
Mississippi Chapter Sierra Club

Golden Triangle Group

CROSSROADS

February 2004 – August 2004



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EVENTS

FEBRUARY

Sat., Feb. 7th, 1:15 p.m. **Art Show and Awards Presentation** at the Starkville Public Library. Since last October, the Golden Triangle Group has been sponsoring an art competition for children in the Starkville schools grades 4 - 6. Awards for 1st and 2nd place for each grade level and Best of Show will be presented. In addition, about 40 pieces of artwork done by the children have been chosen for display in the library during the month of February. Starkville Public Library, 326 University Dr.

See our *featured article* inside.



MARCH

Sat., Mar. 20th, 7:30 a.m. **Buttahatchie River Canoe Trip.** This is NOT an official Sierra Club Outing. The Buttahatchie river flows in the lower northeast corner of Mississippi between Lowndes and Monroe Counties before emptying into the Tenn-Tom Waterway. There may be some logjams and tricky shoals so be prepared to swim if your canoe tips over and have a change of warm clothes. Bring your lunch and drinking water. We will meet at the Clay Lyle Bldg, MSU Campus, Starkville. Call Juliet Tang ahead of time so that we can make arrangements for canoes, kayaks, life jackets, paddles, etc. 662-465-8767.

APRIL

Sat., April 3rd, 2:00 p.m. **Tour of Landscape Architecture Buildings.** Faculty member Pete Melby, who helped conceive, find funding for, and plan this facility, will give a tour and describe the many innovative features that make this complex of buildings ecologically sustainable. We will meet in the Landscape Architecture parking lot on the MSU Campus. Going south on Stone Blvd (away from Campus), turn right at the traffic light by Thompson Hall, go up the hill and Landscape architecture is the

first building on the right. For more information, call Juliet Tang, 662-465-8767.

Sat., April 17th, 9:00 a.m. **Mountain Bike the Noxubee Crest Trail in Tombigbee National Forest.** Come ride part or all of the 26 miles of bike trails that meander through the beautiful forested hills south of Choctaw Lake near Ackerman. Bring lunch and plenty of water. We will meet at the Noxubee Crest Trailhead in the parking area next to the Cemetery on Sheep Ranch Road. Trail map can be found at:

<http://www.southernregion.fs.fed.us/mississippi/tombigbee/recreation/biking/>

Call Juliet Tang at 662-465-8767 if you need directions.

MAY

Sat., May 1st, 6:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. **Yard and Plant Sale** at Lois Connington's home, 117 Cedar Ln., Starkville. Come check out the great bargains at this annual fund-raising event. Volunteers are definitely needed to work at the sale so call Lois at 662-324-2594 to sign up. From Highway 82, go north on Old West Point Rd. Take 2nd right on Cedar Ln. See *featured article* to find out what donations are needed and when they can be dropped off.



Sat., May 22nd, 7:30 a.m. **The Cahaba Lilies.** This is NOT an official Sierra Club Outing. Canoe and/or walk along the Cahaba River, east of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and see these spectacular aquatic spider lilies in the Amaryllis family. If water levels are low, we may have to walk canoes through shoals so wear sturdy wading shoes. Bring your lunch and drinking water. We will meet at the Clay Lyle Bldg, MSU Campus, Starkville. Call Juliet Tang ahead of time to make arrangements for canoes, kayaks, life jackets, paddles, etc. 662-465-8767.

AUGUST

Wed., Aug. 18th, 6:00 p.m. **Potluck and Planning** at Lois Connington's home, 117 Cedar Ln., Starkville. Because it's a weeknight and kids need to be in bed to make school the next day, please be ON TME so that dinner can start shortly after 6:00 p.m. Bring suggestions for fall programs, outings, and newsletter articles. From Highway 82, go north on Old West Point Rd. Take 2nd right on Cedar Ln.

ART COMPETITION TO ENCOURAGE CHILDREN'S APPRECIATION OF LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

Our group ventured into uncharted waters this year by putting on an art contest for 4th through 6th graders in the Starkville area. The theme of the contest was "Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet." Sound familiar? We asked that the art convey a personal interpretation or connection to the local environment or to a conservation issue of local concern.

The inspiration for this project came from members Frances and Harold Thompson, who have shepherded this project through its many obstacles. The competition has been well received, with almost 100 contestants from Starkville Academy, about 50 from the public schools and 4 students from the home school group.

We were fortunate to have the enthusiastic support of the principals, art teachers, and other mentors. We are especially appreciative of the help given by Ms. Beth Henry (Starkville Academy, grades 4-6), Ms. Donna Wolfe and Ms. Cheryl Andrews (Ward-Stewart Elementary School, grades 4-5), Ms. Libby Pollard (Henderson Elementary School, grade 6), and Mr. Keith Jeffries (home school, grades 4-6).

On Feb. 7th, at 1:15 p.m., the awards for prizes, including best of show, will be announced at the Starkville Public Library. About forty of the pieces entered will be on display there until the end of the month. A local artist, Faye Fisher, and a renowned art educator, Nell Elam, have offered their collective talents to judge the selected entries. Please take the time to view the community's budding talents and let's hope that a few seeds planted now will bear fruit in coming years.

David Cross

RARE SALAMANDERS FOUND IN TOMBIGBEE NATIONAL FOREST

Two rare species of salamanders, the southern red salamander (*Pseudotriton ruber*) and Webster's salamander (*Plethodon websteri*) were found in the Tombigbee National Forest by Dr. Jeanne Jones and her graduate students from the Wildlife and Fisheries Department at Mississippi State University.

Dr. Jones was hired by the Tombigbee National Forest under NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act) to take inventory of the animals found in all Units that have any proposed action for the land. The discovery of the salamanders in the Jones Creek Unit is particularly notable because this entire Unit is being proposed for a timber sale.

Under the current Forest Service Management Plan, however, protection only extends about an additional 30 feet beyond where these rare animals are living. District Ranger John Baswell, however, is committed to protecting about 100 feet beyond the immediate areas in which these rare salamanders are living.

Given the amount of destruction to habitat that occurs during timber cuts, my opinion is that more area needs to be protected in these obviously special habitats. So what can you or I do?

First of all, call District Ranger Baswell (662-285-3264) and ask that your name be put on the mailing list for all proposed actions for the Tombigbee National Forest. This means that you will be notified and solicited for public comment on each proposed action as it comes up. Secondly, take the time to write and send in your comments by the deadline indicated.

If you do this now, you will have time to make a comment on the Jones Creek timber sale. According to District Ranger Baswell, the 30-day public comment period for this particular sale of timber is ready to be announced soon. He also welcomes your calls if you need more information or documentation for the proposed action. So please, act now and help to effect change in those special habitats around you.

Juliet Tang

USE EMAIL FOR NEWSLETTER AND CLUB NOTIFICATIONS

Email Juliet Tang (jtang@mafes.msstate.edu) if you would like to receive this newsletter electronically. Also, please specify if you want to be included in our email list for club notifications.

ANNUAL YARD AND PLANT SALE

Clean out your house, pick up some beautiful houseplants and ornamentals, and raise funds for the Golden Triangle Group of the Sierra Club. GTSC's annual yard and plant sale will be held on Sat., May 1st, 6:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. at Lois Connington's house, 117 Cedar Lane, Starkville. Start cuttings from your plants now, divide up crowded perennials, and take a look around your home for those clothes you no longer wear. Housewares, small appliances, furniture, tools, and knickknacks sell well. Please include only clothing in good condition, label your plants, and give conditions they prefer.

You may start bringing donated items for the sale on Sun. April 25th. Please don't bring plants before Wed. April 28th. Volunteers are needed for set up, sales, and clean up. Call Lois at 662-324-2594 to arrange pick up or drop off of donated items, or to volunteer.



Newsletter is printed on recycled paper.

GOLDEN TRIANGLE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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* Two year term, ends Dec. 2005

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NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

The next newsletter will be published and circulated in September. Send any suggestions, articles, or announcements to Juliet Tang (662-465-8767) or Robin Smith (662-324-5550).

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Crossroads