

It's Our Nature

Newsletter of the Fox Valley Sierra Group www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org/foxvalley Vol. 05 Issue 3



JUNE 9

Mushrooms: Their Culture and How to Identify the Good from the Bad as You Explore and Enjoy Wisconsin's Wild Places

Dr. Stephen Bentivenga, Mycologist, Department of Biology and Microbiology, UW-Oshkosh, will share his knowledge of Wisconsin

fungi and mushrooms. He will help us identify the edible and the poisonous mushrooms seen on outings exploring and enjoying Wisconsin's wild places. Held indoors.

> Program is held at 7:00 pm at Bubolz Nature Preserve on Lyndale in Appleton

Upcoming Meetings

JULY 14 FVSG Annual Picnic. See back page for details.

AUGUST No General Meeting. Enjoy your summer!

Green Receives Sierra Club Award

by Alan Lawrence

An email from Club headquarters in early May announced an employee recognition award to Emily Green. This is a name that some of our members will recognize. Emily works for the Sierra Club Midwest Office and has been involved in Fox River PCB cleanup efforts. She received the Mike McCloskey Award which is bestowed upon an employee whose work has reflected and strengthened the meaning, purpose, and mission of the Sierra Club, and who has contributed to the prestige of the Sierra Club in the world community. This award honors a distinguished record of achievement.

In her nine years with the Sierra Club, Emily has helped lead the Great Lakes program to regional prominence. After coauthoring the initial draft of the Great Lakes Legacy Act, she used her unique diplomatic skills to garner wide support for the Act including the Council of Great Lakes Industries and ultimately succeeded in bringing millions into the region to clean up toxic sites. Emily played a significant role in the largest cleanup of contaminated sediments the nation has yet seen, dredging the PCBs from Wisconsin's Fox River. From cleaning up coal plants in Minnesota to bringing Sierra Club US and Sierra Club Canada together to protect the waters of the Great Lakes, Emily goes above and beyond each and every day to protect our air, water, and lands.

Environmental Award Nominees



Randy Korb

From the moment Randy Korb graduated with a degree in Environmental Engineering from the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, he was a man with a mission. A mission to have everyone share his excitement in nature and the outdoors and to protect those fragile bits of life that make our earth more beautiful.

Through one means or another, Randy has been an educator. His job titles are myriad, but his enthusiasm and passion are always bent on educating others to love these small things that cannot protect themselves. His books on butterflies and frogs are delightful excursions into their world, and anyone who has followed Randy into a field of alfalfa waving a butterfly net knows that the Pied Piper is not dead.

His tours have taken him to Mexico in chase of the Monarch butterfly and all over the state in pursuit of frogs. Randy believes that the young people of the world will decide the future of the natural world. So his tours, teachings, and research are bedded in children so that they may touch these miracles of life, and let them touch their hearts. If he can accomplish this, and I know he can, he will have fulfilled his mission.

Katherine Rill

Katherine Rill has devoted her life to the preservation and protection of habitat and the inhibitors. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin, she started her career in teaching biology at Clintonville High School. She immediately became interested in protecting the wetlands in the area and therefore began her alternate career.

Moving on to Oshkosh, she was an active member in so many organizations that planned, protected, and promoted wildlife, land protection, and civil rights of landowners, they are too numerous to mention. Rather than striking out as an individual, she gathered others in, and was instrumental in the planning and use of two nature centers in the Oshkosh area. Her abilities to write grants and fulfill needs in the educational system of the city are great. By the way, she is still active.

Her leadership was integral in the starting of the Winnebago Audubon Society, a group that she led for many years. Her attendance at and with many of the conservation groups in the state has tended to keep them on target and aware of the many problems facing our DNR in the past as well as the future. 05 Issue 3 June-Aug 2005 It's Our Nature is published five times a year by the Fox Valley Group of the Sierra Club, 815 E. Washington Street, Appleton, WI 54911-5660. Subscription included with membership dues.

Vol.

We look for leaders who hold forth with loud voices and shiny swords, but often the most effective ones are those who continually battle with soft voices and elegant words that bind groups together for the common good without a lot of fanfare. Katherine Rill has done just that, and the state of Wisconsin is better for her presence.

Please Update...

Your "Write Place" Information. Due to recent computer "upgrades" (it was Rich's fault!) we have completely lost our "Write Place" alert email address list. Please REsubscribe to our local Sierra Group "The Write Place" alerts email list by sending an email to rich.krieg@wisconsin.sierraclub.org with the message "Subscribe to Write Place". You will continue to receive occasional "calls to action" to help protect the Fox Valley's environment.



Search For the Source: Neenah Slough

by Sandy Krupka

One might ask "Why would anyone want to paddle the Neenah Slough?" Gary and I decided to try to find the beginning, or is it the end, of the Neenah Slough. We figured we'd be back in an hour. Boy, was *I* dumb! At least I was smart enough to take along a water bottle, unlike someone else I know.

Sunday was the perfect day to get out the canoe. Even though it was spring there was no wind and temps were in the 60's. We put in at Main Street where the Slough flows into Lake Butte Des Morts. Now, what do you think one might see on such an adventure?

1. Lots of fishermen who thought we were scaring the fish away by going

by. I was not the only dumb one that day. I wonder if they actually eat what they catch in there. Yuck!

- 2. Lots of fisherkids who were excited to see a boat on the slough and more excited to tell us about all the fish they were catching. One little boy held up 7 fingers when I asked him how many he caught.
- 3. Lots of trash. The usual: car tires and every beverage container that you can imagine. The unusual: shopping carts and heating ducts. I sure hope the city is cleaning some of this up on city-wide cleanup day.
- 3. At this point we were starting to get out of town and what do you think we'd see? Golf Balls! On the shore



and in the water. What excitement! I could hardly contain myself. This would be a little kids paradise. One gentleman thought he would come down off the golf course and into the reeds to take a leak. Lucky for him he was still in the process of unzipping his pants when we went by. We sure surprised him!

- 4. Muskrats in Neenah? Yup, we saw 'em.
- 5. Turtles too quick to get a picture. *(Continued on Page 5)*

From the Chair

Saturday I had the pleasure of helping maintain the lce Age Trail near Hartman Creek State Park. This service is always fun. For years Club member Dale Schaber has been organizing several trail service workdays each summer. It is a way to enjoy the great outdoors and know that you are helping others to also enjoy the trail. We repainted trail blazes, added new signs, and cleared branches that interfered with the trail. But it is more than just work. This service outing affords the opportunity to make new friends, or further strengthen friendships. We often end our day eating ice cream together.

Unfortunately we are all aware that not everyone believes the environment is important. And that continues to be a cause of concern for our members. Sometimes it appears that the environment doesn't have enough friends in government. There always seem to be setbacks of some sort. Sometimes these anger me. Sometimes I'm just frustrated by ignorance or greed. Sometimes it overwhelms me into apathy.

A recent setback concerns the opening of roadless forest areas. The Clinton administration created rules to protect large sections of undeveloped forest, termed "roadless wilderness". The Bush administration has been trying to reverse these rules, and seems to be making progress towards that goal. In early May new rules opened up this land, making National Forests a State issue instead of a National issue. It will be up to state governors to decide whether to protect National forests. This might seem reasonable, but it means Wisconsin citizens will have little influence in protecting the environments of other states. States with small populations will be strongly influenced by the economics of commercial interests.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one battleground that has been receiving much national attention for years. It is a spectacular, fragile place with oil beneath it. The oil companies have long wanted permission to harvest the oil, while environmentalists believe this cannot be done without destroying the place. Furthermore, many believe the costs are too high and the benefits are too low; it will take years to get the oil which will then equal only one or two percent of our nation's consumption. The Bush administration is making it a priority to open this wilderness area to oil exploitation.

Years ago environmentalists said that oil was a finite resource that would eventually come into short supply. We were ignored. Now our consumption is exceeding our resources. Environments are exploited and wars are fought.

What to do? Neither the roadless rule nor the ANWR rules are done deals yet. Make sure your legislators know your thoughts on these issues. Then get outside and do some service. At least that will make you feel good for awhile.

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

- Alan Lawrence, FVSG Chair alan.lawrence@wisconsin.sierraclub.org

Auction Raises Record High

by Jan Moldenhauer

Thank you, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!!!!! for a very successful auction. This year we raised over \$1700 dollars - the most in the recent history of the Fox Valley Sierra Group! It could not have been done without every one of you. To mention names, and I *am* going to mention names, I would have to start with our magnificent Randy Connour who always runs a great auction.

Do not forget the names of those behind the scenes: Maureen Birk, Nancy Brown-Koeller, Chris Calhoun, Nancy Graham, Neil Koenemann, Kelly Krupka, Diane Mandler, Jaci Mueller, and Sally Peck.

Please remember to support our commercial sponsors:

- Gingerbread Haus, Medina
- Great Harvest Bread Co., Neenah
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- Kitz & Pfeil, Appleton
- Manderfield's Bakery, Appleton
- Mountain Bay, Appleton
- Salon Mode Beauty Salon, Oshkosh
- Seven Angels Restaurant, Appleton
- Vertical Stronghold, Appleton

For all of you who contributed objects or services, food, and most of all, money, the auction was a night that will be remembered. It occurs to me that we all cannot be out in the trenches, standing on street corners passing out leaflets, or rushing Madison or Washington. The auction is something that we can all do and have fun doing it! Personally I always look forward to the food and goodies as well as the unique things that come up for auction. Start thinking about next year! It was good to see some new faces, but I must admit, I do savor the old.

Thank you again!

Photos by: Kelly Krupka & Dale Schaber

















Trekkin' with Dale

National Trails Day, June 4, 2005, is an annual nationwide event sponsored by the American Hiking Society. It is always celebrated on the first Saturday in June. This year's theme is "Take the Path to a Healthier You". Improve your health by getting outdoors on a trail!

On June 4th you might celebrate the day by walking, running, biking, skating, exercising or commuting on one of the five state trails in and around the Fox Valley. The five trails are the Wiouwash Trail, the Fox River Trail, the Mountain Bay Trail, the Ahnapee Trail and the Tomorrow River Trail.

A new trail currently being developed is the Paper Trail. This multiuse trail will connect communities in the Fox Valley with each other. It will also connect parks and nature preserves in the area. The Paper Trail will eventually encircle the Fox Cities. For more information on the Paper Trail access the Fox Cities Greenways website: http://www.focol.org/greenways/. For information on the five multiuse state trails in and around the Fox Valley access the Wisconsin Department of Tourism website: http://www.travelwisconsin.com/ or the Wisconsin DNR website: http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/.

Please note that many state trails require a trail pass for anyone age 16 and over. Self-pay stations are usually located at the trail parking lots.

One of the fastest growing recreational activities is bird watching. The Wisconsin DNR is developing five regional

birding guides for Wisconsin. Each guide will be available in a printed or online format. The regional trails will use existing roads to guide bird watchers to selected bird and wildlife watching areas.

Currently the guide to the Lake Superior North Woods Region is available. On June 3 the guide to the Mississippi/Chippewa Rivers Region will be available. During the next three years the remaining guides will be completed: Lake Michigan, Central Sands Prairie and Southern Savannah. A "Checklist of Wisconsin Birds" booklet is available now.

For more information on the Great Wisconsin Birding and Nature Trail access www.wisconsinbirds.org/trail or www.travelwisconsin.com for the state's tourism birding section.

Governor Jim Doyle has designated June '05 an Invasive Species Awareness Month. Invasive plants and animals threaten native

June is Invasive Species Awareness Month

Wisconsin ecosystems. FVSG is currently removing Garlic Mustard in the spring and Buckthorn in the fall. More information on Invasive Species Awareness Month is at: www.invasivespecies.wi.gov/awareness.

In June 2005 the University of Wisconsin Press is publishing Invasive Plants of the Midwest: An Illustrated Guide to Their Identification and Control by Elizabeth J. Czarapata. Paper and hardcover editions will be available. Contact the University of Wisconsin Press at http://www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/books/3601.htm for more information.

Enjoy the Wisconsin summer! See you on a trail on National Trails Day!

Muir Letters Available Online

Last month the Wisconsin Historical Society published online a rare collection of John Muir's letters. The letters span a fifty-year period of his life. They document how John Muir evolved into the world's famous environmentalist and founder of the Sierra Club. Access Turning Points in Wisconsin History at:

http://www.wisconsinhistory. org/turningpoints/

Search for "John Muir's Letters" and click onto the links.

Slough (Continued from Page 3)

- 6. Deer I got a picture of him but it didn't really turn out.
- 7. Carp they create this awesome cloud in the water when they take off and stir up the sediment. It looks like a miniature atomic bomb cloud.
- 8. BIG Northern Pike (2 footers) lots of them! They were sunning themselves in the water. One scared the sh#! out of me. He was laying in the reeds and when we went by he took off and made a loud racket. Gary thought I was going to jump out of the boat.
- 9. Ducks, geese and egrets. They didn't

think much of us being in their territory. I think they were swearing at us.

Well, we paddled for 5 hours traveling only 4 1/2 miles on the Neenah Slough. We went under 5 bridges squeezing our way through the tunnels. We portaged twice where trees were blocking the waterway. We had one 90 degree turn in a 3 foot wide stream where we almost didn't make it past. Gary got wet feet because he was nice enough to manage it so mine stayed dry. We never did find the end. How disappointing. We'll have to finish this adventure another day. So much for a nice easy afternoon paddle. Although, I wouldn't trade a minute of it for anything.



Saturday, July 16 & August 20

Prairie Tours. 11:00 a.m. With hundreds of acres of restored prairie to enjoy, we're sure to find some to suit your tastes. Come and hike through the prairies at the Brillion Nature Center and enjoy the grasses, forbs, and many grassland birds. Cost: Members of the BNC free; non-members \$5.

B Ub0/Z Appleton

Friday, June 10

Horicon Marsh Trip. 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Journey with us to the most famous marsh in Wisconsin - The Horicon Marsh. We will learn about the history, management, and birds of the marsh. We will also take a pontoon boat out onto the marsh to do some birding. Bring binoculars and a bag lunch. Cost: \$30/nonmember, \$25/ member.

Saturday, June 18

Monarch Larva Monitoring Class.

9:00-1:00 p.m. Are you interested in learning about Monarchs? Would you like to collect valuable information that can be used to manage these beautiful creatures? Participants will be provided hands-on training in monarch monitoring protocol, get the latest finding on monarch biology and their populations. Cost: \$2/person for off-site monitors, FREE to those monitoring at the Preserve. **Register by June 13**.

Tuesday, July 19

Nature Mapping. 6:00-8:00 p.m. Everyday people observe wildlife. Now you can be part of collecting and reporting your sightings. Nature Mapping is a system of documenting the location of wildlife observation on a state and national level. The information you report can be used for resource management purposes, scientific studies, and environmental education by the Ecological Inventory and Monitoring Section of the Wisconsin DNR, along with state and local agencies. Cost: Free. Register by July 15th.

Saturday, August 6

Geocache Workshop. 9:00 a.m. – noon. This class will introduce the participants to the geocache website and the basics of geocaching. You will learn how to download coordinates onto your GPS unit, class is geared for the beginner. Experts will be on hand to assist you. We will put our knowledge to use searching for hidden caches on the Preserve. If you have a GPS unit, please bring it (not required). Several GPS units will be available for use at this workshop. Cost: \$5/person.

Heckrodt Menasha

Saturday, July 16

Take a Walk on the Wild Side. 1:30-3:00 p.m. Light-hearted interactive hike with a naturalist. Explore the Reserve as you hop like a frog, sing like a bird, and slither like a snake. 1 1/2 mile hike is easy and stroller-friendly. Cost: \$2/person. Registration required.

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Late Summer Blooms. 1:30-3:00 p.m. Walk the boardwalk with a naturalist and learn about late summer flowers. We'll identify them, learn medicinal uses, and hear a folktale or two. Cost: \$2/person. Registration reguired.



Monday, June 13

Learn About the 1000 Islands Bald Eagles. 9:00-10:30 a.m. For all ages. Hike to eagle nest will be included.

Thursday, June 16

Bird House Building. 9:30-10:30 a.m. For all ages. Bring a hammer. Cost: \$1. Must register 2 weeks in advance of date.

Thursday, June 23 & July 14

Crayfish & Critter Hunt. 9:30-11:00 a.m. For all ages. Wear tennis or water shoes to walk in the river.

Tuesday, July 19

Meet the Animals Day. 9:30-10:30 a.m. For all ages. Dream Acres Traveling Petting Zoo will bring a Wallaby, Iguana, Coatimundi, etc.

Thursday, July 21

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!

Please charge my
MasterCard
Visa
AMEX Exp. Date _____

INDIVIDUAL

\$25 \$39

575

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524

□\$24

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support

our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$750

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S1000

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Check enclosed, made payable to Sierra Club

Bird Feeder Building. 9:30-10:30 a.m. For all ages. Bring a hammer. Cost: \$1. Must register 2 weeks in advance of date.

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532



America needs a smart energy policy that increases our energy security and protects the environment. There is a better way. Congress should pass legislation that cuts our country's dependence on oil, increases our use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power, protects our public lands, and modernizes the electricity grid to prevent future blackouts.

Join the Sierra Club today and add your voice to protect the planet.



Enclose check and mail to: SierraClub, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968

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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



June 2 (Thursday)

Paddle excursion to Point Sable. Bird watch and explore the shoreline and lagoons of Point Sable on the eastern shore of Green Bay. This is an area of winding channels and wetlands, part of which is Nature Conservancy land. We'll watch for the impressive white pelicans that are residing in the area and observe the changes to the shoreline with the recent inundation of zebra mussel shells. If we're as fortunate as we were last year, we'll have an "up close and personal" experience with spawning carp. (Churning white water, prehistoric looking creatures, free shore lunch leaping into your boat!)

This is a flat water trip, but the Bay can develop high winds and waves. The trip will be cancelled if conditions become dangerous. Trip leaves from my land at 7:00 pm, with a leisurely paddle to the point, time to explore, and return by dark. The evening will conclude with a bonfire on the shore. Soft drinks (and bonfire) provided by trip leader. If you don't want to paddle, you can still join us. Come relax on the shore, tend the fire and enjoy the view. BYO: Canoe or kayak, paddles, life vest, etc. Also bug repellent (!!), binoculars, camera, beverages. Please call to let leader know if you are interested. Some boat sharing may be possible. Maureen Birk (920) 468-7252; 3381 Nicolet Dr, Green Bay

June 4

Ice Age Trail Workday. Joint workdays between the Fox Valley Sierra Group and local Ice Age Trail Chapters. Meet at Hartman Creek State Park west of Waupaca at 9:30 AM. Bring a lunch, water, work gloves, and mosquito and tick repellent. If you have a lopper or a pruning saw, please bring it with you. *Dale Schaber 739-6041*

June 11

Bicycle from the University of Wisconsin Green Bay campus to Wequiock Falls just a few miles north of Green Bay. Wequiock is a pretty and under-appreciated falls and can be rather spectacular when the flow is heavy early in the year. In the glen below the falls we will look for early season flowers and learn a little of the geologic forces that formed the layers of dolomite exposed by the relentless erosion of the river. *Charlie Paine 739-1900*

June 11-12

Wolf River Annual Solo Whitewater Canoe Clinic. Grade II. Car Camp. For reasonably

experienced tandem whitewater paddlers or novice solo paddlers who want to begin whitewater. This is for open canoes, not kayaks. Paddlers must provide their own properly equipped canoes. Space is limited.. Fee: \$30 plus camping charges for the weekend. (No refunds of clinic fees). *Rich Krieg (920) 497-8004*

June 18

Annual Quiet Water Canoe Clinic. Day Trip. 9:00 am - 3:00 pm. This clinic is designed to prepare paddlers for safer and more enjoyable quiet water paddling. Clinic topics: basic paddling strokes, practice of strokes, paddling games, canoe rescue, and more. Fee: \$25. Minimum age 14 years. Need to provide own equipment. Held at Lake Wingra Canoe and Sailing Center in Madison. Preregistration by June 1 required. Space is limited.

Meg Nelson prairiesmoke@juno.com

July 9

Bicycle the Wild Goose Trail from Fond du Lac. This rail-trail passes through small towns and the north end of the Horicon Marsh. We will make a stop at the Horicon Marsh Nature center to learn about the history and ecology of the Marsh. *Alan Lawrence (920)* 730-9515

July 16

Canoe the Peshtigo River Trail from the city of Peshtigo to the mouth of the river on the shore of Green Bay. This river route passes through areas rich in historic significance and through the Bloch Oxbow State Natural Area. We will pass a rock weir built by Menominee Indians to catch fish, former farm fields overgrown by red oak, white oak, aspen, and various pines, and the ruins of the Peshtigo Harbor Mill, one of the largest on Lake Michigan in its day. We will look for two man-made Osprey nesting platforms installed in the marsh in the early 1990's. If we are lucky we will see some of the many bird and mammal species that live in the marsh. This will be an approximately four hour canoe trip, depending, of course, on current, wind, and the energy of the paddlers. Charlie Paine 739-1900

August 12-15

Bike Milwaukee's Oak Leaf trails: 99 miles of trails, 15,000 acres, 140 parks & parkways. We will visit the Mitchell Domes, Whitnell Gardens, the zoo & much more. Join us for 1 day or four. *Steven Meyer (920) 684-4174*

September 17

Ice Age Trail Workday. Joint workdays between the Fox Valley Sierra Group and local Ice Age Trail Chapters. Meet at Hartman Creek State Park west of Waupaca at 9:30 AM. Bring a lunch, water, work gloves, and mosquito and tick repellent. If you have a lopper or a pruning saw, please bring it with you. *Dale Schaber 739-6041*

September 25

Bike the Mariner's bike trail 15 or 30 miles. We start at the parking lot at the Manitowoc Library and bike to Rawley Point in Point Beach State Park. In Two Rivers the trail runs close to the Lake Michigan, providing great views. We will stop at the historic Washington House Museum - a 1850's immigrant hotel and home of Berner's Ice Cream Parlor. *Maureen Birk (920) 468-7252 Steven Meyer* (920) 684-4174

Times and meeting locations of Outings can change. Always check with a trip leader at least 24 hours before the outing. Upon arrival all participants must sign a Release of Liability form.

The outing of a lifetime... Don't Miss It!





High Cliff State Park

This gem of a park on the Niagara Escarpment has hiking trails with striking vistas, marina, camping, swimming, an Indian Mound site and nature center.

To visit the park, a State Park sticker is required for all vehicles - or you can hike, bike, or boat in.

We will have our picnic in the lower shelter near the beach.

FVSG PICNIC JULY 14

Meet Around 5:30 p.m.

- Please bring: beverages • a dish to pass
- your own plate & utensils

Grills will be fired up. Please bring your own meat to cook. State park sticker is required for all vehicles. Call Chris Calhoun with questions at 993-1446





Sweet Spring

Deadline...

for submitting materials for the next newsletter is August 7!

Anyone can submit articles, photos, poems, trip reports, etc.



It's Our Nature is printed on 50% recycled fiber, 30% post-consumer recycled, and should be recycled.

California Quarter Honors John Muir

You may have noticed an interesting coin recently. The new (2005) California quarter honors John Muir, the founder of Sierra Club. It also shows Yosemite and a California condor.

"Muir lit the torch of conservation in our state," said California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, who chose the final design. "He has inspired



Muir emigrated from Scotland as a boy. He lived for awhile in Wisconsin, and the Wisconsin chapter of Sierra Club is honored to bear his name. Muir explored and wrote about much of the western United States in his lifetime. His advocacy helped launch the national parks system and he founded the Sierra Club.

"John Muir literally coined conservation as we know it and so it's particularly fitting that we have placed him on the California quarter," Sierra Club executive director Carl Pope said in a statement.

To learn more, please visit the John Muir exhibit on the Sierra Club website: http://www.sierraclub.org/john muir exhibit/

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