

Palisades Views



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March 2011

Shaw Nature Reserve biologist to speak on habitat restoration

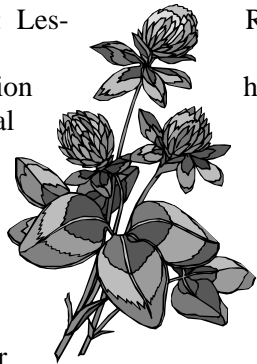
The guest speaker for the March 14 meeting of the Piasa Palisades Group is James Trager, a biologist and naturalist at Shaw Nature Reserve in Gray Summit, Mo. He will discuss "Twenty years of Habitat Management and Restoration at Shaw Nature Reserve: Lessons Learned."

Shaw is an extension of Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis. It includes 2,500 acres of natural Ozark landscapes and managed plant collections.

One of its major goals is "ecological restoration." That means "creation or rehabilitation of a mosaic of habitats that can support healthy populations of the maximum possible number of plant and animal species native to the St. Louis region," according to its website.

About half the reserve is dedicated to native habitats, including glades, prairies, wetlands and oak woodlands. Staff members assess existing diversity, reintroduce native plants and occasionally animals, work to control exotic species and aggressive natives, mow at proper times and oversee prescribed burns.

"Tall-grass prairie is arguably the



most endangered native vegetation type of North America," the website states. "There were scattered earlier efforts to create patches of native prairie grass and reintroduce glade and woodland wildflowers from the founding of Shaw Nature Reserve in 1925 forward.

"The first 'planting' of prairie hay in two small areas of our current prairie acreage was in the 1950s. But Shaw Nature Reserve has been restoring native habitats in earnest (on a landscape scale) since 1979.

"The first effort was the planting of 48 acres of prairie, established in 1980. New plantings were (periodically added until) a couple of years ago, and there are plans for more.

"Much of the seed for the early plantings came from the older prairie-restoration project at Alton's own Heartland Prairie at Gordon Moore Park, as well as from prairie remnants in Missouri, making the SNR prairie plantings truly regionally representative."

Trager earned a bachelor's degree in biology at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, a master's in entomology at University of Kansas in Lawrence and a doctorate in en-

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RECYCLING NEWS

Here is a list of new permanent drop-off locations for electronics/computer recycling by Web Innovations and Technology Services from February to November, unless otherwise noted, except Easter Sunday and Mother's Day. All items will be accepted for free. For more information, visit <http://witsinc.org>.

— The Bank of Edwardsville, 4414 Martin Luther King Drive in Alton on the first Friday of each month.

— Parking lot at 223 W. Main St. in Collinsville on the second Friday.

— The Bank of Edwardsville at 2142 S. State Route 157 in Glen Carbon on the fourth Friday.

— Jerseyville Banking Center at West Exchange and Main Street in Jerseyville on the first Sunday (March, May, July, September and November only).

— Southwestern Illinois College, 2500 Carlyle Ave. in Belleville on the second Sunday.

— The Bank of Edwardsville 100 Suppiger Lane in Highland on the third Sunday.

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New environmental focus may not solve real problems

By **Richard C. Keating**
Group member

Every so often, I am struck that there are two important divergent themes that encompass our environmental concerns.

In recent years, the message has been strongly focused on global-warming threats and the need for green living. This discussion involves appropriately sized dwellings, alternative energy, insulation, fuel efficiency, pesticide-free organic foods

and recycling.

All of this is unarguably good. But an argument can also be made that all of the above is just rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic.

Topics under consideration were mostly very different in the 1970s, when I was awakening students to environmentalism as a biology professor at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Landmark writings were “Tragedy of the Com-

mons” (Hardin), “The Population Bomb” (Ehrlich), “The Limits to Growth” (Meadows and Meadows), “Famine 1975” (Brown) and others.

The themes were: 1) population growth rates are unsustainable and 2) global oil production has reached peak production and costs must rise, thereby further dividing the rich from the poor.

During the interval between then and now, human population has dou-

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Three Rivers Project Notes & Events

3 Ways to Connect Without Paper



"Like" Piasa Palisades Sierra Club's facebook page and you'll get up to date event invites, news tidbits, and volunteer opportunities!



We have an Outings Listserve, an e-mail list that only receives notices of outdoor fun! Send jbensjbensman1@charter.net an e-mail asking to "subscribe" to our outings listserv. You'll never miss an eleventh hour hike or bike ride again!



Our on-line version of the *Palisades Views*: send an e-mail asking to "subscribe" to the paperless version of our newsletter. If you'd like to stop receiving a paper copy, please note that along with your address in the body of the message. christine.favilla@sierraclub.org

Coffee and Tea, Please

The Sierra Club is selling their fair trade, shade grown, organic coffee beans from their office:

French Roast Regular:	\$9.00
French Roast Decaffeinated	\$10.00
Earl Grey Loose Tea:	\$8.00

Office hours:
Mondays: 8:30am-3:30pm.
Rest of week: varies depending on mtgs. Call ahead: 618-462-6802



Get outdoors and help beautify your community

Saturdays, March 12 & 19, 8am-12pm. Invasive Species Removal at Arlington Wetland Restoration Site. We'll manually remove invasive species such as Japanese Honeysuckle and Winter Creeper. On-site training prior to our work day. We need groups and individuals to help with this 8-acre site; if you are active in a church, civic, education, conservation, or recreation group, please try to get them on board. We'll supply you with gloves, bags, water, and lunch - you bring the people power! RSVP: christine.favilla@sierraclub.org or 618-462-6802

Saturday, March 26, 9am-12pm. Trash Bash via water: Connect with Sierrans across the river! We will be cleaning Maple Island of it's trash and debris while getting to know our neighboring Sierra Club group, the Eastern Missouri Group. After a great boat ride, we'll join hundreds of other stewards at the Confluence Trash Bash lunch on the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge! Limited space available: RSVP christine.favilla@sierraclub.org or 618-462-6802

Monday, March 28, 10am-12pm. Spring Clean Up at Discovery Garden, including small prairie burn. We will be helping to prep the garden and the garden's native prairie for the organic children's garden's 10th season. Come one, come all! Please wear closed toe shoes and dress for the weather.

Saturday, April 16. 9am-12pm. Alton City Wide Clean Up, rain or shine. Sierra Club supporters should register at the booth at 200 W. 3rd St. Our 'zone' will be Broadway from Ridge to Washington and Broadway from Washington to Milton Rd. Rather clean your own neighborhood that day? Come to the registration site for free supplies!

Saturday, April 23, 9am-12pm. Trash Bash via road: The Great River Road, part of the National Scenic Byways, is in dire need of a litter clean up! Please join us for the 16 mile stretch from downtown Alton to Grafton. We need groups and individuals to take on different miles of this stretch; if you are active in a church, civic, education, conservation, or recreation group, please try to get them on board. We'll supply you with gloves, bags, and water - you bring the people power! RSVP: christine.favilla@sierraclub.org or 618-462-6802

Environmental Educational Opportunities

March 2011 Issue of Concern: Alby Quarry's Future

Will the quarry become a construction debris waste site? Coal combustion waste site? Landfill? The Sierra Club needs your help and your voice! We are teaming up with the International Union of Operating Engineers and The Alton Area Landmarks Association to inform citizens of the plans and possibilities that this quarry may hold at the end of its mining life. A public meeting date will be set soon! Interested? Please contact christine.favilla@sierraclub.org or 618-462-6802

2011 Environmental Education Association of Illinois Conference

Environmental Education Association of Illinois is proud to announce registration is now open for the 2011 Conference and Annual Meeting! The Sierra Club is on this steering committee.



Join the Environmental Education Association of Illinois (EEAI) April 14-16, 2011 at the beautiful Pere Marquette Lodge and Conference Center, Grafton, IL to "Get Current with EEAI." Our Conference Theme "Get CURRENT with EEAI" highlights the location of the conference headquarters to the Illinois River and will include seven conference strands: Current Topics in EE, Understanding Sustainability, Resources in EE, Research and Evaluation, Energy, Natural History, and Technology in EE. Through concurrent sessions, workshops, and presentations, we will engage, invigorate and inspire you during the conference weekend. Consider how you can use this time to reenergize and enlighten yourselves during this fantastic weekend at Pere Marquette Lodge and Conference Center. Scholarships are available for current EEAI members! Registration Deadline is April 1, 2011. www.EEAI.net Volunteers are needed: christine.favilla@sierraclub.org

Factory Farms: an educational evening with Prairie Rivers and the Kaskaskia Group of the Sierra Club

Learn where your meat, dairy products, and eggs come from, along with the environmental costs of the current farming system and opportunities for citizen activism and making a positive change in Illinois.

Wednesday, March 23

6:30pm

Fairview Heights Public Library; 10017 Bunkum Road, Fairview Heights, IL

Free and open to the public



Dragonfly Monitoring Workshop

Saturday, April 9

1:00-4:00pm

The Dragonfly Monitoring Network was created to gain greater knowledge of the distribution and abundance of adult dragonfly and damselfly species in the Chicago region and across Illinois. This interactive workshop will give you the tools to identify and collect data on dragonfly and damselfly populations in your area. The workshop will include a presentation and a short identification session in the field led by Craig Stettner, Coordinator of the Dragonfly Monitoring Network. This workshop is hosted by the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (<http://ngrrec.org>) and Lewis and Clark Community College.



Event Location:

Jerry F. Costello Confluence Field Station

One Confluence Way

East Alton, IL 62024

The event is FREE. To register, contact Vera Bojic at 618-468-2881 or email vbojic@lc.edu.

Energy Innovation Workshop scheduled for Saturday, July 30 in Edwardsville

Steering Committee forming now. please contact christine.favilla@sierraclub.org or 618-462-6802 for more info!

SIERRA CLUB CALENDAR

Saturday, March 5 **Sierra Club symposium, "RiverBend: Awaken- ing the Dreamer, Changing the Dream."** Sponsored with Oblate Ecological Initiative and United Congre- gations of Metro East Alton Area Cluster. Help create a future based on sus- tainability, spiritual ful- fillment and social justice. Hours are 9



a.m. to 1 p.m. at St. Ambrose Church, 820 W. Homer Adams Parkway in Godfrey. The \$15 fee (\$5 for students) in- cludes refreshments. Register through PayPal at <http://www.lavistaec.org> or show up at the event at 8:30 a.m. For more information, call Mary Jo at (618) 466-5004.

Tuesday through Thursday, March 8-10 **Bottomland Ecosystem Resto- ration Conference** at the Double Tree Hotel in Collinsville. Sponsored by the National Great Rivers Re- search and Education Center with support from other organizations, including the Sierra Club. Sessions on topics such as the Upper Missis- sippi River System Setting, Environ- mental Stressors, Ecosystem Ser- vices, Bottomland Ecosystem Man- agement and Establishment of New Bottomland Forests. For more infor- mation, visit <http://www.ngrrec.org/berc2011>.

Monday, March 14 **Piasa Palisades Group monthly meeting.** James Trager of Shaw Nature Reserve in Gray Summit, Mo., will be the guest speaker (see related article). Meet at 7:30 p.m. at First Unitarian Church, Third and Alby streets in Alton.

Saturday, March 19 **Piasa Pali- sades Group monthly moonlight hike** at Watershed Nature Center in Edwardsville. Come to hear spring peepers (frogs). Walk and talk by the light of the full moon. Flat, easy terrain around the wetlands. Meet at 7 p.m. in the parking lot at 1591 Tower Road, across from Hoppe Park. Bring a friend! For more in- formation, call Gayle Borman at (618) 254-2250.

Friday through Sunday, May 6-8 **Camp Ondessonk weekend.** Stay in cabins and hike in beautiful Shawnee National Forest, which will be welcoming wildflowers and other signs of spring. Hopefully, the Piasa Palisades Group will join members of the Kaskaskia and Shawnee groups. The cost is \$10 per night (\$5 for students). Meals on your own. Jim Bensman is group leader. For more information, e-mail coordinator Carol Klinger at ciklinger@yahoo.com.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

NOTE: The Sierra Club is not sponsor- ing or administering the below activi- ties and cannot vouch for their quality, safety, planning, supervision or man- agement. Information is being provided because it may be of interest to mem- bers.

Wednesday, March 9 **Knee High Naturalists program** at The Nature Institute in Godfrey. For children ages 3 to 5, accompanied by an adult. This month's theme is "Show Me the Energy." Discover how food (energy) originally came from the sun and why people and animals depend on plants for food. Morning

session from 10 to 11 or afternoon session from 1 to 2. The \$5 fee in- cludes a hike, snack, story and hand's-on activity. Advance registra- tion required by previous Friday. For more information, call (618) 466- 9930.

Friday, March 11 **Star gazing at Watershed Nature Center** in Ed- wardsville. Winter is a great time to view wonders of the sky. Join astron- omy guru Steve Sands, a Sierra Club member, who will bring one of his awesome telescopes. Hours are 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Free. For more information, call (618) 692- 7578.

Saturday, March 12 **Herbal medi- cine workshop** at La Vista Ecologi-

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Palisades Views

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To submit a newsletter item:
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DEADLINE FOR APRIL:
SATURDAY, MARCH 26



CALENDAR

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cal Learning Center in Godfrey. Learn how to identify medicinal herbs in your own backyard and use herbs to make medicine in tincture form, teas for certain ailments, first aid and salve. Discuss which herbs can be used for insect repellants, itch relief, bee stings and sunburn. Take home three herbal creations, a recipe book and list of sources. Hours are 1

to 5 p.m. The cost is \$35. To register, call (618) 466-5004.

Saturday, March 19 Discovery Day Camp registration. Sign kids up for weeklong summer camps at The Nature Institute in Godfrey. Pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. Registration will be held from 9 to 11 a.m. at St. Ambrose Community Center, 820 W. Homer Adams Parkway in Godfrey. For

more information, call (618) 466-9930.

Friday, March 25 Frog walk at Watershed Nature Center in Edwardsville. Learn to identify frogs and toads by sight and sound, then wade into the wetlands for closer examination. Hours are 7 to 9 p.m. The cost is \$5. Registration is required. For more information, call (618) 692-7578.

FOCUS

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bled. Large-scale famine and malnutrition has been forestalled, nearly exclusively by increased use of petroleum-derived fertilizers.

Researchers J.W. Hall and Charles A.S. Day recently published an article in *American Scientist* called "Revisiting the Limits to Growth after Peak Oil." They reexamined the 1970s "Cassandra" projections and found them to be largely on the mark.

Hall and Day point out that "mainstream" economists, such as Julian Simon, have pushed back against any suggestion of resource limits. Such thinking uses the model of infinite substitutability, that is, scarcity and rising costs will always result in new, cheaper sources of materials or energy.

With energy, the development of "sustainable" forms has absorbed some of the growth but by no means to a level of replacement of domestic oil and coal. No energy source yet identified would replace oil on anywhere near the scale required.

The green revolution that staved off predicted starvation in the 20th century was mainly achieved, as noted, by massive applications of fossil fuel-derived fertilizer.

Consider, for instance, biofuels, the production of ethanol or oils from plants. Plants have already achieved maximum efficiency of photosynthesis, according to "Taking the Measure of Biofuel Limits," another recent article in *American Scientist* by T.R. Sinclair.

Also, agriculture remains a dispersed activity, and we have no unused cropland hiding anywhere. The limits of sunlight, water, nitrogen and growing-season length are all known.

For biofuels to be a significant "solution" to the fossil-fuel problem, about 118 million acres would be required to meet the target for growing plant material for cellulose-based ethanol. At present, the acreage required for maize, soybeans and wheat is 122 million acres.

Even assuming that enough acreage, water and sunlight, within the right growing-season length, will magically appear, we remain limited by the need to apply nitrogen fertilizer to fields, a process requiring large amounts of natural gas.

Finally, many authors have reminded us of a really significant moral question: How do we justify the diversion of food-crop acreage for fuel production in an increasingly hungry world?

Saturday, March 26 "Get Outdoors! Saturdays at the Watershed." This month's program focuses on understanding watersheds and water quality. For adults and children. Hours are 10 a.m. to noon. Free. For more information, call (618) 692-7578.

Saturday, March 26 Explore Heartland Prairie at Gordon Moore Park in Alton as part of a year-long series of La Vista Ecological Learning Center in Godfrey. This month's program is "Burned: A Terrible Beauty." Walk through the prairie after a controlled burn and before spring flowering. Then go to La Vista for reflection and seasonal refreshments. Hours are 9 a.m. to noon. The cost is \$15. To register, call (618)

SHAW

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tomology at University of Florida in Gainesville. He joined the staff of Shaw Nature Reserve in 1991.

The Sierra Club meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. Monday, March 14, at the First Unitarian Church, Third and Alby Streets in Alton. You are welcome to join us for pre-meeting dinner at 5:45 p.m. at Bossa Nova, 112 W. Third in downtown Alton.