

Chesapeake Paddler



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August 2007

Kayak Camping on the Chowan River, North Carolina

By Greg Welker



Holladay Island, Chowan River map by Roanoke River Partners

A swampy, forested river that is still relatively remote and undeveloped, the Roanoke River at the Virginia/North Carolina border has been on my places to paddle list for several years. The Roanoke River Partners have established several paddle-in camp sites along the Roanoke River. Reading through the information about these campsites it appeared that almost all would require a car shuttle due to the typical river current.

However, recently the Chowan County Parks and Recreation Department opened up five new campsites on Holladay's Island, on the Chowan River. This island is located about 20 miles upriver from Edenton, NC. A check of the chart revealed this was within a section of the river where the current would not be a factor in an out and back trip. All of these island campsites are platforms, or "chickees," in the swamps and sit about two to three feet above the typical water level. The island has essentially three places to camp. Two of these are single platforms, on the east and west sides of the island. At the south point, there is a group campsite composed of three interconnected platforms. I made my reservations and payment by email for the Holladay West platform.

I arrived at the Chowan River around noon. The launch location I was using was a paddle launch site at Cannon Ferry, slightly downriver from the island. The launch area has a boardwalk along the river, a port-a-pot, and a gravel parking area easily visible from the road. The area looked OK to me for leaving my

vehicle overnight. I loaded up the Pisces while swatting mosquitoes and wondering if a mid-July camping trip in a swamp was a good idea bug-wise. It was an easy launch from the sand beach. The river is about 1.5 miles wide at this point with a long South/Northwest fetch, and I would imagine that in windy conditions there would be whitecaps out in the open. I took a leisurely 1 mile course to the south end of the island. Almost all of the river shoreline is cypress swamp, and from my position, the island also looked to be heavily forested in cypress. Arriving at the southern end, I paddled into the cypress and found the dock for the southern group campsite. These sites are made more for canoes than kayaks, with a wood step about 8 feet long being about 1 foot above the water, and then a loading platform about a foot or two above that. In a kayak, this means



Hey chickee, have I got a campsite for you...photo by Greg Welker (Continued on page 4)

CLASSIFIEDS

Ads dated 3 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!

Advertising Rates:

We accept display advertising that relates to the interest of our readers. Monthly rates are as follows:

Size	cost	wide x deep (col)
1/8 page	\$20	2.4" x 3.5" (1)
1/4 page	\$32	4.9" x 4.7" (2)
1/2 page	\$50	7.5" x 4.7" (3)
Full page	\$80	7.5" x 9.75" (3)

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 announcement and personal ads to sell kayaks/ accessories are printed at no charge; non-members pay \$10 for 3 months.

Officer Nominations

The CPA has always relied on many dedicated volunteers to manage the association's activities. Among these volunteers are our nine elected Officers - the Coordinator, Secretary, Treasurer, and the other six members of the Steering Committee. Our Officers manage the CPA's day-to-day business and longer-term planning, serving a one-year term (January 1 - December 31), with duties as outlined in the [CPA Bylaws](#).

Would you like to serve as a CPA Officer next year? Would you like to nominate someone to run for an Officer role? If you want to run or make a nomination, please [submit your nomination here](#). Online nominations are due by Sunday, October 14. Candidate names and "stump speeches" will be posted here and included on the Proxy Ballot in the October Chesapeake Paddler newsletter.

SCHEDULE FOR 2007 CHESAPEAKE PADDLER

Chesapeake Paddler is published 10 times a year, with combination issues in November/December and January/February. The deadline for submitting copy is usually the 15th of the preceding month as follows:

Issue	Deadline for Copy
October 2007	September 15, 2007
November 2007	October 15, 2007
December 2007	November 15, 2007

Have an idea for an article, or is there information you would like to see in the newsletter? Email Ralph at news_editor@cpakayaker.com or call at 301-498-0722.

THE CHESAPEAKE PADDLERS ASSOCIATION

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.

Officers:

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MEMBERSHIP: Subscription to the Chesapeake Paddler is included with membership. Membership is \$10/year or \$20/2 years. Send checks or changes of membership information to CPA, PO Box 341, Greenbelt, MD 20768. DO NOT send them to the newsletter editors.

DEADLINES: Closing date for articles, trip reports, information and advertisements is the 15th of the month prior to the next issue. The editors retain the right to edit or not to print any submitted material. See advertising information in the Classifieds section.

The Chesapeake Paddler is published monthly, except Nov-Feb and may be reprinted whole or in part if credit is given to this newsletter and any identified author (unless an article is specifically copyrighted), and a courtesy copy is sent to the Managing Editor.

Admiral's Walk



Oh, the hot days of August and September in Washington D.C. What is one to do?

Well here's an idea, get out on the river or the Bay and practice safety and rescue. "Boring", you say! Not at all! Especially when you get the chance to jump into the cool water and you learn to climb back into your kayak too. Some of us paddle Sea Kayaks, and some of us paddle Quiet Water kayaks. Either way, there is justification for you all to spend some time on and in the water practicing your safety and rescue techniques.

Sea Kayakers often paddle away from the shore, and many times into water conditions that test their paddling skill and their ability to stay upright. That is what makes the sport of Sea Kayaking the challenge that it is. Should you spend these hot days intentionally falling out of your boat and practicing getting back in? You sure should! Having practiced safety and rescue in calm condition, you will gain the confidence to paddle farther from shore or venture out into more chaotic water conditions. If you fall out of your boat far from shore where you could not easily swim back, then you know you have a few techniques in your arsenal to help yourself or your paddling buddy back into a Sea Kayak quickly. What should you be practicing? How about trying *Paddle Float Rescues*. Get used to using your *bilge pump and paddle float*. Also practice the *Assisted T-Rescue* with a friend. This is the quickest and driest way back into you kayak. Perhaps try a *Cowboy rescue* or a *re-enter and roll with a paddle float*. Also try some *towing with a rope and without*. Have fun and get good at these techniques and you will be surprised at how your confidence in your Sea Kayak rises. And the next time a buddy falls out of his boat while pushing the limits, you will spring into action and get him or her back into their seat before they know how you did it.



So you are a Quiet Water paddler and rarely get far from shore or venture into the waves of the ocean. Why should you ever practice rescue techniques and safety? How about for the confidence booster? How about to feel more attuned to your kayak? How about knowing what it would be like to fall over? How about knowing you could help a friend back into their boat who is out paddling with you for the first time ever? There is every reason that you should practice rescues and safety.

For all paddlers, we should face the fact that we are out in an alien environment. We humans were not made to frolic with impunity on the water. There are consequences lurking all around us. Just as a good trip planner looks forward to all the possible events that could happen when out on a trip, and plans a way out of all eventualities, a safe kayaker thinks about how to help themselves or others if they should be forced to leave the dry safety of their kayak.

Now, I am not saying that you should stay home. Not at all. I am just recommending that you use these great hot days of late summer to try some of the things you have seen or heard about. But do it safely. Try your rescues with friends around to help out; to spot you; or to gently make suggestions as you are trying to get your paddle float rescue working smoothly.

The more you practice safety and rescue the more comfortable you will feel out on a trip. You say to yourself; "I have tried climbing back in my boat in water just like this. If I get into trouble, I can get out. And besides, my paddling buddy has practiced assisted rescues too. We will be fine today." Get comfortable on and in the water, and you will not only feel like a better kayaker, you will be a better kayaker for it.

See you on the water!

Dave Biss

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that you pull up along the platform step and do a dock exit, which is not always the most graceful of maneuvers. A quick exploration of the site and I got back in the boat to circumnavigate the island. I enjoyed quietly paddling in and out of the cypress along the edge of the island. It was apparent that "island" was not going to mean dry land. While I saw a deer and signs of otter and raccoon, I did not see anything I would consider dry land. All three of the sites sit back from the river about 100 feet into the swamp, which provides some privacy and protection from wind and waves. They are well marked with yellow signs if you are observant.



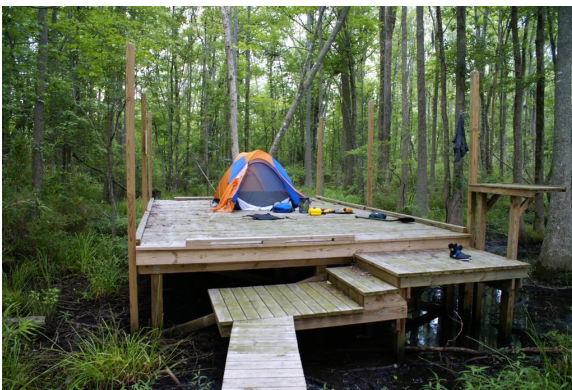
Kayak pulled up on the landing step and secured for the night photo by Greg Welker

Completing the 3.5 mile circumnavigation, I backtracked to Holladay West and examined the landing platform. Some poking with the paddle revealed that there was a sand shoal along the back corner of the landing platform that was only about one foot underwater. I stood on this shoal while unloading the boat. Having platform camped from a kayak before, I figured out a way to prevent individual items from dropping overboard during the unloading. When loading the boat's front hatch, I took a line with several plastic clips strung on it. I tied one end of the line to the item that would go furthest up into the bow of the kayak, and then proceeded to clip the other items in the order they would go into the boat. This way, during the platform unloading and loading if I dropped an item into the water I would be able to retrieve it by the line. Better than watching your camp stove sink out of sight!



Rules of the Road photo by Greg

The Holladay West platform consisted of three platforms connected by wooden boardwalk. The first platform was the landing platform, and this connected to a boardwalk that ran back further into the swamp to the camping platform. The camping platform was about 16' x 24', with a toe rail and six vertical posts along the edge. The posts were about seven feet tall, with eye bolts on top. These would work well if you were looking to rig a tarp during rainy weather. The platform is also equipped with a wooden counter for doing your cooking (so you don't scorch the platform). Between the landing and camping platforms a short T takes you to a privacy screen that conceals a wooden thunder box (aka privy). This was somewhat unexpected, as the site instructions on the web indicated it was total Leave No Trace. Looking at the spiders, I decided my portable facility was a better choice! Since the camping is all on wooden platforms, a free standing tent that does not require staking is essential. In windy conditions, you could tie off the tent to the toe rails. The platform could easily fit two 2-3 person tents, and you could squeeze three tents on it and still have some room to sit, eat, etc.



The camping platform photo by Greg Welker

All of the platforms were well shaded by the cypress, and there were amazingly no mosquitoes. However, there was a healthy population of biting flies, and I quickly changed into long pants and long sleeved shirt. Dinner, to the sound of distant thunder, involved swatting a few flies. Once dark came, the flies went away, and I spent a pleasant evening listening to the swamp sounds – again, not a single mosquito! The island was reported to usually be a good spot to listen to owls, but during my circumnavigation I had noticed several crows in the trees. Typically, crow sightings mean that the owls won't be around, and I heard only a few owls off on the river shoreline.

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Next morning I woke early and quietly packed up. The river air was still, with patches of fog. I quietly paddled along the western edge of the island, watching for wildlife in among the trees. At the northern tip I headed east to the river shore, and explored Catherine Creek. This is a very nice, pristine creek, and well worth a day paddle. Following the river shore south, eating lunch in the kayak, I eventually ended up back at the launch site in mid afternoon.

I imagine this island would be very nice in the fall, perhaps as part of a trip downriver from Winton, about 16 miles upstream, with a take out down at Edenton, 22 miles downstream. With a wind from the north, this would be a very enjoyable trip. With a south wind, you would reverse the trip, but being careful of the large fetch between Edenton and Holladay Island. [edited by Lynn Erwin]

<http://www.roanokeriverpartners.org/Platforms/Holladay/Directions.pdf>
<http://www.roanokeriverpartners.org/>



Fred Tutman trimming with the Roughnecks photo by Chip Walsh

Patuxent Roughnecks

By Chip Walsh

There's something charming about paddling a narrow wooded river through our Atlantic coastal plain. It's peaceful and relaxing, a world away from "must-make" whitewater moves and battling the wind on some of our large open waters. But there is another 'something' that is not so charming: timber blockages or strainers. If you have ever spent any time paddling a river in the woods, you've had your fill of strainers, and you may have even wished somebody would do something about them, or contemplated a few well-placed saw cuts of your own. Carry around a dozen strainers and you may be thinking about a few well-placed explosives.

Fred Tutman is a guy that enjoys paddling the Patuxent, which, once you get above the tidal portion, is a narrow wooded river. He grew up near the Patuxent and loves the river. Presently, Fred is the Patuxent Riverkeeper, and as such, is primarily concerned with the river and its ecology. The Riverkeeper's scope is far wider than creating a place to paddle, but Fred believes that if he can show people the river and get them to realize its potential and its problems, it will help foster a political climate that will contribute to the well-being of the river. That's the logical reason Tutman became interested in strainer busting, but I've seen him on the river, and believe there's an emotional element, too. Tutman is like the rest of us paddlers, and those strainers are in our way.

Under the auspices of the Riverkeeper organization, Fred Tutman created a group of individuals willing to work at strainer-busting. None of the Patuxent Roughnecks, as the group is called, knew much about strainer busting when they started.

The first Roughneck outing was attended by about a dozen people and characterized by more enthusiasm than organization. We had boats and saws and we attacked a strainer formed by a downed tree across the river which had snagged and accumulated a number of smaller logs. We decided to attack the crown end of the tree near the left bank. The crown was intertwined with branches from a nearby, live tree. Together, the trees formed about a twenty-yard stretch which was crisscrossed with limbs and branches. Before long, several teams were cutting branches on both the up and downstream sides of the strainer and, as we progressed, two boats got into the crown itself and were cutting. A shore party organized itself and began pulling up branches and limbs from the top of the banks, which were six to eight feet above the water level.

At first, progress seemed quick. Unfortunately, our first hard lesson was the truth that strainers can be like an iceberg: most of the mass is underwater and unseen. There was a lot more wood entangled in the crown, and much of it wasn't obvious until we removed the surface level. Or rather, until we TRIED to remove it. We'd try to drag out a cut limb only to

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find logs ensnared below the waterline. Nevertheless, we were all energy and within an hour or two everybody was well pleased with the waterway we had cleared.

The next strainer we tackled involved several large tree trunks. The largest trunk had fallen from river right, but must have snapped off. It didn't extend all the way to the left bank, but several smaller logs had plugged the gap. The river bent to the right and the left bank was being eroded. Already one small tree protruded almost horizontally from the collapsed bank and had become involved in the strainer. Just downstream, a massive sycamore tree was anchoring the bank, but leaning well over the river. It would have been easy to clear the smaller logs at the left bank, but we decided to open a slot near the center of the channel and leave the left bank alone to help stall the collapse of the bank.



Two-woman underbucking photo by Chip Walsh

However, trying to open a small slot meant only a few of us were working on creating the opening. The remainder of the crew busied themselves by, among other things, removing the live tree on the left bank and starting to remove the smaller logs. This upset me because it increased the chances of the river eroding the left bank and dropping that big sycamore into the river. The second thing that happened was that in opening the center of the strainer, we dropped Fred, who had been standing on the strainer into the river.

It was a harmless incident, but it was an unintended and out-of-control situation, and that severely scared me. There is massive weight in a strainer, and powerful forces at work in the river. Once a strainer starts to move, the fact that flesh and bone may be in its way is not going to stop it. I was the one with the saw in my hand and I made the last stroke, the one that dropped Fred, and I hadn't seen it coming. Luckily we'd had a harmless incident.

For me, it was a wake-up call. I made it a point to call Fred during the next week. We talked about setting up a command structure and a safety non-worker—ideas that Fred put into practice at our next work day. The Roughnecks' subsequent outings were better organized. At each strainer, we established a cutting team, a rigging team (shore workers), and a non-worker whose duty was to stand back, think of things that might go wrong, and halt work for safety concerns. At the outset of each outing Fred talked about safety and river conservation. Everybody was encouraged to stop work if they recognized a hazard.

By the time the Roughnecks called it quits for the season, there was only one strainer left between the tidal Patuxent and MD Route 214. Prior to our strainer busting, boating that stretch would have been a long day of boat hauling. Personally, I just want to know if we made progress. It is not unusual for heavy storms to send the Patuxent's waters above the banks, and I certainly expect a lot of wood to have moved during high water. I have been anxious to take my canoe back to the river and see what has changed. Will the leaning sycamore be lying across the river? Will new strainers

have accumulated in the slots we opened? Will it be just as much of a boat-hauling battle as it was before the Roughnecks started? To be continued....

The Roughnecks Work Crew is part of the Patuxent Riverkeepers, a private, non-profit advocacy group that works to protect and improve the water quality in the Patuxent River. Other activities include water testing, riparian tree planting, river camping and paddling trips, annual river clean up days, and activism to support our environment. [edited by Lynn Erwin]

For more information go to: www.paxriverkeeper.org



Tangier Island Adventure

By Susanita Hicks and David Moore



Tangier photo by Susanita Hicks

This was my third trip to Tangier. Last summer I blogged about the second trip ... ["Island Hopping in the Chesapeake Bay."](#) It was such a fun trip that I couldn't wait to do it again.

We (Shannon Bishop, David Moore and I) met at the dock at Crisfield around 11 am Saturday morning for the 12:30 ferry. The long open water crossing didn't appeal to all of us, so Shannon and I decided to save our energies for exploring around the islands and take the ferry out and back. There are several ferries with service to Tangier and Smith Islands and most of them take kayaks as well. We decided to take the mail boat. So we loaded the kayaks on to the mail boat and the bags with all our camping and kayak gear. The cost was \$15 per person and \$10 per kayak. The sky was blue. The sea was calm. It looked like the start of a perfect weekend. Earlier we had heard reports of rain forecast for the weekend but it didn't seem serious enough to cancel the trip. And besides I had built in a number of exit plans in the event of bad weather.

The original plan was to launch from Tangier and kayak east to small, uninhabited Watts Island, about 6 miles from Tangier, lunch on Watts, then kayak from Watts east to another island where we would camp for the night. On Sunday, we would kayak back to Tangier, explore the island and camp on the southern tip of Tangier which is a long sandbar. Monday our plan was to kayak from Tangier north to Smith Island and take the afternoon ferry back from Smith to Crisfield. David was looking for a long open water crossing, so he planned to stay with us until Sunday and kayak back to Crisfield. I was a little concerned that he would be making the long open water crossing alone, but David is an expert kayaker and loves the challenge of open water crossings.

I had printed out and laminated maps of the crossing, maps of Tangier and Smith and a list of important GPS coordinates for the trip. I had two GPS devices and in one I had programmed the GPS coordinates we would need to navigate around the islands. The second GPS was intended as a backup. Navigation is not a skill I claim to excel in. I get lost just wandering around my house. But I was sufficiently confident that I could navigate the short crossing from Tangier to Watts and out to the other island.

Six miles after launching, we landed on the south end of Watts. The sea had been like glass and the sky was clear and the humidity low. After a short snack at Watts we realized we were running a little behind schedule. It was around 5:30 and we wanted to get to the other island soon enough to set up camp before the sun set. The long lunch on Tangier was probably about a half hour too long. So I tried to pick up the pace a little for the final four miles. This was easy to do with a wing paddle but Shannon uses a greenland paddle and she started to lag farther behind. Still the weather was so clear I wasn't too concerned.

The sun was setting by the time we pulled all the kayaks up on the beach. I looked around the strip of beach that we had enjoyed so much last year on the Island Hopping Trip. It felt a little lower ... like it had sunk a little. Shannon seemed a little concerned that we didn't see a really clear high tide mark and so was I.

It was hard to sleep that night. The tide had brought the surf in closer to the tents and it was really loud. Several times I woke up and went out to check on the kayaks. They were fine, but just as a precaution I moved them up the beach about six feet. The next morning we awoke to grey skies and a stiff wind. But it was still within our abilities. We decided to kayak over to Watts and assess the weather from there. If we could make it, we'd continue to Tangier but if not we'd stay on Watts until the weather cleared.

The four mile paddle to Watts was quite different from the paddle over. The swells were 2-3 feet. Shannon said that I often disappeared between the swells. And at times they were breaking over the bow. But it was the wind which was the real challenge. By the time we got to the south end of Watts we were clearly struggling. Shannon and I



Underway photo by Shannon Bishop

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had also both experienced kayaking in the wind earlier in the season at Assateague. After that fateful trip we had learned to respect the wind. But David is stronger, more confident of his skills and he still thought he could make it to Crisfield. So after discussing the options Shannon and I decided to camp on Watts and proceed to Tangier in the morning. David decided to continue his course to Crisfield.

I know at this point many people are wondering ... why he left us on the island with a storm approaching. Clearly there is safety in numbers. But we had planned this trip alone and we were both skilled kayakers and we had good tents. We had no fear about staying on the island through the storm. But I was worried about what he was kayaking in to. It would be hard for me to explain what he went through that night so I asked him to write it up. This is David's story.

David's Story

Shortly after saying goodbye on Watts Island I began wondering if I was doing the right thing by leaving Susanita and Shannon on the Island, knowing that a storm was coming that evening. I knew both were good kayakers and had good tents, but it is always better to have more people if things got ugly. I kept debating about leaving the whole time I was going by the island and wondering if I should just turn around and stay on the Island and go back to Tangier together.

As far as the trip back to Crisfield I knew it was not going to be an easy one. It was going to be slow paddle because the boat was weather-cocking really bad, plus the fact I really did not know where or how far Crisfield was from Watts Island. I figured it was about 12 to 14 miles Northeast. I kept looking at the charts so that seemed about right and hey the Chesapeake is only so big. I figured the trip would take me between 3 to 4 hours, since I left Watts Island around 1:00 PM or so I figured I would be at Crisfield no later than 5 PM and back home by 7:30 PM.



David on the beach photo by Shannon Bishop

Right away I saw this was going to be an ugly paddle, going downwind with the waves to get around the island and on my way towards the northeast was a constant struggle. Every once and awhile I could just ride the waves and gain some speed but most of the time I had to keep using correcting strokes to keep me from turning into the wind, which was coming from the southeast. Normally I would just use body lean to turn my kayak, but with the boat weighted down with camping gear and the waves as rough as they were my leans were not as far as they needed to be nor as effective.

A couple things started to happen that caused me to think that I better be prepared for a flip in the middle of the bay six miles from the nearest land. First, I was taking in a lot of water every time the wave broke over me. Things were floating around in my cock pit. Second, the boat was really getting heavy riding really low and I was getting a bit tired.

I spotted the water tower that I knew was in Crisfield and it seemed like it was really far away. My GPS told me I had paddled seven miles so far from Watts averaging a very discouraging 3 mph. I then remembered that I marked the starting point in Crisfield on my GPS when we took the ferry ride to Tangier. All I had to do was find the location on the GPS. I did and it was 12 miles due north. So that was really disappointing.

Now the wind was beginning to howl. The waves were moving faster and they were breaking over my head ... and often. So I decided the only way I was going to get there was to start riding the waves since they were heading in the right direction anyway. Riding the waves was not going so well because it seemed like I was riding in the waves not on top and taking in even more water and not having any control. So now my biggest concern was getting the water out of my boat, which I did not want to attempt under these conditions. So I started heading to the nearest piece of land due east, the land turned out not to be so near, but an accommodating beach 12 miles away from Watts Island. I kept thinking who was the idiot who ever invented a kayak without a rudder and why didn't my boat come with an automatic pump like Susan's and why did I not use my whitewater skirt? When is that storm coming ... and this was not so fun anymore.

I finally made it to the beach and my GPS told me, Hurray you made progress. You are now only 10.4 miles away from the Crisfield at 330 degrees NW. So now with a full belly of peanut butter crackers, chewy Granola bars and some Chocolate pudding I was ready to head out. With all the water out of the boat now I was going to surf the waves all the way with a whitewater state of mind, meaning no correcting strokes. I was just going to brace and lean my way through and surf the waves and make as much speed as I could. It worked for the most part.

It was now completely dark. The storm clouds were blocking all the stars and the moon. Every time I started to head into a channel

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CPA Trip Requirements and Ratings

All trips are organized by and for members of the club. When you participate, please remember that trip leaders are "hosts", not professional guides, but you must be willing to follow their instructions. They are neither necessarily trained in first aid or CPR, nor do they always carry first aid equipment or safety devices for your use.

You, and you alone, are responsible for your personal safety.

Trip leaders will pre-screen all participants for skills, equipment and willingness to abide by club rules and policies. If you wish to join a trip, you must contact the leader in advance.

REQUIREMENTS

Equipment: While on the water, all paddlers

and clothes appropriate to the water temperature. Boats must have water-tight bulkheads or flotation devices to prevent the kayak from swamping when capsized. All paddlers must have—and know how to use—a pump, paddle float and whistle. On the day of the trip, leaders may refuse to admit participants for noncompliance with any of these requirements, so if you are not sure, discuss it with the leader in advance!

Waivers: All participants in CPA-sponsored trips must sign legal release forms each time before setting out on the water. Only one release per season is needed for regularly scheduled events (e.g., the weekly activities of the "pirates"). The legal release absolves all participating CPA members from legal liability for the injury or death of a fellow participant.

RATINGS:

First Timers: Participants have never paddled before. No prior skills needed.

Beginners: Participants have paddled some, taken classes, or have been on short (up to 4 -mile) trips and can do a wet exit and paddle float re-entry.

Advanced Beginners: Participants have been on longer trips (up to 10 miles, full-day outings), have some experience with varying conditions such as winds and waves and have good rescue and groups paddling skills.

Intermediate Paddlers: Participants are comfortable with open-water crossings of 2+ miles, can handle a variety of water conditions and have strong self- and group-

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September

1-8 (Sat-Sat)	4th Annual Loons of the Adirondacks: Come paddle in the Adirondack Mountains of upstate New York. Lakes galore suitable for all levels of paddling will be explored. We can do paddles at all levels of experience. September is a great time -- warm weather, no bugs, few tourists. When we get tired of paddling, there are museums, shopping, hiking, swimming, and nature watching. Skill Level: All Paddlers Organizer(s): Led by David T Moore 301-704-3262, Luci Adams.
1 (Sat)	Upper Wicomico Day Paddle: To quote the MD DNR "Zekiah Swamp has been recognized by numerous authorities as one of the most significant ecological areas in the Chesapeake Bay watershed" Skill Level: Advanced Beginner Paddlers. Organizer(s): Led by Dan Hoke 703-507-4220.
2 (Sun)	Scenic Anacostia Day Paddle: We'll get in a view of the Nationals new ball park on the way up to the National Arboretum. Skill Level: Advanced Beginner Paddlers. Organizer(s): Led by Dan Hoke 703-507-4220.
7-10 (Fri-Mon)	Non CPA Event: Downeast Sea Kayaking Symposium: Some of our Club Member who teach in Maine are co-sponsoring a Kayak Symposium in September. Web Site: http://www.carpediemkayaking.com Skill Level: Advanced Beginner Paddlers Organizer(s): Led by Carpe Diem Kayaking (207) 669-2338.
7-9 (Fri-Sun)	Martinak State Park: Car camping at Maryland's Martinak State Park on the middle Eastern Shore. Paddle the Choptank River and other local waters. Protected water paddling. RSVP required. Call Greg for sign up and pre-qualification. Skill Level: Beginner Organizer(s): Led by Greg Welker and Jenny Plummer-Welker 301-249-4895.
8 (Sat)	NonCPA Event: Kayak Attack Race, Salisbury. A six mile race, starting at 10AM on the Wicomico River. www.WicomicoFestivals.org
8 (Sat)	Kent Island Paddle Finale: This is the finale paddle of a series geared towards practicing and getting in shape over several months in preparation for a distance paddle at Kent Island. Skill Level: Intermediate Paddlers Organizer(s): Led by Marshall Woodruff 202-345-0606.
15 (Sat)	Non CPA Event: Wye Island Race: The 12.5 mile race starts at Wye Landing on the Wye East River, 18 miles southeast of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge on Maryland's Eastern Shore. The course is over sheltered estuaries with minimum boat traffic and great scenery. Skill Level: All
15 (Sat)	Camp Merrick on the Potomac: Launch from The Camp Merrick Lions Club onto the Potomac for a day paddle. There will be a \$5 launch fee. More information to follow. Skill Level: Beginner Organizer(s): Led by Mike Cohn.
16 (Sun)	Alexandria Waterfront Day Paddle: A day paddle from Bel Haven Marina to the waterfront of Old Town Alexandria. See the towering new Wilson Bridge above. More information to follow shortly. Skill Level: Advanced Beginner Organizer(s): Led by Dan Hoke .
21-23 (Fri-Sun)	Tall Pines III: A car camper at a private campground on the upper Virginia Eastern shore. Paddle out of your campsite! Lots of local places to paddle once you are there. Call for prequalification and more information. Skill Level: Advanced Beginner Organizer(s): Led by Greg Welker and Jenny Plummer-Welker 301-249-4895.
27-29(Fri-Sun)	Eastern Neck: Join us for a day paddle around Eastern Neck Wildlife Refuge and camping all weekend. More information to follow shortly. Skill Level: Advanced Beginner Organizer(s): Led by Marshall Woodruff (202) 345-0606.
29 (Sun)	NonCPA Event: Support the Nation's Triathlon: There is a short water swimming course for the athletes participating in the Nation's Triathlon on Sept. 29th. Come down to Washington D.C. and support this event as an on-water safety kayaker. More information on time and place to follow shortly. Web Site: http://thenationstriathlon.com Skill Level: Advanced Beginner Paddlers. Organizer(s): Led by Dave Biss 703-241-0036, Charles Brodsky - Founder, The Nation's Triathlon®.

October

- 5-8 (Fri-Mon)** **Non CPA Event: Delmarva Paddlers Retreat:** Now in it's 19th year, the Delmarva Paddler's Retreat has grown into one of the largest celebrations of the origins of kayaking. Participants and Guides alike have opportunity to share and hone traditional kayaking techniques and skills. Activities range from on-water instruction, along with rope gymnastics, seminars on traditional kayak construction, presentations and lectures. **Skill Level:** All **Organizer(s):** Led by Ed Zachowski.
- 12-14 (Fri-Sun)** **Elk Neck Car Camper:** Fourth Annual Elk Neck Car Camper and Moveable Feast. **Skill Level:** Advanced Beginner Paddlers **Web Site:** <http://troop424.freesevers.com/Elk%20Neck%202006/ELKNECKTRiPREPORT.html> **Organizer(s):** Led by Ralph Heimlich 301-498-0918 (leave a message).
- 25 (Thu)** **PoG Halloween Paddle Party:** The event to end the season. We will dress up, paddle and then part on the docks as we close the season. More information will follow shortly. **Skill Level:** All **Organizer(s):** Led by Dave Biss 703-241-0036.

November

- 4 (Sun)** **CPA Annual Meeting:** details to follow. **Skill Level:** All **Organizer(s):** Dave Biss.
- 10-12 (Sat-Mon)** **Chicahominy Riverfront Park:** Car camping and paddling in the protected waters of Chickahominy River **Skill Level:** Advanced Beginner Paddlers **Organizer(s):** Led by Bill Dodge 703-201-8636 (cell).

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Tangier Island Adventure *(Continued from page 8)*

the lights would disappear meaning that there was land blocking my progress. So much for short cuts. So then I just headed for the boat channel marked by the red and green channel lights, knowing that this was going to take me the long way into Crisfield but at least it would get me there. I finally arrived at the Crisfield dock at 9:58 PM.

I did a grand total of 23 miles from Watts Island on top of the 4.5 miles coming from the other island to Watts Island. So I was a little bit worn out. So now all I had to do was drive two and half hours back in the rainstorm without falling asleep at the wheel.

Back on Watts

I turned on the VHF radio to the weather alert channel and listened to the forecasts. They have to run through every forecast in the area and that was tedious. So I decided to call David Shames, who always seems to be close to a computer and ask him to look up a forecast online. Fortunately my cell phone had excellent coverage. I got hold of David and explained our situation. Between the laughter he went online and found a forecast for Crisfield. The wind which was southeast would change to northeast by morning. Scattered thundershowers were forecast for the evening.

It was probably around 10 when the storm approached the island. I could hear the thunder from afar. Then the sky lit up with lightning. It was coming so quick that it seemed like someone had just turned the lights on outside and left them on. I could hear the waves crashing on the shore and wondered if the dune I had chosen was high enough. Then it hit. The force of the wind was incredible. The sides of tent were pushed inward and I could feel the tent lifting off the sand. Then as quickly as it came it ended. The wind died down to a slow roar. Cautiously I climbed out of the tent to inspect the damage. I looked over at the kayaks. They were still secure on the dune. The wind picked up and continued to blow throughout the night but that was the only thunderstorm which hit us directly. I could hear thunder in the distance. Somehow I got back to sleep and awoke the next morning to a steady rain. I waited about an hour for the rain to let up then ventured outside. The sky was grey and heavy but there was the hint of blue peaking around the clouds. The water was almost dead calm. I yelled over to Shannon's tent to get ready to leave. A half hour later we had the tent and gear packed in the kayaks and we were on the water.

The GPS was helpful in keeping us on course but it wasn't hard to navigate to Tangier. We could see the island from Watts. The waves were a little choppy as we got further away from Watts and out in the unprotected waters. But it was manageable. An hour and half later we paddled close to shore where the crab houses are situated. The channel was past the crab houses. But now we had another problem. The tide was low and we were running out of water. We tried pushing the boats forward with our hands in the sand but that would only take us so far. We had to get out of the kayaks and walk pulling the kayaks behind us.

I went back to the crabhouse / bar that we had eaten at on Saturday and asked if there was any place where we could shower. They directed us down the street to the marina where we found an open door and a hot shower ... waiting for us. Clean and refreshed we had lunch found at one of the restaurants and called David Moore to let him know we were ok. We took the 4 pm ferry back to Crisfield and called it a day. [Editor's Note: This is an excerpt of [Susanita's Blog](#), so go there for the full story. Also, see the [photo albums](#).]

Jug Bay Semi-Hemi Kayak Kamper

By Ralph Heimlich



Another steamy, sweaty August morning on the Pax
photo by Ralph Heimlich

This weekend was a perfect example of why I don't like to do trips in August...and why I do.

We base-camped at the Jug Bay Canoe Camp (a paddle-in site) on Friday and Saturday night and did paddles from the camp. (see <http://www.pgparks.com/places/parks/jugbay.html>)

Friday, Jim Allen, Dick Rock and I arrived and set up camp, then paddled up-river past Jackson Landing (Jug Bay HQ) and entered the Western Branch. We marveled at all the flowers in bloom on the shore (wild rice, pickerel weed, cardinal flower, marsh mallow, marsh marigold, a tall purple thing, Joe Pye Weed, etc.) The butterflies were in heaven. We stopped at Mount Calvert and walked around the house, reading the interpretive sign boards, including pictures of Commodore Barney's attack on the British and the Chesapeake Beach Railroad that crossed the Patuxent in sight of the house.

Back at camp, Marla Aron and Ellen Stefaniak joined the group and set up camp. The reason NOT to paddle in August is it can be sooo darn hot. It got up to about 95 degrees and 100% humidity (It's not the heat, its the humidity!) We prepared our dinners, sweltered, and swatted. A little alcohol is usually a social lubricant, but in the heat, it just broke my sweat out in a sweat. Given the heat and a near full moon, we did a night paddle, having the river to ourselves. Paddled down stream until my memory of the river gave out, then backtracked up to Jackson Landing before pulling in. I left my little LED lantern on at the dock, to avoid the "Are you SURE this is the landing?" dialog on our return. Early to bed, knowing we were the only people in the park (at least legally).

Stumbled out of the hammock for an early sunrise. Very pretty, but it was already about 80 and 100% humidity. Quick breakfast and we got on the water to paddle down to Selbys Landing (about 1/4 mile) to collect our day paddlers, Brad Roberts and Karen Long. We paddled down to the mouth of Mattaponi Creek and up the creek at low tide. We made it to just past the critical area drive bridge. Interesting wildlife included not 1 but 2 rotting deer carcasses, one adorned with vampire butterflies (yeech!). A pack of semi-wild dogs is apparently running deer in the park at night, and we thought the 2 in the creek were victims. Many turtles and a Northern brown water snake.

Paddled down to Lyons Creek and found that a very nice (and shady) escape, especially since the flow up stream a ways was much cooler than the river. An immature bald eagle roosting on a boat house roof surprised us when it turned out not to be a vulture, and mama flew overhead as well. Several snakes and lots of fish visible in the clear water and SAV. A big surprise was a little spotted fawn lying on the bank in "invisible" mode, with mama snorting and running away. It watched 9 kayakers glide by on the upstream and was still there when we came back by. Left Brad and Karen at Selbys Landing ramp and greeted Hedy Sladovich, who joined us for Saturday night. Back to camp for lunch in the shade and sweatesta (new coinage).

Dick noticed something stirring in the tree holding up our tarp. We were being investigated by the local welcoming wagon in the form of a very pretty black and white snake (maybe a northern black racer or a black rat snake). He did some Inuit rope exercises with himself as the rope and then gingerly checked out the tarp while firmly holding on to the branch with his tail. Decided the tarp was not the ground, then moved over to the tree trunk, down and out of there.

We decided to prepare our "feast" for an early, daylight dinner. Sushi, prosciutto, green figs, and cheese for appetizers, broccoli raisin and pine nut salad, chicken cacciatore and turkey breast medallions on couscous were the main dishes, with Mrs. Rocks Nebraska Chocolate Flat Cake for dessert. After the stuffing, we repaired to the dock for a foot splash and leisurely wine sipping.

When it cooled off a bit, we launched an evening paddle upriver to Mount Calvert under oppressive skies. The SECOND REASON I don't paddle in August is thunderstorms, and the weather radio squawked us an alert to turn back as they were approaching from several directions at once. We landed and stowed the boats just in time to sit out a real electric blizzard in the cars for about an hour. As the T boomers moved off to the east, we hit the tents. A bit later (after midnight) there was more lightening and thunder and heavier rain, but it was hard to tell if we were getting wet since we were...wet. The midnight rain dropped the temperature and washed some of the humidity out of the air for comfortable sleeping. I even got a little chilly in my hammock about 4 o'clock, and shortly thereafter the dog pack was heard baying through the park until about 5:30.

After breakfast, Marla and Ellen packed up and took off, and the three muskytears headed downstream for a short paddle. Interesting sighting were 4 white geese in with a group of Canada Geese (didn't look like domestics--no orange bills). We also saw a small head swimming across the river in front of us. Looked like one BIG snake, or a muskrat, but turned out to be a miniature otter (we thought). I now think it was a mink (see mustela vision at <http://links.baruch.sc.edu/Data/SpeciesLists/Mammals.html>) which is listed on the Jug Bay list of mammals. Cool little guy.

As you can see (see pictures at <http://picasaweb.google.com/ralph.heimlich/PaxRiverKayakKamperAugust2007>) the heat and humidity don't show in pictures and fade from memory, but I remain conflicted about paddling in "tropical" Maryland in August.



Inside our August 2007 issue:

- **Kayak Camping the Chowan**
- **Patuxent RoughNecks**
- **Tangier Island Adventure**
- **Jug Bay Semi-Hemi Kayak Kamper**
- **Officer Nominations**
- **2007 Calendar**

Jug Bay Canoe Camp Guest *Photo by Jim Allen*

The Chesapeake Paddler

Chesapeake Paddlers Association, Inc.
PO Box 341
Greenbelt, MD 20768

REMINDER: Please check your mailing label or the email you were sent for your membership expiration date. If your CPA membership has expired, or will expire soon, please send in your dues. SEE BOX ON PAGE 2 FOR ADDRESS.