



WENOCA SIERRAN

Newsletter of the
Western North Carolina Sierra Club

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

MAY - JULY 2013

Upcoming Events:

Unitarian Church
1 Edwin Place
(corner of Charlotte St. & Edwin Pl.)
Social: 7 pm / Program: 7:15 pm

Wednesday, May 1 Jeff Jennings & Dr. Jennifer Frick-Ruppert

*DuPont State Forest:
Protected from Development
and Blue Ghost Fireflies*

Wednesday, June 5 Jill Gottesman

*Our Mountain Treasures:
Planning for the Future of
Our National Forests*

Saturday, July 20 4th Annual Summer Picnic

Noon - 4 pm
Blue Ridge Parkway
sheltered picnic grounds
(Bull Mt. Rd. off Riceville Rd.)

WENOCA will hold meetings on the first Wednesday of the month. Executive Committee meetings will be held at 5:30 pm prior to the monthly programs.

All members are invited to attend.

For more information, call
Judy Mattox at 828-683-2176
or email judymattox@sbcglobal.net.

WENOCA SIERRAN is the newsletter of the Western North Carolina Sierra Club. The newsletter is published four times a year. Articles and comments are welcome.

DuPont State Forest: Protected lands and Blue Ghost Fireflies



Jeff Jennings

Join us on Wednesday, May 1 when Jeff Jennings, a former engineer with DuPont Chemical in North Carolina, will discuss how DuPont State Forest, a 10,415-acre wooded area located between Hendersonville and Brevard, was protected from private development.

Also presenting will be Dr. Jennifer Frick-Ruppert, Professor of Biology and Environmental Science at Brevard College, who will describe the Blue Ghost Firefly, one of the charms of DuPont Forest.

The Blue Ghost Firefly, is a lampyrid beetle found in the southern Appalachians, especially in DuPont State Forest. Observed primarily in May and June, they have a luminescence characterized by a steady glow, in contrast to a species-specific pattern of flashes. They may emerge as early as April or as late as June or July, depending on elevation and climate and are usually found in shady, moist habitats, characterized by a thick, spongy leaf litter and dense tree cover.

Jeff Jennings is an engineer and small business owner

who lives with his family in Mills River. He moved to WNC in 1991 to work as an engineer at DuPont's Brevard Site, which is now DuPont State Forest. An avid hiker, he quickly became active in local environmental groups. When DuPont announced plans to sell 7600 acres of forest surrounding the plant in 1996, Jeff organized a successful effort to have the State protect the land. Working closely with Chuck McGrady of the Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy, as well as Rex Boner and Dick Ludington at the Conservation Fund, they succeeded in preserving this pristine wilderness area.

Dr. Jennifer Frick-Ruppert is a Professor of Biology and Environmental Science at Brevard College, where she has taught since 1997. She earned her Ph.D. in Zoology from Clemson University in 1995. She teaches courses in environmental perspectives, biodiversity, biology, and natural history and was awarded the 2003-2004 Award for Exemplary Teaching. Originally from South Carolina, Jennifer grew up with a love of nature and an appreciation for her surroundings. Her long awaited book, Mountain Nature: A Seasonal Natural History of the Southern Appalachians, was published in 2010 by UNC Press. It has received several notable reviews for its quality and lively writing style and was a finalist in the Philip Reed Memorial Award for Outstanding Writing About the Southern Environment.



Jennifer Frick-Ruppert

Our Mountain Treasures: The Future of Our National Forests



Jill Gottesman

On Wednesday, June 5, join us for a presentation by Jill Gottesman, outreach coordinator for The Wilderness Society, to discuss the future of our national forests.

Every 10-15 years, our National Forests get a fresh look and a revision on their management plans. Pisgah and Nantahala are overdue, but the process is underway and it is time to speak up for our forests. The United States Forest Service is well into their first year of the plan revision process and asking the public for input on the management future of these public lands. During this presentation, Jill will give an overview of the multi-year plan revision process and describe how interested citizens and groups can participate. She will

also describe The North Carolina's Mountain Treasures Campaign, the over 300,000 acres of western North Carolina for which The Wilderness Society, the NC Sierra Club, and other partners hope to gain better protective measures in this new Forest Plan.

Come ready to be inspired by spectacular photos and by the incredible opportunities ahead.

Jill Gottesman brings the skills of a diverse work history in nonprofit management, environmental education, wilderness therapy and social work to her role of Outreach Coordinator for The Wilderness Society's southeastern regional office. Before joining The Wilderness Society, she was Outreach Director at Georgia ForestWatch. She received her BA in Recreation and Resource Management from the University of GA, and her Master of Social Work degree from the University of NC Chapel Hill, but regards her years working and studying in the outdoors all across the country as the most valuable experiences of all.

State Issues Update By Ken Brame

Sign on-line petition to Gov. McCrory to proclaim June as "Solar Month"

While mostly symbolic, the proclamation would recognize what the solar industry contributes to our state: that it generates \$1.7 billion dollars and has more than 1,100 companies employing 15,000 people, including western North Carolina's own FLS and Sun Dance. The petition encourages more solar and clean energy companies to locate here, and most of all, sends the signal to clean energy opponents that this industry is not just thriving, but it is here to stay. Sign the petition at www.firstinsolar.org.

Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (REPS)

North Carolina state legislature introduced two bills to repeal the Renewable Energy Standard. H 298 and S 365 not only get rid of our clean energy standard, they remove wind energy from the definition of renewable energy. They also reclassify peat, fossil fuels, and nuclear energy as renewable sources. Please contact your state legislators listed below to ask for a vote against any attempt to change the NC Renewable Energy Standards.

Fracking - This year's 2013 NC state legislature passed a new Senate bill, S 76 on fracking that wiped out last year's promise that no fracking permits would be issued without a separate vote of the legislature. Please contact your state legislators (below) to ask that they vote to review the Mining & Energy Commission's recommended rules to be sure they are adequate before fracking permits are issued. State that consumer protections in last year's fracking bill should be upheld, that fracking wastewater underground in NC is a bad idea, and that lawmakers shouldn't rush oil & gas development by removing protections for the public.

Building Codes - The NC legislature is considering bills,

HB 120 and SB 108, to move to a 6-year cycle for improving residential building codes (versus the long-standing 3-year cycle). The bill also proposes to shift code interpretation away from the state's professional building inspection departments and code officials and, instead, be conducted by the NC Building Code Council. There are so many reasons these are bad ideas – from hurting home buyers and future home owners, to the 75+ and 100+ year impacts of these decisions, to insurance rate risks, to making the state less attractive to businesses moving in, to making it harder on builders with big changes every 6 years compared to small, incremental changes every three. Please protest to your legislators.

NC Legislators:

Buncombe County: Tim.Moffitt@ncleg.net - 919-715-3012

Nathan.Ramsey@ncleg.net - 919-733-5746

Haywood, Madison, Yancey Counties:

Michelle.Presnell@ncleg.net – 919-733-5732

Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Macon Counties:

Roger.West@ncleg.net – 919-733-5859

Good News - The State Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources filed a lawsuit seeking to force Progress Energy to stop leaking toxic pollutants from the Asheville power plant's coal ash ponds into groundwater and the French Broad River. The suit comes 2 months after a notice of intent to sue Progress Energy over the coal ash pollution was filed by the Southern Environmental Law Center on behalf of the Sierra Club, Waterkeeper Alliance and Western North Carolina Alliance, stating Progress Energy is in violation of the Clean Water Act.

Please consider making a gift (including a monthly, sustaining gift) to the NC Sierra Club to fund our lobbying program. Visit the NC Sierra Club website, or call the Chapter office at 919-833-8467.

See the Blue Ghost Fireflies - Special Tour for Sierra Club - May 25



Josh Rosen

Sierra Club has been given special permission to have a guided tour by Josh Rosen, student and co-author with Dr. Jennifer Frick-Ruppert on the Blue Ghost Firefly. *Please do not try to see the firefly on your own since their fragile habitat is being destroyed and the fireflies are at risk.*

If you would like to sign up for this special event, please contact judymattox@sbcglobal.net or phone 828-683-2176. Limit of 25 people.



Join us for the 4th Annual Summer Picnic

On Saturday, July 20, the Sierra Club will enjoy its 4th Annual Summer Picnic from noon to 4 pm at the Blue Ridge Parkway sheltered picnic grounds located on Bull Mt. Rd. near the VA Hospital on Riceville Rd.

Directions: Exit 7 on I-240; go east on Tunnel Rd for 2 miles; turn north on Riceville Rd; go 1.3 miles and turn west on Bull Mt. Rd. The fenced-in, sheltered picnic area is on the left about ½ mile up the road. Please bring a pot luck dish to share and your own settings. Drinks will be provided. Badminton, horseshoes and music will add to the festivities. We hope to see you there!



David Reid & Ken Brame enjoying badminton

River Cleanup volunteers and canoeists needed for May 18

By Richard Kark

Did you know that the Sierra Club WENOCA chapter has adopted a section of the French Broad River? Our adopted area stretches from Jean Webb Park near downtown Asheville to the Pearson Bridge. We take this duty seriously and will participate in all clean up days. The next one is Saturday, May 18. These clean-ups are fun and important - and it comes with perks. The May 18 event is followed by a party!

Many of you have already signed up but we could use more bodies. Some volunteers will walk the banks picking up debris while others will float the river with their grabbing tools. We are especially in need of competent canoeists. Canoes are better vessels for holding junk as opposed to low capacity kayaks that so many paddlers seem to prefer. Don't get me wrong - we can certainly use some kayakers, too - and appreciate every able bodied person and vessel.

Let us know if you are a canoeist and please remember a certain level of competency is needed to dodge the woody strainers along the shore where much of the debris will be found. We even have canoes available for those who don't have one of their own.



Preparing for our inaugural French Broad River cleanup in May 2012

If we can assemble a reliable and enthusiastic group we will likely also adopt a section of the Swannanoa River. So far, three Sierra members are working on this project. They include Richard Kark, Mark Threlkeld, and Tom Morrissey. If you would like to be added to our list for this event or future clean-ups, contact Tom. Also let him know whether you can handle a canoe. Email Tom at tmorrissey@environcorp.com or phone him at 404-513-4069.



Spring-Summer Hiking Schedule



SAT, MAY 11 – BRIDAL VEIL FALLS – Easy 4.6 mile round trip hike in DuPont Forest to Bridal Veil Falls where you can cool your feet in the water or walk behind the falls. Route follows the Reasonover Creek Trail and Conservation Road to Bridal Veil Falls Road. Bring water and a lunch or snack. Meet in Asheville at 9:30 am and return about 4 or 5 pm. RSVP to hike leader (Jane) at janelaping@sbcglobal.net or 828-772-0379.

SAT, MAY 18 - BLACK BALSAM / TENANT MOUNTAIN HIKE - This is a Moderate 5 mile hike. Beautiful panoramic views from two peaks above 6000 ft. Meet in Asheville at 10 am and return around 4:30 pm. This hike is for experienced hikers. RSVP to hike leader Lisa McWherter at lisamcw2@gmail.com or 828-713-4994.

SAT or SUN, JUNE 29 & 30 - MONTREAT DAY HIKES - Offered in conjunction with the June camping trip listed below. There will be both short & long hikes as options. Details to come. Please contact either Outings Leader to sign up. Lisa McWherter at lisamcw2@gmail.com or 828-713-4994. Jane Laping at janelaping@sbcglobal.net or 828-772-0379.

SAT, JULY 13 – SPLASHING WATERFALL HIKE! (Splashing is optional.) Cat Gap to Butter Gap Trail (following Grogan Creek). Moderate/easy, approx 4 miles roundtrip there & back hike. It is situated at the base of John Rock. Offers 2 nice waterfalls. There will be a splashing opportunity (self-splashing only, please!) on Butter Gap trail. Kids that do hiking are welcome w/accompanying parent/guardian and signed liability waiver. Meet at 10 am in Asheville. Back around 4:30 pm. Wear good footwear for a few steep areas & a few muddy spots. Contact hike leader to sign up. Lisa McWherter at lisamcw2@gmail.com or call 828-713-4994.

SAT, JULY 27 - BUCK SPRINGS – Easy to moderate 6 mile one-way hike from Pisgah Inn on the Blue Ridge Parkway to NC 276. This hike is mostly downhill with several shallow water crossings. Lush vegetation and many water features makes for an interesting hike. Requires a shuttle. Wear sturdy shoes or hiking boots, bring water and a lunch or snack. Leave Asheville at 9:30 am and return by 4 - 5 pm. RSVP to leader at janelaping@sbcglobal.net or 828-772-0379.

CAMPING TRIP IN MONTREAT – JUNE 28-30 - Arriving Friday, June 28 / Departing Sunday, June 30. Tent Camping in Family Campground. \$20 per campsite, with up to 2 tents per site & max of 4 persons per site. Opportunities to share campsites to defer costs. There will be both short & long hikes as options on Sat & Sun. Please contact either Outings Leader to sign up. Lisa McWherter at lisamcw2@gmail.com or call 828-713-4994 or Jane Laping at janelaping@sbcglobal.net or 828-772-0379.



WENOCA GROUP
SIERRA CLUB
PO Box 469
Asheville, NC 28802-0469

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 260
ASHEVILLE, NC 28801
EDITION 2013-05-07

The Executive Committee meets monthly. For more information, please contact Judy Mattox at 828-683-2176 or at judymattox@sbcglobal.net. All WENOCA members are invited to attend.

Our website is www.wenoca.org.

WENOCA OFFICERS - 2013 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Judy Mattox – Chair - 828-683-2176

Lisa McWherter - Outings Leader

Rich Wasch - Treasurer

Kris Cunningham - State Executive Committee

Grace Curry - Publicity Committee

Ken Brame - Political Committee

Gene Keil - Website/Membership Committee

Rober Zieber - At Large

Elaine Lite - Newsletter Editor

Kelly Martin - Beyond Coal - 828-251-1272

Earth Day 2013 Global Theme ... “The Face of Climate Change”

On April 22, 2013, more than one billion people around the world will take part in the 43rd anniversary of Earth Day. From Beijing to Cairo, Melbourne to London, Rio to Johannesburg, New Delhi to New York, communities everywhere will voice their concerns for the planet, and take action to protect it. We'll harness that power to show the world The Face of Climate Change. And we'll call on our leaders to act boldly together, as we have, in this pivotal year.

The 5th annual Asheville Earth Day will take place on Saturday, April 20, 2013 from noon-10 pm in downtown Asheville on Lexington Avenue. This FREE, day-long event is focused on providing a fun, entertaining setting to educate and promote conscious awareness and green living for the families and individuals of the Asheville community. This year's event will feature an amazing array of main stage talent, arts, local food and environmental education.

The Sierra Club table will be presenting actions for Beyond Coal, Wind Energy in NC, and other local Western North Carolina issues. If you are interested in volunteering at the Sierra Club booth for an hour a two between noon - 8 pm, contact Kris Cunningham at krissysjake@gmail.com or 702-285-6832. We will provide all the training. All ages are welcome! Asheville Earthday is offering FREE water this year, so don't forget your water bottle!

