



Sierra Club
Woods & Wetlands Group
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April Sierra Club General Meeting

Cathy White: Dragonflies

Wednesday, April 19, 2006

6:45pm

Vernon Area Library

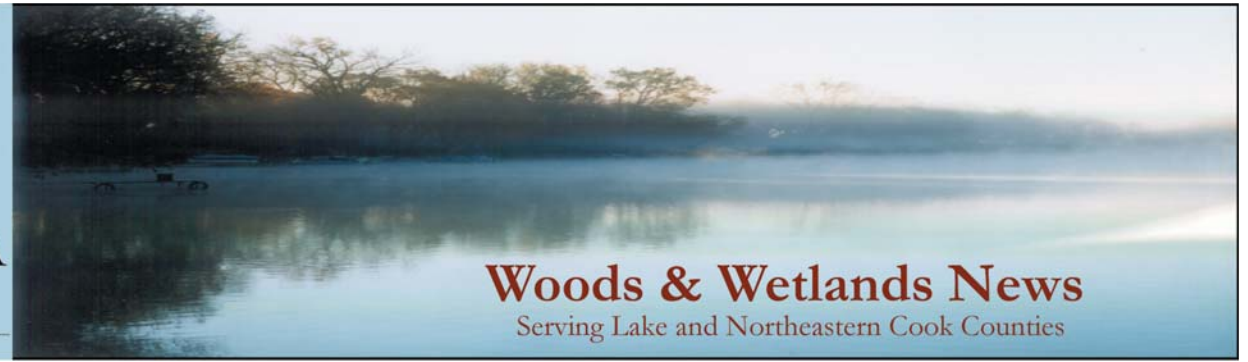
Their scientific name is Odonata, but we see them flitting from place to place in our gardens and know them as dragonflies and damselflies. Delicate, beautiful, fragile, (and deadly to other bugs), these insects have suddenly made the headlines as the State of Illinois has accelerated plans to extend U. S. Highway 355 - in the vicinity of the Hines Emerald Dragonfly habitat.

The Hines Emerald is the only federally endangered dragonfly in the United States. So far it is known to exist in only four locales: Door County, Wisconsin, the eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan, in several fens in Missouri and in a few isolated places near the Des Plaines River in northern Illinois.

With highways targeting their habitat, there is no better time to learn about these striking insects. Few people understand their lives better than our Wednesday, April 19 speaker, Cathy White, Environmental Quality Coordinator for the Village of Wauconda. Before joining Wauconda's Environmental Quality Office, Ms. White received a Master's Degree in biology, worked in Naperville and Addison, and has helped to protect dragonflies in the Midwest. Come to our April meeting to appreciate the hidden lives - and dangers - damselflies and dragonflies.



Photo attribution: E.D. Cashatt,
 Illinois State Museum



Woods & Wetlands News
 Serving Lake and Northeastern Cook Counties

Split in 62nd District, **Turnout Crucial**

After watching him rack up Illinois Environmental Council (IEC) environmental voting scores of only 30% in 2003 and 25% in 2004, we're glad to see incumbent State Representative Robert Churchill is retiring from his IL state house seat. To our dismay, he hopes to perpetuate his dismal record, and now seeks a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. While stepping down he has selected Barbara Oilschlager as his Republican successor. So far she has shown little regard for environmental issues.

The good news is that this open seat gives the voters of the 62nd District in north-central Lake County the exciting possibility of electing a state representative who is truly committed to preservation of the environment. This year, the residents of the 62nd state house district have the opportunity to vote for a qualified, pro-environmental candidate in the primary regardless of whether they chose a Republican or a Democratic primary ballot. With two good candidates to choose from, the Sierra Club has made the unusual decision to endorse the primary bids of both candidates: Republican Sandy Cole and Democrat Sharyn Elman.

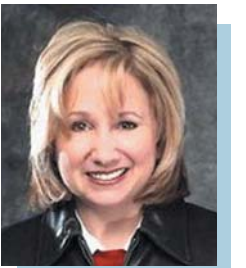


Sandy Cole

Sandy Cole has served on the Lake County Board and the Lake County Forest Preserve District since 1996. In these roles she has demonstrated mastery over a spectrum of policy challenges important to constituents in the 62nd. Cole has a long record of preserving open space and wetland areas. Going forward, she intends to focus on the Lake Michigan watershed and mercury pollution. A long-time member of the Sierra Club, Cole has consistently won our endorsement, and has also been endorsed in this race by the Illinois Chapter of REP America (Republicans for Environmental Protection).

Gurnee resident Sharyn Elman is a former radio and TV journalist who has shown an interest in a broad range of environmental issues. A breast cancer survivor, Elman has a particular interest in the link between environmental stressors and human health. Elman is committed to finding practical and effective ways to reduce pollution through regional transportation planning.

Two good candidates present a risk of splitting the conservation vote. This should be seen as a challenge as much as it is a luxury. Unless we mobilize to support these better candidates, Oilschlager might steal the prize.



Sharyn Elman

Please lend your support.

Contact:

Citizens for Sandy Cole
 1315 Osage Orange Road
 Grayslake, IL 60030
 (847) 548-0877
www.sandycole.net

Sharyn Elman
 Friends of Sharyn Elman
 P.O. Box 8304
 Gurnee, IL 60031
 (847) 528-6918
www.voteelman.com

your vote counts!

Woods & Wetlands Calendar of Events

General Membership Meetings

Thursday, March 23 Program Meeting, 6:45 pm.
A Journey through Natural Kenya and Tanzania
 with prize-winning photographer **Laurence Stern.**

Travel through game parks and land reserves to see animals in natural habitats, from the elephant to the spider, plus flowers, trees, tribesman and more!

Wednesday, April 19, 6:45pm Dragonflies by Wauconda Environmental Quality Coordinator **Cathy White.**

Learn about these fragile, beautiful, delicate and little known insects, some of whom are threatened by I-355 highway construction.

Wednesday, May 17, 6:45pm The Chicago River: A Natural and Unnatural History by author **Libby Hill.**

The rocks below, the glaciers above and, more recently, bulldozers have shaped our area. Libby Hill has been studying human and geological history for many years. She will bring Chicago River history to life at this May meeting.

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 quickly left into the Library parking lot.

Woods & Wetlands Conservation Committee Meetings

March 22, April 26 and May 24 at 7 pm*

Conservation Committee Meetings are held at College of Lake County, South Lake Campus Room 103, 1120 South Milwaukee (Brown brick building on west side of Milwaukee Ave., 0.2 miles north of US 45 and about 2 miles south of Town Line Rd; park and enter in back.) Call Larry Marvet, 847-537-2083 for details.

For maps and details, please visit <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/w&w/meet/index.html>

Conservation News

Larry Marvet, Conservation Chair

2005 was an action-packed year for environmentalists everywhere, and especially in the North Suburbs of Chicago. Locally, we reversed an attempt by Lake Forest and Costco to build a -big box-store on important natural land adjacent to one of our best forest preserves. At the state level, we pushed back the Illinois State Legislature's powerful attempt to ruin state and county wetlands protections. And nationally, we stopped (again) George Bush's pet project, oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Notice that each of these victories were to stop something terrible, not to realize any new protections for wildlife, wild lands or the environment in which we live. That is, unfortunately, what you get when the drill, pave and burn gang rules our governmental bodies. It doesn't have to be that way, and, in fact, I think the trend is swinging back our way.

The national security argument goes only so far when this security requires us to destroy the things we love. With so many trust me's falling apart for our current leaders (many of whom are facing corruption charges and stiff jail sentences), the upcoming state and federal legislative sessions, as well as elections, will provide us a great opportunity to ring out the bad, bring in the good and, maybe, go on the offense.

Our efforts are already bearing some fruit, as Governor Rod Blagojevich (up for reelection in November) has proposed some great, new mercury reduction rules for Illinois' coal-fired power plants. These rules would require Illinois coal plants, to reduce mercury pollution by 90% by 2009. We'll need to push these rules to assure they're approved and finalized, but it feels nice to have the ball. Call your Illinois state legislators and tell them you want to eliminate mercury pollution and support these new rules. You can find contact information for your legislators at this website: <http://elections.il.gov/DistrictLocator/SelectSearchType.aspx>

On the elections front, we've already started our selection and endorsement process meant to sort the good candidates from the bad. (Please see specific primary endorsements in this issue.) We'll also be actively helping our friends to get elected and publicizing who will or won't protect the environment. To help us get the best elected, call or contact our Political Chair, Chuck Knight (847) 680-6437 at: www.polichair@illinois.sierraclub.org.

As always, we depend on you push for environmental protection. At the very least, read our newsletter, vote for our endorsed candidates, and make phone calls to your legislators during crunch time. If you have an itch to get involved further (nearly all Sierra Club activists are volunteers), call or write us. Hope to hear from you!

Larry Marvet, Conservation Chair, 847-537-2083
larry.marvet@illinois.sierraclub.org

ending the endangered species act?

Larry Marvet, Conservation Chair

G. W. Bush and his main anti-environmental henchman, Congressman Richard Pombo, are midway in their effort to gut the Endangered Species Act (ESA), perhaps the world's best wildlife protection law. I'm not kidding when I say this is half complete - Pombo's "Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act" passed the U. S. House of Representatives in September, 229 to 193. North suburban Congressional representatives Mark Kirk and Melissa Bean voted against this horrible bill, but it still got through and similar legislation will be voted on in the U. S. Senate.

Pombo's law, if passed, would:

- Eliminate conservation measures on tens of millions of acres of land around the country, (the "critical habitat" of endangered species) and prevent such conservation activities in the future.
- Require the federal government to pay developers, the oil industry and other special interests to keep them from killing or injuring publicly owned fish and wildlife.
- Abandon the nation's commitment to recover healthy numbers of species facing extinction by ensuring that recovery plans are unenforceable and eliminating the requirement of the current law that plans be prepared to ensure the "conservation and survival" of listed species.

Pombo and Bush Interior Secretary Gale Norton are both pushing to make the ESA as toothless as possible. Norton is most famous as the protege of Reagan Interior Secretary Jim Watt, the prototypical anti-environmentalist. Norton went on to become Colorado Attorney General where she tried to have the ESA declared unconstitutional.

This new legislation is their most obvious attack, but just part of the administration's 5 year battle to emasculate the law. As noted in Ted Williams' excellent Audubon Magazine article (<http://magazine.audubon.org/incite/incite0511.html>), "There are three main strategies in the [Bush] administration's ESA end run: rigged and suppressed science; sweetheart lawsuits in which the White House encourages legal action against the act, winks at the plaintiffs, then gives up; and bizarre interpretations of the law that are inevitably struck down but delay recovery for years."

Bush, Pombo and Norton are not the first, nor will they be the last, to attack the Endangered Species Act. The reason it still stands, and is as strong as it still is 33 years after passage, is because Americans believe in it. With this latest threat, it's time to reassert your position with our federal legislators. Ask them to support the ESA and oppose any bill that would weaken protection for endangered species and habitat.

Call your senators and congressional representative at the US Capitol Switchboard: (202) 224-3121. To find out who your federal legislators are, go to this web site: <http://elections.il.gov/DistrictLocator/SelectSearchType.aspx>.

Sierra Club Woods & Wetlands Group illinois.sierraclub.org/w&w

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Woods and Wetlands News is a publication of the Sierra Club Woods and Wetlands Group, involving members in Lake and northeastern Cook counties in Illinois. It is published four times per year and is



April Fundraiser for Woods & Wetlands

Have a Barrel Full of Laughs and Help the Local Sierra Club Group

The Woods and Wetlands Group is having a fundraiser in April. Barrelhouse Chuck, a blues piano player in the Chicago tradition, will appear for one night only at Byron Colby Barn. You can arrive early (7:00 pm) and participate in a silent auction or arrive later (8:00 pm) to catch Barrelhouse Chuck. The cost is \$15.00 payable at the door (please no credit cards). Make sure to tell the ticket taker that you want \$5.00 set aside for the Woods and Wetlands Sierra Club Group! All of the proceeds of the silent auction will go to benefit Woods and Wetlands. The evening is BYOB. We hope to see you there!

Barrelhouse Chuck Friday April 14th
 Silent Auction: 7:00pm Entertainment: 8:00 pm

Byron Colby Barn in Grayslake

RSVP: Stan Rosenberg 847-543-1202 Jim Bland 847-223-2548

Directions: Byron Colby Barn is located on the grounds of Prairie Crossing in Grayslake, Illinois. It is located 1/2 mile south of Route 120 on Route 45. Enter the complex at the stoplight on Route 45 and Jones Point Road. The Barn is on the immediate left as you enter and the parking lot is just to the west of the Barn.

Before You Buy That Car

By W&W Group Chair, Evan Craig,

There is a lot you can do to improve the quality of the air we breathe and stop global warming. About a third of our air pollution comes from the power plants that generate electricity and factories. Another third comes from the cars we drive and the lawn mowers we use. The last third comes from our furnaces, water heaters, and appliances. Here are some surprises I discovered during two recent purchases.

If you want to stop global warming, before you buy that car, buy a more efficient furnace. You'll also save money and live more comfortably. According to the EPA, upgrading from a standard 78% efficient furnace to a 90% efficient furnace for a 2000 square foot house will keep 12,000 lb of CO2 out of the air every year! Ditching your 22 mpg car and buying a 40 mpg car will only cut your CO2 by 6,000 lb or half as much. If you have a 25 year old furnace like I had, you'll stop 20,000 lb of CO2! It will set you back around \$4500, but even at present gas prices you'll earn the money back quickly. There are two ways of estimating costs for payback:

1.) Assume that your present unit is about to die. If you want to stay warm, you need at least a new standard 78% efficiency furnace. The difference in cost of that vs. a high 90% efficient (AFUE) furnace is recouped by the money you'll save on your electric and gas bills over the course of the next two years.



2.) Assume that your present furnace is a 78% standard efficiency model in great condition. If you rip it out and replace it with a new 90% high efficiency furnace, it will take five to six years to recoup the cost of the new furnace through lower utility bills. Tragically, many new homeowners expecting to occupy their dream houses for decades are getting wasteful low efficiency furnaces. You can tell who has what as you drive by the back of the house. The intake and



exhaust of high efficiency furnaces are a pair of plastic pipes at ground level, not a vent out the roof. The EPA provides a payback calculator; the website also reminds you to include a programmable thermostat in the deal. The EPA url is: http://www.energystar.gov/ia/business/bulk_purchasing/bpsavings_calc/Calc_Furnaces.xls

While you're at it, upgrade that old central air conditioner to 15.5 SEER. But first I spent a few hundred bucks on a whole house fan to use instead of the A/C on those not-too-hot days. It installs in the top floor ceiling and draws fresh air into the house during the cooler parts of the day. Air conditioners account for huge increases in electric bills - and that means coal-fired electric power plants are belching more pollution up-wind of our airshed. Fans use much less energy.



Now that you've evicted the thief in your utility closet, you are pre-qualified to choose a car.

Those of us who did our own engine repairs 20 years ago rose to the challenge when wires and pollution controls took over the engine compartment. But even we gave up looking under the hood years ago, when engines disappeared under stylish manifolds. Now there's a new reason to raise the hood, and it doesn't take a gear-head to figure it out.

Everyone knows that a Prius gets more mpg than a Hummer, but few realize that every Prius is not created equal. Every model of every popular car sold today is built in several versions. While the differences in mpg (and global warming scores) between the versions of the same car are minimal, the amount of pollution in their exhausts can be more than double! That pollution comes in the form of NOx, NMOG (rhymes with smog), CO (poisonous carbon monoxide), PM (soot) and HCHO (formaldehyde, lung irritant and carcinogen). The differences are less for new cars than for cars built before 2004. So how do you know which cars are the clean ones? It's not on the window sticker, It's on a sticker under the hood.

The EPA has posted a website that allows you to easily look up any car made since 2000. It lists the different models and for each

one gives the Emission Standard and the Underhood Label ID (e.g.5FMXV02.31D4) that reveal whether that 2005 Ford Focus you're looking at gets a stinky 2, or a respectable 9 score. If you're buying a new car, it has just gotten a little easier. EPA is certifying ok cars as - "SmartWay,"- and the cleanest as -"SmartWay Elite".- You'll probably still get a blank look when you ask the dealer about -SmartWay Elite,- but it's easier than asking him to find those codes. The website is:



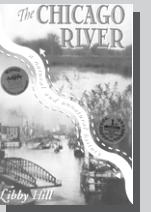
<http://www.fueleconomy.gov>
Comparing several different used cars made in several different years, can get laborious. Luckily the tabulated scores are available, and I've combined them for all years into one spreadsheet and sorted it by overall scores. You can find it in the on-line version of this W&W News at <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/w&w/WWNews/docs/usedcarguide.xls>. As you'd expect, hybrids top the list. But then there are some surprises. While their mpg is only in the 30's, the Mazda3, Nissan Sentra, Hyundai Elantra, Kia Spectra and Ford Focus have clean enough emissions to rank them among the grubbier hybrids. So print out the first few pages and take it with you to the used car lot. You'll make a difference.

Don't like typing website addresses? Visit the W&W website (you have it in your Favorites by now, don't you?) and click on these links in the on-line version of the W&W News.

<http://illinois.sierraclub.org/w&w>

May Sierra Club General Meeting

The Changing Chicago River Landscape: Above And Below
By Libby Hill,
Wednesday, May 17, 2006
6:45pm, Vernon Area Library



After the glaciers, the Chicago River in Lake County was primarily a series of interconnected "sloughs" that made farming and settling the land problematic. In Cook County, the "river" was more defined, but in both counties draining and ditching and reshaping the watershed created today's familiar landscape. Libby Hill has been studying our human and geological history for many years. Through her books and publications she has brought to life the unique natural and unnatural history of the Chicago River. She will bring it to life for us at our May 17th meeting.

She is the author of, *The Chicago River: A Natural and Unnatural History*, winner of the American Regional History Publishing Award, and other publications. Ms. Hill teaches the Geography and Environmental Studies Department at Northeastern Illinois University and works for the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC). Her signature history-sociology-librarian-geography-ecology bent makes her an interesting and exciting speaker that should not be missed!

Woods & Wetlands Board Change Needs Your Approval!

The proposed bylaws change below is one of the ways your local Sierra Club group hopes to increase member participation and deal with our improving fortunes. As you know, over the last year or so we've restarted regular general membership meetings, initiated regular meetings of the Conservation Committee, increased the number and quality of our outings, and, most importantly, engaged more members in our community activities.

With all these people and activities, we believed it time to increase the number of officers on our board. To now, we've had 5 elected board members for our Executive Committee (what we call ExCom). As we grow, more ExCom members will provide a more diverse range of opinions and lend additional hands to our projects. The new ExCom will increase to 7 members.

But why stop at only seven? Saving our fragile environment relies on all of us coming together for the environment and doing what it takes. If this passes, seven of your fellow members will soon be busy making ways for all of our 2300 members to get involved, have fun, and make a difference.

Here is your first chance to help. Use the simple Special Election ballot below to vote whether to change our Bylaws to accept two more members to our Executive Committee. If two thirds of the votes we receive favor this change, we'll be on the lookout to appoint two new ExCom members. You're reading page 4 of this newsletter – could one of them be you?

To vote, just cut out and use the ballot below, or simply write YES or NO on a scrap of paper. For joint memberships you can generate a second ballot so both members can vote. Put your ballots in an envelope and write your name(s) and address only on the envelope, which will be separated from your ballot (required for your vote(s) to be tallied).

SPECIAL ELECTION BALLOT

Increase the W&W Executive Committee from 5 to 7 members.

YES _____

NO _____

Mail the envelope by April 29, 2006 to:

Sierra Club W&W Bylaw Change
P. O. Box 876
Grayslake, IL 60030

Thanks!