Klutznick-Harris Symposium offers 15 sessions on “Jews and the Environment”

by LEONARD GREENSPoon
Holder of the Klutznick Chair in Jewish Civilization
Creighton University

Their passions range from hiking to biking -- and all sorts of other activities. Their homes are found from the Middle East to the Midwest -- and many points in between. The topics of their presentations cover everything from agriculture to zoology -- looked at from a variety of perspectives and methodologies. They are the 15 presenters at this year’s Klutznick-Harris Symposium -- on Jews and the Environment -- being held on Sunday, Oct. 28, and Monday, Oct. 29.

The Symposium will have its formal beginning Sunday, Oct. 28, 10:30 a.m., when Daniel Hillel talks about the role of the environment in shaping the Hebrew Bible. Hillel, currently residing both in Israel and in New York, is one of the world’s leading ecology experts, having authored or edited nearly two dozen highly respected books on soils and hydrology.

Born in California, he went to Palestine (later, Israel) at an early age. In the early 1950s, he was a founding member of a Negev settlement named Sde Boker. There he became friends with David Ben Gurion, with whom he exchanged a number of letters that he cherishes to this very day.

He will be followed by Ellen Bernstein, well known as a lecturer, writer, and organizer within the Jewish environmental movement. With mountain climbing, canoeing, and biking among her favorite childhood activities, she did her undergraduate work at UC-Berkeley in one of the first environmental programs in America.