

ALABAMA WILDFLOWER SOCIETY

BLANCHE DEAN CHAPTER

June 2012

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Monday , June 4 –Rebekah Pine-Parker from the Freshwater Land Trust will be our speaker... join us at the BBG starting at 7:00PM

I will be discussing the mission of the Freshwater Land Trust with an update of our newest properties and projects as well as status updates of our programs including the newly unveiled Red Rock Ridge and Valley Trail System.

~Rebekah Pine-Parker

Rebekah Pine-Parker

Rebekah is from Huntsville and had the blessing of growing up surrounded by nature on Monte Sano Mountain. She attended Birmingham-Southern College and received a B.A. in urban environmental studies in 2009. After completing her undergraduate degree, Rebekah continued her education and received a M.S. in geography with a concentration in physical geography from the University of

Alabama. She was a member of the Forest Dynamics Lab at the University of Alabama. Currently, she is the Land Steward at the Freshwater Land Trust. As Land Steward, Rebekah spends a great deal of time on the FWLT's many properties performing site inspections and restoration projects. Rebekah enjoys spending her free time relaxing and playing Frisbee with her three-year old chocolate lab,



Upcoming Meetings

- **Monday , June 4 –Rebekah Pine-Parker from the Freshwater Land Trust will be our speaker for our meeting at the BBG starting at 7:00PM**
- **Monday , September 10 – Meeting at the BBG starting at 7:00P**
- **Field Trip to High Falls to be scheduled for the fall (Michelle)**
- **Hope to schedule fall trip to the ecoscape at BSC.(Roald)**



Forever Wild Land Trust at risk in Nov vote:

Alabamians will vote Nov. 6 whether to keep funding the 20-year-old program that preserves forest and marsh lands for public use such as hunting and hiking.

Within the past week there have been two newspaper articles advocating for the extension of the Forever Wild Land Trust, and we want to be sure that you have seen them. Please find the articles at

www.alabamiansforeverwild.org

We will continue to keep you updated on the campaign efforts and future news stories.

This first article was written by Dennis Sherer with the Florence Times-Daily and appeared on Friday, May 11th. He wrote a great piece detailing the program while highlighting many of the tracts that are relatively close to the Shoals area. At the end, he bluntly states that discontinuing Forever Wild will not solve the state's budget shortfall.

Additionally, the Monday, 5/14 edition of the Times-Daily further promotes Forever Wild in their short section called "Hits and Misses" where there applaud certain stories and admonish others. The quick piece reads as follows:

"Thumbs down to the groups in Alabama that are trying to hijack funds from the Forever Wild program for other uses. Alabamians will vote Nov. 6 whether to keep funding the 20-year-old program that preserves forest and marsh lands for public use such as hunting and hiking. About 16 percent of this land is in Colbert and Lauderdale counties. The original Forever Wild funding bill passed with 83 percent of the vote, but now groups want to use the money for other purposes."

Lastly, the Gadsden Times their support of Forever Wild in the Sunday, May 13th paper. The paper highlights many of the main points used in support of Forever Wild and encourages readers to vote in favor of the extension.

Thank you for your continued support, and as always, please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Bee Frederick
Alabamians for Forever Wild
Campaign Manager
Office: [205.969.1331](tel:205.969.1331)

Minutes of April 2, 2012

The meeting commenced at approximately 7:10 p.m. on the grounds of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, being called to order by President Linda Sherk.

Items of business included an announcement that the Ruffner Nature Preserve would be having a plant sale on April 14 from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Treasurer Maryalys Griffis reported that we had \$1322.46 in available funds.

Tonight's presentation was delivered by Ms. Kate LeCroy, a senior biology major and Harrison Scholar at Birmingham-Southern College. She was awarded the 2011 Blanche Dean Scholarship of \$1500.00 from the Alabama Wildflower Society for a portion of her work described in the presentation. Also of note, she was one of only eight students nationwide to receive a Preparing Leaders and Nurturing Tomorrow's Scientists (PLANTS) Grant from the Botanical Society of America. This assisted her in attending the Botany Conference in Providence, R.I., perhaps THE energizer for her soon-thereafter ventures. Although of petite stature and a whopping nine days shy of age 22, it was readily apparent that she was both knowledgeably and intellectually precocious.

Ms. LeCroy began studies and exercises in plant identification, ecology, field trips, and botanical surveys under the tutelage of Dr. Peter Van Zandt, Birmingham-Southern College (BSC) Visiting Assistant Professor of Biology. Much was also in collaboration with Dr. Larry Davenport of BSC.

The study sites for Ms. LeCroy's presentation were Birmingham's Ruffner Nature Preserve and the Bibb County Glades, near West Blocton.

Historically, Ruffner has three limestone quarries, one significantly larger than the other two. Iron ore and other mining ceased in the 1950's. While scanning and surveying this larger quarry, Ms. LeCroy spotted a plant in October that was a wonder and mystery to her. It was discovered to be a smooth blue aster (*Symphotrichum*), this being confirmed by Dan Spaulding, curator at the Anniston Museum of Natural History. It was the first such discovery in Jefferson County, being known to exist in only eight-ten other Alabama counties!

With research experience at the Univ. of VA in the summer of 2011, and interaction with other scientific and secondary school groups, Ms. LeCroy became keenly interested in the matter of pollination, particularly that of moths. It is one of her current primary goals to diligently study this topic with the analysis and identification of pollen. She has actively pursued her interest at the Bibb County Glades. What is the moths' degree of pollination? Is visitation more the activity than pollination? Hopefully, the answers can be published in a journal.

Ms. LeCroy will soon be entering the University of Pittsburgh to pursue her Ph.D. Her focus will be Ecology and Evolution (in Biology). Pittsburgh has a strong emphasis on public outreach, strongly emphasizing habitat preservation and similar peripheral and related aspects of the big picture.

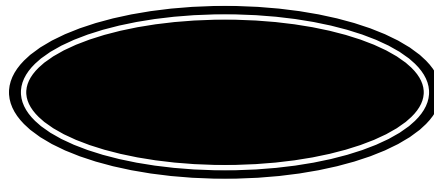
The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:50 p.m. The presentation was nothing short of spectacular! We will next convene in the evening of June 4.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles E. Gleaton, Recorder

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