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Explore, Enjoy, and Protect the Planet

May Program

Endemic Creatures Abound in Madagascar

By Mary Green

Mo Valley Program Director

With its extraordinary, yet highly threatened, biodiversity, the Indian Ocean island of Madagascar is a global conservation priority. The country's wide range of habitats contains a stunning array of wildlife species, many of which are found nowhere else on earth.

Unfortunately, poverty and unsustainable resource use are leading to large-scale forest clearing, which in turn leads to the depletion of Madagascar's biodiversity. Only a small fraction of the original forest remains, and many species have become extinct, including the magnificent elephant bird. Until recently, the Malagasy rural population, one of the poorest in the world, had limited land tenure rights, little access to information, and minimal support for alternative livelihoods, which has had devastating consequences for both the country's natural environment and its standard of living.

The island of Madagascar separated from mainland Africa between 100 million and 200 million years ago, creating a



time capsule of life in the process. Today the island provides sanctuary for plants and animals that have long since disappeared from other parts of the world and continued to evolve. Four out of five species of plants and animals found there are unique, or endemic, to Madagascar. Among the best-known species are the lemurs, a primitive group of primates.

Sierra Club Program Madagascar: Closing the Conservation Circle

Shannon Engberg
(Henry Doorly Zoo) &
Susie McGuire
(Conservation Fusion)

Thursday, Mar. 27, 7 p.m.
First United Methodist Church
69th & Cass streets, Omaha
Enter north door
**The public is welcome at all Sierra
Club educational programs.**

Madagascar houses 100 percent of the world's lemurs.

Speaker Shannon Engberg of Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo will tell us about the zoo's research in Madagascar. Originally

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Chapter Chair's Corner

Wayburn Remembered for Environmental Advocacy

By Dick Boyd

Nebraska Chapter Chair

While attending a Club meeting in San Francisco in September 2006, I was most fortunate to be able to be part of Dr. Ed Wayburn's centennial birthday celebration at Fort Mason. Having read much about Wayburn, I was privi-

leged to meet and be a part of the birthday celebration. The Club lost a great champion when Dr. Wayburn passed away at 103 on March 5, 2010.

All of those who attended the party were provided a complimentary copy of Wayburn's memoir, "Your Land and Mine." I read the book, and

was very impressed with the book's epilogue, "Of What Will We Dream?" The following excerpts are from his book. Hopefully, he would not have any objection to my reprint of these excerpts.

In environmental advocacy, first comes a vision, then an obsession to do the job so that

the vision will endure. In pursuing my obsession, I have followed a few helpful rules.

1. Choose your targets and don't be diverted. Always consider long-range as well as short-term objectives. With the constant onslaught on wilder-

See Guidelines page 3

Successful Year for Environment at Neb. Legislature

By Ken Winston
Sierra Club Lobbyist

The 2010 Legislature adjourned for the year on April 14. This session was our most successful session since I began lobbying for the Sierra Club in 2002. At the top of the list is LB 1048, which could greatly expand wind energy development in Nebraska. LB 1048 was unanimously passed by the legislature and signed into law by the governor.

LB 1048 grew out of LR 83, an interim study by the Natural Resources Committee, which in turn was a by-product of LB 437, introduced by Sen. Ken Haar in the 2009 session. LB 1048 sets up a process for private developers to export electricity generated by renewable energy while protecting Nebraska's public utilities. Nebraska has moved very slowly on wind development in spite of our enormous potential in that area, in part because our public power system has been limited in its ability to take advantage of federal tax incentives in this area. Passage of LB 1048 could boost the state's electric generation from wind from 152 megawatts to thousands of megawatts.

This type of expansion has the potential for billions of dollars in investment and thousands of jobs in rural Nebraska. It also can provide electricity for thousands of consumers by a method that does not generate greenhouse gases, send toxins such as mercury into the environment or use huge amounts of water, as coal does.

We also supported LB 978 and LB 997, two bills that provide opportunities for greater energy efficiency. LB 978 requires the state to purchase or lease Energy Star-rated appliances unless it is not cost effective

to do so. LB 997 requires counties and cities to include an energy component in their planning process, including evaluation of renewable energy opportunities and promotion of energy efficiency. The manner in which communities are planned has a great impact on energy usage. LB 978 and LB 997 were both introduced by Sen. Heath Mello and both were passed by the legislature and signed by the governor.

Another bill we supported that relates to renewable energy is LB 1014, introduced by Sen. Ken Haar. LB 1014 sets up a process for performance pay for teachers to be funded from renewable energy leases on state school lands. LB 1014 was passed by the legislature and signed by the governor.

We took a neutral position on LB 1010, which provides a process for Natural Resources Districts to use eminent domain to obtain land for trails purposes. I worked with Sen. Dave Pankonin, the introducer

of the bill, on amendments to the bill. The final product was an improvement over the original bill and a huge improvement over last year's proposal that would have prohibited the use of eminent domain for trails purposes. LB 1010 was passed by the legislature and signed by the governor.

We were also neutral on LB 764, which OKs the use of the management planning process in basins that are not fully appropriated. However, authorizing a planning process to bring together necessary parties to prevent depletions of aquifers and maintain adequate stream flows is a positive idea, and I had intended to recommend support for LB 764 had the bill not advanced so quickly. It was passed by the legislature and signed by the governor.

Finally, we have continued to develop a level of credibility and respect in the Legislature for the Sierra Club. I have repeatedly stated my recognition of the leadership of Sen.

Chris Langemeier in getting LB 1048 through the legislative process. He has returned the favor by telling me how much he has appreciated my work in this process and the support of the Sierra Club on this issue. Sen. Haar is obviously one of our best champions in the Legislature and I work closely with him on many issues. In addition, Sens. Mello, Avery, White, Pirsch, Nordquist and Pankonin are just some of the legislators who have sought our support and input in the legislative process.

The annual Sierra Club and Cinnamon Roll was again a success, with many staffers and senators telling me how much they enjoyed the cinnamon rolls, and they received a brochure and a list of legislative priorities at the same time. Next year, I hope to expand it to make it a full-fledged lobby day, perhaps with other conservation organizations and with lots of constituents there to lobby their legislators.

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Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35

Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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Conservation Fusion seeks to educate youth, protect diversity

conceived in 1998 as a way to map the island's wildlife, the zoo's Madagascar Biodiversity and Biogeography Project (MBP) has evolved into a comprehensive study using population genetics, systematics, ecological monitoring, and community outreach to preserve endemic flora and fauna populations.

Shannon will describe the reasons for the zoo's research, techniques, including how they capture lemurs with blow darts, and the outreach program used to teach the local population how to prevent deforestation.

Susie McGuire started a local NGO (non-governmental

organization) based in Omaha to manage some of the educational components of the zoo's Madagascar project. The organization, called Conservation Fusion, has the goal of connecting the children of Madagascar with local Omaha youth and educating them to protect and preserve the biodiversity of Madagascar.

Engberg and McGuire will speak about their experiences with these 'projects, their travels to Madagascar, and their continuing work in Omaha and Madagascar.

Please join the Sierra Club for a very interesting, informative and educational evening.

Sierra Club programs are free and open to the public.

For more information contact Mary at mary.green@nebraska.sierraclub.org, or (402) 556-1830.

June Sierra Club Program

Thursday, June 24, 7 p.m, location to be announced - We have a special program planned. Darrel Draper, one of the Nebraska Humanities Council's most popular performers, will do his historical re-enactment on Teddy Roosevelt -- the Conservation President. As chief executive from 1901 to 1909, Roosevelt signed legislation establishing five national parks. Roosevelt

also enacted the Antiquities Act of June 8, 1906. While not creating a single park itself, the Antiquities Act enabled Roosevelt and his successors to proclaim historic landmarks, historic or prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest as national monuments. In 1903, Teddy Roosevelt teamed up with Sierra Club founder John Muir for an extended hiking trip in Yosemite. Historians note that after his hike with Muir, Roosevelt developed great interest and urgency for preserving the nation's remaining natural treasures. The general public is welcome to attend this educational program.

Continued from page 1

Guidelines for EcoCampaigns

ness today, it is easy to get sidetracked into any number of issues. Clarity of purpose is critical.

2. Never let anger take over. Certainly there have been occasions when my opposition's acts and words have aroused my wrath, but I've tried not to let negative reactions divert me from my goals.

3. Keep the land from being chopped up. Whether the issue is a planned subdivision or clear-cut logging, the watershed must be protected. I learned this lesson during my early attempts to create a national park in California's redwoods, when the integrity of watersheds was neglected.

4. Early compromise is the downfall of any conservation campaign. Proponents of the either/or philosophy argue that it can lead to a speedier resolution. But early compromise can kill a park or wilderness designation, either before legislation gets to the Capitol or after

inadequate borders are in place. Ask for what you want and most likely you will still end up with less than the optimum, but it will be closer to the mark. Compromise may be inevitable but must be tolerated with reluctance.

5. Environmental organizations must present a unified front. Internal disputes will arise but are best kept behind the scenes. There is no easier excuse for Congress to avoid action than the opportunity to say: If you guys can't make up your minds, how are we supposed to?

6. Finally, once you have taken hold of a project, follow through. Campaigns may reach climaxes, but they do not end.

Thank you Dr. Edgar Wayburn!!!

Any Sierra Club member who would like to read the book, "Your Land and Mine, Evolution of a Conservationist," is welcome to borrow my copy.

Conserve resources and be part of green economy

Learn how your home or business can be part of a green economy.

EcoStores Nebraska, in cooperation with Metropolitan Community College (MCC), is offering three cutting-edge workshops on making buildings more economical and ecological. All are in room 249 at the MCC Connector Building, 27th and Q streets.

Deconstruction and Construction Waste Reduction, Friday, May 21 from 9 a.m to noon. This workshop informs and inspires on strategies to recycle and re-use materials where possible and to deconstruct rather than demolish buildings.

Retrofitting Buildings for Efficiency, Friday, May 21 from 1 to 4 p.m. This workshop is about retrofitting buildings for greater energy and resource efficiency.

Auditing Buildings for Energy Efficiency at Saturday, May 22 from 9 to noon. This workshop begins training for neighborhood-based energy auditors to identify resource conservation measures that provide the greatest economic and environmental benefits.

Registration is \$20 for each workshop or \$49 for all three workshops. Seating is limited. Register and pay by credit card by calling Metropolitan Community College's Central Registration Center at (402) 457-5231.

Sierra Club
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May 2010

Events

Stinson Park Party and Farmer's Market

Sundays, Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day weekend from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Aksarben Village (67th Street from Center to Mercy streets)

Come take part in the fun as Stinson Park's Farmer's Market features events all summer! There will be plenty of free concerts, fundraisers and activities to keep you entertained while Wohlner's grills burgers and brats, Godfather's Pizza serves pizza by the slice, and the most recent tenant of Aksarben Village, Jones Bros. Cupcakes,

sponsors a beer garden! Check out the website at www.aksarbenvillage.com to get information on each event and/or band.

Intro to Electric Vehicles

Thursdays, June 10 through Aug. 12 from 6 to 9:50 p.m., at Metro Community College

This course (SNRG 1210) will familiarize students with an overview of electric vehicles and prepare them for a career in a new transportation paradigm, one that is less dependent on petroleum and more dependent on electricity. The instructor is Bill Moore, editor of EV World.

Cost: \$192 for 4.0 credit hours Register by May 25 at www.mccneb.edu/schedule/classselect.asp?sterm=10/SS

Green Living Workshops

Starting Tuesday, June 15,

Metropolitan Community College (MCC) is offering Green Living Workshops starting this summer. Learn how to save money, improve your family's health and be good to the environment! These workshops include current, practical information on topics such as food, water, energy, transportation, 'stuff' (solid waste and recycling), economics, gardening and yards. Different Green Living Workshops will be offered each quarter, including: Introduction to Living Green-Living Well, Backyard Chickens: Chicken Tractoring in Suburbia and Rain Barrel Design and Construction.

To register, call (402) 457-5231 or visit www.mccneb.edu/ce/classselect.asp?sTerm=

10/JU&typeofclass=ALL and search for home and garden.

For more information, contact Daniel Lawse, coordinator of sustainable practices, at (402) 738-4564 or djlawse@mccneb.edu.

Chapter Excom Meeting

The next meeting of the Chapter ExCom will be June 26 in Lincoln. The ExCom will discuss policies, issues, procedures, and activities for the Chapter. The chapter lobbyist and the various issue chairs will give reports.

All chapter members are welcome to attend the meeting and to participate in the discussions. For contact info, go to http://sierranebraska.org/?page_id=23

To list an event or activity in the newsletter and online, e-mail the particulars to MoValSierraNews@yahoo.com or mail it to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 4664 Omaha, NE 68104 For more information, call Scott at (402) 981-7819

Nebraska Chapter mailing address: P. O. Box 4664, Omaha, NE 68104; phone 402-551-9480 <http://sierranebraska.org>