



It's Our Nature

Newsletter of the Fox Valley Sierra Group of the John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club Vol. 15 Issue 1

Fox Valley Sierra Group Programs

February 12, 2015 - 7:00

Monte Averno - Center for the Environment

What is FREEA?

Vicki Vogel from the Fox River Environmental Education Alliance will tell us about the organization. It's history, how it obtained the Monte Averno site, and their plans for the future.

March 12, 2015 - 7:00

Monte Averno - Center for the Environment

Biking in Wisconsin

Dave Cieslewicz from the Wisconsin Bike Federation will update us on what they are doing for the bicyclist in Wisconsin.

April 9, 2015 - 7:00

Monte Averno - Center for the Environment

Bats of Wisconsin

Heather Kaarakka (bat biologist) from the DNR will speaking to us about the species of Wisconsin bats, their habitats, how to attract bats in your yard, update us on the White Nose Syndrome and how we can help preserve them.

May 14, 2015 - 7:00

Monte Averno - Center for the Environment

"The Great Sand Fracas of Ames County: A Novel"

Author Jerry Apps of Madison will talk to us about his book and what he learned in his research about fracking and sand mining.

June 11, 2015 - 7:00

Monte Averno - Center for the Environment

Cliff Tops & Canyons of Southwest Utah

Rappel down cliffs, squeeze through slot canyons, and climb to knee-shaking heights. Kelly Ramstack will share slides of her adventures in Vermillion Cliffs & Grand Staircase Escalante National Monuments and Zion National Park.

From the Chair

January 2015, By Alan Lawrence

In our last newsletter we announced that the Fox Valley Sierra Group was moving our meeting location. We've held our monthly meetings at the Gordon Bubolz Nature Preserve in northern Appleton since 1982. A construction project with their main building has forced us to find a new home. We were fortunate to find a new home with the Fox River Environmental Education Alliance (FREEA). This is the former Monte Averno Spirituality and Retreat Center, located on the Fox River in northeastern Appleton.

By now some of you have visited. We held our December holiday party meeting there and explored the building. Our January meeting was unfortunately cancelled due to bad weather. We helped FREEA with their "Eagle Days" event and are helping lead short nature hikes at their March 14 Fox River Celebration. It is a nice place. They are open at other times and you are encouraged to visit.

The facility is easy to access from Highway 41. Exit at Ballard Road and go south to the end of the street, then turn left. 1000 N. Ballard Rd. (Directions are available on their website, <http://foxrivereea.org> or simply, FREEA.org).



In my last column I told the exciting news of the participation of my wife and me in the People's Climate March in New York City where we marched along with 400,000 people from far and wide. The event was about Global Warming and Climate Change. The social justice aspect of Climate Change was a major theme. Change will be hardest for those least capable of doing anything about it.

I am encouraged that President Obama has apparently paid attention. Although he has not said much about the Keystone XL Pipeline we have been telling him for several years that this must not be built. He seems now to understand that message and says he will block it. Furthermore he is talking about Global Warming. I think he understands that he needs to help on this problem.

Continued on page 2...

...continued From the Chair

A couple of months ago our Board of Directors began thinking about Earth Day. We used to have a fantastic "Fox River(bank) Cleanup" that involved hundreds of people, including families and Scout troops, working to clean up a dozen parks along the shores of the river. It was a major undertaking. We stopped doing that after the parks were clean enough that there wasn't much to do. For the past decade we've worked on controlling the invasive garlic mustard plant from several locations, but that did not involve many people.

We thought it would be nice to have a hike for the community. It would begin and end at Monte Alverno, helping to show off this facility. It would also provide a nice hike along the river. (See separate article). Several of our members hiked along possible trail options, and eventually we came up with an exciting route. We are still working out the details and trying to recruit help from partnering organizations. We anticipate that this will be a big event that you will want to either hike or help with.

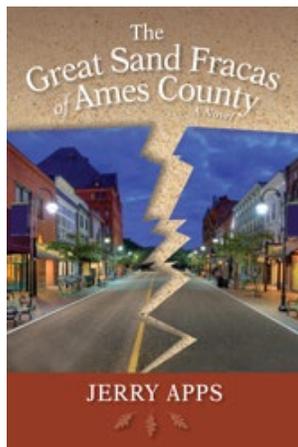
Thanks for reading my comments. As leader of our group I welcome your feedback.

Alan Lawrence, 920-730-9515 or alan_lawrence99@yahoo.com

MAY SPECIAL MEETING EVENT

May 14th we will feature author Jerry Apps from Madison, WI.

Jerry is an author, storyteller, historian and writes a bi-monthly column for The Country Today. Jerry has written 30 books including his latest (released in Sept 2014), "The Great Sand Fracas of Ames County: A Novel". He has learned much about sand mining and fracturing, tapping into a highly controversial issue to explore contemporary Midwest values - historical preservation VS forces of changes, environmental protection VS economic opportunity. Join us in May for his presentation, as he will talk about his book and what he learned in his research. (Note there will be a nominal charge again this year: \$5.00/adult and \$12.00/family)



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**Next Newsletter Deadline for submitting materials - March 15th
for April thru July Issue.**

Earth Day River Hike

Our group is organizing an Earth Day event for the community. It will take place April 18, kicking off the Earth Day week. Activities begin and end at Monte Alverno, our new home and home of the Fox River Environmental Education Alliance. Activities at FREEA will showcase their facility and be a place for parking, food and restrooms.



The hike is planned along the Fox River right from FREEA and going to Peabody Park. We'll have refreshments and activities there. People can turn back and enjoy a short hike, or they can continue on for the 5.5 mile adventure. We'll continue to College Avenue, cross the bridge and hike along the southern shore on the Newberry Trail to Olde Oneida Street. Then cross back to the northern shore utilizing trails on the Eagle Flats. Restrooms and food can be found at Stone Cellar Brewpub, Pullmans at Trolley Square, Warch Campus Center at Lawrence University, or at locations not far off the walk.

Details are still being worked out, but you will want to put this on your calendar and plan to be there either as a helper or as a participant. We believe this will be big.



Outings: Get outside and join us on one of our outings this winter & spring! They are a great way to meet other outdoor enthusiasts. Outings are open to members and non-members alike. In order to participate, sign up at one of our general meetings or contact the outings leader directly. Time and meeting locations of outings can change. Some trips are weather dependent. Times are not listed in these descriptions to ensure participants will check with trip leaders before proceeding.

OUTINGS

Feb. 15, Sunday

Snowshoeing at Mosquito Hill Nature Center New London

Winter brings frozen wetlands and that means a chance to get in to see lowlands of the Wolf River not usually accessible. Meet in the Nature Center for about a 2 hour hike. If snow cover is insufficient, the hike will be done without snowshoes. Bring a sandwich if you'd like to stay for a late lunch in the cozy log-sided warming room. Fee: Donation for trail use. Rental available (additional fee). Arrive 15 minutes early if you are renting. If snow cover is insufficient, the hike will be done without snowshoes.

- Nancy Brown-Koeller, 715 853-6625

Feb. 21, Saturday

Snowshoeing at Navarino Nature Center Navarino

Winter brings a chance to hike to the porcupine den and often find Mr. Porcupine at home, continue over the a bog and through the woods. Meet in the Nature Center lower level for about a 2 ½ hour hike. If snow cover is insufficient, the hike will be done without snowshoes. Fee: Donation for trail use. Rental available (additional fee). Arrive 15 minutes early if you are renting. If snow cover is insufficient, the hike will be done without snowshoes.

- Nancy Brown-Koeller, 715 853-6625

March 21, Saturday

Hike at Skunk & Foster Lakes State Natural Area, Amherst

Celebrate spring with a hike! We'll combine a section of the Ice Age Trail with the trails at Skunk Lake to make two nice loops through the woods. Hilly terrain offers awesome views of the glacial pothole lakes below. After our hike we'll head into nearby Amherst for lunch.

Kelly Ramstack, 920-540-9139.

March 28-29, Saturday & Sunday

Canoeing Robinson and Morrison Creeks near Black River Falls.

Class II rapids; Car Camp. When the water is up in the spring, these two small, scenic creeks are a lot of fun. Although the Robinson has a couple of drops, they can be portaged. Trees often need to be portaged as well. As always, we'll pick up spring thaw trash as we go, leaving the streams in better shape for those who follow. Wet/dry suit required for this early season trip. For details, contact: Phillip Johnsrud, 715-445-4777, johnsrudp@tds.net

April or May

Garlic Mustard Pulling

Pull garlic mustard at High Cliff State Park and at Memorial Park in Combined Locks, Wisconsin. All depends on the weather and how fast the garlic mustard grows. Call early to be put on the garlic mustard pullers list and to be contacted about specific dates and times.

- Contact Dale Schaber, 920-739-6041 or dschaber@athenet.net

April 18, Saturday

Earth Day River Hike

Kick off Earth Day week with a hike along the Fix River in Appleton. See details on page 2.

May 30, Saturday

Ice Age Trail Hike - N. Kettle Moraine

A rolling, easy, spring hike in the Northern Kettle Moraine State Forest will follow ridges past kettles and kames to Butler Lake and back. Bring your own lunch. Total hiking distance: eight miles. Total hiking time, including lunch and breaks: six hours. Total ascent: 1,148 feet. Total Descent: 1,020 feet. Trailhead is about an hour from Appleton. Hike will be cancelled in case of bad weather so everyone must be registered with either leader, who will provide details for trailhead and starting time.

- Phil Snyder, jsnyder2@new.rr.com or Margaret Klose, margaretklose@gmail.com

June 27, Saturday

Ice Age Trail Hike - Waupaca Area

Hike a premier section of the Ice Age Trail, starting at Hartman Creek State Park in Waupaca and looping south through the Emmons Creek State Fishery and Wildlife Area. Bring your own lunch. Total hiking distance: about nine miles. Hike stats, including distance, time, ascent and descent will be shared with registered hikers. Hike will be cancelled in case of bad weather so everyone must be registered with either leader, who will provide details for trailhead and starting time.

- Phil Snyder, jsnyder2@new.rr.com or Margaret Klose, margaretklose@gmail.com

Saturday, Feb. 28, 1:00

Bailey's Harbor.

Not an official Sierra Club trip but there might be FVSG people here! Experience The Ridges in a whole new way and a whole new season! These hikes with a Ridges naturalist cover the cultural and natural history of the ridges and swales in their "off" season. Enjoy a leisurely hike on level terrain. If snow cover is insufficient, the hike will be done without snowshoes. Some snowshoes available for hike participants – call ahead to reserve. \$5/person Ridges members, \$8 General public, children under 18 free. Additional \$5 to rent snowshoes. Info: (920) 839-2802.

Invasive Species

Buckthorn

RHAMNUS Genus about 150 species which are shrubs or small trees commonly known as Buckthorn. The Glossy Buckthorn (*Rhamnus Frangula*), and Common Buckthorn (*Rhamnus Cathartica*), are prevalent in the Midwest.

Buckthorn is common to Eurasia and was brought to the US in the 1800's as an ornamental shrub. It has since spread and due to its prolific multiplication is considered an invasive species by the US Forrest Service and the Wisconsin DNR. Today it is still being sold and transported however some states including Minnesota and Illinois have banned its sale. Both species threaten forests by out competing native plants including tree seedlings for nutrients, light, and moisture.

Buckthorn can be identified by scratching the bark on a

stem or branch the sapwood will be orange to yellow in color. Common Buckthorn has short spike like thorns on the tips of twigs. Glossy buckthorn does not have thorns on the tips of the twigs; the twigs are tipped with buds. Generally the leaves on both species are oval, dark green, and sometimes pointed on the tip. Common buckthorn leaves are hairless have 3-5 veins curving to the tip from the mid vein, and have teeth along the edges. Glossy buckthorn sometimes have fine hairs on the backside, lack teeth along the edges, and have 8-9 veins running to the tip from the mid vein. The leaves appear early in the spring and stay late into the fall well beyond the growing season of native plants. The buckthorn fruit are small clusters, appear where the leaves meet the stems and ripen in late summer. Each fruit is approximately 1/3" in diameter, contains 2-3 seeds. When the fruit ripen are dark black in color.



Common Buckthorn



Glossy Buckthorn



Common buckthorn occurs in uplands, mainly in the understory of oak woods, riparian woods but also in grasslands. It is often found in disturbed areas such as thickets, hedgerows, pastures, abandoned fields, roadsides and on rocky sites.

Glossy buckthorn is an aggressive invader of wet or moist soils, but also grows well in a wide variety of upland habitats, including old fields, roadsides and dry woodlands. It has become a problem in wetlands as varied as acidic bogs, and sedge meadows. It is capable of growing in both full sun and shaded habitats.



The tree trunks are barely visible behind the Buckthorn shrubs in the picture on the left.

Both buckthorns are characterized by prolific reproduction via seed, tolerance of a wide variety of habitats. In full sun, buckthorn can produce fruit a few years after establishment, and seeds remain viable in the soil for many years. Fruit production may be delayed for 10 to 20 years in shaded habitats. Once established, buckthorn has the ability to spread aggressively in nearly any habitat. Once plants begin to produce seed, buckthorn can rapidly form dense thickets. Birds eat the abundant fruits and facilitate the long-distance dispersal of seeds. The fruits act as a laxative to the digestive system, aiding in dispersal.

As with all invasive species, buckthorns in natural areas are most effectively eliminated by spotting the invasion early and removing isolated plants before they begin to produce seeds. Buckthorn can be controlled mechanically or with herbicides, or both. Small infestations can be cut or pulled by hand.

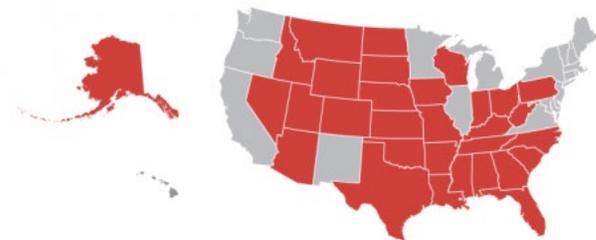
The Fox Valley Chapter of The Sierra Club has outings in the spring and fall to mechanically remove Buckthorn. Two of our board members Alan Lawrence and Darrel Ruechel worked for about two hours on a stand of Buckthorn last fall at the Bubolz Nature Preserve. They pulled the small shrubs and used a pruning lopper to cut the larger ones. When they cut the larger shrubs the top of the stump was treated with a herbicide (roundup). The herbicide will kill the roots preventing new shoots from growing in the spring.

This spring please join the Sierra Club work party when they work on helping to eradicate this invasive plant species. Watch for the date in the Fox Valley Sierra Group news letter.

John Engel - Conservation Chairman
(The U.S. Forest Service & WI DNR invasive species website were information sources.)



STATES WITH SENATORS WHO DENY THE HUMAN IMPACT ON CLIMATE CHANGE:



STATES AFFECTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE:



Update from the Field

Laura Menefee, John Muir Chapter Executive Committee, Protecting Native Forests and Wildlife subcommittee

The year ended with big news for Great Lakes wolves, who were returned to Endangered Species status as of December 19, 2014. A federal court ruling stated that United States Fish and Wildlife Service were premature in removing Great Lakes wolves from Endangered status protections before wolves had colonized a significant portion of their historic range. The ruling also cited the misuse of the Distinct Population Segment classification, which can only be used to instate protections, not to remove them. Additionally, the ruling expressed concern with the hostile state management policies in place which are aggressively reducing the population without understanding what the long-term ramifications of such practices will be, thereby violating the Endangered Species Act requirements for a five year monitoring period following delisting, as well as to refrain from practices which led to extirpation initially. Wisconsin policy, which allowed hunting, trapping, snaring, use of electronic predator calls and hunting over bait as well as hunting with hounds, resulted in 500 wolves killed over three years. Hunting in all three Great Lakes states over the three years since de-listing resulted in 1500 wolves killed. You can

read more in my editorial for the Wisconsin State Journal at:

http://host.madison.com/laura-menefee-court-right-to-stop-wolf-hunting-in-wisconsin/article_7026fe94-64f3-5496-832a-5de5900594c5.html

Our new Protecting Native Species and Wildlife subcommittee of the Executive Committee will continue to monitor developments in State management and to pursue outreach and educational opportunities in order to ensure sustainable and ethical management policies, using the best available science for our natural resources which belong to the Public Trust.

I look forward to representing the John Muir Chapter at the National Council of Club Leaders this fall. As an elected, At-Large member of the Executive Committee, I will be meeting with representatives from 65 Sierra Club Chapters, as well as the National Board of Directors in order to facilitate Chapter goals and further communications in the interest of our One Club objective. I am excited to be meeting other club leaders, making new friends and contacts, and developing my leadership skills for the benefit of our members.

What's in the Air

Around Frac Sand Plants?

Crispin Pierce, PhD

Monday, February 23

6:30 p.m. Waupaca Library

Program sponsored by Winchester Academy of Waupaca Free to the Public

Crispin Pierce is an associate professor at UW-Eau Claire. Dr. Pierce, Director of the Environmental Public Health Program summarizes how airborne particulates are generated and can be released during frac sand mining, processing and transporting activities.



A good time was had by all at our December holiday meeting with the White Elephant gift exchange.

Thanks to our membership

We collected \$400.00 at our December holiday party and donated it to Bubolz Nature Preserve.

Bad Weather

In the event of severe weather on the night of a monthly meeting please check our website to make sure that we have not had to cancel. This is the most efficient means we have to get the word out at the last minute, and had to do this on January 8 when bad weather made having a meeting inadvisable.

<http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/foxvalley>

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



With your help we can protect the wolf

Sierra Club Water Sentinels are the first line of defense of America's waters. We live on the water planet. However, water is a finite resource with only about 1 % of the world's water actually being available for human consumption. Water pollution & over-use are threatening both the quality & quantity of our water resources at an alarming rate.

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Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 15	N/A
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35

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