



Illinois Soil Classifiers Association Newsletter

Winter-December 2022

Upcoming Events:

Hydric Soils April 23-24,
Workshop 2023

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Message from the President

Submitted by Liz Miernicki

Dear ISCA member,

Even though spooky season has passed, I'd like to share a short story about a murder mystery involving an unlucky amateur soil scientist. My idea for the story came from a conversation I had with my soil judging students. Around Halloween, they approached me for an opportunity for extra credit. As a fan of the holiday, I said, "Go find Cyril Hopkins in the cemetery on the southside of campus". Surprisingly, the three of them didn't find this quest too weird and were glad to have the chance to score some extra credit. I knew they could handle that level of spookiness. This assignment left me thinking about how a soil scientist may be a perfect criminal for a murder mystery story! We often work alone, and our equipment collection is perfectly suited to commit crimes? No better set up than that! Enjoy!

Murder weapon revealed in soil profile description

Marengo County, AL.

Update regarding recent death of soil scientist James Belknap

Wayne Drummer has been taken into custody for the murder of his co-worker, James Belknap. Drummer and Belknap, both soil scientists, were tasked to update soil survey maps in the northeastern portion of Marengo County this summer. Belknap's body was recovered from a shallow grave during yesterday's rainstorm. Authorities were able to locate the body using cadaver dogs. Belknap's scent was picked up by all dogs on the edge of a woodland, where police discovered a single index finger protruding from a crack at the soil surface. During questioning, police footage captured Drummer muttering nonsense about how he didn't take the shrink-swell potential of the Vertisol into account while burying Belknap. The only other piece of information Drummer was willing to discuss was the official soil series description he and Belknap completed the week before the murder. He mentioned he had to clean the description up a bit before submitting it for review. "The murder weapon is in the soil profile description", Drummer repeated multiple times to the officers. Other soil scientists were called to help with interpreting the soil profile description. It took less than 30 seconds

to discover that Drummer changed one of the horizon names to "BAt". When asked to confirm if a bat was the murder weapon, Drummer only laughed.



A mallet was discovered at the scene of the crime as well. This crime remains under investigation and details regarding the autopsy have yet to be released.

Liz Miernicki

Definitions for the soil terminology can be found on page 9.

Alabama expected to be top producing state for peanuts this year

With planting wrapped up 2 weeks ago, peanut farmers can now focus on weed management and of course, yield projections. Stan Sawmill, president of the Alabama Peanut Producers Association, expects to see yields averaging around 4,115 pounds per acre. This is a five percent increase

Call for Candidate Nominations

Submitted by Josh Litwiller

Call for Candidates

Any full member interested in serving on the executive council is welcome to submit his or her name to the nominations committee chair by Monday January 16. The positions up for election are President-Elect, Vice-President, and Treasurer. Thank you to those of you who have already agreed to serve. Please submit names to Josh Litwiller at joshualitwiller@gmail.com.

2022 Burt Ray Award Winner: Kyle A. Baldwin

Kyle is a Junior at UIUC from Aurora, Illinois. He is majoring in Natural Resources and Environment Science with a concentration of Environmental Science and Management while also pursuing minors in Spanish and Leadership. He is passionate about Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and the use of geospatial data, like surveyed soil profiles, to understand more about phenomena of our Earth. Long-term, Kyle's goal is to find sustainable solutions to the environmental issues affecting our world. Congratulations, Kyle!



Photo credit: Ron Collman



Photo credit: Liz Miernicki

ISCA Fall Meeting

Submitted by Ashtyn Stufflebeam

The annual fall meeting this year was held on Saturday, October 8th at the ISU Ropp Agriculture Building in Normal, Illinois. We had a total of 23 people attend. Dr. Rhykerd, a soils professor from ISU, started the meeting off for us, presenting on the geomorphology of the area. Then we heard from Alicia Metzger on Wetland Delineations and mitigation banks followed by Ashtyn Stufflebeam on her initial soil mapping detail in Wyoming. After lunch, Brandon Mueller presented about some educational outreach opportunities William Kreznor and Associates are involved with! Krispy Kreme provided coffee and donuts to start off our meeting. Lunch was provided by McAlister's deli. Following Brandon's presentation, we went out to the old ISU farm to check out the soil pits. These pits were dug for the Region 3 Collegiate soil judging competition, but we were able to use them for our meeting. There were 5 pits total, we set aside the time to look over two of them for the meeting, but members were able to check out the other pits as time allowed. The first pit we reviewed (Pit #4), got quite a few of our members talking. This pit was loess over a dense till (see picture) with till coming in at 49cm. The second pit we reviewed (Pit #2) was deep loess.



Alicia Metzger presenting

ISCA Fall Meeting



Pit 4

ISCA Hydric Soils Identification Course



Save the Date

April 27-28, 2023

Illinois Soil Classifiers Association Hydric Soil Identification Course

2 Day Hydric Soil Course will Cover:

Introduction to hydric soil identification
Soil formation, landscapes, and water flow
Using the hydric soil indicators
Disturbed and problem sites

Cost: \$200

Location: DuPage County Campus
field locations tbd

You Can Earn: 10 PDHs

For updates visit: Illinoissoils.org



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Submissions

This is **YOUR** newsletter. If you wish to submit material, here are some preferences.

- Send information by the last week of the month before the newsletter is scheduled to be published.
- Digital copy in Microsoft Word
- Use as little formatting (indents, bullets, charts) as possible. This increases the work to get it into Publisher. It can be done, but increases work load for the committee.

The Newsletter Committee reserves the right to make edits/corrections deemed appropriate

Publication Schedule

- Winter (February)
- Spring (May)
- Summer (August)
- Fall (November)



The Illinois Soil Classifiers Association is an organization promoting the wise use of the soil resource. ISCA is made up of professional soil classifiers in public service, private industry, and education and includes students and others interested in preserving soil. A soil classifier maps, describes and interprets soils according to a national system of soil classification. ISCA was established in 1975 and is affiliated with the American Registry of Certified Professionals in Agronomy, Crops, and Soils.

ISCA on Facebook

For those of you who want to keep in touch with ISCA members and others interested in soils in Illinois, join our group on Facebook. Search Facebook for "Illinois Soil Classifiers Association" and become a friend of ISCA. Anyone may post messages, announcements, pictures or events that may be of interest to our membership. This is a great venue for posting meetings of other associations or organizations who use soil information. This is also a great place to post pictures of recent projects, interesting soils, or maybe something unrelated to soils, but of general interest to the membership. If you don't have a Facebook account, it is easy to set up. Just go to www.facebook.com and follow the instructions. Unfortunately, the Facebook site is restricted on some government computers, so many of you will need to do this at home. Contact webmaster@illinoissoils.org if you have any difficulty in accessing the ISCA Group or if you have any questions or comments.



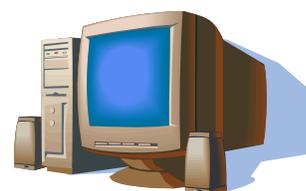
ISCA Newsletter Committee is looking for pictures of its members, past or present, to include in future newsletters.

Submissions can be sent electronically or hard copy to the staff address, see above and left. Please include a narrative for the caption! If hard copies are sent please indicate, if they are to be returned otherwise photographs will be retained in an archive photos file.

www.illinoissoils.org

New, exciting links have been added to the "announcements" page on our website. Be sure to bookmark this page. Its an excellent resource to keep you informed on the latest soils issues.

Better yet... make it your home page!



Visit the ISCA website to see the color version of this newsletter

www.illinoissoils.org/news

.....Cut.....Cut.....

Change of Address Form

Name: _____

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*Mail to: Scott Wiesbrook, ISCA Secretary, 1816 S. Oak St., IL 61820