than most people want, it

Right Whale Facts

Scientific Name: *Eubalaena glacialis* which means "good", or "true" whale of the ice in Latin

Average Length: 50 feet (15 metres)

Food: uses comb-like baleen plates to sift zooplankton from the water

Habitat: called the "urban whale" because it lives near the densely populated Atlantic coastline of North America

Status: Endangered

Threats: collisions with ships and entanglement in fishing gear

is an authoritative reference that belongs in Georgia's public libraries.

If you count yourself among those who don't know much about right whales, my apologies for the dearth of information in this short article. If you wish to learn more, a good place to start is the website of the Right Whale Consortium (<http://www.rightwhaleweb.org/>). If your goal is to become an expert get a copy of *The Urban Whale*. I've also put together a PowerPoint presentation which I would be happy to present to your group.

take action

To find out how you can help, join the Sierra Club's Atlantic Coast Ecoregion Task Force North Atlantic Right Whale BEACON (Bimonthly Early Alert Coastal Network) project by e-mailing narightwhale@hotmail.com.

New Document To Outline Harbor Deepening Plans

By Judy Jennings

About 14 years ago, when Coastal Sierrans objected to “fast track” harbor deepening in Savannah, our flagship issue was saving tidal freshwater wetlands at the Savannah National Wildlife Refuge which lies upriver from the port. As our number of meetings with the Army Corps of Engineers and Georgia Ports Authority grew from a few to a great many, so did our list of issues. We learned to talk the language of ports, big ships, and international trade. But, underlying it all was our desire to protect habitat for hundreds of species of fish, birds, and mammals. By the end of this summer, we expect that the public will be able to review the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. If you intend to read it all, take a cozy blanket to your most comfortable reading chair and settle in because the seasons of the earth will have changed before you finish it.

But, don't let the weighty document intimidate you. The basics are simple. If you deepen about 25 miles of a river from 42' up to 48', you know two things are going to happen. Dissolved oxygen in the river will go down, and the salinity from the Atlantic Ocean will spread further up river. The questions are to what extent these things happen, and what will be the environmental impacts.

Some impacts directly relate to other infrastructure, such as intake for Savannah's surface water treatment facility, the region's use of the Floridan Aquifer, and renourishment of sand on Tybee Island's beaches.

The SNWR is home to a large variety of wildlife including: ducks, geese, wading birds, shorebirds and several endangered and/or threatened species including bald eagles, wood storks, manatees, and shortnose sturgeon. The refuge also provides nesting areas for wood ducks, great horned owls, bald eagles, osprey and swallow-tailed kites among others. Bottomland and upland hardwoods house and feed deer, hog, and turkey. Of course, these species also use many acres of wetland and upland habitat spread along the banks of the meandering river and old plantation land on the river's South Carolina side where the impacts of deepening will also be felt.

Sighting some of these beautiful animals will make a person stop and watch. So will the sight of a passing gigantic container-ship but if you could block the sound of the ship's engines and listen to the river beneath it, you'd hear the crackling of shrimp, the creaks and clicks of the bottlenose dolphin, and the distinct sounds of prized fish such as red drum, spotted seatrout, black drum, and weakfish.

Marine species such as the highly endangered right whale (see p. 5) are also of concern. But, it is impossible to list here all the species on air, land, and water that could be impacted. It is the job of the DEIS to address them. If you don't have time to read the whole document, no worries. I promise you, your Issue Leaders will!

Saturday Morning at Johnson Ferry

By Alan Toney

Early Saturday morning I took my dogs on our weekly walk through the Chattahoochee National Recreation Area at Johnson Ferry. I'm always amazed by the wildlife. We were barely out of the parking lot when I notice a large red shouldered hawk sitting in a dead pine tree. He was busy working on his plumage and totally ignores us. A little further along a beaver slaps his tail to show his displeasure with our approach. Next we surprise four white tail deer feeding near the large beaver pond. They evaporate into the woods, while a pair of Cooper's Hawks dance on the wind in full aerial courtship. As we cross Mulberry Creek heading toward Morgan Falls Dam, we encounter a coyote is hunting in the high grass. Luckily he's down wind so for once my visual senses have the upper hand over vastly superior canine nasal equipment and we slip by both dogs and coyote unaware. As we circle back home we meet a young couple with two small children on a pilgrimage to the beaver pond. The kids seem delighted at the prospect of seeing a beaver and quietly I hope he's still out although the Sun is now climbing in the sky and beavers are basically nocturnal.

Johnson Ferry North has always been the best kept secret in the CNRA but now that the adjacent Hyde Farm has been saved there are many proposals to open the area up with new trails for walkers and cyclist. Mountain bikers have shown a great deal of interest in turning the area into another mud tire play ground and I fear for this special place of solitude where nature still thrives close to the City.

The Park Service says they have not made a decision about the trails or the bridge over the River linking the area to Morgan Falls Park, so anyone who cares can still comment to:

National Park Service
Attn: Dan Brown, Superintendent
1978 Island Ford Parkway
Atlanta, GA 30350-3400.



Burning Broiler Litter? Watch out for Arsenic!

By **Armando Tasistro**

In 2008, 1.4 billion broilers (chickens for meat) were produced in Georgia, the top producing state in the Union. In its short life each broiler produces on average 3.2 lbs of litter, a mixture of manure and the bedding material used to line the chicken house floor. Thus, in 2008 a total of 2.25 million tons of litter were produced.

Traditionally in Northeast Georgia most of the broiler litter has been spread on pastures. Excessive applications have resulted in environmental and health problems related to the pollution of water by phosphorus, pathogens and antibiotics, and of air by ammonia and odors.

In recent years, many proponents of litter burning as an alternative method to handle the waste have appeared from academia, the business sector and even regulatory agencies. Occasionally, that option has been dressed as a “green” technology by linking it to power generation.

However, burning is far from being an environmentally friendly option.

The main limitation lies in that most of the litter contains arsenic.

Arsenic is added to broiler feed by integrators — vertically integrated corporations that control poultry production from hatchery until sales to final consumer — to control parasites and to enhance weight gain. Roxarsone is the most common form of arsenic used and is excreted in the manure mostly in an unchanged form.

Burning destroys roxarsone but not arsenic, which is transformed into inorganic forms — mostly arsenic trioxide (As_2O_3) — that are much more toxic than roxarsone. Some of that inorganic arsenic can go to the atmosphere and some will remain with the ashes.

The inorganic arsenic that goes up the smokestacks remains in the atmosphere for several days mainly as free particles or bound to fine particulate matter and can travel thousands of miles. It is also important to note that arsenic trioxide cannot be detected by smell. Eventually, the particles will settle and pollute soils or water bodies.

Arsenic trioxide is readily absorbed by the lungs, and the evidence from workers and residents exposed to arsenical smelters, mines, chemical factories and waste sites with arsenic, indicates a strong association between inorganic arsenic exposure and lung cancer. Because arsenic trioxide can also cause skin and other internal cancers such as liver, bladder, kidney, colon, and prostate, the World Health Organization, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Environ-

mental Protection Agency, and the National Toxicology Program have classified it as a human carcinogen.

Arsenic from arsenic trioxide can pass through the placenta and affect the developing fetus; it can also be excreted in breast milk. Research data support an association between high ingested arsenic dose and fetal toxicity. Furthermore, children are less efficient at converting inorganic arsenic to the less damaging organic forms than adults, and thus they may be more vulnerable.

Incineration has serious limitations of its own as a disposal technology, which cannot be analyzed now. However, it is worth to emphasize that the removal of arsenic by scrubbers or air pollution devices would have to be complete — i.e. no arsenic could be allowed to go to the atmosphere — because based on current data, no safe level for inhalation exposure to inorganic arsenic has been established by national and international health and environmental organizations.

The presence of inorganic arsenic in the ashes limits their utilization as fertilizer source, because arsenic can be solubilized and contaminate surface or ground water. In fact, there is abundant evidence already on high arsenic concentrations in water bodies in areas that have been fertilized with poultry litter for a long time. This danger is also present if the ashes are dumped in landfills, from where the arsenic can escape through the unavoidable leaks.

Therefore, burning is doubly harmful: it transforms the arsenic in the broiler litter into forms that are more toxic, and it creates alternate routes for these toxic forms to damage people and the environment. This lethal interaction between burning as a way of waste disposal and arsenic as a feed additive for poultry demands the need to stop both practices.

Sierra Club 101



Are you new to the Sierra Club and want to get involved but not sure how? Do you know what issues the Georgia Chapter is working on and how to get involved? Do you want to know who we are and what we're doing?

Join us for **Saturday, June 5th** at 10 AM, for Sierra Club 101, your crash course on the Club, the Georgia Chapter, and our issues. Meet with volunteer leaders and staff for breakfast at the Sierra Club office at 743B East College as we introduce you to our Sierra Club.

For questions or to RSVP, contact Ashley at ashley.robbs@georgia.sierraclub.org.

AWARE: Atlanta's Wild Animal Rescue Effort

By Linda Potter

Volunteer Coordinator, AWARE

I am very excited that the Georgia Sierra Club has decided to partner with AWARE. Let me start by introducing you to AWARE, one of Atlanta's treasures. AWARE is a nonprofit, all-volunteer wildlife center committed to the preservation and restoration of wildlife and its habitat through education and wildlife rehabilitation.

AWARE is the only wildlife center in Georgia that accepts all species of wildlife and is open 24 hours a day every day of the year. Last year, AWARE accepted over 900 injured, sick, or orphaned wild animals. These animals included eagles, hawks, owls, songbirds, herons, geese, ducks, bobcats, foxes, beavers, chipmunks, opossums, rabbits, squirrels, bats, snakes, armadillos, and the list goes on. Our goal is to rehabilitate these animals and release them back to the wild—ideally in the same area where they were found. We raise orphans and provide medical care to animals with injuries or illness. Additionally, AWARE provides a supportive environment for adult animals to recuperate and for orphaned animals to learn the skills necessary to survive in the wild.

In addition to the animals that we rehabilitate and release, AWARE has six ambassador animals used for education. These animals have been rehabilitated, but they would not survive

in the wild due to permanent injury and therefore cannot be released. Our ambassador animals include two bobcats, a red-tailed hawk, a barred owl, a corn snake, and a gray squirrel.

Education is critical to saving wildlife. Through education programs, AWARE teaches children and adults how to protect and preserve wildlife and its habitat. We also teach that the peaceful coexistence of humans and wildlife is essential for our mutual survival. AWARE provides education programs to schools, parks, civic groups, and government agencies. We also educate the public through area festivals and events. The value of education is clear. Just 45 minutes of education can inspire a group to go on to save thousands of animals over their lifetime.



In addition to our programs, AWARE educates the public by answering 15,000 to 20,000 phone calls a year. Calls come from people who are having difficulties with urban wildlife. With our guidance, most of these calls result in the animal being saved and the caller learning valuable information about living with our wild neighbors. AWARE also receives referrals from municipal agencies such as animal control and

the police. In most cases, the callers are misinformed about the animals. A few moments on the phone with AWARE provides a caller with facts that help him or her understand there is no reason to fear the animal. This collaborative arrangement with municipal governments has saved thousands of wild animals that otherwise would have been trapped and euthanized.

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Conservation

AWARE (Continued from previous page)



How to get involved

During this year, you will see more articles about AWARE in the Georgia Sierran, and you will have a chance to participate in Sierra Club activities with AWARE.

In addition to activities with the Sierra Club, you can volunteer with AWARE. As an all-volunteer organization, we are always in need of dedicated volunteers who enjoy wildlife, the great outdoors, and hard work. We offer two major volunteer opportunities: animal caregiver and construction volunteer.

Animal caregivers help with all aspects of animal rehabilitation—preparing food, feeding animals, cleaning enclosures, washing dishes, doing laundry, monitoring animals' progress, and releasing animals back to the wild. The minimum age to be an animal caregiver is 18. Training consists of one 4-hour shift per week for six weeks. Because of the time that AWARE invests in training caregivers, we require a four-month commitment of one 4-hour shift per week following training.

Construction work occurs every Sunday starting at 10 a.m. We are constantly building new animal enclosures and maintaining structures that have already been built. If you are coming alone, no pre-registration is required. Just come to the center at 10 a.m. on a Sunday morning and ask for Michael Ellis, AWARE's founder and director. He will match your interests and abilities with the work that needs to be done. If you are coming with a group, please call ahead so that we can organize a project for you. Volunteers under 18 years of age will need a parent or guardian with them.

In addition to these two volunteer opportunities, AWARE is always looking for people who can provide other services. We are in need of a motivated fundraiser as well as an event/educational program coordinator. Additionally, we will soon begin work on a second building. For this major project, we will need an architect, a general contractor, various subcontractors, lots of willing workers, and donations of materials. We are also happy to hear about any other services that you can provide. And finally, if none of these hands-on opportunities is for you, your monetary donation will always go to good use.

Additional Information

AWARE's wildlife center is located on seven beautiful acres adjacent to Davidson-Arabia Mountain State Park at 4158 Klondike Road, Lithonia, GA. AWARE receives no government funding and all work is accomplished through donations and volunteer efforts.

For more information, please visit our web site at www.AWAREOne.org or call AWARE at (678) 418-1111. For volunteer opportunities, e-mail or call AWARE's Volunteer Coordinator, Linda Potter, at Linda.AWARE@gmail.com or (404) 395-2428.



AWARE Volunteer Day

The Sierra Club is partnering with AWARE to offer our members a chance to see and help these spectacular animals. Please join us for the first Sierra Club Work Day at AWARE Sunday, May 23rd at 10am. We will help with construction and clean-up projects and have a chance to learn more about the animals that AWARE helps. Expect the work day to last approximately three hours and please be prepared to work! Your best dirty work clothes are advised. Children are welcome.

For more information at to RSVP, please contact Ashley at ashley.robbins@georgia.sierraclub.org. You must RSVP! Directions will be sent once we receive your RSVP. We look forward to seeing you.



Hemlocks & The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

By Philip Zinsmeister

One of the major issues which has been considered by the Wildlands Committee over the past few years concerns the massive die off of hemlock trees in Georgia and throughout the eastern United States. The hemlock decline is a direct result of activity of the hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) an aphid-like insect that feeds on hemlock sap. Tree death occurs about 4-5 years after a HWA infestation. Hemlocks are a particularly important component of the riparian zones of streams in the North Georgia mountains. Disappearance of hemlocks means loss of barrier to siltation into the streams and with the loss of tree cover, an increase in water temperature which is highly detrimental to trout and other fish and faunal populations. Major proportions of the hemlock population have already been killed.

Since the HWA is an exotic species from Asia and the Pacific Northwest there are no natural defenses to their activity in the Appalachian region. Therefore, a substantial effort has been underway for several years to attempt to minimize the HWA impact. Attempts at HWA control follow 2 approaches. One involves chemical treatment of trees which, although relatively effective, is expensive and labor intensive since individual trees must be treated and there is, of course, always the possibility of undesirable side effects from chemical application.

The second effort involves an attempt at biological control. Laboratories at the University of Georgia, Young Harris College and North Georgia College have been raising and releasing

predacious beetles which prey specifically on the HWA. The work involves developing techniques for rearing substantial populations under laboratory conditions and then establishing populations in HWA infested areas. To date there has been some success in growing the beetles and, as of yet, less luck in getting sustainable populations in the wild (although there have been a couple of promising reports). Of course, this research work also requires financial support, and a principal effort of the Wildlands Committee has been to assist in fund raising to support the labs.

The major fund raiser for HWA control in the musical and outdoor event called HemlockFest held every fall outside Dahlonega. HemlockFest this year will be held Nov. 5-7 and will include numerous bands and informational activities. The Wildlands Committee provides volunteers to work at HemlockFest in helping to setup and man concessions booths. This year we will also be maintaining a table with information on the Sierra Club as a recruiting tool. We will be looking for additional volunteers to help with these activities. If one desires to contribute the HWA research program(s) immediately, a simple way to go to the Georgia Forest Watch site (www.gafw.org) where a path to donation can be found.

take
action

Please support the Lumpkin Coalition, our partners in the fight to protect Georgia's hemlocks.

You can find out more by visiting:
<http://www.lumpkincoalition.org/>



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Atlanta ICO Happenings



Day Hike to Arabia Mountain

By Jeff Ader

On Saturday March 20th, Atlanta's Inner City Outings (ICO) group went on their second trip with Parkside Elementary's Unity Club to Arabia Mountain. Ranger Tyrone Burkette led our group of 12 students (K-5), parents and ICO volunteers on a wonderful 2.5 mile hike through the forest to Arabia lake and then up over the granite outcroppings. We were very fortunate that Arabia Mountain offered these weekend tours as Ranger Tyrone captivated our group along the hike with his wealth of knowledge of the local ecology and history of the area. While the vast granite outcroppings made the kids feel as though they were on another planet, they were all impressed with the wildlife they got to see including turtles, tadpoles, salamanders and prickly pear cacti. We ended the trip with several team building activities and heard from all the kids about the many things that they learned and enjoyed while on their hike. Hearing the parents talk about and even start planning future trips to Arabia Mountain for their kids was a great reminder that it does not take much for the outdoors to really sell itself...

Kolomoki State Park Camping Trip

By Jeff Ader

ICO and 9 lucky girls from the Warren Boys & Girls Club ventured into Southwest Georgia on March 27th for an overnight camping trip. Having left early Saturday morning, our group was able to stop along the way down to Kolomoki State Park at Providence Canyon to eat lunch and explore the canyon created by poor farming practices in the 1800s. While the kids

were awestruck at the beautiful canyon views, they were equally amused by the natural clay found at the base of the canyon. We spent a fair amount of time playing in this clay and even the adults got their hands dirty...

The kids were quick to set up their tents and help with the dinner preparation once we arrived at Kolomoki State Park. The tin foil dinners made with meat, potatoes, carrots, onion, and spices (referred to as "silver turtles") were a huge hit with the group and many wanted the non-campfire recipe to take home. As always, it would not be a camping trip without smores. Our group was challenged, however, to make the smores while participating in Earth Hour, which meant no flashlights or lanterns. Despite the challenge, the smores were cooked to perfection by all of the kids! To burn off some of the "smore" energy before bed, we took the girls on a short night hike and even played a game of Simon says in the dark.

After starting off the morning with a healthy serving of peach cobbler (made the night before after the girls went to sleep) our group went on a short hike to climb up the largest of the Kolomoki Mounds located near our campsite. All in all it was a wonderful trip and we were very thankful that we never experienced any of the bad weather that was forecasted for the weekend!

Horizon Theater Fundraiser

Looking for an evening of entertainment while supporting a great cause? Atlanta Inner City Outings is selling tickets to the play "Shakin' the Mess outta Misery" at Horizon Theater Company to raise money for the amazing outdoor trips they take kids on throughout the year. The play is "a joyous, exuberant celebration about the coming of age of a young girl and the eight loving Big Mamas who raised her." For more information about the show, go to www.horizontheatre.com. Showtime is 8 pm on June 30, 2010. Tickets are \$18/each and can be purchased by contacting Melissa Poulsen at mnp1231@gmail.com.

Volunteer Opportunities with Atlanta ICO

If you are interested in learning more about Atlanta Inner City Outings, please check out our website:

<http://ico.sierraclub.org/atlanta/>

We are always looking for new volunteers! If you are interested, please contact our volunteer coordinator, Gwen Bergen, at gbergen@gmail.com.

Be a Part of Atlanta's First *Ciclovía* Street Closure



"A quality city is not one that has great roads but one where a child can safely go anywhere on a bicycle."

- Enrique Peñalosa, Former Mayor of Bogotá, Colombia

Imagine a street full of people of all ages and backgrounds, walking, biking, creating and laughing, together. A street temporarily closed to cars, but open to people.

Imagine residents safely enjoying their city, socializing with neighbors, and engaging in healthy activities. Imagine if all of this were free, with absolutely no barriers to participation. By the people, for the people. Sound good yet?

On May 23rd from 1-6PM, we are turning this dream into a reality by organizing the first-ever **Atlanta Streets Alive**. This event will take a valuable public space - our city's streets - and open them up for people to play, walk, bike, breathe, and make their own.

Modeled on tremendously successful events from around the world, the event will be part bike tour, part block party, and a great time for getting active, supporting local businesses along the route, people watching, and enjoying our amazing city!

Ciclovía, literally "bike path" in Spanish, is a ground-breaking event that started in Bogotá, Colombia. This weekly event draws more than 1.5 million people to walk, bike, skate and enjoy more than 70 miles of streets opened to people – and closed to automobile traffic – every week. Thirty years after the first program, the concept has spread around the world from Tokyo, Japan to Kiev, Ukraine. Now we are bringing it to Atlanta for the first time ever!

Atlanta's *Ciclovía* will be held on Sunday afternoon from 1-6PM, a time of the week with low auto traffic. We have carefully selected this time frame to avoid overlap with other large events going on throughout the city, and to allow those who attend church services to participate after services end.

Atlanta Streets Alive offers free and fun physical activity space to all Atlantans, and will provide open space in areas that have not been people-friendly in the past. Local businesses will benefit from increased pedestrian and bicycle traffic along commercial corridors. The event will provide a model of how cities can provide healthy, environmental friendly outdoor activities for their residents.

Get Involved with Atlanta Streets Alive!

If you are interested in being part of this event, please fill out the volunteer form under the "get involved" section of our website, <http://www.atlantastreetsalive.com>. Any questions can be directed to ASA volunteer coordinator Jason Vargo (JVargo@gmail.com).

Social Corner

Being a member of the Sierra Club means more than paying dues and occasionally calling your state representative. It's about being a part of something bigger, a brotherhood of people who have learned that if we don't protect the environment, we won't have anything to enjoy. Across the US, there are more than 1.5 million Sierrans who have joined John Muir's mission to explore and preserve the Earth, and in Georgia, nearly 12,000 of you agree. We hope that you can join us at one of these upcoming socials as we come together in friendship. You are the Sierra Club, and we're excited for you to be involved.

Please join us as we host Atlanta Green Drinks **Wednesday, May 12th** at 6:00 PM at the Sierra Club office at 743 E. College Ave, Decatur. Atlanta Green Drinks is a popular networking event that we are proud to be a part of. Drinks are sponsored by Sierra Nevada.

Sunday, May 23rd is the kickoff of the Sierra Club's partnership with AWARE. We hope you'll join us for a work day at AWARE to benefit the organization and the animals it serves. To find out more, please see page 5.

Let's grab brunch **Sunday, June 20th**, at Radial in Chandler Park. Radial is a great local restaurant that features fair trade coffees, vegan options, composting, and "great breakfast good for the planet." Please meet us 12 PM at 1530 Dekalb Ave NE, Atlanta.

For questions or to RSVP, please contact Ashley at ashley.robbyns@georgia.sierraclub.org.

Georgia Chapter Conservation Retreat • August 20-22

The Georgia Chapter Conservation Committee invites you to attend a Weekend at Wahsega. This will be an opportunity for you to meet and network with other Georgia Sierra Club leaders, both from our several Groups and from the Chapter level. You will have an opportunity to gather information, ask questions and learn about the National and Chapter conservation priorities, some of our Group successes and challenges, and what you can do to protect Georgia's unique environments.

Workshops will include topics such as "Marketing Your Message in the 21st Century – How and When to use Face-

book, Convio, Meet-ups and old fashioned tabling or phone-banks", "Hemlocks – a Doomed Tree?", and "Cows vs. Georgia Power – which is worse for the environment?". Of course, we'll also have presentations by our Conservation Committee Chairs on the work they are doing, and how you can get involved, plus some hikes to nearby waterfalls, etc.

All this and more at one of Georgia's great 4H camps in North Georgia, with plentiful meals and dormitory housing. For a look at the camp, go to www.wahsega4h.org. You will need to bring your own bedding and bath items (sleeping bag and pillow, or sheets and blankets,

towels and your "10 essentials" kit).

If you require more luxurious lodging, or a tv, there are a number of motels in the Dahlonega area. If you prefer to tent camp, please call Genie Strickland to ensure that there is a campsite available for you. Camping is very limited. Please do not just assume there will be camping available for you. Call Genie first!

If you have questions or need more information, please call:

Terry Jones, 706-549-9643, or
Genie Strickland – 404-607-1262,
ext. 221

Georgia Chapter Conservation Retreat Registration Form

August 20 - 22, 2010 • Camp Wahsega, Dahlonega, Ga.

We would prefer that you attend all meals and all training sessions on both Saturday and Sunday, in order to get the full benefit of the training and team building. However, we understand that some may not be able to attend the full weekend. If that is the case, please sign up for as much of the weekend as you are able to attend.

Number of persons needing a vegetarian meal: _____ Special diet?: _____

Name(s) of those attending: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

What topics are you most interested in learning more about? _____

Registration Fee: \$15.00 (everyone attending must pay the registration fee) \$ _____

Dorm/Camping: \$14.00 per night, per person \$ _____

We want to camp. There will be _____ persons in the tent.

Saturday Breakfast: \$7.00

Saturday Lunch: \$8.00

Saturday Dinner: \$8.50

Sunday Breakfast: \$7.00

Sunday Lunch: \$8.00

Total Cost of our meals \$ _____

Grand total (registration fee, housing and meals) \$ _____

Please mail your registration form and check made payable to: Georgia Chapter Sierra Club
c/o Genie Strickland
743 E. College Ave., Unit B
Decatur, GA 30030

Don't Forget!

Please help the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club in protecting Georgia's beautiful environment. Each year the Fundraising Committee of the Georgia Chapter sends out letters to its donors, members and partners in hopes of raising money to support the work of the Georgia Chapter. **In 2010, the Fundraising Committee hopes to raise money to provide a sustainable financial future for the Georgia Chapter and to support all the wonderful environmental work.** Please look over your letter you may have received from Mark Woodall and consider donating to support the Georgia Chapter now!*

These contributions really do make a difference to the Sierra Club and are an important part of the Chapter's budget. When you make a donation to the Chapter, you support the Sierra Club's work in our own backyard. You allow us to continue our work to protect wilderness and wildlife, to improve the quality of life in our cities and to promote the enjoyment of nature. Only a small portion of membership goes to the Georgia Chapter so this is **your way** to make a difference here on the local level.

Please be as generous as you are able—and remember, these funds directly affect your way of life in your neighborhood.

*Not every member received a March Window letter; keep a lookout for information coming soon.

Fill out the donation form on the next page or mail your contribution to:

Georgia Chapter, Sierra Club
743 E. College Ave., Suite B
Decatur, GA 30030

Support Your Chapter



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Yes! I want to support the work of the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club for sustainable living, healthy environment, improved transportation, and a green Georgia future!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

_____ Sign me up to receive the
Georgia Chapter E-Newsletter:
Footnotes Online.

_____ Please do not publish my name
as a donor.

_____ Please send more info on how
to give an environmental bequest!

Make check payable / send check and form to:

Georgia Chapter Sierra Club
743 E. College Ave., Suite B
Decatur, GA 30030



Monthly Giving Program

Gift Amount:

☐ \$10.00 ☐ \$25.00 ☐ Other \$ _____

Gift Duration:

☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Annually

Continuous: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Credit card # (not AMEX): _____

CVV Number: _____ **Expiration Date:** _____

Card Type: Visa Discover Mastercard

2010 Georgia Legacy Council

- ☐ *Live Oak Champion* \$5,000 +
- ☐ *Southern Magnolia Society* \$1,000 - \$2,499
- ☐ *Longleaf Pine Protector* \$2,500 - \$4,999
- ☐ *Evergreen Partner* \$500 - \$999

Other Contribution Levels:

☐ \$100 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$50 ☐ Other \$ _____

Contributions and gifts to the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club are not tax-deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. For information concerning tax-deductible contributions to the Sierra Club Foundation to support grants for public education, research, and litigation programs necessary to further the Sierra Club's conservation goals, please contact gregory.schwartz@sierraclub.org or 404-607-1262 ext. 225.

Upcoming Meetings & Programs

We meet the 2nd Tuesday each month. Doors open at 7:00 p.m., program begins at 7:30. Church of the Epiphany, 2089 Ponce de Leon Ave. (see directions below)

Tuesday, May 11: A Hidden Jewel in the Atlanta Area: Panola Park

Did you know that close to the Atlanta metropolitan area is a state park designated as a National Natural Landmark? Join park ranger Jody Rice as he describes this beautiful location, its plans for future development and a short film that highlights the features of the mountain itself. He will also describe one the most exciting activities available to individuals: tree climbing and tree top excursions. Learn more about our local treasure.

Tuesday, June 8: Creating a Backyard Habitat with Native Plants

Do you want a beautiful yard with real "native plants"? Do you want to limit invasive species? Listen to Karen Lindauer from the Georgia Native Plant Society discuss strategies to create a natural and beautiful backyard habitat. Learn more about native species and how to make them thrive. Finally have the yard you have been wishing for.

Karen Lindauer is a Georgia Native Plant Society Rescue Facilitator, a volunteer at the Georgia Perimeter College Botanical Gardens; a coordinator at the Fern Creek Habitat Restoration Project and a passionate gardener.

Sat. June 12, 10AM: Adopt-A-Stream

Biologic monitoring in Medlock Park. We need lots of help finding the bugs that live in the South Fork, Peachtree Creek. Check our website for directions: www.georgia.sierraclub.org/Atlanta

Meeting Location: Metro Atlanta Group General membership meetings are held at the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, 2089 Ponce de Leon Ave. at the intersection of with East Lake Drive; the entrance to the church is off of East Lake Drive. From MARTA's East Lake station, it's a 10-15 minute walk north along East Lake Drive. MARTA Bus 2 also runs on Ponce de Leon between North Avenue and Avondale stations.

Did DeKalb Commissioners Disregard Law with Marist Flood Plain Vote?

By Nancy Wylie, Group Chair

Marist School is a private school in a residential area of DeKalb County. Its property spans Nancy Creek. To meet the requirements of the residential zoning, the school must have a Special Land Use Permit which includes a general development plan. Marist has recently acquired more land, and is seeking to change its general development plan by building more buildings, and more athletic fields, and more parking spaces.

In general, there is no opposition to any of the proposed development outside the 100 year flood plain. However, DeKalb County has a tree protection ordinance that prohibits the removal of trees that are within the 100 year flood plain. There is quite a lot of opposition to the proposed development within the flood plain. Indeed, DeKalb County staff had three areas of concern:

(1) An overflow parking area that involved removal of trees in the flood plain;

(2) Two new athletic fields in the flood plain that also involved tree removal;

(3) Two pedestrian bridges and one vehicular bridge that, if built at grade, would be seven feet below flood plain level.

For each of these conditions, staff recommended solutions that would comply with DeKalb ordinances. Some solutions did involve applying for waivers, variances, and similar exemptions from existing law; others involved design changes.

At the DeKalb County Commission meeting on March 16, the Commissioners voted to replace the staff recommendation Condition #1 that required compliance with DeKalb County, state, and national laws (and the resulting need to apply for variances, waivers, etc) with:

"1. The Subject Property shall be

developed substantially in accordance with the Site Plan prepared by Watts & Browning originally dated July 27, 2009 and revised March __[sic], 2010."

That vote seemed essentially to waive all procedural protections, grant waivers and exemptions without review, and generally flout environmental protection.

What was said during the discussion was the most shocking. Marist School is in Elaine Boyer's District, and Cathy Gannon's Super District. Both Cathy Gannon and Jeff Rader spoke in favor of following DeKalb ordinances, and against removing trees from the floodplain without adequate procedural protections (applications for waivers, consideration of alternatives, etc). Commissioner Boyer then chastised Commissioner Rader for interfering in another commissioner's district. (They are my words but Commissioner Boyer's sentiment, and she didn't dare say anything to Commissioner Gannon because it IS in Commissioner Gannon's super district).

So, by the end of the meeting, the DeKalb Board of Commissioners had voted 4 to 2 (Commissioner Connie Stokes abstained) to substitute an undefined, unreviewed, and still-being-modified site plan for the protections provided by DeKalb, State, and Federal laws. It seems that professional review, or adequate consideration of alternatives, or opportunity for public input are not important to Commissioner Elaine Boyer.

Although the Board of Commissioners was told that Marist had already applied to the state for a variance from the state buffer requirements (maintain vegetation within 25 feet of a stream), in fact, EPD had no record of such an application. We will continue to monitor this situation since there are also wetlands involved.

LETTER SENT BY ATLANTA GROUP EXCOM TO DEKALB COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The Metro Atlanta Group Executive Committee of Sierra Club has recently reviewed the Special Land Use Permit application submitted by Marist School, and related DeKalb ordinances.

We oppose those portions of this application that involve removing trees in both the flood plain and in the stream buffer zone, and involve encroachment into the stream buffer zone.

DeKalb County Code of Ordinance specifically states: Section 14-39(g)(10) "Removal of trees from floodplain not permitted. " Since the land is zoned R-100, and the use is for athletic fields and vehicle access/parking, we can find no exemptions or exceptions to the removal of the trees from the flood plain. In addition, the County Arborist has unequivocally stated that the trees should not be removed.

Trees in a flood plain serve many purposes related to water flow: They simply slow down the falling rain to reduce flooding to begin with. Everybody has noticed that in a light rain, the water doesn't initially even get to the ground under a tree- the leaves stop the first rainfall. Then the roots absorb water to keep it on the site. If water does rise to the root level of the trees, the roots help hold the soil and reduce erosion caused by the rushing water. Ultimately, the trunk will help slow a raging torrent, and help reduce damage down stream. It is for all these reasons that trees should not be removed either from the flood plain or from the edges of the streams (stream buffer zones)

DeKalb County has many ordinances that protect flood plains and stream buffers. Examples include Section 14-37(b)(5) Prohibits grad-

ing and filling in flood plains (exceptions do not apply to athletic fields) ...and 14-44.1(a)(1) requires a 75 foot natural vegetative stream buffer and specifically includes: "Stream buffers shall preserve any existing mature riparian forest that can provide shade, leaf litter, woody debris and erosion protection to the stream.

All these ordinances reflect a single set of goals: protect the citizens from flood damage by limiting the removal of vegetation in flood plains, and protect the streams from excessive erosion by limiting encroachment into the buffer zone required next to the stream.

We ask you to protect DeKalb citizens, and maintain the tree and vegetative protection required by the DeKalb ordinances. The trees in the flood plain and the stream buffers on the Marist property should not be removed.

ATLANTA GROUP DIRECTORY

*Chair	Nancy Wylie, 404-256-1172 nancywylie@mindspring.com
*Vice Chair	Gordon Draves, 404-766-3456 nonsmoke4ga@hotmail.com
*Secretary	Larry Kloet, 404-636-7226 larrypkloet@aol.com
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Store Manager	Blount Ferrell
Outings	Martin McConaughay, mmcconoughay08@gmail.com
Membership	Lissa Jackson
* Denotes a member of the Metro Atlanta Group Executive Committee.	

Milton Fields: A Natural Burial Ground



As Georgia's only green state-regulated perpetual care cemetery, Milton Fields provides conservation based, cost effective, eco-friendly burial services to those of all faiths. We are committed to organic burial practices that are in perfect harmony with the natural surroundings.

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(770) 751-1445

info@miltonfieldsgeorgia.com
www.miltonfieldsgeorgia.com

First Centennial Group Photography Gallery and Contest: May 6, 2010

Enter your favorite pictures in our first ever photo contest. The competition is open to all Sierra Club amateur photographers, their immediate family and friends of the Sierra Club. An amateur is any photographer, beginner or advanced, who does not receive a significant income from photography.

Images can be submitted in three categories:

- 1) AIM - Any animal or living creature in motion (no pets, no live stock, no captive animals, no people)**
- 2) AIP - Any animal or living creature in their natural habitat in portrait (no pets, no live stock, no captive animals, no people)**
- 3) LAP - Landscapes and panoramas of flora and fauna**

The following criteria will apply:

Originality – Composition – Technique – Difficulty

Pictures will be judged by Larry Winslett, a professional photographer, and judge's decision will be final.

Entries are limited to 3 pictures per person, max. 8" x 10". Pictures must be individually mounted on poster board or similar sturdy backing and titled with a brief description as to where it was taken. You also need to assign it to one of the above categories. Do not post your name. Pictures will be numbered on entry to assure anonymity for judging purposes.

Minor digital enhancements such as cropping, filtering and correcting are acceptable but major alterations such as removal or addition of elements and/or cloning will not be allowed. The judge will be final arbiter.

There will be an entry fee of \$3.00 for one, \$5.00 for two and \$6.00 for three pictures, payable on entry at the competition.

Award for the best picture in each category will be \$50.00. The winner must give permission to have the picture published in our web site and the next Sierra Club Sierran paper. Only pictures taken digitally or converted to digital format would be suitable for publication. This is not a condition for entry.

There will also be recognition of 2nd and 3rd place winners.

New Trails in Chattahoochee NRA – Another Viewpoint

By Maureen Donohue

As a Sierra Club member and volunteer for the Chattahoochee River NRA (Chat) I was surprised to see the Sierran article (Jan/Feb edition) criticizing National Park Service staff for proposing mountain bike trails. To date, there is no decision regarding trail development and use in Chat.

The NPS has developed an Environmental Assessment (EA) to help make this decision. The EA is a lengthy process, normally taking about a year to complete. It has considered many factors such as location of rare and endangered flora and fauna, the geology and soil types of the area, the environments impacted, e.g. wetlands, the wishes of the public with regard to park use and the sustainability of the park and its natural and historic treasures, given the proposed use. An EA costs multiple thousands of dollars to complete, but it is an important tool in the decision-making process.

The idea advanced in the previous article that the parks served the public well because the parks were mostly left to benign public use is incorrect. As a volunteer in Chat, I see little benign public use. I remove other people's trash, retrieve dog poop bags from the woods, and spread branches over badly worn social trails that cannot take constant foot traffic. I see fellow park users ignore "trail closed signs" and dogs run loose on trails.

Most units of Chat were previously developed home sites. One unit was a state park. There was no overall trail plan when the park was created in 1978. Old Indian paths, old roads and driveways formed the basis of the trail system. Many of the erosion problems we see in these parks today are the result of this lack of planning as well as the increasing growth in metro Atlanta's population and a corresponding increase in park use. An overall trail plan is overdue. I commend the NPS for its commitment to creating an "accessible and integrated park system."

My fellow Centennial Group Sierrans have supported river clean-ups and trash and invasive species removal events held in Chat. It is also important to make our individual as well as group preferences known via written comments to the EA and attendance at the public meetings. Then we must trust the professional staff at Chat whose task it is to preserve this valuable resource while ensuring that people enjoy and use the park safely.

I am not personally in favor of bikers on the same trails with walkers, and I totally agree with the position statement made by the Centennial Group's Ex-Com regarding the proposed trail development.

We must remember, however, that NPS is not the enemy; nor are bikers. Biking and walking are both alternative means of transportation and help us foster healthy lifestyles.

Centennial Support For Kid's Earth Day



A big thank you to our volunteers manning the tabling at the Kid's Earth Day Fest at the Chattahoochee Nature Center in Roswell on April 17.

Lynn Walston, Joe Sutherland, Johnny Plunkett, Margret Voss, Jorg Voss, Roger Buerki, Ashley Robbins and Wolfgang Tiedtke did their best teaching kid's and their parents about non-point pollution. Cobb Water was kind enough to borrow their EnviroScape display which turned out to be a favorite for children.

Another big draw was the "fishing pond" which taught children that some fish may be poisonous due to polluted water. All in all it was a great success and the Sierra Club certainly had a place to be there.

It was also good to see Sierra Club members to support other causes. Richard Kinzel had a big display to promote use of rain barrels and Ron Warnken volunteered at the CNC stand to advocate saving injured animals. In September a team from CNC will come to our monthly meeting and make a presentation together with one or two injured animals.

Georgia Turtles Threatened

By Ashley Robbins

A few years ago, when I was in college, I had the opportunity to study in China. It was an incredible experience that I will never forget, and one that changed my life considerably. During my time there I met some incredible students and faculty. My favorite watercolor professor, Feng Laoshi, and I became particularly close. He was very tickled to have an American student who was so interested in his culture and language, so one evening he offered to take me out for a very nice Chinese dinner.

The best restaurants in China feature the freshest foods. So fresh that the exterior of these restaurants are littered with cages of live animals where you can go and personally select your dinner for the evening. Our dinner for the night was snake. Feng Lasoshi wanted to buy me turtle soup as well, but decided that the snake was more than enough dinner.

I'm really glad that he decided against it.

Turtle soup is a delicacy in Asia. It promotes longevity and Georgia Sierran ♣ May/June 2010

is a special dish to have and to give to someone. It's made by heating a broth to and then dropping in live turtles. The pot is then served to the table with the turtle swimming around, slowly dying.

So why should you be concerned about turtle soup in Asia?

Because Georgia currently doesn't regulate trapping of our fresh water turtles for export. Our turtles are being caught and sent to Asia to be made into turtle soup and medicines. The populations of turtles in Asia have been decimated and some species have gone extinct due to overharvesting, so they've turned to America, where more than 700,000 turtles were exported from in 2008.

It's our job, as stewards of the environment, to protect Georgia's turtles from Asian soup pots. Join the Centennial Group's Conservation Committee to find out how you can help. You can find out more by contacting Joe at jcsuth@email.com.

Sierra Club License Plates

We have the Sierra Club front auto plates now for sale. They identify you as a committed environmental activist, they serve as effective advertising for the club,

they make a nice, thoughtful gift to friends who care about the cause, and not least, help sustain your Centennial Group. See the auto plates on page 19. Your Centennial Group Ex-Com appreciates your support.

Plates can be purchased in two ways: 1) purchase at our monthly meetings for \$12.50 each; or, 2) purchase by mail for \$16.50 each, including postage and handling.

Make check out to Centennial Group and mail together with your order to: Wolfgang Tiedtke, 750 Bayliss Dr., Marietta, GA 30068.



Upcoming Meetings & Programs

May 6: Photo Contest (See Opposite Page)

June 10: David Arnal, a Professional Beekeeper

Meetings: The Centennial Group meets at 7 p.m. on the first Thursday of every month at: Life University, Room 311 in the Upper Gymnasium, 1269 Barclay Cir. SE, Marietta, GA 30060. For detailed directions contact wtiedtke@bell-south.net or check our website www.georgia.sierraclub.org/centennial. Executive Committee meetings are the 3rd Thursday of every month at 7 p.m., usually at La Madeleine Restaurant, 4101 Upper Roswell Road, Marietta.

Gwinnett Group Update

At last April has come bringing an end to winter and the beginning of warm weather. What a wonderful feeling it is to be able to be outside without layers of clothing! April also brings Earth Day and the Gwinnett Group has planned many activities to celebrate throughout the month.

Our April meeting began the spring season with a discussion of renewable and alternative energy. Steve Willis presented an informative program on the technology and economics of the practical application of wind and alternative energy.

On the following Saturday, our Adopt-a-Stream group performed water quality testing on Suwanee Creek and reached out to the community by providing information about our stream monitoring and the Sierra Club to those enjoying the Suwanee Greenway.

On Earth Day, the Greater Gwinnett Group planted trees at Chattahoochee Elementary School and distributed seeds to the kindergarten students to plant in their yards and their neighborhoods. Our involvement in the community is not just for activities on Earth Day but designed so the results will be seen years from now when these children have children of their own.

Our planned program for our May meeting will be Joel Hitt, Georgia Master Gardener speaking on native plants in the landscape and organic gardening. Our June meeting is our annual picnic at McDaniel Farm Park in the Duluth area where we share great food and just enjoy ourselves on a pre-Summer's evening. All members and non-members are invited to join us as we enjoy a superb meal and conversation with like-minded people who believe the environment in which we live is important.

Spring brings better weather and the time to be outside, enjoy the outdoors and do what Sierrans have always

done-explore, enjoy and protect the environment. You are invited. Come and join us.

- Dan Friedman



Rep. DuBose Porter addresses the group

The Rocks are Alive!

In March, the Greater Gwinnett Group took an unusual virtual tour of the national award-winning park system in Gwinnett thanks to County park engineer/designer, Rex Schuder.

While parks in the Atlanta Metro area often include ball fields, picnic pavilions and increasingly, walking/jogging trails, we also have some very rare and threatened ecosystems in our Gwinnett parks. Most noteworthy are pioneer plants that stake their ground on the granite outcroppings in Gwinnett. Rex showed us wonderful pictures of rocks covered with moss, lichen, and the beautifully blooming diamorpha, which only grow under certain conditions and can be easily crushed under foot.

Afterwards, several people asked how they could get involved in protecting the spaces he mentioned, in particular the granite outcroppings. Rex suggested that we contact our County Commissioners to ask if the current sales tax program includes funds for the acquisition of passive park land and to then request that consideration be given to preservation of our most threatened landscape features, especially granite outcrops with endangered vegetation and our oldest stands of hardwood forest.

- Tom Morrissey

Sierra Solutions and Our Leaders

The year 2010 started off with a bang for the Greater Gwinnett Group. Our January meeting centered around "Sierra Solutions" where we focused on four of the main pillars of the Sierra Club: Water, Clean Energy, Transportation Alternatives, and Outings. This meeting included a tremendous sharing of information and resulted in a several group members getting more involved in Chapter initiatives.

We would like to thank, Ashley Robbins, Alan Toney, Jim Dexter, and Ed Scholl for their great presentations and participation. Our annual legislative update in February, which was co-hosted by our very able Sierra Club lobbyists Neill Herring and Mark Woodall provided a special treat with the appearance of the Georgia Senate Minority Leader and Democratic Candidate for Governor, DuBose Porter as well as State Representative Lee Thompson. We learned a great deal that evening about this year's session of the State Legislature and got a glimpse of 'what may be' from the possible future leader of our fine state.

Upcoming Meetings & Programs

May 20 - Joel Hitt, Georgia Master Gardener, Native plants in the landscape and Organic Gardening 101

May 22 - Adopt-a-Stream monitoring event - Suwanee Creek Greenway, 11:00 am

June 17 - Annual Summer Picnic - Come one, come all to McDaniel Farm Park in Duluth, 6:30 pm

Meetings: 3rd Thursday at Berkmar High School, 405 Pleasant Hill Road, Lilburn, GA 30047, in the Media Center. Doors open at 7 p.m. with light refreshments. Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. For questions, contact Tom Morrissey at 404-513-4069.

A Student Support Project for Kindergartners

By Sam Breyfogle

To celebrate Arbor Day, the LaGrange Sierra Club presented a flowering dogwood seedling to all Troup County public school and Montessori school kindergartners. More than 1,030 seedlings in all were individually wrapped by 35 volunteers during the project. Local high school and LaGrange College students pitched in to help club members and other interested parties with the project. The seedlings were individually packaged with planting site selection and planting instructions and distributed to the 15 schools for Friday, February 19th, 2010, Georgia's Arbor Day. This was the third consecutive year the LaGrange Group has coordinated this project with the Troup County public school system.

Arbor Day is a nationally celebrated observance that encourages tree planting and tree care. In recent years, this day has been used to highlight the benefits of trees and the environment. National Arbor Day was founded in 1872 and is celebrated on the last Friday in April. Because spring arrives sooner in our warm climate, Arbor Day is celebrated on the third Friday in February in Georgia.

Upcoming Meetings & Programs

Thursday, May 13: Monthly Meeting at St. Mark's Episcopal Church at 207 N. Greenwood St. in LaGrange. Please note that date has changed from 1st Thursday to 2nd Thursday due to church related event planned at St. Mark's on May 6th. Refreshments at 6:30. Program starts at 7 pm. Program will be given by Sim Blich on organic gardening.

Saturday, May 22: Outing At Flat Shoals Creek. Member Stephen Johnson has invited us to see state endangered shoal spider lilies in bloom on his land. Email Laura and Sam Breyfogle for details at breyfogle@charter.net.

Thursday, June 3: Monthly Meeting at St. Mark's Episcopal Church at 207 N. Greenwood St. in LaGrange. Refreshments at 6:30. Program starts at 7 pm. Program will be given by Elizabeth Appleby on French Food Culture.

Saturday, June 19: Bird Walk led by Stephen Johnson and Sam Breyfogle. Meet at 9 am at the West Point Lake Visitor Center on the east side of the Dam, at Shaefer Heard Park on U.S. 29, 3 miles north of West Point. Bring binoculars if you have them. We plan to be done by lunch.

Saturday, June 19: Market On Main resumes. Fresh fruits and vegetables sold by local farmers at the parking lot next to the LaGrange Theater. 8-10 am

Saturday, June 26: Lake Martin Bash. Email Laura and Sam Breyfogle for directions and details at breyfogle@charter.net.

Savannah River Group

Savannah River Group Update

As is true for all of Georgia's Sierra Groups, the Savannah River Group (SRG) is concerned with protection of our native flora and fauna. In April, the speaker at our monthly meeting was a naturalist from Fort Gordon. Steve Willard's program focused on how Fort Gordon protects the Red Cockaded Woodpecker, and he brought an artificial nesting box to show how this provides a nesting "cavity" for the birds.

Our day hikes this spring have featured visits to areas with protected flora such as Heggie's Rock, a Georgia Nature Conservancy (TNC) granite outcrop with several protected plants, including spreading quillwort, floating twin-leaf, and green sedum. SRG Co-chair and botanist, Judy Gordon, trains the tour leaders who lead the trips to Heggie's Rock which is open for visitation through reservations with TNC. Heggie's Rock, located in Columbia County, is the least disturbed and has the greatest numbers of protected flora of all the granite outcrops in Georgia. Judy will lead another trip in late September to view the Confederate Daisy display. Contact the SRG or the Atlanta office of TNC if you would like to visit Heggie's in September.

- Judy Gordon



Grass Sedum (top) and Confederate Daisies (bottom)

Contacts

Executive Committee

Chair: Mark Woodall, 706-674-2242,
markwoodall@windstream.net
At-Large Elected Member

Vice Chair - Administrative: Ashley Robbins, 276-780-3748,
ashley.robbs@georgia.sierraclub.org
Centennial Group Delegate

Vice Chair - Policy: Steve Willis, 912-341-0718
snwillis@yahoo.com
Coastal Group Delegate

Sam Booher, 706-863-2324, sbooher@aol.com
Savannah River Group Delegate

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LaGrange Group Delegate

Nancy Wylie, 404-583-1455,
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Metro Atlanta Group Delegate

Appointed Officers & Chairs

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Treasurer: Tom Neff, tsneff2003@yahoo.com

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Conservation Vice Chair: Larry Winslett,
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Finance Chair: Sam Booher, sbooher@aol.com

Fundraising Co-Chairs: Erin McPhail Wetty,
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Inner City Outings: Allison Williams,
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Legislative: Mark Woodall,
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Training Team Coordinator: Terry Jones,
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Webmaster: Charlotte Gardner,
ga_sierra_webmaster@yahoo.com

Conservation Campaigns

RAIL Committee:

Jim Dexter, jimdex@aol.com
Meeting: 4th Mon., 6:45 p.m., chapter office

Fresh Water Protections Committee:
Glynn Groszmann, glynn@gcharter.net
Meetings rotate, please call.

Smart Energy Solutions:
Colleen Kiernan, colleenkiernan@mindspring.com
Meeting: 1st Monday, 7 p.m. chapter office

Cool Cities: *vacant*

Wildlands and Wildlife:

Phil Zinsmeister, pzinsmeister@oglethorpe.edu
Meeting: 3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m., Location TBA
Committee sometimes skip months. Call first.

Volunteer Issue Leaders

The Conservation Committee is organized by issues. To get involved in Conservation issues, please contact the Issue Leader of your choice below.

Chattahoochee National Recreation Area:
Alan Toney, mudflat@comcast.com

Clean Air: Curt Smith, chsmith@speakeasy.net

Coastal: Judy Jennings,
judyjennings@comcast.net

Coastal Marsh: Mark Mosely, msmosely@aol.com

Cumberland: Annette Gelbrich,
apgelbrich@yahoo.com

Factory Farms: Thomas Black,
tblack9@yahoo.com

Federal Endangered Species: Larry Winslett,
winfog@windstream.net

Federal Public Lands: Shirl Parsons,
kparsons@mindspring.com

Historic Places/ Arch. Sites: Brian Thomas,
bthomas@trcsolutions.com

Marine Species/Habitat: Karen Grainey,
karengrainey@bellsouth.net

National Forest Issues: *vacant*

Nuclear Waste: Stacey Kronquest,
stacey@kronquest.com

Okefenokee Swamp: Sam Collier,
scollier@mindspring.com

Organic and Locally Grown Foods: Bryan Hager,
bhager@mindspring.com

Population: Todd Daniel, todddan@mac.com

Rivers and Wetlands: Keith Parsons,
kparsons@mindspring.com

Savannah Harbor: Judy Jennings,
judyjennings@comcast.net

State Lands/Georgia DNR: Phil Zinsmeister,
pzinsmeister@oglethorpe.edu

State Lands/Stone Mountain: Larry Winslett,
winfog@windstream.net

Stop I-3: Sam Booher, sbooher@aol.com

Transportation: Bryan Hager,
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Waste/Recycling: Larry Winslett,
winfog@windstream.net

Water Sentinels / Adopt-a-Stream:
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genie.strickland@sierraclub.org

Development Coordinator:
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gregory.schwartz@sierraclub.org

Program Manager: *vacant*

National Staff

Regional Conservation Recruiter:
Erin Glynn, 404-607-1262 x.223
erin.glynn@sierraclub.org

Standing Meetings

Inner City Outings

Meetings: 4th Tuesday, 7 p.m., Brookhaven Boys & Girls Club, 1330 North Druid Hills Rd., Atlanta.

Local Groups

A great way to get involved in your Chapter is by joining and participating in a local group. Some groups take certain months off, so it's a good idea to email first. Each group has a website. For maps and additional information on each group, visit the website: <http://georgia.sierraclub.org/local/>

Centennial Group

Serving Cobb, Cherokee & North Fulton

Chair: Wolfgang Tiedtke,
gacentexcom@gmail.com

Conservation Chair: Joe Sutherland,
suth1e@comcast.net

Outings Chair: Bob Springfield,
bob@bobspringfield.com

Meetings: 1st Thursday, welcome/refreshments 7:00 p.m., program 7:30 p.m.; Life College, 1269 Barclay Cir. SE, Marietta. For directions call Wolfgang Tiedtke at 770-973-7820.

Coastal Group

Serving Savannah & surrounding counties

Chair: Steve Willis, snwillis@yahoo.com

Conservation Chair: Judy Jennings,
judyjennings@comcast.net

Outings Chair: Jim Darby,
darbyjim@bellsouth.net

Meetings: 3rd Thursday, 7:00 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 520 E. Washington Ave, Savannah

Greater Gwinnett Group

Serving Gwinnett Co.

Chair: Tom Morrissey, thmorrissey@bellsouth.net

Conservation Chair: Art Sheldon,
a.sheldon@charter.net

Outings Chair: Mirza Balic,
mirza.balic@georgia.sierraclub.org

Meetings: 3rd Thursday, 7:00 p.m., Berkmar High School, 405 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lilburn 30047

LaGrange Group

Serving the LaGrange area

Chair: Dean Rogers, dean@mediamindz.com

Conservation Chair: David Wappler,
david.wappler@gmail.com

Outings Chair: Elizabeth Appleby,
ecappleby@yahoo.com

Meetings: 1st Thursday, 6:30 p.m. St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Parish Hall, 207 North Greenwood St.

Metro Atlanta Group

Serving Atlanta, Dekalb, & South Fulton

Chair: Nancy Wylie,
nancywylie@mindspring.com

Outings Chair: Martin McConaughy
mcmarty@bellsouth.net

Conservation Chair: Nancy Wylie,
nancywylie@mindspring.com

Meetings: 2nd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Episcopal Church of the Epiphany • 2089 Ponce de Leon Ave. (between Atlanta and Decatur).

Savannah River Group

Serving Augusta & surrounding areas

Co-Chair: Judy Gordon, Ph.D.,
gordonjudith@att.net

Co-Chair: Sam Booher, sbooher@aol.com

Conservation Chair: Denice Traina,
yboty@aol.com

Outings Chair: Cindy Annis, ctreehuggr@aol.com

Meetings: 3rd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., Unitarian Church on Walton Way, Augusta at 7:30 pm.

Regional Contacts

LeConte Group/Athens & NE Ga.

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Jim Callison, jimcallison@juno.com

Macon

Fletcher Winston, winston_f@mercer.edu

North Ga. Conservation Group

Larry Winslett, winfog@windstream.net

Valdosta

Brian Day, bjday@valdosta.edu

Looking for a Group near your home?

The Georgia Chapter website (<http://georgia.sierraclub.org/>) contains a map showing the locations of all Groups. Or, call the Chapter office at (404) 607-1262.

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Georgia Chapter Office

743 East College Avenue, Suite B
Decatur, Georgia 30030
404-607-1262 • FAX: 404-876-5260
georgia.chapter@sierraclub.org

Directions to take MARTA to the Sierra Club

office: Our office is an easy 1-2-minute walk from the MARTA Avondale station (E7). We encourage you to take MARTA when possible. Exit the MARTA station towards the SOUTH PARKING LOT, located on the East College Ave side. Once outside, proceed to the right towards Sams Street. Cross over Sams St. and the office is the building located right behind the convenience store. The office is the second door from Sams St. — Suite B.

Stay Informed!

SIERRA CLUB WEB SITES

GA Chapter Web Site:

<http://georgia.sierraclub.org/>

GA Chapter Outings:

<http://georgia.sierraclub.org/outings/>

GA Chapter Email Lists Site:

<http://georgia.sierraclub.org/lists/>

EMAIL LISTS

Subscribe to a Georgia Chapter e-mail list. Just send an e-mail to:

LISTSERV@LISTS.SIERRACLUB.ORG

Your message should read:

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LIST NAMES:

GA-OUTINGS (chapter outings list)

GA-NEWSLETTER-ANNOUNCE (online newsletter updates)

GA-ENERGY-FORUM (Smart Energy Solutions Committee)

GA-RAIL-NEWS (RAIL/Transit Advocacy Committee)

Subscribe to Georgia Chapter Online E-Newsletter at:

http://action.sierraclub.org/CHP_GA_Signup

Visit the Ga. Chapter web page and click on "Local Groups" for info on local groups e-mail lists.

Chapter ExCom Meeting

The next meeting is Saturday, March 20th from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. Meetings are open to the membership. For more information, call the Chapter office at 404-607-1262 x. 221.



PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID

Outings and Events

Sierra Club Outings provide a variety of opportunities for people to enjoy the beautiful outdoors. To find out more about what outings are being offered, please visit our website at <http://georgia.sierraclub.org/outings>.

Saturday, May 8

House of Dreams - Berry College

Location: Berry College, Rome

Rated: [4 miles / 2 to 3 mph / 500 ft elev gain]

Description: Please join us on this family favorite outing. Strolling leisurely from the Berry College campus to the mountain-top gardens, we will see beautiful vistas from above. At 26,000 acres, Berry College is the largest campus in the world. This college was "green" before the term became fashionable. We will briefly explore the campus and bring home ideas on how other colleges can become environmentally friendly. Afterwards, we will lunch in Rome. Children and first-time hikers are welcome. Limit 12. Rated 4-M-5. Contact ArthurRatliff@Bellsouth.net, or 404-284-0055.

Saturday, May 29

East Palisades Trail / Chattahoochee National Recreation Area (CNRA)

Location: Atlanta

Rated: [4.6 miles / 2 to 3 mph / 350 ft elev gain]

Description: This moderate, 4.6 mile hike is a loop with some backtracking on one section. Part of the trail is along the Chattahoochee River with a great river view from a cliff at one point. Another portion of the trail follows along the bottom of the "palisades" (a line of high cliffs) from which this area gets its name. Limit 10. Contact Bob Springfield at bob@bobspringfield.com and include your phone number for follow up.

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See page 19 for more information.