

The Chesapeake Paddler



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A Wye Island circ in autumn yields up visual feast

Brilliant leaf displays, abundant waterfowl, and cooler temps are hard to beat

By Sue Stevens

The faint call of an osprey can still greet kayakers preparing to launch from the popular Wye Landing: <http://www.talbotcountymd.gov/index.php?page=418>. This location is departure point for a semi-annual circumnavigation trip of Wye Island, located on the Eastern Shore just below Wye Mills off MD 404. It is a worthwhile 12-13 mile day-trip following the shoreline of the wooded island. There are lots of



sights along the way: sailboats, crabbers, geese, skates, bald eagles, and other bird life. The crabbers are usually already out on the water; even with uncertain forecasts; typically there are lots of boat trailers lining the narrow road down to the filled parking lot. In mid-morning, we kayakers often have the two double-wide ramps, as well as a narrow slot for a sandy kayak launch, to ourselves.

Hearing predicted NE winds, or even a small craft warning, we can choose which direction to go around the island, either clockwise or counterclockwise, to keep the winds behind us. It's a lot more fun going with the wind in a kayak; tide is not an issue here. Wye Island waters are fairly well protected from most wind and fetch. Quickly you learn that every corner along the route looks totally different going the opposite way! The kayakers take off like a flock — or a herd of cats some say — as the shoreline recedes because there are many places to explore. With the wind from behind, it is easy paddling the first six miles (if you go counterclockwise that's under the Wye Island Bridge)

to the half way beach. It was sad to lose a landmark structure on the far northern side of the river, where a large white-frame, columned house stood on a grassy point with a duck blind out front. Vacant land is all that remains now because the house was demolished in 2016. Its three-story white brick chimneys, which stood out like a lighthouses, are now missing; only a large for-sale sign sits on its green lawn. What an expensive and lovely view it offers!.

The usual lunch stop has a shady, wide sand beach under some leaning Osage Orange trees and a handy picnic table. For hikers, it is located at the end of several wooded trails. Sometimes, if the site is occupied by horseback riders or a troop of Boy Scouts, kayakers have the option of pulling out nearby in the shade and walking along the sandy shoreline; there is plenty of space. Further up the main trail, there is a primitive necessity outhouse...or one can find alternatives. It can be slightly warmer standing in the water than sitting on the beach, depending which way the wind is blowing. It's a good time to chat and eat lunch together. It's always fun to see what folks bring to share — cut up watermelon, cantaloupe, grapes, chocolate, cookies, and M&Ms go over big!

A northeast prevailing wind can easily push kayakers all the way to the western end of Wye island, so the fleet may be tempted to go

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THE CHESAPEAKE PADDLERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

The mission of the Chesapeake Paddlers Association is to provide a way for people to enjoy sea kayaking within the Chesapeake Bay area and to promote safe sea kayaking practices through educating the local sea kayaking community and the interested public.

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A 5% discount will be given for ads supplied as electronic files in acceptable formats (i.e., .tif, .gif, .jpeg, bit-map). Email or call for more information and for 10-month discount. See advertising contact in masthead.

Public service announcements and personal ads to sell kayaks/ accessories are printed at no charge; non-members pay \$10 for 3 months. Ads dated three months before the date of this issue will be pulled unless a new request is received by the 15th of the month prior to the next issue. And if it has sold...tell us!

THE CHESAPEAKE PADDLER

The Chesapeake Paddler is published 10 times a year, with combination issues in Nov/Dec and Jan/Feb. The deadline for submitting copy is the 15th of the preceding month. Have an idea for an article, or is there information you would like to see in the newsletter? Contact news_editor@cpakayaker.com

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News From the CPA Coordinator - Bill Smith

The summer of 2018 in Chesapeake Bay has been significantly different from past seasons because of the record amounts of rain, which reduced the number of sea nettles, and the emergency water release of the Conowingo dam on July 27, which has had a devastating effect on the health of the bay. The Conowingo Dam controls the release of water from the Susquehanna River, the largest fresh water source feeding into Chesapeake Bay. Officials at this dam, which for years has held back sediment and debris, responded to the volume of rain (up to 15 inches in southeastern Pennsylvania) in late July by opening the flood gates and releasing the massive amounts of pollution now wreaking havoc on the bay.

The silt clogging the bay's waters is expected to have long-lasting negative effects on the population of all shellfish, and particularly oysters, just as their numbers were beginning to increase after years of restoration efforts. In addition, the sediment contains pollutants which affect the growth of sea grasses and dissolved oxygen in the water. Cleanup has been made more difficult by the quantities of debris



Debris at Jonas Greene State Park.

still flowing from the north which necessitate repeated cleanups of the same area. The bay being tidal, the debris sloshes up and down

the bay on incoming and outgoing tides. The Conowingo Dam, owned and operated by the Exelon Corporation, has donated a whopping \$25,000 for cleanup, hardly a drop in the bucket compared to the funds



that will be required to deal with all the damage to the bay. While Exelon Corporation is not solely to blame because the buildup behind the dam has accumulated over many years, I think they could have done a much better job of clearing in recent years. Before the release, the debris field behind the dam was reported to be about 900 feet wide. The state of Pennsylvania shares some blame for not doing a better job of enforcing and controlling the pollutants entering the river.

I live and paddle around Anne Arundel County, Maryland and see that the county is overwhelmed by the cleanup. The problem might result in some of our favorite launches and parks closed. I can foresee that cleanup may take a few years to accomplish and involve repeated calls for volunteers. During a mid-August paddle on the Severn River and Kent Island I was amazed at the number of trees, bottles, Styrofoam and countless other forms of debris that were present in the water and on the shores. I suspect that this situation will result in some severe damage to power boats in collisions with logs or other assorted debris.

Here's hoping that the next two months will bring a more familiar weather pattern, including an abundance of weather suitable for great paddles. ♣

~ *Bill Smith*

CPA officer nominations are due September 30

No hanging chads in this club. Online voting begins October 11.

It's almost Fall and time to consider who you want as officers of Chesapeake Paddlers Association. If you would like to run for office, then get someone to nominate you for a position or if you have a good candidate in mind then nominate them. The deadline for nominations is September 30, 2018 and ballot distribution and online voting begins October 11, 2018. Final voting is at the annual meeting.

The officers include: **Coordinator, Secretary, Treasurer, and Steering committee (six positions).**

Descriptions of the nomination and election procedures and officers' duties are in the By-Laws Section 4 online at http://www.cpakayaker.com/about-cpa/mission_bylaws/

Of the current officers, Bill Smith (Coordinator), Sue Stevens (Secretary) and Rich Stevens (Treasurer) have agreed to run again. Of

the current Steering Committee, Ralph Heimlich, Paula Hubbard and Chip Walsh have agreed to run again, while Tim Dole, Jaclyn Gilbert and Greg Hollingsworth have declined. We have expressions of interest in running from Linda Delaney, Katherine Neale, and Shelly Wiechelt.

Nominate officers online at <http://www.cpakayaker.com/nominations/>

The annual meeting will be held at the Eastport-Annapolis Neck Library meeting room on 269 Hillsmere Drive, Annapolis, MD 21403. The meeting room will be available from 1:00PM to 5:00PM.

Nearby paddling locations include Truxton Park on Spa Creek or Jonas Greene Park on the Severn River. Linda Delaney will lead the Annual Meeting Paddle prior to the meeting. ♣

Paddler Profile: John Gibbs

By Bob Browning

Lives in: Alexandria, Virginia

Real job: George Washington's Mount Vernon, Librarian; REI Bailey's Crossroads, Sales

Do you regularly attend a Piracy?
Pirates of the Potomac

Number of years paddling: 14

How did you get involved in sea kayaking? Through working at REI and becoming familiar with kayaks

What boats do you paddle?
Perception Keowee, 10 feet, purple;
Prijon Seayak, 16 feet, red

Rudder or skeg? Rudder

Type of paddle used? Euro

Do you do any other type of paddling besides sea kayaking? No

Do you regularly do any other outdoor activities? Hiking, camping

How often on average do you paddle between May and October?
One to two times a week

Do any winter paddling? No, but I have in the past

Favorite local paddling location? Mattawoman Creek

Favorite CPA trip you've ever been on and why? A Ralph Heimlich camping and paddling trip from Trappe Pond Park, Delaware. I learned about the bad habits I had developed while paddling solo, especially how inefficiently and slowly I was moving through the water relative to faster paddlers. I got towed and had to buy a crab cake sandwich for the tower. But the trip was very interesting, saw lots of new water, and learned some valuable lessons and heard good advice which I took to heart.

Coollest paddling trip you've ever been on anywhere and why? Paddling solo on Penobscot Bay in the vicinity of Camden, Maine. Paddling from Lincolnville to Warren Island State Park and camping out, then finding my launch site after returning across the bay, eventually guided by the sunlight glinting from a car window. Paddling the lakes and ponds around Camden and the harbors of Camden and Rockport.

Scariest/most dangerous trip/experience and why? One year I decided to paddle solo around islands in the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River area to learn the ins and outs of sea kayaking. I figured



I would be exposed to different water conditions and challenges while circumnavigating islands (Eastern Neck, Tilghman, St. Georges, Wye). Coming out of the passage at the north end of Tilghman Island into the Bay, I hit a patch of rough water, long fetch, and wind (probably an unfavorable tide too). It was my first discomfoting time. I had to trust

both my kayak and my skills and intuition. Worked out fine.

Future bucket list trip(s)? Would love to paddle Key West and the Everglades and the North Carolina coast below Ocracoke

Three things you like most about paddling? The feel of a water-born kayak, seeing nature from the water, and being challenged by adverse conditions

What do you like about CPA? The people, learning from experienced paddlers, and exploring new places to paddle as well as to eat and drink

One unusual, non-paddling thing other people find interesting about you? My obsession with New Orleans and Louisiana music, food, and culture ♡

Do you know a paddler who would make an interesting profile? Contact Bob Browning at: BBBrowning43@verizon.net

Do you enjoy reading of the paddling adventures, local and distant, of other members? Do you like getting new ideas for paddling trips? Are you advocating for paddling access or amenities in your area? Have you pondered questions relating to kayak gear? Variety is the spice of life, and of newsletters. Please write an article reflecting your thoughts, experiences, and discoveries to share with our paddling community. We all become a bit wiser and excited to be on the water again. We need your input to make *The Chesapeake Paddler* the best it can be. We look forward to your contributions to this publication. ♡

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further west. Down river on another far point, paddlers can see a lighthouse structure, but it is too far away. At the western point, the island's treeline may block most of the wind; the wider coves get hit with more fetch. Everyone agrees the best kayak surfing waves can come from boaters or large motoring sailboats. The wooded coves along the southern side of the island shield more anchored sailboats; maybe they are going to visit the nearby town of St. Michael's.

Though it is hard to track even the shifting patterns of colorful kayaks and flashing paddles along the shoreline, it helps a group to keep together with a lead paddler and one or two sweeps.

Sometimes it is also helpful for the lead to slow the pace of the trip down, to gather round, and grab a granola bar or a drink of water. It is always good to stop at convenient points to let everyone rest and



chat. For a trip leader, it's helpful for everyone to keep their marine radio handy!

Paddlers may choose to take shortcuts across the inner coves or to parallel the far shoreline to check out the sailboats and spot blue herons fishing. It helps to anticipate the faster crabbing boats, which appear suddenly around the wooded corners. For each trip kayakers keep in mind that the island is always on their left – or is it their right?

Rounding the last wooded point, there is usually another eagle to spot in the treetops and the landing is in sight. Usually less than six hours, Wye is a great location for a successful kayak

day trip! The bay waters stay warm in September and early October when the autumn leaves are brilliant; it makes for some great sight-seeing while kayaking! ♦

When you circle Wye Island, you paddle past the past

Here are some resources and historical notes to help you make the most of your paddle

Here's some background information on the interesting history and current management of Wye Island NRMA overseen by DNR: <http://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/pages/eastern/wyeisland.aspx>.

There are a number of historic sites surrounding Wye Island - some we can spot while others sit far back from the water. Most historic plantation houses did not want to be close to the water as today's big houses are. Their wharfs – now long gone - were used for commerce and shipping.

Across from the Wye public landing, we can spot the green fields of Wye Heights Plantation. Its historic white brick plantation house sits on top of a rise, and their flocks of black Welsh mountain sheep are often scattered across its shady fields: <https://www.wyeheights.com/>. The property features 10 acres of formal landscaped gardens, which may be visible from the water of Skipton Creek.

For added paddling mileage, it is possible to start further up toward the headwaters of Skipton Creek. Another smaller Talbot County public launch is located at the end of Skipton Landing Road off US 50: <http://dnr.maryland.gov/boating/Pages/water-access/talbot.aspx>. Paddling.net also describes it well: <https://paddling.com/paddle/trips/skipton-creek-mill-creek-maryland/>.

The next large creek to the south hides Pickering Creek Audubon Center, a large working farm and nature center open to the public,

which also has a small kayak /canoe launch at a dock: <http://md.audubon.org/chapters-centers/pickering-creek-audubon-center>. That's another shorter outing option.

On the south side of the Wye River on the west side of the wide Lloyd Creek sits Wye House Farm, another historic plantation with well documented archeology digs by the University of Maryland. The region's plantations widely used slave labor to produce most of its profits. The widespread effects of the cruelty of slavery was exposed by the abolitionist and scholar Frederick Douglass: <http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/wye-house-plantation/>. The plantation includes an orangery; a similar brick and glass greenhouse is located at Mount Vernon. It is a rare surviving early garden structure where orange and lemon trees were cultivated, and it retains its original 18th century heating system of hot air ducts.

During its peak, the plantation surrounding the house encompassed 42,000 acres and housed over 1,000 slaves: <http://aia.umd.edu/wyehouse/>. It is still a working farm owned by the descendants of Edward Lloyd. It is well known that Frederick Douglass, around the age of seven and eight, spent a few years of his life on the plantation and spoke extensively of the brutal conditions of the plantation in his autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*.

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Anacostia surprises, delights

Figure 8 route spans urban/rural divide

By Jan Tucker

When I think of places to paddle, the Anacostia River is not the first place that jumps into my mind, but when I saw Lois's trip on the Meetup schedule, I thought it might be someplace different to see. I had heard horror stories for years about how polluted the Anacostia was, but the past few years have brought quite an improvement.

Everyone got to the Anacostia park boat ramp early (I wanted to allow time to find the place if I got lost). There were eleven paddlers with a variety of experience levels. Some were beginners with rented boats and others were more experienced.

Lois planned the trip as a "figure 8" with one loop going up river and around Kingman Island and the second, for those who wanted a longer paddle, down to the Washington Channel. The first loop was a very pleasant surprise. I was expecting a sort of "urban environment" but instead it was wooded and felt like we were miles from nowhere



Photos/Huei-Chi Hsu

[Wye, continued from previous page](#)

On the north side of the island and beyond the Wye Island Bridge sits the historic Wye Plantation property where University of Maryland Agricultural & Natural Resources has managed a long-term breeding program for a Black Angus herd since 1954: <https://agresearch.umd.edu/wye/angus>. They introduced larger Angus cattle breeding commonly seen throughout the U.S: http://agresearch.umd.edu/sites/agresearch.umd.edu/files/docs/Wye_article_final%5b1%5d.pdf. There is also a large conference retreat complex, Wye Aspen Center/ Houghton House located on this point, site of the summit between Israel and Palestine in 1998: .

The historic Wye Plantation was once owned by William Paca, signer of the Declaration of Independence and a former governor of Maryland: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Paca. His other mansion and historic gardens are located in downtown Annapolis: <http://www.annapolis.org/contact/william-paca-house-garden>. William Paca was buried in 1799 at this family cemetery though the original Paca residence burned down later in 1879. The current Wye Hall, built in the 1930s, is not visible from the water, but we know it's there!

except for the occasional Metro train passing over one of the bridges. There were egrets, herons and cormorants along the way. At the top of Kingman Island, we stopped to talk to the lady driving the golf course beer cart over the bridge as we went under. She seemed quite surprised to see a group of kayakers. I guess if we had asked to buy a few, she could have tossed them down but getting the money up to her might have been a problem. Also, we would have been in violation of our CPA insurance policy. The island was very pretty; there were more birds and flowers. The loop around the island and back totaled around 4.6 miles.

We ate our lunches back at the launch, and then on to the Advanced Beginner segment. Six of us did the second loop going down the river past the War College and into the Washington Channel. We passed the Navy Yard and Nationals' stadium. This was more of the urban scene I had expected. There were big yachts, water taxis, people going every which way in rented kayaks and stand-up paddleboards and all sorts of things to see. After about 4.3 miles we turned around and headed back to the park. Our total mileage for the day was a bit over 13.



The two loop format worked out well for our mixed group. A couple of the paddlers who did the whole thing were in shorter rec boats and kept up just fine; Lois did a great job keeping us all together. For me it was a fun and different paddle. ♣

We've always heard there is another kayak landing located on Wye Island at the back of one of the coves, but it's hard to find. Paddlers are not allowed to use the DNR dock. The trail guide shows an existing campsite located at the end Dividing Creek with kayak/canoe access: http://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Documents/WyeIsland_Map.pdf.

We discovered that a brand-new hand-carry sand launch has been built at the Granary Creek Picnic Area, 632 Wye Island Road 38° 53'31.6"N 76°08'22.7"W: <http://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2018/07/01/wye-paddle>. It just opened July, 2018, jointly funded by the MD State Highway Administration, DNR, the Nature Conservancy and REI: <http://chesapeakeconservancy.org/explore/explore-by-boat/public-access-projects/wye-island/>. You may need a DNR park pass - check first! There is limited parking at the site with some additional parking at a small lot approximately 1/4-quarter mile away. Please note - parking is prohibited along the road.

Our Chesapeake watershed has nearly 12,000 miles of shoreline, but only 2 percent of it is publicly accessible. If folks can't access the water, it is hard to ignite their love of the bay as kayakers know well! ♣

Upcoming Events. For the most up-to-date listings, visit the [CPA Meetup Calendar](#)

Date	Event	Summary
T W Th, 9/4-6	area piracies	check CPA website for more info
Sat, Sept 8	KIPP #7	seventh mtg to build endurance for circumnavigation
T W Th, 9/11-13	area piracies	check CPA website for more info
Sun, Sept 16	non-CPA event: Triathlon for Chesapeake at Smithsonian Environ Res Cen	8:00-9:00, safety support for swimmers on the Rhode River (one hr); kayakers may paddle after the swim portion
T W Th, 9/18-20	area piracies	check CPA website for more info
F 9/21-23	non-CPA event: 8th Annual Kiptopeke Sea Kayaking Symposium	8:00 am 9/21-4:00 pm 9/23, Kiptopeke SP, VA Eastern Shore, \$, paddlers fr 10 states, classes for new and experienced paddlers, shelter in 6-br lodges
Sat, Sept 22	Mallows Bay Ghost Fleet	10:00-3:00, Beg, paddle the graveyard of the WWI wooden ships, bag lunch
Sat, Sept 22	KIPP Circumnavigation	culmination of season of building endurance
T W Th 9/25-27	area piracies	check CPA website for more info
Sa 9/29-Su 9/30	Practice Kayak Camper, Patuxent River	9:00 9/29 - 5:00 9/30, Beg, practice one night kayak camping with support & advice fr experienced campers
Sat, Sept 29	Around Wye Island	9:00-4:00, Adv Beg, 12+ mi, bag lunch, dinner out after
T W Th 10/2-4	area piracies	check CPA website for more info
T W Th 10-9-11	area piracies	check CPA website for more info
T W Th 10/16-18	area piracies	check CPA website for more info
T W Th 10/23-25	area piracies	check CPA website for more info
T W 10/30-31	area piracies	check CPA website for more info
Sun, Nov 4	Annual Membership Mtg	1:00-4:45, pizza and potluck sides & desserts, business mtg, Eastport-Annapolis Neck Comm Lib; gear logo sales
Th 11/8-Su 11/11	Chickahominy Camper	12:00 pm 11/8 - 4:00 pm 11/11, car camper, paddles on area rivers, reserve campsites now, potluck Sat dinner

Launches of the Month: Downs Park

These two launches give you the choice of paddling directly on the Bay, or entering Bodkin/Wharf Creek in more protected conditions. The Bodkin Creek Launch was recently upgraded by dredging and forming a nice sand beach launch, pictured.



Site: Downs Park

Lat: 39.111142 Long: -76.433365

Address: Chesapeake Bay Drive, Pasadena, MD 21122

Type: car top launch

Parking: Large

Restroom: Yes

Fee: \$6 parking

Ownership: Anne Arundel County - Recreation and Parks

County: Anne Arundel

State: Maryland

Water Body: Bay

Comments: <http://www.aacounty.org/departments/recreation-parks/parks/downs/>

Site: Downs Park, Bodkin Creek

Lat: 39.112774 Long: -76.439652

Address: Locust Cove Rd, Pasadena, MD 21122

Type: car top launch

Parking: Moderate

Restroom: No

Fee: \$6 parking

Water Body: Bodkin Creek/Wharf Creek

<http://www.cpakayaker.com/chesapeake-bay-access-and-paddle-in-campsite-map/>

The Chesapeake Paddler

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REMINDER: Please check your mailing label for your membership expiration date. If you receive the newsletter electronically, you will receive an e-mail reminder prior to your membership expiring; please notify the Secretary for changes to your email address. If your CPA membership has expired, or will expire soon, please send in your dues. SEE BOX ON PAGE 2 FOR ADDRESS.