



September 1, 2016



SIERRA
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News and Notes

By Delphine Trowbridge

Friends of Griffith Park has a lecture on Reptiles & Amphibian Discoveries from Southern California's Citizen Scientist Army. August 18 at Los Feliz Branch Library at 1874 Hillhurst Ave, LA 90027. Doors open at 6:30 pm. Lecture will be by Dr. Greg Pauly.

Verdugo Hills Conservation Round Table needs volunteers to help with the important conservation and political work we do. We meet about 9 times a year with a fun potluck dinner and plan the events. Our next meeting is Thursday, Aug 25. If you are interested, please contact Delphine Trowbridge or Judy Anderson at VerdugoHillsGroup@gmail.com.

The Sierra Club needs your help to elect pro-environment candidates in November.

Anthony Portantino, who is running for State Senate, has been endorsed by the Sierra Club as well as Adam Schiff, Jack Scott, Howard Berman, Paul Krekorian and many others. Volunteer to help with his campaign 626-478-9465.

Thanks for the Action! Thanks to all Sierra Club activists who reached out to Assemblymember Jimmy Gomez about his bill AB2356, which would have weakened CEQA protections. Mr Gomez decided not to go forward with the CEQA changes. (Verdugo Hills wrote him a letter)

Thursday, July 14 a group of about 12 (Sierra Club) toured the Lanterman Historical House in La Canada-Flintridge. We saw a movie about the history of La Canada valley and the first settlers including Dr. Roy Lanterman and family. We had a great docent tour of house and grounds. We then

took a horse trail hike through the area. Then we concluded an informative day with Happy Hour at the Dish. This was not our usual outing but everyone seemed to enjoy it and want more.

Verdugo Hills Group Elections are coming soon. We are now looking for candidates to serve on our 2017 management committee. You must be a member of Verdugo Hills Group. We plan the activities for the year and also where we spend our money. If interested email VerdugoHillsGroup@gmail.com

Verdugo Hills has lost two of our long time members.

William "Bill" Green

July 16, 1936–December 27, 2015

Bill served as Verdugo Hills Conservation Chair until he moved to Escondido more than 10 years ago.

He earned a degree in geochemistry from Tufts University; he also attended University of Arizona where he graduated with a Master's degree in Geology. He taught physical science at both San Fernando High School and Glendale Community



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College. As our conservation chair, he fought development in the Tujunga wash area. Bills final request was to have his ashes deposited into the Cascadia subduction zone off the Oregon coast so that he will blast millions of years hence from a volcano and circle the globe on high altitude air currents. A perfect farewell for a geologist.

Genevieve Kalinowski
February 1921-August 2016

Genevieve was born in Prairie North Dakota and moved to California in the 1940's.

She loved the Sierra Club and was a regular Griffith Park hiker. She joined the Verdugo Hills Sierra Club in 1991 and has been a participant in many of our activities including Mystery Dinners.

She was a long time resident of Los Feliz and active in her local Catholic Church. Genevieve was loved by everyone and will be missed.



Chapter-Sponsored Trip to Mongolia is a Wildlife-Viewing and Cultural Adventure upon Wide-Open Spaces

by Bruce Hale

Twenty-three intrepid participants enjoyed an extraordinary travel adventure upon the steppes and grasslands of Mongolia on the two week trip sponsored by the Angeles Chapter in June. Some people had asked me why travel to Mongolia, "there's nothing there." Indeed, once we got outside of the capital Ulaanbaatar [frequently called "UB"] we rode upon bumpy dirt roads in our caravan of 4-wheeldrive vans [plus cook van and equipment truck] mile after mile of vast, wide-open spaces. I for one found it exhilarating to be, as it were, "right in the middle of nowhere." The grasslands and steppes have a special beauty of their own. At this time of

year, the grasses are green, carpeting the flatlands as well as the rolling hills. But the grasses and other flora are stunted, growing very close to the ground, from the two year drought in Mongolia. The sage plants, also stunted and ever so close to the ground, still exude their fresh herbal fragrance. Sunsets and sunrises, cloud formations, and starry night skies tend to be gorgeous upon the steppes. Summers are short in Mongolia. By the end of August, the cold of winters already starts to set in. Much of the produce raised in Mongolia has to be grown in greenhouses.

Our tour operator, Mongolia Trekking, provided us with excellent service. The drivers of the 6 Mitsubishi vans were ever so resourceful and capable of making repairs right on the spot. The cook crew prepared gourmet style meals from scratch. After all, in these remote regions there are no stores or restaurants around the corner. The crew had a big square tent for their kitchen and another for our dining room. Often the crew would drive ahead of the vans so that they could set up the lunch site in advance for us. Meat of course is plentiful in this country of nomadic herders. Vegetable dishes usually included cabbage, sometimes partially fermented, and carrots, and lots of potatoes.

This trip was different from the first two trips which Fred Dong and I led to Mongolia as this time we did 3 nights of actual tent camping, besides the four nights in the established ger tent camps which



Taksi horses, Khustain Preserve

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Gazelles running fast in the distance, Toson Hulstay Preserve



are relatively luxurious with the big round tents [which in Russian are called yurts] and central commissary for meals and facilities. Still, the tent camping was made easier by the spacious tents, the sleeping mats, and portable outhouses, as well as the meals provided by our tour operator. In Mongolia one can set up camp anywhere. We camped by rivers and sometimes not far from small towns. The mild weather also made it easy. The nights did not get below the mid 40°F. In fact, no one even used the wood stoves in the ger tents. At first after our arrival we headed to the east of UB where we divided our time between two nights in ger camps and the 3 nights of real tent camping. Our furthest point in the northeast was 71 km from the Russian border.

A purpose in touring the steppes is to view wildlife and birds. We saw many birds especially around bodies of water, such as white napped cranes, Siberian cranes and other cranes, various herons, large vultures, and golden eagles. The flora is also noteworthy: for example, little blue irises, forget-me-nots, wild rhubarb. We were in the area in which the gazelle herds migrate. One morning our vans drove us cross-country to search for gazelles. We saw -- from a distance-- two herds running fast. As recently as 5 years ago, the gazelle herds totaled 2 million, but today the population is under 1 million as result of the drought which concentrates salt in the lakes which the animals then drink and die.

Our last ger camp at Khustain, about 100 km west of UB offers the chance to see the Takhi, the wild horse which had become extinct in the world and was revived and brought back to be successfully reintroduced in 1998. Today the Takhi number about 350. We saw a small group of the Taki during our evening excursion into the preserve. Fred led two early AME excursions at 5:30 am for the best



- **One of our vans got stuck mid-stream in the Omon river and is being towed out**



- **Massive statue of Genghis Khan, Bayalag. Intended to be on the scale of an Eiffel Tower**



- **Bogd Khaan Winter Palace, Ulaanbaatar where the last king lived**

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viewing. Those who went along were rewarded by seeing as many as 85 Takhi.

Besides wildlife watching and birding, we also included some cultural and historical sites. We saw, for example, the largest statue of Genghis Khan on horseback in the world. It is about 1 ½ hour east of UB, and, if meant as a tourist draw, it is succeeding. We also visited the monument marking the spot where Genghis Khan was coronated in 1206 AD after establishing his empire. Going back further in history, we visited a burial ground and a deer stele dating to the 6th century BC and the 2nd millennium BC, respectively. For modern history, we saw the important battleground in the town of Choybalsan where, in 1939, the Soviets and Mongolians defeated the Japanese.

Of special interest to everyone were visits we made to local families. We toured a factory making wooden parts for the ger tents out of larch. We visited the log cabin house of the grandparents of the birding expert who accompanied us. They served us a crumbly sour cheese, homemade bread and butter and clotted cream. We also visited a nomadic horse-herding family whose ger was near our second campsite. In mid-August this family will relocate their ger for the winter. They performed demonstrations of horse training with their herd of over 100 horses. Important throughout Mongolian history, horses remain vital to the nomadic life. Having a herd of horses signifies prosperity. There are more horses in Mongolia than there are people.

UB, population of about 1 million [1/3 of the overall population of the country], is a bustling metropolis growing at a frantic pace. New construction, spurred in part by the country's vast mineral wealth, abounds everywhere. Streets, never made for heavy traffic, are jammed. It is faster to walk than drive in the downtown area. Shopping is a favorite pastime in UB where there are innumerable opportunities to buy souvenirs. Wool products from both sheep and yak are popular. The center of

downtown UB, just several blocks from our hotel, is Sukhbaatar Square around which are government buildings including the parliament building with the iconic statue of Genghis Khan. While we were in UB, the classic car rally from Peking to Paris had stopped over in UB and parked their classics on Sukhbaatar for public viewing. Most of these classics had been updated with new engines and specialized tires. Combining the old and the new is also so typical of modern Mongolia.

Note: Fred and I are planning another trip to Mongolia for 2018. This trip will focus on the Gobi Desert and the northwest region of Mongolia, the region of alpine lakes and eagle-hunters. It will be about two weeks long and will include 3 nights of real tent camping as well as some ger camping. We expect to announce the trip once the itinerary is finalized and approved by the Sierra Club early next year.

Down in the Dumps

By Carol Henning

Walk down any residential street in Los Angeles the day before trash collection is scheduled. You will see a rainbow of blue, green and black containers. Sometimes you will smell them too. Where will all this stuff end up? Supposedly, most of the material in the blue can will be recycled, and the green can's contents will end up as mulch. The garbage in the black can, though, will go to a landfill.

"Landfills are a nuisance, and we're quickly running out of space," says Kathryn Barger, an aide to L.A. County Supervisor Mike Antonovich and herself a candidate for County Supervisor, District #5. This district—which includes two million people and stretches across much of the northern San Fernando and San Gabriel Valleys, including Santa Clarita, Burbank, Glendale, Montrose, La Crescenta, Pasadena, Tujunga, Granada Hills, the Angeles National Forest and the San Gabriel Mountains—has four landfills. They are Lancaster, Chiquita, Sunshine and Scholl Canyon.

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This last one, Scholl Canyon, is the subject of a vigorous campaign by opponents of the Glendale City Council's proposal to expand it. Scholl Canyon is 55 years old and 535 acres. It is a regional dump surrounded by residential and commercial areas in Pasadena, Glendale and Eagle Rock. A Draft Environmental Impact Project Report (DEIR) has been prepared in order to be ready when needed. Glendale is said to be planning to install an anaerobic digestion facility and a power generator at the landfill.

In its Unavoidable Adverse Impacts section, the DEIR states that the proposed project would result in unavoidable adverse impacts related to air quality even after mitigation. The Coalition for Landfill Alternatives says two proposals would allow the landfill to rise up "more than 180 feet above the current ridgeline. One of the plans would also add 13 acres horizontally making the landfill one of the most prominent peaks in the San Rafael Hills." The group also points out that the dump sits near a network of active earthquake faults and that it has "NO protective liner around its porous base, allowing pollutants to seep into the Los Angeles aquifer." As most of us know, landfills create greenhouse gases, especially methane. Scholl Canyon has a gas collection system, but some gases still escape.

Darrell Park, the other finalist in the County Supervisor Fifth District contest, supports "no new or expanded landfills." To borrow words from Shakespeare: "'Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished." But what do we do with all the trash? Park displays a wallet made out of a failed bike inner tube. Recycling and adaptive reuse is one answer. But are there enough facilities to do this? Barger says "the future lies in Alternative and Conversion Technology Facilities." She points out that, in many European countries, black bin waste has been converted into energy for years. She adds: "As part of Lancaster's CUP a few years ago, we required an Alternative Technology fee that will fund a new

facility on-site." Owners of the landfill were initially reluctant but they later agreed to bring it online before 2020." It seems we need all of the above.

By some estimates, the world uses and throws away more than a trillion plastic bags a year. Plastic requires nonrenewable fossil fuels for manufacture. Plastic bags are easily dispersed, impede waterways, pollute oceans and overwhelm landfills. Bans on single-use plastic bags, or fees for them, have reduced the volume of trash. For example, San José has seen an 89 percent reduction of plastic bag litter in the city's storm drains. Industry groups are fighting to reverse plastic bag bans. There are recycling processes which use machines to make used bags into plastic resin pellets and then into new plastic products. Where is this process available? Where are the funds or the political will to build and install these machines? The problem with plastic is that it will not decay down to its basic elements. Plastic is Forever.

Those little plastic bottles that contain overpriced water are recyclable, but how many of them end up in shrubs, gutters, waterways and landfills instead of in recycling bins. Single use bags and cups, for

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**Send an email to Verdugo Hills Group:
VerdugoHillsGroup@gmail.com**

Volunteers Needed

Verdugo Hills Group is always looking for new people for our Management Committee.

We are looking for hike leaders, event planners/leaders, committee members, etc.

If you would like to help in directing our wonderful group, please talk to our membership chair,

GENE PAULIN ()

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example, are made which can be composted. I first encountered these at the farmers' market in Boulder, Colorado. Since then, I have encountered them here, but rarely.

How can we avoid establishing new dumps and expanding the ones that already exist? First, we need to use fewer disposable items. At least, the ones we use should, unlike plastic, be capable of decay. We may congratulate ourselves if a plastic bag or bottle ends up in a dump rather than in a stream, in a flowerbed or on a sidewalk. But most of the trash that makes its way to landfills could be recycled, composted, or converted to energy, as has been done in some European countries for years. Sweden has been using food scraps to generate energy. At one point, the country was actually importing trash. In contrast, perhaps 1.6 million tons of food scraps landed in L.A. and Orange county dumps in 2011.

The Organics Project of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter Zero Waste Committee reported that, in 2011, one million tons of yard trimmings were deliberately deposited into landfills in L.A. and Orange counties. Even though this "green waste" can be mulched or composted, much of it is hauled straight to landfills, where it is layered with garbage. Cities that did a good job of handling food scraps and yard trimmings included Burbank, Glendale, Santa Clarita and Santa Monica.

In most cities in L.A. and Orange counties, yard trimmings are collected curbside separate from garbage and recyclables. We might hope that this material is turned into mulch or compost. However, these expectations apply only to yard trimmings from single family homes. If you live in an apartment or condo, a separate bin for plant trimmings is rarely provided. My attempts to encourage the condo complex where I live to provide a green bin have been met by homeowners' board members shaking their heads and rolling their eyes. Multi-family dwellings and commercial buildings negotiate with independent waste haulers and often do not bother

with the expense of recycling collection. There is now a franchise system for multi-family and commercial trash collection in the City of Los Angeles. This gives certain companies responsibilities for designated "waste sheds." The object of the franchise system is to increase accountability on the part of the private solid waste industry. The management of multi-family and commercial buildings must be pushed to make it possible and practical for tenants to recycle.

Organics in landfills decompose, which releases methane, a greenhouse gas 100 times more damaging to the climate than CO₂ in the critical near-term 20-year time frame. The EPA reports that landfills account for over 20 percent of all methane emissions in the U.S.

As a would-be environmental goody-goody, I often wonder how I can get rid of a broken, beyond-repair or used item in a responsible way. More and more items are now welcome in recycling cans, but what can one do with stuff that isn't welcome? I once spent half a day looking for a place where I could dispose of used needles (to dispense subcutaneous fluids to a sick cat). Most people cannot spend several hours on such a quest. Why is this information not more readily available? And why does one have to go here to dispose of batteries, and there to dispose of spend compact florescent lightbulbs, and another place to leave used tires?

Recycling brings twice the number of jobs as landfills and incinerators do. But recycling facilities are usually situated in communities without enough clout to keep them out. It is a question of environmental justice. We must insist that recycling facilities be clean, safe and sited fairly. We must also insist that workers in these facilities be treated fairly. Often the workers are treated as if they were worth no more than the trash they haul or sort. Wages are low and working conditions are unsafe. Work areas are often filthy and have little ventilation. Sometimes neither haulers nor sorters are given

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safety equipment. Green jobs should be good jobs, should they not?

In my Swedish class we were given diagrams of an återvinningscentral (a recycling center). The purpose was to help us acquire vocabulary related to this practice, but a few of us were surprised and impressed by the range of material accepted for recycling: from drywall, to mirrors, to tires, to left-over paint, to textiles, to treated and untreated wood, to bathtubs, to packaging of all sorts, and so on. Paper, plastic, metal and glass packaging are all accepted.

Ah, packaging! Today, it seems that almost any item one buys in a store is packaged to a fare-thee-well. My least favorite is the plastic prison that surrounds such products as a tube of glue, shoe laces, a pair of tweezers, just about anything. That I have avoided serious cuts when removing these nasty plastic surrounds is a source of wonderment. The waste generated by these plastic domes consists of shards with edges capable of inflicting wounds. Moreover, do we really need to buy produce imprisoned in plastic tubs and covered with more plastic? I shop at farmers' markets to avoid this excess packaging, but this is neither practical nor possible for many consumers.

Here is an episode from Griffith Park's experience with landfills. In the mid 1950s, air pollution over Los Angeles led to a ban on backyard incinerators and open trash fires. A 1953 study by the Stanford Research Institute concluded that refuse burning was responsible for 30 percent of the L.A. basin's smog-forming elements. From that ban, a question emerged: What could L.A. do with all its trash? The sudden need for municipal rubbish disposal led to the making of a dump in Griffith Park. Over the Griffith family's objections, Toyon Canyon, a beautiful and densely vegetated area with large live oak trees, was scraped by bulldozers and turned into a trash dump. "By October 1959," writes Mike Eberts in his history of Griffith Park, "it

was handling half of the city's combustible rubbish, about 1,200 tons a day." As one who often bicycled up Oak Canyon from Travel Town, I remember the parade of trash trucks making their way to the former Toyon Canyon. Exhaust from the trucks and fumes from the garbage mountain slammed the nostrils of hikers, bikers and equestrians.

In 1981, L.A. city was denied permission to continue using the county's Puente Hills site. Toyon was almost full. A new dump was needed. Some city officials cast covetous eyes upon Senett Canyon, another lovely natural area in Griffith Park. This time, however, the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter got to work—writing letters to Mayor Bradley and leading hikes into the canyon. It was the campaign against the Toyon 2 landfill that got me to become an environmental activist. Recreation and Parks Commissioner Royce Neuschatz led the opposition to Toyon 2, and the saved area was renamed Royce's Canyon in her honor.

All our attempts to prevent new landfills and the expansion of existing ones must address the throw-away culture that makes it necessary to make more room for rubbish. We need to tell manufacturers and retailers, "Enough already with the excessive packaging!" We need to encourage our friends (and perhaps ourselves) to stop buying cases of water in little plastic bottles. Cities must provide more and better recycling centers and must invest in conversion technology facilities. If we don't commit ourselves to eschewing disposable items, recycling what we have, and reusing what we can, we will continue to feel Down in the Dumps.

CST #2087766-40: Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the Liability Waiver before you choose to participate on an outing, please go to: sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/ or contact the Outings Department at for a printed version.

ACTIVITIES

September 15 Thursday

Griffith Park Loop

We will go up stairways and trails around the Observatory and Frank Lloyd Wright's Ennis Brown house. Hike is partly shady and about 3 miles. Good hike for a warm day. Optional lunch at Trails. Meet 10 am at the foot of the Boy Scout trail off Vermont Street just before the Greek Theater. Bring hat and water. 90+ - Check with the leader. Ldrs: Delphine Trowbridge, Bruce Hale.

October 3 Monday

Monthly Meeting

Join the Verdugo Hills Group for a program about Annette Kargodorian's recent whirlwind train tour of Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic. Some of the cities include: Brussels, Zurich, Munich, Salzburg, Vienna and Prague. See lots of pictures of great architecture, city views, palaces and cathedrals. Everyone welcome at 7:00 for social time and refreshments. The meeting begins at 7:30 in the auditorium of the La Crescenta Library, 2809 Foothill Blvd. Enter from the rear.

October 20 Thursday

Silver Lake Court Stair Walk

This is a country walk in the city, along a stretch of the old Red Car trolley systems. We will also climb up our adopted stairs and see the Verdugo Hills garden project. 3.2 miles and 603 steps. Meet 10 am at the SW corner of Riverside Drive and Fletcher Drive, across from Home Restaurant. Optional lunch at Home. Bring had and water. Ldrs: Delphine Trowbridge, Evelyn Alexander, Bruce Hale.

November 7 Monday

Monthly Meeting

Enjoy a program of pictures and stories about a recent trip to France presented by Evelyn Alexander. The program included Normandy, The Dordogne and the Loire Valley. See Mount St Michelle, the Normandy Beaches, Giverny, the painted Caves near Sarlat, as well as Chateaus, Castles and of course Paris. . Everyone welcome at 7:00 for social time and refreshments. The meeting begins at 7:30 in the auditorium of the La Crescenta Library, 2809 Foothill Blvd. Enter from the rear.

November 14 Thursday

LA's New Arts District and Little Tokyo

Explore Los Angeles's newest neighborhood, the Arts District. See the galleries, new buildings, restaurants and murals that make up this new bohemian area. Wear comfortable shoes. Bring \$ for lunch. Heavy rain cancels. Meeting place TBA. Contact Ldrs: Delphine Trowbridge, Bruce Hale

November 20 Sun

Museum of Neon Art, Glendale

Join us to visit the site of Glendale's newest attraction, the Museum of Neon Art. After more than thirty years and at least four different locations the museum has finally found a permanent home on Brand Blvd. Dedicated to showcasing and preserving this electric and contemporary art form, among its collection, the museum contains examples of signage and art that may be familiar to many. Plan to meet at the Museum at 1:00 (216 S Brand Blvd.) or for those who would like to join us for lunch, meet 11:30 at Porto's Glendale (315 N Brand Blvd). City parking structure is 90 minute free parking at 120 Maryland Avenue, Glendale, CA 91209. City parking lot behind the museum accessible from Harvard or Colorado is \$1 per hour at parking meter. Wear comfortable shoes, bring money for admission (\$10, adults, \$8 seniors, \$5 Glendale residents with ID), and optional lunch. Ldrs Evelyn Alexander, David Eisenberg

Mark Your Calendar

- Mystery Dinner Fundraiser will be March 4, 2017

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All links are live. You can email leaders or visit websites by clicking on a link.

Email and Phone info is not available in the web version to protect privacy.



To contact leaders or for more information on our Group, email VerdugoHillsGroup@gmail.com.

VERDUGO VIEWS

Meetings

Verdugo Hills meets first Monday of each month except July and January. Meetings are located at the La Crescenta Library (2809 Foothill Blvd—Enter in the back). Social Hour: 7 pm, Meeting: 7:30

Web Page

angeles.sierraclub.org/verdugo

Support Committee

(Directory of Support Committee and Leaders is on inside back page.)

- Delphine Trowbridge..... Chair/Co-Conservation/
Mailing/Hospitality
- Marlene Vella Vice Chair
- Carol Henning..... Co-Conservation/
Chapter Delegate
- Charlotte Feitshans.....Secretary/
Alternate Chapter Delegate
- Michael Beck.....Climate Change
- Annette Kargodorian Treasurer
- Judy Anderson Membership/Treas Asst
- David F Eisenberg..... Newsletter Editor
- Gene & Terry Paulin Political
- Bruce Hale Outings
- Garen Yegparian..... Political Compliance
- Evelyn Alexander..... Publicity/Programs
- Dotty & Mike Sandford..... Fundraising
- Lucile Davis Social Secretary
- Richard Castro..... Webmaster

Conservation Round Table

Carol Henning, Michael Beck, Gene Paulin,
Evelyn Alexander, Delphine Trowbridge, Judy
Anderson, Marlene Vella, Charlotte Feitshans


Submission Instructions

Deadlines are the 15th of even numbered months
(Feb, Apr, June, Aug, Oct, Dec).

Send stories by email (preferably) to:

Send pictures by email by email at full
resolution. Email if you wish to make
arrangements to scan a picture

Membership



**Don't Get Left Out
in the Cold... Join Us!**

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 give you the lay of the land. Join today and become part of America's largest environmental organization offering the most enjoyable outings.



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Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35

Contributions, gifts & dues to Sierra Club are tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$ 7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine and \$ 1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

Enclose a check and mail to: Sierra Club, PO Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041 or visit our website: www.sierraclub.org

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