

Shawnee Trails

News of the Shawnee Group — August 2004

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



In Wilderness is Preservation of the World

"If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them more than the miracles of technology. We must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it." ~ President Lyndon B. Johnson, on signing of the Wilderness Act, '64

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September 3, 2004 marks the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, arguably America's greatest piece of conservation legislation. By establishing the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS), Congress sought to ensure that "increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States."

The very idea of setting aside lands to remain forever wild was born and nurtured by visionaries such as John Muir, Bob Marshall, Aldo Leopold, Arthur Carhart, and Wilderness Act author Howard Zahniser. Starting in 1964 with 9.1 million acres within 54 Wildernesses, the NWPS has grown to over 107 million acres in 662 Wilderness areas, seven of which are in southern Illinois. These wild lands serve as critical habitat for countless species, facilitate essential opportunities for solitude, inspiration and primitive recreation, and provide sources of clean air and water. With the passage of the Wilderness Act, Congress granted present and future generations of Americans an invaluable legacy – land where the "earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man."

The overarching legal mandate of the Wilderness Act is to preserve the wilderness character of each area in the NWPS. Wilderness character is a complex essence that gives Wilderness its unique value; a value far beyond whatever scenic or recreational values the land may hold. Historical records clearly demonstrate that Wilderness Act visionaries understood that wilderness character consists of both tangible, physical components as well as intangible, psychological and spiritual components. These components shape our interactions and relationship with wild places in ways that are different from how we approach any other landscape. Congress understood that preserving wilderness character is the essential key to keeping alive the very meaning of Wilderness in America. Illinois has three areas that still warrant protection as wilderness: [Camp Hutchins](#), [Ripple Hollow](#), and [Burke Branch](#). For information, please visit: <http://www.illinoiswilderness.org> #

Shawnee Group Event Calendar

August 5th ~ ExCom meeting @ Shelby Seegers, 6:00 PM.

August 15th ~ Meet & Greet Beach Party @ Spring Arbor Lake, 3 PM.

Regular member meetings resume in September.

Outings are listed on page 2

Meet and Greet: August Beach Party

It's time for the annual member beach party of the Shawnee Group. In addition to the outings listed on page 2, every member is invited to the Spring Arbor Lake on Saturday, August 15th. Come to Spring Arbor Beach prepared for swimming, canoeing, and brats. Park at the beach or at 139 Spring Arbor Drive. We will eat about 5 PM. Bring a potluck side dish and drinks and your own tableware. A grill and charcoal will be available. Come earlier at 3 PM for swimming and boating. **Directions:** Turn right at the Spring Arbor sign less than a mile south of the Giant City School and go to the 5th house on the left. Call 457-8989 for direction help. #

We can do better!

**We can protect
Illinois wetlands**



www.illinoiswetlands.org * illinois.sierraclub.org

Safe, happy and inspired

Descriptions of all outings of the Shawnee Group and five other Groups in Illinois Chapter are now available in in one central location thus making it easy to find a wider range of outdoor activities by any Sierra Club member or the general public. Plan your summer outings now! Go to the Group website for the link to this new feature:

<http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/outings.htm>

August 6 — 8, Eleven Point National Scenic River Weekend Canoe Trip, Missouri

The watershed of the 11 Point River encompasses some of the wildest lands in the state of Missouri: deep valleys, steep wooded hills, gushing springs and towering bluffs. The Eleven Point River offers just about anything a canoeist could want - moderate whitewater rapids, flat-water pools, caves to explore, rich, abundant flora and fauna, clean, cool and unpolluted water. The trip begins Friday night and ends Sunday afternoon. Starts at Greer and ends at Riverton, MO. Contact: Bob Pauls, IL Chapter Outings Chair, <mailto:outings@illinois.sierraclub.org>. Make your reservations **today**: 618-549-9408. No walk-ins allowed. Deposit and some canoe experience required. Canoe/kayak rentals available.

Sunday, August 15, Beach Party, Spring Arbor Lake, Giant City Road/Spring Arbor

Come prepared for swimming, canoeing, and brats to Spring Arbor Beach. Park at the beach or at 139 Spring Arbor Dr. Eat about 5 PM. Bring a potluck side dish and drinks. A grill and charcoal will be available. Bring your own tableware. Come earlier at 3 PM for swimming& boating, Directions: We're south of the Giant City School less than a mile. Turn right at the Spring Arbor sign and I'll be 5th house on the left. Call Don at 457-8989 for further directions.

August 21, Lower Big Muddy Canoe Trip, Jackson County, IL

Our Saturday trip will leave from the Turkey Bayou-Oakwood Bottoms Recreation Area for put-in to the lower Big Muddy. Participants may choose to camp Friday night at the nearby Pine Hills Campground (\$5). We will paddle through forest and wetlands in the oxbows of the southern half of the Reservoir where the river forms the border between Grand Tower and Pomona Townships. Upon exiting the Reservoir, the river is bordered on the west by the Big Muddy River County Levee Road that protects the bottomland farms in the "claw" of land below Grand Tower. On the east are the bluffs of the Clear Springs Wilderness and LaRue Pine Hills. We will exit near the confluence of the mighty Mississippi River. You must provide your own canoe or kayak. Assistance is available in securing one with adequate notice. Come experience the thrill of flying fish. Contact: Bob Pauls, IL Chapter Outings Chair, <mailto:outings@illinois.sierraclub.org>. Reservations and deposit are required. 618-549-9408. #

Adventures with Uncle Bob Tyson *Your Guide to Self-Adventure*

This month I recommend for your hiking pleasure the Mantle Rock Nature Preserve in nearby Kentucky. Take the free ferry at Cave-in-the-Rock, Illinois. The ferry runs from 6 AM to 9:40 PM, 7 days a week. Expect a long wait on holiday weekends. Upon crossing take a right on KY 135 and travel approx 20 miles on this pretty, but winding drive. At Joy Crossroads, turn right and follow KY 133, 2.2 miles and look for a historical marker on your left. Turn onto this unmarked gravel road to the parking area by the port-a-potties. Walk down the lane to the information kiosk.

At 0.44 mile you are treated to a 30 foot high, 188 ft long natural bridge. Trees impede a good camera shot (I recommend that you take a shot of both ends and splice the halves together). If you can negotiate the fallen trees on the right edge of the bridge, there is a route to the top of it; otherwise, continue on this 1.9 mile loop trail. Note the neat rock formations to the left of the bridge. At one point on the trail you top out at a cliff line. Soon you make a sharp left into the woods again. At mile 1.15, look at the Medusa tree: This dead cedar has branches that twist in all directions. Although I did not note any unusual vegetation (late May), my reference book on this trail indicates the presence of June Grass, Hairy Lip Fern, and Prickly Pear Cactus. This area is not well maintained and is missing some trail markers. This trail is listed in a new book, **Hiking Kentucky** by Brook and Barbara Elliott. This area will be part of one of the Shawnee Group's group hikes. At any time there is flooding on the Ohio river, forego this adventure as KY 135 gets flooded and a tributary backs up into the trail. For more information contact Bob Tyson at 684-5643 or at <mailto:sh-outings@illinois.sierraclub.org>



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