

# Shawnee Trails

News of the Shawnee Group — April 2005

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



## Wildflowers of Southern Illinois and the Natural Areas that Support Them

The April general meeting of the Shawnee Group will be on Thursday, April 14th at 7:30 PM. Attendees will be treated to an illustrated slide presentation by John Schwegman, retired state botanist for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. John will cover many of the common and rare species of showy wildflowers of the southern Illinois and describe how many of them are restricted to small and unique natural habitats.

John moved with his wife, Martha, to live near Metropolis on a bluff above the Ohio River. He may have retired from this position, but he has been very active in several causes since returning here. He frequently leads field trips for friends and groups to see wildflowers and prairies. He has played a major part in developing the displays at the new Barkhausen Wetlands Center in the Cache River State Natural Area. He has an interest in archaeology and is working with others to map and develop the Kinkaid Mounds area. He is also interested in the mussels of area rivers. He currently serves as Commissioner for the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. John is an outstanding naturalist and has an endless curiosity which leads to more knowledge in many areas.

John started his career with IDNR as a manager of Mermet Lake Conservation Area. It was while he was at Mermet that he fell in love with plants and began his intensive study of botany. He is a graduate of SIU with degrees in both zoology and botany. His work at IDNR included natural area preservation, natural areas inventory, and ecosystem management.

John was the first president of the national Natural Areas Association (1979-1981). In 2000 he received the Natural Areas Association's highest level of recognition. The George B. Fell Award is given to the person who has demonstrated the highest level of leadership in natural areas stewardship. He is also known for authoring the Natural Divisions of Illinois.

The 7:30 presentation will be preceded at 7 PM by a social hour with refreshments at the Carbondale Township office, 217 E Main Street, Carbondale, IL. The public is welcome.

Author, Ron Schmeck, will be at our pre-program social this month with copies of his book, The Other Side of the Middle. You can have your copy signed by the author. (See page 2) .

## Open Houses: Draft Shawnee National Forest Plan

The U.S. Forest Service has released the Draft Shawnee National Forest (SNF) Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for public comment. The comment period ends June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2005. The Forest Plan can be viewed and downloaded from the web at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/shawnee>

You can also call the Forest Service to request a copy of the Plan and DEIS (hard copy or CD) by calling 1-800-MYWOODS. The Forest Service will be holding three open houses in our area to answer people's questions concerning The Plan and the DEIS. People will also be able to submit written and oral comments at the open houses. The open houses are:

- ★ Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 3-7 PM, Knights of Columbus Hall, 100 Columbus DR, Marion, IL
- ★ Wednesday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 3-7 PM, Fischer's Restaurant, 2100 W. Main St., Belleville, IL
- ★ Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 3-7 PM, Vienna High School Commons Area, 601 N. 1<sup>st</sup> St., Vienna, IL

Sierra Club members and other concerned citizens will be meeting in April to discuss the issues of SNF environmental and recreational concerns. Contact Barb McKasson for further information at (618) 529-4824. ☎

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### Shawnee Group Event Calendar

**April 7** ~ Group ExCom meeting, 6 PM at McClure's.

**April 14** ~ Membership Program: Wildflowers of Southern Illinois, 7:30 PM at the Carbondale Township Office, Carbondale.

**April 2 & 18** ~ Outings

**April 24** ~ Newsletter deadline.

**April 28** ~ Newsletter Folding @ Carbondale Township Office.

**April 30** ~ Yard Sale

## WELCOME TO THE FUNDRAISING CORNER

As members of the Sierra Club/Shawnee Group you receive quality publications, access to our informative web-site, interesting member programs and many opportunities to participate in the protection and enjoyment of our precious environment.

The volunteer hours that go into these projects are vast and freely given. In an attempt to keep up with the expense side of the equation the Shawnee Group would like to present several opportunities to participate more fully. This month we have a book that you will find both charming and delightful, written by non-other than our previous Executive Committee Chair, Ron Schmeck.

### The Other Side of the Middle, A Pennsylvania Dutch Story of Family Love by Ronald Ray Schmeck.

Ron Schmeck grew up in the Pennsylvania Dutch or German region of Pennsylvania and currently resides in Makanda, IL. He has written a novel which uses fiction to illustrate the respect for nature and the interest in sustainability that has permeated Pennsylvania Dutch culture since the people from the Rhine valley first came to the United States in the 1600's and 1700's. Pennsylvania Dutch farmland is richer, both biologically and, economically, than it was when the people from the Rhine first began their stewardship of the land. It is possibly the richest farmland in the United States. This is due to use of organic fertilizers, crop rotation, and nitrogen fixation which the Dutch were using two hundred years before anyone else in the US had even heard of it. In contrast, during the depression, other farmlands of this country were about played out. What a rich legacy, with care and intention, the Pennsylvania Dutch handed down to their children! This book will make you wish you had "grown up Dutch." The values and love portrayed in the book will warm your heart. Ron Schmeck will be at our membership social on April 14th with copies of his book. Come early and have your copy signed by the author.

To order a copy of The Other Side of the Middle by Ron Schmeck you have several order/payment choices:

1. By check or money order mail your order and payment to: Sierra Club, Shawnee Group Treasurer, P.O. Box 117, Carbondale, IL 62901.
2. By credit cards or e-check using PayPal, go to our web-site and select **Buy with PayPal.** ☞

## Illinois Chapter Lobby Day in Springfield, April 7<sup>th</sup>

The annual Illinois Chapter Sierra Club Lobby Day will be held Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, in Springfield. We are carpooling on April 6<sup>th</sup> and Chapter is paying for us to stay at the Mansion View Hotel that evening. We'll start early (8:30 AM) with the IL Environmental Council's "Legislator Breakfast.": Your chance to get some grub and meet legislators as they stop by to do the same. From 9 AM till ~ 3 PM we'll be working the House and Senate; meeting legislators in their offices or pulling them off the chamber floor.

Bills we are working on include protecting our state parks from off-road vehicles, protecting our waters from phosphates and invasive species, banning a toxic flame retardant (PBDE), and protecting our air from diesel fumes and old, "dirty" power plants.

If you are interested in participating, call Barb McKasson (529-4824) or Tim Stenson (687-5456). We may also be conducting in-district lobby visits, so contact us even if you cannot come on April 7. For further information on the bills Illinois Chapter is working on, go to <http://www.illinois.sierraclub.org> and click on "Illinois Legislative Tracker." ☞

## Earth Day / Week Tabling and Events: Volunteers Needed

We are working with other groups in the Southern Illinois Center for Sustainability to plan "Earth Week" activities. We will be giving a program on campus on the Shawnee Forest Plan and proposed wilderness areas during Earth Week. We will also have a booth at the Earth Day Fair. We need volunteers to help educate the public at the Earth Day Fair on Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>. We will have shifts both during the day and in the evening. Call Barb McKasson (618-529-4824) or Tim Stenson (618-687-5456) to find out more or to volunteer. ☞



Shawnee Group ExCom Leaders  
(x) = ExCom officers with voting rights

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## Depleted Uranium Hazard At Crab Orchard Refuge and Beyond

By Barbara McKasson

Doug Rokke, a former Gulf War I soldier and an expert on Depleted Uranium (DU), will be speaking at Lawson Lecture Hall 141 on the SIU Campus in Carbondale on Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 7:00 PM. DU bullets are being produced by General Dynamics on Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge. Rokke will speak about the dangers of radioactive “drift”, which has environmental and health impacts for thirty miles from the General Dynamics site, even though the DU is within a building. Rokke will also discuss the effects of the use of DU ammunition on soldiers and civilians in Gulf War I and II. Other related events include a press conference at 4:00 PM and a potluck dinner with the speaker at 5:00 PM, both at the Interfaith Center. ☩

## Help Ban Toxic Flame Retardant Used in Children’s Pajamas

By Barbara McKasson

Polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE) is applied to everyday consumer products such as children’s pajamas, upholstered furniture and computer cases. Concentrations of PBDEs in humans’ and animals’ bodies are rapidly increasing. The large quantities of PBDE that have been detected in humans have been found in fat, blood and breast milk. No studies of effects have been conducted on humans, but the research on laboratory animals is daunting. The Environmental Working Group asserts, “PBDE exposure [has been linked] to an array of adverse health effects, including thyroid hormone disruption, permanent learning and memory impairment, behavioral changes, hearing deficits, delayed puberty onset, fetal malformations and possibly cancer.” It would be logical to assume that PBDE exposure would have a similar effect on humans.

One study showed that the amount of PBDEs in people’s bodies is doubling every four to five years. Another study showed that the concentrations of PBDEs in the bodies of Americans are 10 – 20 times greater than in Europeans.

Senator Christine Radogno has introduced S.B.424 to ban PBDEs after Dec. 31, 2005.

The European Union and five U.S. states have passed laws banning PBDEs. It is imperative that we pass this bill to protect the health of the people in Illinois.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Write or call your state senator to cosponsor and vote in favor of SB 424.

- ★ Senator Dave Luechtefeld, Dist. 58, (618) 243-9014; (217) 782-8137; 103B Statehouse, Springfield, IL, 62706
- ★ Senator Gary Forby, District 59, (618) 439-2504, (217) 782-5509; M122 Statehouse, Springfield, IL, 62706
- ★ Senator John O. Jones, District 54, (618) 242-9511; (217) 782-0471; 103D Statehouse, Springfield, IL, 62706 ☩

## Help Block Oil Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

By Barbara McKasson

As many of you know by now, despite our best efforts, Senator Cantwell's amendment that would have stripped the federal budget legislation of provisions to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge narrowly lost by a vote of 49 – 51 in the U.S. Senate. While this is a setback, the fight to save the Arctic Refuge is far from over. The Senate vote was just the first battle in a long fight to keep the Arctic Refuge out of the budget. Right now, the House version of the Budget doesn't have drilling language included.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1) Contact our Senators! Both Senator Durbin and Senator Obama voted to protect the Refuge. We need to thank them!

- ★ Senator Durbin: (202) 224-2152; (618) 998-8812
- ★ Senator Obama: (202) 224-2854; (618) 997-2402

2) Call your U.S. Representative and tell him/her it is important to keep a provision to allow drilling in the Arctic Refuge out of any budget bill. Jerry Costello has been a supporter of protecting ANWR, but voted the wrong way last time, so please call him.

- ★ Rep. Jerry Costello: (202) 225-5661; (618) 233-8026
- ★ Rep. John Shimkus: (202) 225-5271; (618) 252-8271

3) **Wear a Green Ribbon.** See page 5 for more information. ☩

## Wear a Green Ribbon for the Arctic!

America's Arctic Refuge is in danger. Two weeks ago, oil interests came one step closer to ruining the wild coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge with sprawling oil development.

In a backdoor scheme cooked up by drilling proponents, the U.S. Senate has included language in the Federal Budget that could remove protections prohibiting oil development in the biological heart of the Refuge. **BUT THE FIGHT IS FAR FROM OVER!**

Make a statement today. Show your solidarity for America's Arctic Refuge with a visible symbol — a green ribbon.

Tie it in your yard, hang it on your home, pin it on your clothes or wear it around your wrist. Then pass it on. Send an e-mail and give ribbons to your friends and family.

Millions of Americans feel strongly about this issue — and together we will NOT be ignored. Show your support until Congress assures us that the Arctic Refuge is safe from oil drills.

### Why This Will Work

Millions of Americans have made it plain that they want the Arctic Refuge protected and yet some members of Congress continue to ignore us. It's time to step up the pressure.

When your Members of Congress come home for recess they will see green ribbons on every street. Strangers who know nothing about the Arctic Refuge will ask about your ribbon and you'll tell them. Soon green ribbons will be tied in neighborhoods across the country, news media in every state will take notice, and Congress will not be able to ignore us.

We are counting on YOU to spread the word. Buy a spool of ribbon and hand out ribbons to everyone you know – at work, at church, and everywhere you go! It's easy!

Stand up for wildlife and America's wild places and tell oil interests that they have crossed the line. Don't sit quietly while our wild heritage is sold to Big Oil.

Goto <<http://arcticribbon.org/>> learn more about the green ribbon campaign and other simple, effective ways you can help save the Arctic Refuge now!

### How to Spread The Word

1. **Tell your family and friends** about the green ribbon campaign and to spread the word to their network of friends.
2. **Cell Phones:** Text message your friends with a message like "ArcticRibbon.org. Pass it on." You could even use your camera phone to send a photo of your green ribbon!
3. **In Person:** Buy a spool of green ribbon and some safety pins. Hand ribbons out at work, at church. everywhere!

For more information go to: <http://arcticribbon.org> ☞



Safe, happy and inspired

Descriptions of all outings of the Shawnee Group and five other Chapter Groups in Illinois are now available 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. Go to the Group website for the link to this feature: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/outings.htm>

### **April 2 (Saturday) Panther Den Service Outing**

Panther Den service outing. Held in cooperation with the SIU student environmental club, we will meet 9:30 AM at the Interfaith Center (US 51 at Grand Ave) to car pool. Contact trip leader, Bob Tyson at 684-5643.

### **April 18 (Monday) Hayes Creek Canyon and Sand Cave, Eddyville, IL**

Join us in the Shawnee National Forest where we take two hikes. The first is a short trail into Hayes Canyon, a unique rock glade covering several acres. Hopefully, a waterfall will add to our views. While there, we will also walk further to study the extent of equestrian damage to public trails in southern Illinois. At the nearby Sand Cave we'll hike the surrounding cliff line. The cave is about 50 ft wide and deep, and 30 ft high. Meet at Murdale shopping center big sign in Carbondale 8:30 AM or Marion Wal-Mart parking lot (near Ryans) at 9 AM. Contact trip leader, Bob Tyson at 684-5643. Sand Cave is described on our website. <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/outings.htm>.

### **May 15 (Sunday) Draper Bluff, Cedar Bluff, and Goreville Falls (SNF)**

Draper Bluff is on private land and hosts a vertical climbing school. We will hike to view a beautiful cliff line and rock formations from the top of 100 foot bluffs. We will then drive a short distance to Cedar Bluff for a short hike among gigantic bluffs and rock shelters. Cedar Bluff and the Falls are on Illinois Department of Conservation land. We will explore whether ATV riding is still occurring here. Meet at Murdale Shopping Center big sign 12:30 PM in Carbondale or the Marion Wal\*Mart parking lot (near Ryans) at 1 PM. Contact Bob Tyson, trip leader at 684-5643. ☎

## **Adventures with Uncle Bob Tyson**

*Your Guide to Self-Adventure*

<http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/unclebob/adventures.htm>

This month I recommend to you **Goreville Falls** (also known as Bork's falls). This route description is a continuation of last months' article on Cedar Bluff and Draper Bluff. This location is also managed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The falls is approximately seven miles north of Cedar Bluff. I will describe two alternate routes to drive to the falls.

1. Exit Interstate 57 at the Goreville exit and go east past the livestock sales barn and to the turn right onto Regent Road. Traveling steeply downhill, you arrive at a ford over the road (the creek bed is stone). Cross this and go to the parking lot. If the water is deep or of high velocity, park along the side of the road and locate the cliff top trail on the left side of the road.
2. At Cedar Bluff (church parking lot) go north on Cedar Grove Church Road. This is good road except for crossing two fords in low spots. If the water is deep after a rain, turn around, had back to the church. Turn left onto Happy Hollow Road, then to Sullivan Road, and finally Goreville Road. Turn left and look for Regent Road.

Assuming you took the first route, follow the wide gravel trail downhill and observe the cliff formations. You will eventually arrive at a clearing and power line easement. Turn left and locate a trail heading northeast. You will need to cross a small creek bed. The trail curves north. At that curve, look to your upper right side and check out the cave and shelter bluff. Back on the trail, follow the floor of the cliff canyon to the falls. I estimate the height of both adjoining falls is approximately 30 feet. This water falls over a huge, long shelter bluff that is easily accessible to explore. Upon finishing your visit to the falls, back track along the cliff line until you see a narrow opening which enables you to easily climb to the top of the cliff. After completing your ascent, turn left. As you follow this back to the parking lot you will have a continuous views below of the canyon and falls.

This loop trail I've described is not an officially designated trail. I estimate the total loop distance as 1.5 miles. This route does not appear in any guidebook, except the back of the Ferne Clyffe State Park map. For more information on this adventure, contact Bob Tyson at 618-684-5643. ☎

**WE MISSED YOU!** 14 participants enjoyed the Fountain Bluff river trail hike on March 13. We had continuous views of the Mississippi River and the tall bluff line.

## **SPRING YARD SALE EARLY CALL TO CLEAN OUT YOUR ATTIC OR GARAGE**

The Sierra Club is participating in the Spring Yard Sale at the SIU Arena parking lot on April 30th, 2005. Ann Hill has once again, generously volunteered her garage as a storage place until the sale for donated items. If you have items to donate for this event please call Ann for drop off times and directions: 457-7206. She is located off old Hwy 13, 1/4 mile East of Giant City Rd. This year we will only price the larger items and wing it with the smaller items. If you feel so inclined you could put a price on your items before you take them to Ann's garage. We are looking for members to help with the sale and enjoy the day. If you can do this, please call Yolanda Comiskey at 549-2119. Rain date is Sunday, May 1st. ☎

## Help Restore the IL Department of Natural Resources Staff

By Barbara McKasson

This January, 89 employees of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) were laid off. This included superintendents of state parks and forests, people who process boating, hunting and fishing licenses, and many others. Since the year 2000, the staff of IDNR has shrunk by 30%. These drastic cuts have greatly crippled IDNR, which has been cut more than any other department in our state government.

House Bill 214 would appropriate \$2,000,000 for FY 2005 as a lump sum from the Wildlife and Fish Fund to the IDNR to restore these 89 employees, effective immediately when passed.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Call your state representative and urge him/her to push for passage of HB 214. Representatives Phelps, Bost, and Bradley are co-sponsors of HB 214. However, this bill has not been moving through the legislature. Thank them for being co-sponsors, but urge them to lobby their fellow representatives to pass this bill.
2. Call Governor Blagojevich and tell him to restore the 89 IDNR employees' jobs, and to stop raiding dedicated funds, such as the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF) and the Open Space Land and Development Fund (OSLAD).

- ★ Rep. Mike Bost, Dist. 118, (618) 457-5787; (217) 782-0387; 202-N Stratton Bldg., Springfield, IL 62706
- ★ Rep. John Bradley, Dist. 117, (618) 997-9697; (217) 782-1051; 265-S Stratton Bldg., Springfield, IL 62706
- ★ Rep. Brandon Phelps, Dist. 118, (618) 253-4189; (217) 782-5131; 292-S Stratton, Springfield, IL 62706
- ★ Rep. Dan Reitz, Dist. 116, (618) 443-5757; (217) 782-1018; 200-9S Stratton, Springfield, IL 62706
- ★ Governor Rod Blagojevich, (217) 782-6830; 207 Statehouse, Springfield, IL 62706. <mailto:governor@state.il.us> #

## RUSTLE THE LEAF™

BY PONCE & WRIGHT



WE DON'T MIND, SO MUCH, THE STUFF YOU TAKE...



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