



Woods & Wetlands News

Serving Lake and Northeastern Cook Counties

Renewable Energy

Jeff Maras

I can't say why renewable energy holds such a fascination for me. It might have something to do with my living too much in the future and not enough in the now. Maybe the idea of a free and constant source of energy like the sun or wind is what intrigues me. I can't help but think we're stuck on this planet for a long time and I wonder what today's kids will use for energy.

They're not going to be using cheap oil like we are today. We've found and used the easy oil. At the rate we're using it, extracting the oil that is hard to get won't gain us much more. Natural gas will be around a bit longer, but never again will its use be so cheap or guilt free. We have plenty of coal but we leave such a cost to our future generations by burning it. I'd like to leave the planet in better shape than I found it. Not an easy thing to do.

I notice that when I start talking about renewable energy today I don't get the blank stares I did five or ten years ago. Today people have at least heard the term. I regard Hurricane Katrina as the eye opener people needed to understand the real effects of global warming; one of which is destroying a complete city. Burning fossil

fuels now has a readily identifiable cost associated with them.

So how do we move from the present into the future? We don't have people leading us there right now. I think we will very shortly, but what can each of us do right now?

What we need to do is lead by example. This means going out and buying a compact fluorescent light bulb and putting it in your lamp. This act means more than the 50 watts of electric you didn't use. It shows your friends and family that this new technology actually works. It tells them that they could buy one of these new light bulbs, save money on energy usage which has far reaching effects and not actually venture out of the herd mentality that our society follows. Leading by example really works. It doesn't work instantly, but that's how change occurs.

BE PART OF THE
2% Solution

Buying that light bulb tells the business world there's money to be made. It's called voting with your dollars and there are a lot of people who keep track

of the voting. That's a very strong message to send. Business working on environmental issues is a powerful ally to have.

The examples you set go well beyond the lowly light bulb. Business watches you vote when you buy a car that gets over fifty miles per gallon. Your diesel car that gets a third better mileage than gasoline and can use vegetable oil or biodiesel instead of petroleum is another vote. These cars are all out there now. You can start setting an example now.

These current technologies are not the ultimate solutions to the energy problems we face. Many of the answers are not technological at all but involve changing the way we live our lives. These technologies will buy us a little more time until we can figure out how to live on this planet for a long long time.

I hope to write to you in future issues of W&W more detailed descriptions of Renewable Energy and how you can start moving the future into the now.

Woods and Wetlands Calendar

Wednesday, Sept. 19th, 6:45 p.m.

General Meeting
Hawk Watch: Raptors Among Us
Vic Berardi, founder of Illinois Beach Hawk Watch. See left column this page.

Sunday Sept. 23rd, 12:00-4:00

Party on Little Silver Lake, Antioch, weather permitting.
Come meet other members on Lake County's highest quality lake.
Details and RSVP at:
<http://Illinois.sierraclub.org/w&w>

Wednesday, Nov. 28th, 6:45 p.m.

General Meeting
Balancing Preservation and Growth
Sarah Surroz, Stewardship Coordinator, Liberty Prairie Conservancy

Saturday Oct. 6th, 10:00 a.m.

Outing
Canoe Des Plaines River Russell Rd. to Wadsworth
Leader: Barbara Bell
Illinois.sierraclub.org/w&w/Outings
Cosponsored with LCFPD.

Wednesday, Nov. 28th, 6:45 p.m.

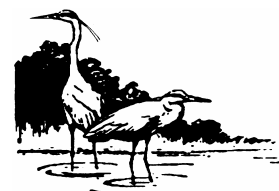
General Meeting
Balancing Preservation and Growth
Sarah Surroz, Stewardship Coordinator, Liberty Prairie Conservancy

Conservation Meetings

Conservation meetings are held at 6:00 pm in advance of General Meetings.

Directions

General Meetings are held at Vernon Area Library, 300 Olde Half Day Road in Lincolnshire. Take Route 22 (Half Day Rd) west from Milwaukee Ave (Rt 21), turn north (right) at the first stop light, then left into the Library parking lot. Maps and details are available at:
Illinois.sierraclub.org/w&w/meet



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Lake County Forest Preserve District. Sarah has a bachelor of science degree in natural resource management and biology from the University of Wisconsin and serves on the board of directors for Chicago Wilderness Magazine.

Thanks!

Running the great programs we schedule for our general meetings takes tremendous behind-the-scenes work. Michelle Schumacher has taken much of this responsibility since the spring and is doing a great job that should be recognized. Thanks, Michelle! 🐾



**Sierra Club
Woods & Wetlands Group
200 N . Michigan Ave.
Suite 505
Chicago, Illinois 60601**

The Fall Season of Sierra Club Meetings

By Larry Marvet

Here's our line-up of fun topics for our fall meetings.

Hawk Watch: Raptors Among Us

Vic Berardi,
Founder of Illinois Beach Hawk Watch
Wednesday, September 19, 2007, 6:45pm
Vernon Area Library, Lincolnshire

Hawks and other birds of prey are all around us in Northern Illinois. Some live here year-round and many others are migratory. Vic Berardi will speak to us just as the fall journey of these majestic birds begins, showing us how the migration unfolds and what to expect.

Mr. Berardi is a long time hawk and activist, working to protect our winged wildlife. Besides Hawk Watch, Vic is a board mem-

ber of the Hawk Migration Association and Central Flyway Editor for Hawk Migration Studies.

Bringing Them Back Alive: The Return of the Swamp Metalmark

Doug Taron
Curator of Biology,
Notebaert Nature Museum
Wednesday, October 17, 2007, 6:45pm
Vernon Area Library, Lincolnshire

The orange and gray Swamp Metalmark butterfly is a beautiful insect found only in very specific habitats—and was pushed to extinction in Illinois just 20 years ago. Doug Taron will tell us about his work with the Chicago Academy of Sciences to return this spectacular bug to Illinois through habitat restoration, captive breeding and wild release.

Besides his curator job, Taron manages “Butterfly Haven” at Chicago's Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, the only permanent year-round exhibit of live butterflies in Illinois. He has a Ph. D. from Northwestern University and has been working in Illinois butterfly conservation for many years.

Balancing Preservation and Growth

Sarah Surroz
Stewardship Coordinator
Liberty Prairie Conservancy
Wednesday, November 28, 2007, 6:45pm
Vernon Area Library, Lincolnshire

Population continues to grow at a rapid pace in Lake County, home of the state's highest concentration of threatened and endangered species. Sarah Surroz will discuss new efforts—based on proven

strategies—to balance growth with preservation of natural areas and farmland. The benefits of open space are numerous and we'll learn about the conservation easement—an increasingly popular tool for preserving America's open lands.

The Liberty Prairie Conservancy is a non-profit organization established in 1995 by citizens wishing to preserve the scenic landscape of central Lake County. Building upon the success of that vision, the organization expanded its mission county-wide in 2004.

Ms. Surroz has worked in the conservation field for over 20 years, including 13 with the

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Group Executive Committee

Group Chair	Evan Craig	847-573-6536
Outings Chair	ww-chair@illinois.sierraclub.org	
Conservation	Larry Marvet	847-537-2083
	ww-cons@illinois.sierraclub.org	
Treasurer	John Massman	847-838-9440
	john.massman@illinois.sierraclub.org	
Fundraising	Barbara Bell	847-367-4253
	barbara.bell@illinois.sierraclub.org	
Secretary	Doug Ower	847-872-8328
	doug.ower@illinois.sierraclub.org	

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Oak Openings, Liberty Prairie Conservancy
Photo Courtesy of Sarah Surroz