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## Mississippi Chapter Sierra Club

Golden Triangle Group

# CROSSROADS

September 2002 – January 2003

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## EVENTS

### SEPTEMBER

Tue., Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m. **Topic: Appeal for the Air Permit issued to the Cook Swine Facility.**

The public is invited to hear appeals made to the Permit Board of the Department of Environmental Quality in Jackson, intersection of Highway 80 and Ellis Ave. For details, call Margaret Copeland at 662-323-3875 (W) or 662-323-1445 (H). See featured article.

Wed., Sept. 18<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m. **Potluck and Planning** at Harold and Frances Thompson's home, 608 Lakeview Dr., Starkville. Nominations for 3 executive committee positions will be taken. Place your Sierra Club calendar orders and bring up issues you want to discuss. Follow Montgomery St. north of Highway 82, turn right on Critz St., take 1st left on Overstreet Dr., and left again on Lakeview Dr. For more information, call the Thompsons at 662-323-7379.

Sat., Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m. **Trail Clearing.** Work will focus on the lower half of the Noxubee Crest Bike Trail in the Tombigbee National Forest. Bring gloves, lunch and water. Any of the following tools can be brought: loppers, clippers, saws, light chain saws, machete. We'll meet at the small cemetery on Sheep Ranch Rd. From Starkville, take Highway 12 west, in Sturgis at the BP gas station turn left onto Sturgis-Louisville Rd, head south for several miles then turn right onto Poplar Flat Rd. Follow Poplar Flat Rd for several miles then turn right onto Sheep Ranch Rd. The cemetery will be on your left. For more information, call Juliet Tang at 662-465-8767.

### OCTOBER

Sat., Oct 19<sup>th</sup>, all day. **Great Delta Bear Affair at Rolling Fork.** The Mississippi Wildlife Federation invites the public to take part in this celebration of President Theodore Roosevelt's famous 1902 bear

hunt in Sharkey County, MS. Festivities include vendors, local and regional musical entertainment, bird watching, fun run, bike race, quilt raffle, Teddy Bear parade, children's activities and much more! Rolling Fork is located on Highway 61, west of the Delta National Forest. For more info, visit their website at <http://www.mswildlife.org/deltabearaffair.html>

### UNOFFICIAL OUTING

Sat., Oct 26<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 a.m. **Canoe the Little Sunflower River in the Delta National Forest.** Davis Mounger will take us through the back bayous and old growth forests of the Delta National Forest. Bring your own food and water for the day. Camping is optional so bring your gear if you want to stay the night. This is NOT an official Sierra Club Outing. We will meet in front of Clay Lyle Building, MSU Campus, Starkville. Please call Juliet Tang ahead of time at 662-465-8767 if you plan on coming so that we can organize canoes, paddles, and lifejackets for all attending.

### NOVEMBER

Wed., Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m. **Topic: Black bear Restoration in Mississippi.** A representative of the Mississippi Black Bear Restoration Task Force will speak on the history of the Louisiana Black bear and its present status in Mississippi. Clay Lyle Building, rm 117, MSU Campus, Starkville. For more information, call Juliet Tang at 662-465-8767. See featured article.

### DECEMBER

Fri., Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m. **Holiday Gathering** at Harold and Frances Thompson, 608 Lakeview Dr., Starkville. True to tradition, the Thompson's will host our annual Christmas potluck dinner. Bring your favorite readings, poems, music, or just yourself, and celebrate this special time of year. Calendar orders will also be ready to be picked up and paid for.

Follow Montgomery St. north of Highway 82, turn right on Critz St., take 1st left on Overstreet Dr., and left again on Lakeview Dr. For more information, call the Thompsons at 662-323-7379.

## JANUARY

Wed., Jan. 8th, 6:00 p.m. **Potluck and Planning** at Lois Connington's home, 117 Cedar Lane, Starkville. All are invited to help plan our spring meetings. From Highway 82, go north on Old West Point Rd. Take 2<sup>nd</sup> right on Cedar Lane. Lois' house is at the top of the hill on the left. For more information, call Lois at 662-324-2594.

## IMPORTANT CAFO UPDATE

On September 10<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m., the Permit Board of the Department of Environmental Quality will hold an appeal for the Air Permit issued to the Cook Swine Facility. Several affidavits from citizens who have been adversely affected by the facility will be presented. Sierra Club's expert witness will also testify. The public is invited. The DEQ building is located in Jackson at the intersection of Highway 80 and Ellis Ave. For details, call Margaret Copeland at 662-323-3875 (W) or 662-323-1445 (H).

## WILDERNESS PROTECTION FOR THE DELTA NATIONAL FOREST

As more and more of Mississippi's wild areas give way to development, it is time for the people of our state to recognize and protect the few remote places that are left. This is particularly urgent in the Delta, where little forestland remains.

Most Delta forestland is islands of scarce acreage amidst farmland. A glorious exception is the complex of federal lands that includes the Delta National Forest and the Panther Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. Located between Yazoo City and Rolling Fork, these lands combine to make over seventy thousand acres of forest and wetlands that contain the remotest areas in the region. The Delta National Forest is also the only bottomland hardwood forest in the National Forest System. With the Sunflower River as their border, the Ten Mile Bayou and Six Mile Bayou parcels of the Delta National Forest are almost the only unroaded federal lands in Mississippi's National Forest System. To keep these areas wild, Mississippians are working to have these parcels protected by Congress under the Wilderness Act.

The 1964 Wilderness Act is a milestone in American Conservation. Congress defines what qualifies as wilderness.

*A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which:*

- 1. Generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable*
- 2. Has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation*
- 3. Has at least 5,000 acres of land and is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition*
- 4. May also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.*

Once designated, wilderness areas allow for camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, and horseback riding, while preserving the wild character of the land by protecting them from logging and motorized vehicle use. While states out West have millions of acres of wild country, we must act if we are to save even this tiny fragment of our conservation heritage, so that future generations can have a hint of "the wild" without having to leave home.

The importance of protection for these areas is great. Due to the relatively undisturbed nature of these areas and their proximity to the Panther Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, this forestland has outstanding potential for the reintroduction of species that require large, remote tracts, such as the Louisiana Black Bear. Wilderness recreation can also bring financial relief to areas that otherwise suffer from a depressed economy.

Mississippi has the lowest amount of protected wilderness in the National Forest System. The only other wild forestland in the state lies in the Black Creek Wilderness in the Desoto National Forest. Were these lands to receive Congressional Wilderness designation, it would make one percent of our state's 1.1 million acres of National Forest Land protected. It is time for these lands in the Delta to get the attention they deserve.

Please send letters and words of support to Rep. Bennie Thompson, who represents the Delta district, and to the Forest Service, who will be instrumental in evaluating whether or not the area qualifies for wilderness designation.

The Honorable Bennie Thompson  
P.O. Box 610  
Bolton, MS 39041  
1-800-355-9003  
fax: 601-866-9036

National Forests in Mississippi  
100 W. Capitol Suite 1141  
Jackson, MS 39269  
Attn: Jeff Long  
601-965-4391  
[jlong@fs.fed.us](mailto:jlong@fs.fed.us)

Thanks for all your help,  
Davis Mounger  
Friends of Mississippi Public Lands

## **BLACK BEAR RESTORATION IN MISSISSIPPI**

The black bear was once distributed throughout Mississippi and much of the entire United States. The bear served as a source of food and clothing for Native Americans as well as early European settlers. As a result of extensive clearing and conversions of woodlands and swamps for agriculture, development of urban/suburban areas, and overhunting, bear populations and their distribution have been dramatically reduced. The bear is listed as endangered throughout Mississippi and federally threatened in approximately the southern two-thirds of the state.

The Mississippi Black Bear Restoration Task Force (MBBRTF) is a coalition of federal and state agencies, private conservation groups, private timber companies, and concerned citizens. The mission is to restore ecologically viable and socially acceptable black bear populations in Mississippi. States, such as Arkansas, Georgia, the Carolinas, and others, have been successful in bear management efforts to the point that limited bear hunting provides recreational opportunities for sportsmen while helping to manage bear populations.

During the Fall of 2000, MBBRTF was active in trapping, radio collaring, and tracking female bears

in Bolivar County. Four bears were trapped, including two females which were subsequently radio-collared. Also, four previously collared female bears crossed the Mississippi River from Arkansas into Mississippi. These six collared bears provided a wealth of new information. For example, it was apparent that female bears do cross the Mississippi River. In December 2000 and January 2001, all of the collared females went back across the river into Arkansas. During spring 2001, three females that had been in Mississippi the previous fall had at least one yearling cub. These cubs survived not just one, but two trips across the Mississippi River.

Another goal of MBBRTF is educational outreach. Black bear restoration will not succeed without a well-informed public. Videos, posters, informational leaflets, and "educational trunks" are all being developed as part of the educational effort.

If you are interested in what the MBBRTF is doing or wish to make donations, contact Bo Sloan (662-686-3157 or [bo.sloan@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:bo.sloan@aphis.usda.gov)), District Supervisor, USDA Wildlife Services, and Chairman of MBBRTF.

This article originated from *Wildlife Issues*, a newsletter published by wildlife biologists with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks. It was written by Bo Sloan who gave us permission to reprint it for our newsletter.

## **CALL FOR NOMINATIONS**

Nominations are being taken to fill 3 positions on the Golden Triangle Group Executive Committee. The term of each position is 2 years and will begin January 2003. Any member in good standing is eligible for nomination by the nominating committee or by petition, i.e. you nominate yourself. The deadline for nominations is Nov. 1. Call Juliet Tang at 662-465-8767 for more information or to make submissions. Voting ballots will be mailed to all members in early December. Please vote.

## **SIERRA CLUB CALENDARS FOR SALE**

Two styles are available, a hanging wall calendar for \$11.95 and a desk engagement calendar for \$12.95. To order, call Juliet Tang at 662-465-8767. Calendars can be picked up at our Dec. meeting.

## **GOLDEN TRIANGLE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Lois Connington\*\* Starkville  
Ex Comm, Treasurer

[lconnington@yahoo.com](mailto:lconnington@yahoo.com)

David Cross\*\* Sturgis

Vice Chair

[dave4diving@hotmail.com](mailto:dave4diving@hotmail.com)

Joan Embree\*\* Starkville

Ex Comm

[hsemaven@staruser.net](mailto:hsemaven@staruser.net)

John Schneider\* Starkville

Ex Comm, Chapter Rep

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Juliet Tang\* Sturgis

Chair, Newsletter

[jtang@entomology.msstate.edu](mailto:jtang@entomology.msstate.edu)

Frances Thompson\* Starkville

Ex Comm

\* Two year term, ends Dec. 2003

\*\*Two year term, ends Dec. 2002

## **NEWSLETTER ARTICLES**

The next newsletter will be published in February.  
Send any suggestions or announcements to Juliet  
Tang (465-8767).

## **GOLDEN TRIANGLE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Lois Connington\*\* Starkville  
Ex Comm, Treasurer

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Frances Thompson\* Starkville

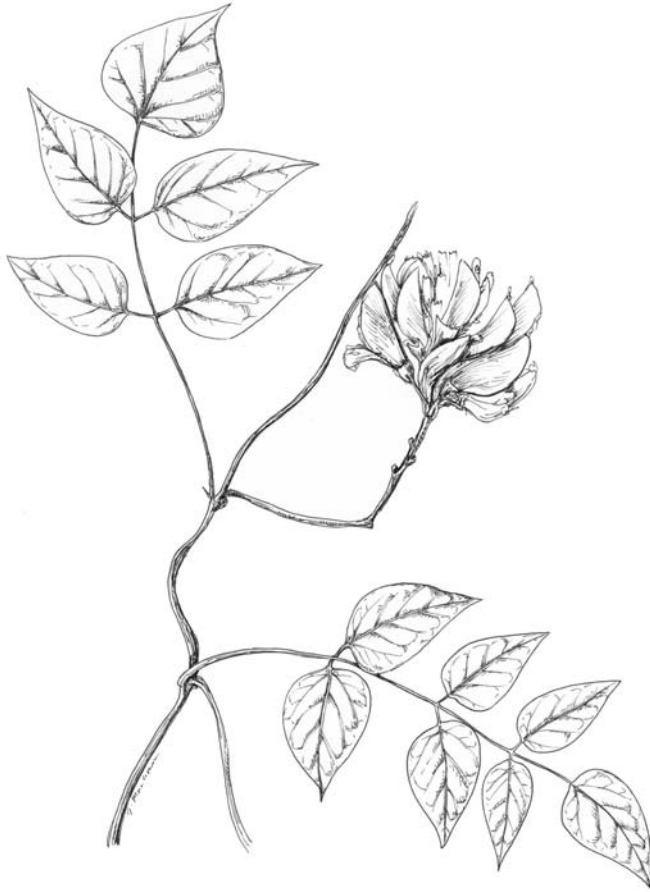
Ex Comm

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*Apios priceana*, Price's potato bean, is a perennial herbaceous vine with twining stems produced from a single, large tuber. The compound leaves have 5-7 leaflets (dark green above, light below) and large, white and lavender pea-type flowers that bloom from late June to mid July. The fruit is a dark green bean, very similar to a garden-variety green bean. It grows in open wooded areas, in clearings along stream banks, on bluffs, or at the base of ravines. The soils are generally well-drained loams on old alluvium or calcareous boulders. It is listed as a federally threatened species and currently has 15 extant sites: 3 in Alabama, 4 in Mississippi (including Oktibbeha County), 4 in Kentucky, and 4 in Tennessee.

Text taken from  
<http://forestry.state.al.us/publication/Endangered/potatobean.htm>.

Joe A. MacGown (artist).

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*Crossroads*