

Orange- Chatham Group

www.sierraclub-nc.org/ocg

Local Elections

Political Chair Bernadette Pelissier is assembling people for a political committee that will help with make political endorsements in the upcoming local elections. If you would like to serve on this committee please contact her at 643-2762 or email her at bpelissier@juno.com

OCT 2003



Fall Social for Members

New Members: Come and get to know your fellow environmentalists in our local Orange-Chatham group. It's also a great chance to meet the Orange-Chatham Executive Committee members and let them know what issues are important to you and how you'd like to be involved with the Sierra Club.

Continuing Members: Help us welcome this year's 500 new members!

A Scientist Audits the Earth

The impact of 6.1 billion humans on our planet is staggering and affects every aspect of our lives, whether we realize it or not. Pimm emphasizes the accelerating loss of biological diversity. A few centuries ago, about 10 of the estimated 10 million species on Earth disappeared each year; now perhaps 1000 are lost annually, and the rate is rapidly climbing toward 10,000 per year as human impacts intensify everywhere. In addition, species are not interchangeable. The product of at least 3.8 billion years of evolution, each has its own importance, its own meaning in the function of ecosystems, and its own potential for us. Because extinction is irreversible, it has permanent effects on Earth and on human prospects. Humans currently consume more than 40 percent of the world's annual biological productivity, and we use and borrow more than half of its accessible global freshwater runoff. Our situation is clearly not sustainable. We are living off the principal, not the interest, and we face the same consequences that such a strategy would have if it were applied to a personal bank account.

In his epilogue, Pimm does an especially good job of highlighting the lack of attention economists and politicians pay the environment, and the grave dangers implicit in such negligence. Earth has only so much to yield, and only at our peril can we assume it can continue to respond to our needs. It is important that we learn about Earth and its biota much more efficiently and rapidly than we currently do, because we need such knowledge to manage our home sustainably. We must address these problems at a global scale, "with at least enough precision to detect a decade of change." In an outstanding imaginary dialogue with an economist, an environmentalist, and someone governed by social and religious values, Pimm presents lively and convincing arguments about what we can do and why we should do it. *The World According to Pimm* is a remarkable testament to the ideas presented in its closing sentences: "Our world is a spectacularly beautiful, interesting, and diverse place. Only by attending to its problems will it remain so."

OCG Meetings

Thursday, October 9th at 7:30 p.m. Fall Social and Book Discussion at the Church of Reconciliation.

The World According to Pimm

The World According to Pimm: A Scientist Audits the Earth. Please join us to hear Stuart Pimm, Doris Duke professor of conservation ecology at Duke University present his recent work on impacts of humans on species diversity. We will also be having a social for Sierra Club members! For questions, contact our Program or Membership Chairs. (See stories on left column)

Thursday, October 2nd, 7:30 p.m. ExCom meeting. At the Oriental Garden Restaurant on Rosemary Street. Submit agenda items to Robert Porter at robertporter@mindspring.com or 933-7613. All OCG members are welcome and encouraged to join us.

Once every 400 Years!

According to a story reported in Sep lath's *The News & Observer*, "the Shearon Harris Nuclear Plant has a design flaw in its emergency cooling system that could increase the chances of a serious accident." The problem is common to 69 of nation's 103 operating nuclear reactors.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission ranked

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Once in 400 Years! - continued

the susceptible plants according to risk but did not reveal the names of the plants. However, a representative from the Union of Concerned Scientist stated that "Shearon Harris is in the higher-risk group of plants." The flaw raises the chance of a serious accident from once in 20,000 years to once every 400 years in some cases. The study indicated that the risk of SHNP experiencing core damage rises to once in 869 years. By NRC standards, a one in 10,000 chance is acceptable.

Outings

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the liability waiver before you chose to participate on an outing, please go to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact the Outings Department at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.

3rd Saturday - Bolin Creek Trail. Work is continuing on the Bolin Creek habitat restoration project. After a fairly small amount of work, a significant improvement is now visible along the Greenway. This is a long-term project, and we need many more volunteers. It's hard work, but very rewarding.

We meet the third Saturday of each month at the Greenway entrance on Bolinwood Drive, just off Hillsborough Street in Chapel Hill. Please contact Bill Bracey at arbor-net@mindspring.com, or 942-9937 if you are interested in participating.

1st and 3rd Saturdays of each Month - American Tobacco Trail Service Outing. Generally, the group meets on the first and third Saturdays of every month starting at 9:00 AM. The workgroup meets at the Scott King Rd. crossing of the ATT. For more info contact Thad Howard (HWG) at 919-544-9126 or e-mail thad.howard@duke.edu.

SEP 27-28: Lumber River. Paddle on this moderate section of southeastern N.C.'s prettiest black water river, located just south of Lumberton. Total paddling distance is approximately 22 miles; with overnight on Sat. beside the river (a remote canoe-in site.) No pets or children under age 13. Leader reserves the right to change paddling location if weather and/or water level dictates. Contact Chandler Stewart (CG) at cstewart4@mindspring.com or by phone between 8:30--10:30 P.M. @ 910-739-4879 or 910-536-4416.

OCT 3-5 Women's Backpacking at Mt. Rogers. An opportunity for women to enjoy the company and support of other women as we backpack and hike through the Grayson Highlands area of Mt. Rogers (VA). We'll backpack 3-4 miles into a base camp on Friday, meander several of the trails on Saturday, then break camp and hike out on Sunday. If there's interest, we can learn how to bake pizzas or cinnamon rolls on camp stoves. Moderate backpack and hike. Contact Shelly Eberly (OCG) at 919-967-7358 between 7 and 9 p.m. or e-mail seberly@earthlink.net.

OCT 11 (Sat) County Tour. Walking and driving tour of northern Orange and Durham Counties. We'll visit some of the most

scenic and historic spots in the area and learn a little more of the history that exists in our own backyard. Contact Annette Jurgelski (OCG) at 919-644-0280.

OCT 11 (Sat) American Tobacco Trail. Learn about one of the Triangle's greenways on this 10 a.m. moderate hike of 3.5 miles on the newest section of the ATT below Hwy. 64 in Wake County. Please call Janet Burhans Hitti (HWG) at 919-572-2407 or e-mail jhitti0326@cs.com for directions.

OCT 12 (Sun) Pilot Mountain. View the glorious autumn colors while hiking to the top of Pilot Mountain. We'll take a strenuous climb from the bottom trailhead, past interesting rock formations to wonderful views. Plan a 1.5 hour drive from Chapel Hill (leaving at 9 a.m.) to meet at the trailhead and a 3.5 hour hike. Bring a pack lunch and a jacket for the wind-buffered mountaintop. Limit 15. Contact Ann Kaplan (OCG) at annbkaplan@hotmail.com or (919) 929-6826 to sign up.

OCT 18 (Sat) NC Botanical Gardens. Visit UNC Botanical Gardens and Morgan Creek Farm. Easy walk through the woods followed by a tour of the gardens. Chapel Hill residents call Joan Timmons at 932-9625. Raleigh seniors contact Lew Herr at 870-6964 to discuss car pooling.

OCT 25 (Sat) Chapel Hill Greenway Hike. Come hike the beautiful wooded trails that are tucked away in the center of Chapel Hill. Meet at the parking lot of the three-story white building at the intersection (traffic light) of Airport Rd. (NC-86) and Hillsborough-Umstead Rd. This is 3 miles south of I-40, exit #266, opposite Hunam Restaurant and Fosters Market. Chapel Hill Fosters for lunch after the hike, if you wish. We will visit the Chapel Hill Museum as we walk back through the Chapel Hill Historic District. Easy 3- or 6-mile walk. No reservations necessary. Leader contact: Kathy Harris (OCG) at 919- 968-8173.

OCT 26 Sign-up deadline for November 1-2 Lumber River trip.

NOV 1 (Sat) Hanging Rock State Park. What is a monadnock? Come find out at Hanging Rock State Park. Prepare for the holiday gluttony at this lovely park just two hours west of the Triangle. Our 6-8 mile hike will be moderate with some strenuous sections. Limit 12. To sign up, contact Kristi Chilton (HWG) at 919-361-1870 between 7 and 9 p.m. or at joybird7@yahoo.com.

NOV 1-2 LUMBER RIVER. Paddle on this Wild & Scenic River in its northern reaches where it is truly "wilder", narrower and more twisting. This will be a moderate trip; with the distance approximately 26 miles. We will camp on Saturday night at a canoe-in only site beside the River. No pets or children under age 13. Leader reserves the right to change paddling location if weather and/or water level dictates. Contact Chandler Stewart (CG): mailto:cstewart4@mindspring.com or by phone between 8:30 & 10:30 P.M. at 910-739-4879 or 910-536-4416.

NOV 22 (Sat) Sign up deadline for Edisto River Paddling Trip November 28-30 (see listing below).

NOV 28-30 Edisto River. Paddle this beautiful black water river located near Charleston, South Carolina from our base camp at Givhans Ferry State Park. Arrive on Friday in time for a short afternoon paddle as a warm-up for a full day on the river Saturday, followed by a potluck dinner. Boats not provided. No pets or children under the age of 13. Contact Robert Gordon (CG) at robert747@netzero.net or 919-954-1442 before 10 p.m.

More outings information is available on-line at <http://www.sierraclub-nc.org/ocg>



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