

Chesapeake Paddler

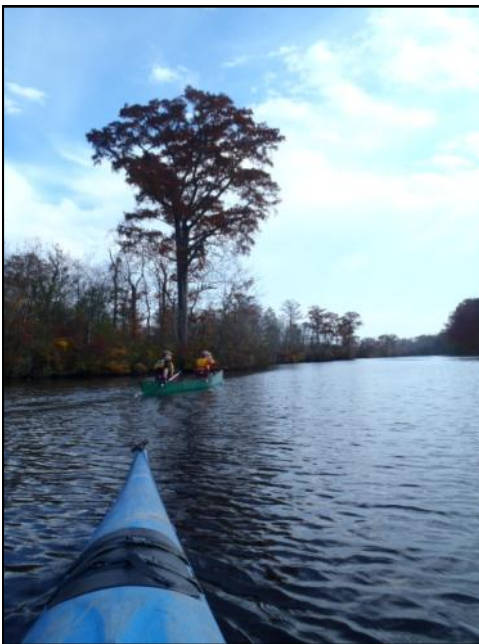


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January-February, 2014

A Paddler's Favorite Flora and Fauna on the Pocomoke

By Paul Fofonoff



Paddling the Pocomoke in the Fall
photograph by Paul Fofonoff

I first saw the Pocomoke River in 1997, and I've paddled it at least four times, with the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Anne Arundel Bird Club, and the Chesapeake Paddlers Association (CPA), mostly on the section between Snow Hill and Porter's Crossing, and on Nassawango Creek. I still have a lot of the river to explore, and I recommend Ralph Heimlich's 2010 'Sea Kayaker' article for a fuller description and paddling details (<http://seakayaker.us/paddling-the-pocomoke-and-nassawango/>). But I'm a biologist (mostly marine), and an amateur naturalist above the water's surface, so I'll write about a tree and a few creatures.

The Pocomoke is remarkable, as the East Coast's "northernmost Southern river," with the northernmost extensive tidal Bald Cypress swamp. Two biologists, George Beaven and Henry Oosting, surveyed its flora in the 1930s, and listed more than 200 species of plants. The Pocomoke is missing alligators and Spanish Moss, but you can see ferns and flowers growing on trees, deer and snakes swimming, and float with the tide deep into a forest. I can't list all the creatures you can see on this river, and I'll just try to sketch a few of my favorites.

Bald Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*)—A tree with knees

As trees go, Bald Cypress is a strange tree. It's a conifer, but not an evergreen—the needles turn rusty and drop off in the fall. This tree can grow in up to 1.2 meters (4 ft) of water, but it will also grow in a lawn or a yard in comparatively dry soil. The seeds won't germinate under water, but will survive submerged for 2 ½ years, and then will germinate on exposed mud or moss. A record tree in Williamsburg, Virginia, is 44 m (144 ft) tall, but these trees more usually reach 25 m (82 ft). A single tree is monoecious (has both sexes) produces both pollen and seeds, and produces hard, green, spherical cones. The Pocomoke swamp was logged many times, so its trees

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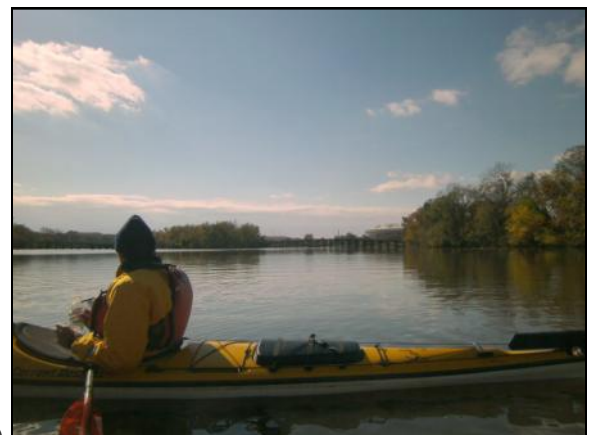
Anacostia Water Trail Map and Guide

by Ralph Heimlich, CPA Coordinator

For several years, our Annual Meeting Paddle took place on the Anacostia River, launching from Bladensburg Waterfront Park.

The Anacostia Watershed Society, a nonprofit organization dedicated to cleaning the water, recovering the shoreline, and honoring the heritage of the Anacostia River and its watershed communities just released the Anacostia Water Trail Map and Guide, now available through their website. The Trail Map and Guide, created in partnership with the National Park Service, brings together all of the resources and activities available on the Anacostia River and guides users through access points and features of the trail.

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Kayaking the Anacostia River, CPA's 2012 Annual Meeting photograph by Ralph Heimlich

CLASSIFIEDS

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!

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1/8 page	\$20	2.4" x 3.5" (1)
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Public service announcement and personal ads to sell kayaks/accessories are printed at no charge; non-members pay \$10 for 3 months.



Pirates of Sugarloaf visit the National Geographic Museum for FotoWeekDC
photograph provided by DJ Manalo

SCHEDULE FOR THE 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. Have an idea for an article, or is there information you would like to see in the newsletter? Email Jenny Plummer-Welker at news_editor@cpakayaker.com or call 301-249-4895.

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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NEW: Membership is \$10, \$18, \$27, \$35, for 1, 2, 3, and 4 years. Sign up for membership online at <http://www.cpakayaker.com/join-cpa/become-a-member/> or send checks or changes of membership information to CPA, P.O. Box 341, Greenbelt, MD 20768. Do not send them to the newsletter team.

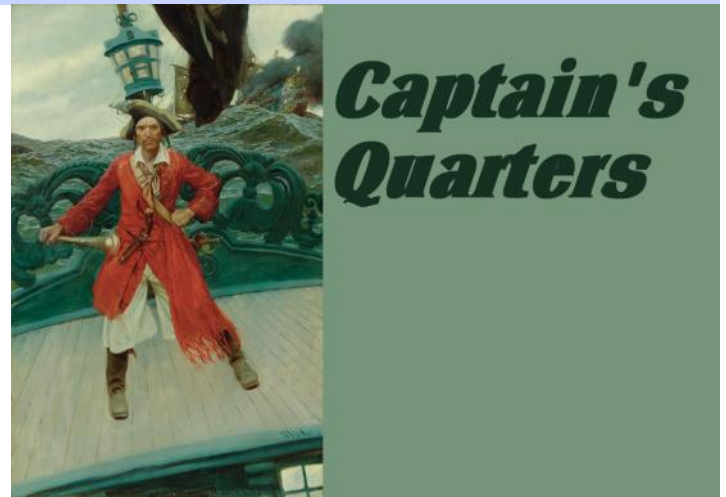
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It May Be Cold, But the Sea Kayak Season Starts NOW!

The first events of the 2014 season are already on the calendar (see <http://www.cpakayaker.com/paddle-now/calendar/>). NOW is the time for you to be thinking about plans for trips or events YOU want to lead this season. You'll have the opportunity to discuss them with CPA leaders and members at the two Annual Planning Meetings, scheduled for Saturday, February 8 (Maryland) and Saturday, February 22 (Virginia). Other events kicking off the season are a repeat of the popular Cold Water Safety Clinic on Sunday, February 9 at Truxtun Park, Annapolis, a three-part workshop on creating a neoprene spray skirt (in January, February, and March), the one-day classroom SK101 course for beginning kayakers on March 15, the Boat and Paddle Workshop on April 5, and the on-water skills weekend, SK102, on April 25-27. Shake off those winter blues and start thinking about gliding across Chesapeake waters.

Maryland Boating Enhancement Task Force—Some of you may wonder just what the Coordinator does. When I'm not busy coordinating, I get to represent CPA in various venues some of which may actually have some impact on the future of our sport in the Bay area.

In 2013, the Maryland General Assembly passed Senate Bill 90 (SB 90, <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2013RS/bills/sb/sb0090e.pdf>), which changed some of the tax provisions relating to the boating industry in Maryland. Among other things, SB 90 established a task force to evaluate options and make recommendations for enhancing boating and growing the industry in the Maryland. I was approached and agreed to fill the slot on the task force allotted to paddle sports. Our charge is to consider incentives to encourage boat registration and use of Maryland marinas and boat yards; modifications to the Maryland vessel excise tax rate and boat registration fees; how the Waterway Improvement Fund is used; the impact of decreased state and federal spending on boating access; and other matters. The task force has until September, 2015 to report findings and recommendations to the Maryland governor. SB 90 changed the 5% vessel excise tax by capping it at \$15,000, so any boat valued over \$300,000 pays a flat \$15,000, and boats valued less than \$300,000 pay 5% of value. Non-motorized craft, including paddle craft, currently pay the 6% general sales tax, not the excise tax, and are not required to be registered in Maryland. SB 90 also redirected 2.3% of the motor fuel tax revenue to the Chesapeake Bay Trust Fund and 0.5% to the Waterway Improvement Fund. While the cap sacrifices some revenue, the motor fuel tax redirection restores some revenue. Vessel excise revenue has trended downward from about \$31 million per year in 2005 to \$13.5 million in 2012, with an upward tick in 2013 to \$15.2 million as the economy recovers.



Ralph Heimlich paddling on Patuxent River, December, 2013
photograph by Dave Isbell

The Waterway Improvement Fund installs and maintains about 4,500 aids to navigation (not part of the U.S. Coast Guard system), dredges channels and harbors not serviced by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, grants funds for constructing and maintaining public boating facilities, marine pumpout stations and boating-related shoreline erosion control, funds marine operations of the Natural Resources Police, removes abandoned boats and debris that impede boating, supports acquisition of fire/rescue/patrol boats and equipment, and generally plans for, evaluates, and regulates recreational boating use. The Waterway Improvement Fund operates through matching grants to local government and marinas and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and tries to leverage matching federal fund sources such as U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fish and Wildlife Service sport fish restoration programs, and the Federal Boating Infrastructure (BIG) program.

I'll be working on the Task Force through September, 2015 and will report back to CPA members as issues are brought up and discussed. Please contact me if you have viewpoints on ways to enhance boating in Maryland and the appropriate role of the paddle sports in the larger boating picture.

Ralph Heimlich
Coordinator

CPA Paddler Profile ~ Mike Ward

Interview by Rick Wiebush



Mike Ward at Watts Island, Virginia
Photograph by Rick Wiebush

Name: Michael Ward

Lives in: Hershey, Pennsylvania

Real job: Sunoco/Fuel Transport Driver

Member of a Piracy? Pirates of Baltimore and Pirates of the Lakes

Paddling Buddies: Jay Gitomer, Rick Wiebush, as well as others from the Baltimore area. Gary Benzon of Carlisle, Pa.

Number years paddling: 6

How did you get involved in kayaking? Bought my first rec boat with the idea I would just goof around a little.

How did you learn to sea kayak? SK102, skills clinics with the Pirates of Baltimore, as well as some commercial courses.

Any formal training or ACA/BCU certifications? I have taken courses with Cross Currents, Adventure Crafters, Bay Kayaking, and earned a BCU 3* three star assessment at the Kiptopeke Symposium last fall.

Boat usually paddled: Tiderace Xcite 17'10" red/white

Type paddle used: Euro

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

Do you regularly do any other outdoor activities? No

How often do you paddle in summer? Once or twice per week

Do any winter paddling? Yes

Go to pool sessions? Canoe Club of Greater Harrisburg organizes winter pool sessions at a local high school.

Favorite local paddling location: Swatara Creek in Hershey.

Favorite non-local location: Cape Henlopen, Delaware

Best paddling trip/experience ever and why: The coolest thing I ever did in my kayak was during an open water training course with Cross Currents at Cape Henlopen. Conditions were kind of flat with regular dumping surf of about two feet or less. So for fun we paddled parallel to the beach riding the shoulders of the waves, using draw strokes to keep from being thrown down on the beach. Most fun you can have with your clothes on.

Scariest/most dangerous trip/experience and why: On a recent surfing trip to Metomkin Inlet, Virginia, I experienced my first pitch-pole. When I noticed I was looking up at the water and down at the sky, the thought *take a deep breath* went through my mind. Once things settled down and I stopped being pushed by the wave, I realized I had managed to stay with my boat (and shocked to find it still attached to my ***). I was able to roll up and after some re-orienting, I found the beach where our gear was stored.

Bucket list trips: I want to (will someday) paddle with icebergs.

Three things you like most about paddling? I am a water guy anyway, plus it's a break from the everyday run around. And I get to meet a lot of really cool people.

What do you like about CPA? The paddling resources: people, places, and a whole wealth of knowledge.

One thing other people find interesting about you: Saying I'm an amateur gourmet cook is probably a little much, but I'm certainly a foodie.

CPA Paddler Profile ~ Sue Byerly

Interview by Rick Wiebush

Name: Sue Byerly

Lives in: Chestertown, Maryland, on the lovely Eastern Shore

Real job: Marketing Coordinator for a manufacturing company

Member of a Piracy? Pirates of the Eastern Shore

Paddling Buddies: Melinda Bookwalter, Paula Hubbard, Lizzie O'Donoghue, Rich Pieper, Laura Ventura, and the KIPP-ers

Number years paddling: 10

How did you get involved in kayaking? I picked up a used rec boat in 2003 because I've always enjoyed being out on the water. I admit it, I was one of those oblivious rec paddlers – PFD on the deck, no training whatsoever, paddling mostly alone, and quite happy in my ignorance. After a capsized episode that could easily have been a lot worse, it became clear to me that it was time to either step up my game or find a new hobby.

How did you learn to sea kayak? In 2009, I started taking sea kayaking classes on the Western Shore and that fall, I bought my first sea kayak. In 2010, I signed up for the Kent Island Practice Paddle (KIPP) series. I had no idea what I was in for, but was hooked from the start. I was a sloppy paddler with six years worth of bad habits to unlearn, and somehow I was able to complete the KIPP circumnavigation on sheer willpower. Through KIPP, I also discovered there was a small group of women sea kayakers right in my backyard! With more instruction, patient mentors, and lots-lots-lots of practice, things really started to click in 2011. In 2012, I bought a second kayak and switched to a Greenland paddle. 2013 was my fourth year of KIPP, and I cannot say enough about the mentoring and skill building that is an integral part of this series.

Any formal training or ACA/BCU certifications: Various lessons with several instructors in Maryland, but no certifications yet.

Boat usually paddled: My favorite is a well-worn orange poly Valley Avocet (16') – it's not pretty, but it's my do anything kayak. I also have a boysenberry/gold/ivory fiberglass Impex Cat 3 (17') that's my go-to kayak for distance paddling.

Type paddle used: Lumpy Greenland paddle. I also have a carbon Werner Camano bent shaft, but it's usually on my deck for a spare.

Do you do any other type of paddling besides sea kayaking? Not regularly. **Do you regularly do any other outdoor activities?** No, but I would like to do more hiking and biking, or maybe try cross country skiing.

How often do you paddle in summer? At least once or twice a week from May through October, and maybe once or twice a month in the colder months. **Do any winter paddling?** Yes, as long as it's sunny and above 35°F. Winter paddling has a stark, serene beauty that's worth experiencing (on sunny days). **Go to pool sessions?** I've signed up for the Catonsville pool sessions this winter.

Favorite local paddling location: The lower Sassafras River – sandy bottom, nettle free, and relatively clear water through the entire summer. The possibilities are endless – bird watching, creek exploring, playing around, or heading out to the Bay. Moonlight paddling anywhere is just magical. **Favorite non-local location:** That's a tough one, but if I had to choose... see the next question.

Best paddling trip/experience ever and why: A last minute decision to join a kayak camping trip in the McCoy and Mink Islands, Georgian Bay, Ontario last August - five spectacular days of semi-remote island hopping bliss with wonderful friends, stunning scenery, crystal clear water, made-to-order weather, and moonlit nights. I don't own a lot of camping gear (yet), and I'm especially grateful to my paddling friends who loaned me their gear to use for the trip!

Scariest/most dangerous trip/experience and why: April 2012 – Cape Henlopen, full moon Tides & Currents Class with Adventure Crafters. It was definitely outside of my comfort zone and my first experience getting knocked over in rougher conditions. Can't wait to do it again.

Bucket list trips: Too many places, not enough time. The easy answer is to escape to a warmer climate in the winter and someplace cooler in the summer. **Three things you like most about paddling?** 1) It's fun! Paddlers are the most friendly, generous, and fun bunch of people I've had the pleasure of meeting. 2) It's my therapy. No matter what's bringing me down, getting out on the water sets me right again. 3) It's never boring. Each time I pick up a paddle is a unique experience, and there's always something more to learn. **What do you like about CPA?** The sense of community.

One thing other people find interesting about you: I like to collect Hull Brown Drip dishware.



Sue Byerly at Muddy Creek, Susquehanna River

Photograph by Laura Ventura



(Continued from page 1)

are mostly less than 100 years old, but some in the south have been dated to 1700 years ago. Further north, there's an isolated grove at Battle Creek on the Patuxent, and planted trees survive as far north as Pittsburgh and Ottawa.

But for me, the most unique features are the knees, tall wooden cones and spikes that rise from the long horizontal roots, out of the mud and water. In some places, they look like a mass gathering of cowed monks, or Saturday Night Live's old Cone-heads. Each knee is a little different, like an abstraction of a human figure. But what are they for? One idea is that they help the roots breathe, pumping oxygen down into the anoxic mud. But there's no evidence for that. I talked to Pat Megonigal, a Smithsonian biogeochemist, who has been doing some experiments in a small grove of planted trees, near where I work. I thought maybe the weight of the knees might stabilize the tree, in the mud, but Pat pointed out the weight of the knees is trivial compared to the weight of the tree. At the edge of a swamp, the knees are all on the wet, muddy side, where they'd tip the tree over, if they weighed a lot, which they don't. The knees don't grow in dry soil, and they grow taller in deeper water, but nobody knows what they're for.

Red-Bellied Cooter Turtle (*Pseudemys rubriventris*)



Red-Bellied Cooter Turtle
photograph by Patrick Wamsley

In the Pocomoke and other tidal fresh rivers around the Chesapeake, the Red-Bellied Cooter and the Eastern Painted Turtle

(*Chrysemys picta*) are the turtles kayakers most commonly see, because they are common, and bask in the sun. Other common turtles, like the Snapping, Mud, and Stinkpot turtles, and the Diamondback Terrapin come out of the water, mostly to lay their eggs. The red-belly is our largest basking turtle, with a shell 10-12 inches long. They're usually shy, but on some well-travelled rivers, they'll let kayakers get close enough to admire their colors and take pictures. It ranges throughout the lower Chesapeake watershed south to the Gulf, but there's a tiny, isolated colony in ponds near Plymouth, Massachusetts, a relic of a brief warm phase after the Ice Age.

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)

This beautiful duck is found throughout the Chesapeake's wooded fresh and brackish

tributaries, but the Pocomoke is ideal habitat, with lots of sheltered fresh waters, and trees for nesting. But humans tend to take out the big trees that attract woodpeckers that make the nesting holes that the Wood Duck needs. Even worse, in the late 19th and early 20th century, this bird was massacred for its feathers, used to decorate ladies' hats. Wood Ducks have been rescued by a long ban on hunting (now permitted), and by the placing of numerous nesting boxes—sometimes wood, sometimes plastic—on poles, and usually with an inverted cone below to block predators. The male bird is more colorful, but the female is equally elegant, in brown and olive. The birds are wary, and without binoculars, you'll know them by their fast take-off and their call, which Roger Peterson describes as "a distressed woo-eek." They are one of a few ducks that breed here in the summer, so you can see them year-round.

The episode which I'd love to see in real life (BBC's "Planet Earth" shows it for the related Mandarin Duck) is how the ducklings leave their nesting hole, permanently, because they can't fly yet. The nesting hole can sometimes be 50-60 ft. up in a tree, and momma, on the ground or in the water calls the babies till they make the leap. Small animals can stand big drops, because of air resistance, and because the impact of an object increases with weight. So the ducks gather their courage, jump, hit the ground, shake themselves, and waddle to the water, following momma.

Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*)



Prothonotary Warbler
photograph from Smithsonian
National Zoo, Migratory Bird Center

This brilliant golden-yellow and olive bird draws birders to the Pocomoke in spring. The name comes from a group of Vatican officials who wore bright yellow robes, in order to distinguish themselves from the cardinals. The Prothonotary Warbler likes southern hardwood and cypress swamps, and, like the Wood Duck, nests in tree-holes made by woodpeckers. It forages for insects and snails in low vegetation near water, and calls "sweet, sweet, sweet." It's easy to spot it from the water—we saw many on an Anne Arundel Bird Club paddle in May.

One could add many more plants and critters to this story, but I hope these few will draw more paddlers to the Pocomoke, and encourage them to stop, look, and listen, and cherish and protect the Chesapeake's swamps and marshes.

Paul Fofonoff, a CPA member since 2002, kayaks with the Pier 7 Pirates. He is a Biological Science Technician at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Anne Arundel County, Md. Paul earned a Ph.D. in Oceanography from the University of Rhode Island, a M.S. in Zoology, and a B.A. from Clark University.



Cypress Tree along the Pocomoke River
photograph by Paul Fofonoff



Wood Duck
photograph by Patrick Wamsley

Skills Article ~ Loosen Up: Hand Grip for Kayakers

by Jay Gitomer

Excerpted from [The Proper Paddler: Posture & Body Mechanics for Kayakers](#)

There are a lot of elements of body mechanics to consider when paddling. Some we talk about a lot, like rotation. Some we touch on less often. But since everything in our bodies is connected, things that might seem small can actually have a big impact on health and efficiency.

Hand position is an example of a subtle posture that ripples throughout the body. They're just hands, hanging out at the ends of our arms, and we don't think much about them. However, making a single change can lead to more pleasurable paddles, more efficient technique, and a longer future enjoying our sport. A loose grip on the paddle is more important than it might seem.

Clutching the paddle is the main cause of paddler's wrist, the repetitive stress injury that is right up there with torn rotator cuffs when it comes to sidelining a paddler. It's common enough to have a fancy name: De Quervain's syndrome. De Quervain's happens when overused tendons become inflamed, and it takes a long time to subside. De Quervain's makes turning a doorknob, lifting a can of beer, or taking a stroke painful and wobbly.

Tension in the hands creates a ripple effect throughout the body. Make a fist right now, pretend to take a few paddle strokes, and take an inventory of what's happening with the rest of your body. Your arm muscles become tight all the way to the shoulders. Your pecs and lats are probably also tight. It takes more energy to paddle with tight torso muscles than with a loose, relaxed body. That's important because if we want to paddle far, we need to paddle efficiently, only employing the fewest muscles needed at any time. Also, we want to be loose and relaxed all over because the upper body needs to be able to function independently from the lower half so that we can edge and drive the boat with our feet while we also rotate our torsos and manipulate the paddle. That's a lot of complex action, all of which can be eased by the simple action of opening one's hands.

Holding the paddle tightly cocks the wrists. Bent wrists absorb the entire impact of the stroke. Ouch. We're right back to tendinitis. A bent wrist doesn't allow a paddler to put the full force of his body into each stroke; instead, only the amount of force that the wrist joint can tolerate is transferred to the blade. That means that the entire effort of the whole body, from the foot pushing the peg to the torso rotation to the raising of the paddle, is shorted out at the point where the body meets the blade, so the stroke doesn't provide all of the boat movement that it could. It's like running on tiptoes.

Technique is also affected by grip. When your hands are clenched on the shaft, there's a tendency to put your weight on the paddle. If your weight is on the paddle and your hands slip, you can lose your balance and sometimes end up swimming – or, at least, feeling less secure, which isn't fun. Hands that are loose on the shaft also might slip, but since your weight isn't on the paddle, your balance won't be affected. Keep your hands loose and your weight in your seat.

On a related note, holding the paddle tightly can be a sign that a paddler is arm-paddling rather than using torso rotation. Imagine paddling with no rotation, using just your arms. What would your hands be doing? The angle of movement when arm-paddling demands a tighter grip -- without the torso driving the paddle across the body, the lower wrist has to cock and the lower hand has to close around the shaft. So if you catch yourself clutching the paddle, check to be sure that you're really rotating.

So far, we've focused solely on the negative consequences of a tight grip. There isn't much to say on the prescriptive side, though, because it's so simple: relax your hands.

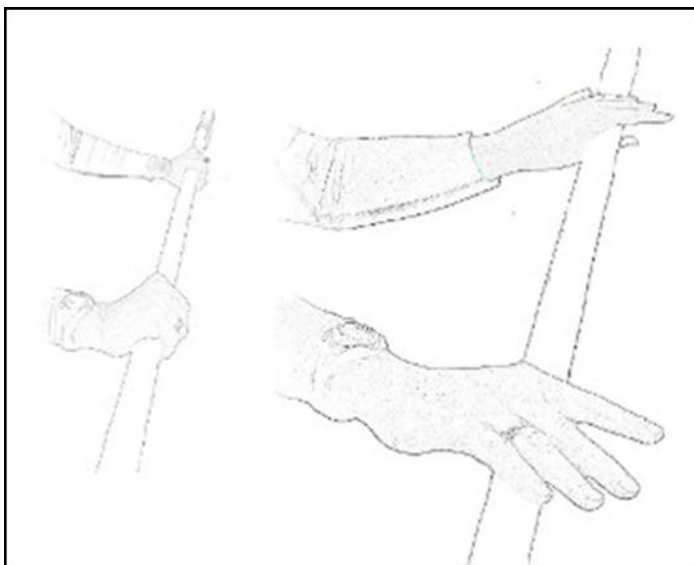


Figure 1 Incorrect vs. Correct Paddle Grip

The upper hand is open and pushing. The paddle shaft is in contact with the pad of the hand and is supported by the V formed between the thumb and hand. The lower hand forms a gentle hook. If this is hard to get the hang of, try paddling with a pinky finger raised. Occasionally do a check by wiggling your fingers. If you can wiggle all your fingers on both hands in mid-stroke, your hands are relaxed.

Wrists should be in a straight line with the hands. Those of you who participate in racquet sports, shooting sports, or weight lifting are already familiar with the mechanics. Straight wrists allow the impact of each stroke to be dissipated throughout the body. That protects the wrists from repetitive stress injuries and allows the full force of each stroke to be transferred to the blade.

That was a lot of words to talk about something as simple as hand position. It's not so simple, after all, though, because they're not just hands; they're the point at which the body connects with the paddle, our primary tool for forward propulsion.

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([Continued](#) from page 7)

To find out about other physical adjustments you can make to improve your paddling experience, please check out <http://www.smashwords.com/profile/view/jaygitomer>.

Jay Gitomer is the owner-operator of [Blue World Paddlesports](#) and the organizer of [Babes with Blades All-Women, No-Yelling Paddling Events](#). She is known for her creative, fun approach to training. Jay is an ACA Level 3 Coastal Kayak Instructor, BCU UKCC Level 1 Paddlesports Coach, and BCU 4-Star Leader. Jay sits on the Advisory Committee of the Safety Education and Instruction Council of the American Canoe Association and also founded and runs the [Baltimore Boards](#) paddleboard club. She is a former coordinator of the Chesapeake Paddlers Association and currently volunteers with Team River Runner to help wounded service people.

REVIEWER'S COMMENTS

Alison Sigthy: Yeah Jay! I couldn't agree more—a relaxed body is a must for good paddling technique, and it is impossible to be relaxed if you have a death grip on the paddle. When I was learning to paddle, one of my favorite paddling instructors, Mitch Mitchell, said to hold the paddle like a banana—tight enough you don't drop it, but no tighter. I've always remembered that, and like the image.

I'm not sure I understand or agree with Jay's comment about your hands being more likely to slip on a tightly gripped paddle, but since I am in total agreement that you shouldn't grip your paddle tightly anyway, it probably doesn't matter.

Loose is good. On flat water, I almost always hold my paddle like I'm making an okay sign—I have plenty of paddle control but my body stays loose and fluid. This makes paddling more effective and more enjoyable. Anything that works to keep you relaxed is worth trying. I will often have students who are hard on themselves, or just thinking too much, listen to music while paddling. Music also helps you find a rhythm and paddle more gracefully.

I remember hearing a sportscaster say great athletes, when they are at their best, will often lose their mouth guards because their jaw is so relaxed. While I don't know how true that is, I do know we tend to clench our jaw when we tense up, so I'd like to add another favorite technique. When you are learning something new, or pushing your comfort zone, SMILE! It's impossible to be tense when you smile.

Mitch Mitchell: Great article by Jay. I often take students into rough water conditions, and I can always tell their comfort level by looking at their hands. A death grip signals to me that the student is tense, and not until I can get them to loosen their grip do they begin to relax the rest of their muscles and begin to go with the flow and react to the conditions.

Another important factor of a relaxed grip is that with most strokes it causes you to present your blade face in the proper orientation for the stroke you are performing. With a tight grip not only is there very little feedback from your blade but you may be compensating from an improper blade angle. We see this every day at our rental location where someone is holding their asymmetrical blade upside down and since it wants to flutter in this position they compensate by clamping down on the grip.



CPA's 16th Annual SK102 Skills Clinic April 25-27, 2014, Lake Anna, Virginia

SK102 is CPA's on-water skills clinic weekend.

SK102 offers on-the-water skills classes covering wet exits, basic strokes, basic and advanced rescues, stroke improvement, rolling and more. Additional on land courses cover topics like navigation, kayak camping, etc. SK102 is designed to get teach beginner or intermediate kayakers the skills they need to be kayak safely, including proper paddling technique to minimize the risk of stress or repetitive injury and how to rescue themselves or their kayaking partners. It's also a heck of a lot of fun.

How to register: You must register by **March 29, 2014** on our website: <http://www.cpakayaker.com/sk102/>. SK102 sells out every year with a significant waitlist. New paddlers and especially those who attend SK101 receive priority for SK102 registration.

Where: Lake Anna is 2 hours south of Washington DC. The lake is a nuclear power plant cooling pond, so the water is not only very clear, it is heated – allowing you to practice wet exits, rescues, and rolling in warm water in early spring! The location is private property on which you are welcome to camp.

Cost: \$47, which includes the cost of two days of all volunteer instruction, camping on-site, morning coffee, Saturday night dinner, porta-potties and a one year CPA membership.

For more information, please email Catriona M. at SK102.CPA@gmail.com. Pictures of last year's event are visible here: <https://picasaweb.google.com/cpakayaker/2013SK102>.



SK101 - Introduction to Sea Kayaking
A Winter Workshop
Presented by the
Chesapeake Paddlers Association, Inc.

A one-day introductory course on the basics of sea kayaking. Experienced paddlers will speak about kayak and paddle design, including how to choose the right ones for you, what equipment you will need to start paddling, the basics of safe paddling, how to find people to paddle with, interesting places to paddle, and other, related topics of interest. Kayaks, paddles, equipment, clothing, car rack systems, and a variety of kayaking gear will be on display. Although this event is primarily for the newer paddler, or those interested in getting into the sport, everyone is invited to come and expand their paddling horizons.

What: An introduction to sea kayaking

- Hear presentations on types and uses of boats, paddles, safety, and gear
- Learn where to paddle
- Find potential paddling partners
- See displays of kayaks, paddles, car racks, safety and other paddling gear



When: Saturday, March 15, 2014, 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Where: West River Center
5100 Chalk Point Road
West River, MD 20778

Cost: \$30/person. Everyone must register in advance.

Walk-in registrations **will not** be available.

The cost includes light breakfast and lunch.



Directions: Directions to West River United Methodist Center

From Baltimore and Annapolis: Take I-97 South to Rt. 50 East. Go 1/4 mile (approx.) to Rt. 665 (Aris T. Allen Blvd.). Follow Rt. 665 to Rt. 2 South (Solomons Island Rd.). After crossing the South River Bridge, turn left at the fifth traffic light (Rt. 214). At the second light, turn right onto Rt. 468 (Muddy Creek Rd.). Follow Rt. 468 for 8 miles. Turn left onto Chalk Point Road. (Landmarks at this intersection include a BP station and a convenience store).

From Washington: Take Rt. 4 to Rt. 258. Follow signs toward Deale. Proceed on Rt. 258 - go straight at intersection of Rt. 258 and Rt. 2. Rt. 258 will end at Rt. 256. Turn left. Rt. 256 will end at Rt. 468. Turn left again, proceeding on Rt. 468 for approx. 100 yards. Turn right onto Chalk Point Rd. (between the BP station and a church). Follow Chalk Point Road for 1 mile, turn left into West River Center.

Registration form is on the other side



Chesapeake Paddlers Association, Inc. (CPA)

www.cpakayaker.com

CPA is a completely volunteer-run organization. The mission of the Chesapeake Paddlers Association is to promote safe sea kayaking and safe paddling practices through the education of the local sea kayaking community and the interested public. Club activities may include, but are not limited to kayak trips, kayak camping trips, instructional workshops, informal weekday evening paddles, and any other activities consistent with the mission that members of the club wish to organize.

Registration: You do NOT need to be a CPA member to register for this event, so please tell your friends and family. Apply to register in SK101! Space is limited and available on a first come, first serve basis. Advance registration is required; walk-ins are not permitted.

Deadline is 5:00 p.m. Friday, March 7, 2014 so that we can give the facility an accurate head count. If you have questions, please contact us at CPASK101@aol.com or 410-353-7221 (after business hours).

The preferred means of registration is via the web at <http://www.cpakayaker.com/paddle-now/special-events/sk101>. This will take you to http://www.eventbee.com/v/cpakayaker_sk101/event?eid=191513272#. Fill out the form there, and pay \$30 per person using PayPal©.

Or mail this form and your check made payable to "Chesapeake Paddlers Association" for \$30 per person:

REGISTRATION FORM

Your Name: _____

Your Email: _____

Your Phone#: _____

Address (Street, Town, State & Zip Code)

How did you learn about this workshop? _____

Have you attended SK101 before? When? _____

Do you have kayaking experience: Yes / No

If "Yes", what kind, how long? _____

Would you prefer a vegetarian option if offered? Yes / No

Mail to: CPA SK101 Registration
 c/o Steve Bethke
 9102 Louis Ave
 Silver Spring, MD 20910

Note: You are confirmed ONLY if PAYMENT IS RECEIVED and a slot is available. You will receive a return email or phone call confirming your registration. If you do not receive an email or phone call, you HAVE NOT been registered. If the program is full, we will keep a wait list.

Cancellations: If you have registered and paid and are on the wait list, but we are unable to give you a spot at SK101, your payment will be refunded. For others with confirmed spots who need to cancel, we will provide refunds if cancellations are made in a timely fashion. Please be sure to contact us if you know you won't be able to attend so that someone on the wait list can benefit. **However, no** refunds will be issued for cancellations received after 5:00 p.m. on March 7, 2014, because as of that date we will be charged by the facility for your attendance.

Chesapeake Paddlers Association Tentative 2014 Calendar

Date	Title	Summary
1/18/14	Build Your Own Spray Skirt Workshop Session #1	Build a neoprene spray skirt of your own. You MUST contact the organizer to participate in this workshop. Ralph Heimlich, 301-498-0918 (leave a message), heimlichfamily@comcast.net
2/8/14	Annual Planning Meeting-Maryland	Come add your planned trips and events to the CPA Calendar for the year. Ralph Heimlich, 301-498-0918 (leave a message), heimlichfamily@comcast.net
2/9/14	Coldwater Safety with Moulton Avery: Swim-test Your Gear	Lecture on coldwater safety, followed by a chance to swim your coldwater gear under controlled conditions in really COLD water, Turxtun Park. Catriona Miller, 571-248-1619, thelittlepiggies-cpa@yahoo.com, Moulton Avery
2/15/14	Build Your Own Spray Skirt Workshop Session #2	Build a neoprene spray skirt of your own. You MUST contact the organizer to participate in this workshop. Ralph Heimlich, 301-498-0918 (leave a message), heimlichfamily@comcast.net
2/15/14	Fiberglass Kayak Repair Workshop—CPA & Annapolis Harbor Boat Yard	A class on light fiberglass & gel coat repair. http://www.cpakayaker.com/calendar/85/1719-Fiberglass-Kayak-Repair-Workshop/ Catriona Miller, 571-248-1619, thelittlepiggies-cpa@yahoo.com. Fees: \$18 observer, \$50 repairs
2/22/14	Annual Planning Meeting-Virginia	Come add your planned trips and events to the CPA Calendar for the year. Brian Blankinship, Brian@BayKayaking.com, 11777 Cotton Mill Drive Woodbridge, VA 22192
3/15/14	SK 101 Intro to Sea Kayaking	Classroom introduction to sea kayaking. West River Center, 5100 Chalk Point Rd., West River, MD. Paul Casto, 410-853-7221, Steve Bethke, sbethke@rcn.com
3/22/14	Build Your Own Spray Skirt Workshop Session #3	Build a neoprene spray skirt of your own. You MUST contact the organizer to participate in this workshop. Ralph Heimlich, 301-498-0918 (leave a message), heimlichfamily@comcast.net
4/5/14	Boat and Paddle Workshop and Gear Swap	Truxtun Park in Annapolis from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Catriona Miller, 571-248-1619, thelittlepiggies-cpa@yahoo.com
4/25-27/14	SK 102 -16th Annual SK102 at Lake Anna	Save the Date, Registration is open. Catriona Miller, 571-248-1619, sk102.cpa@gmail.com
5/31/14	Potomac River Swim (Non CPA Event)	Visit http://www.potomacriverswim.com for more information. Cheryl Wagner at 202-387-2361, cherylw@crosslink.net .
7/19/14	Swim OC 2014 (Non CPA event)	Swim support for 9-mile race, limit of 50 swimmers. Contact Corey Davis at corey197@gmail.com

Visit the CPA Web page, <http://www.cpakayaker.com/>, for more events, details and trip leader/organizer contact information. For a full listing of upcoming Club events, visit the CPA Calendar, <http://www.cpakayaker.com/index.php?page=calendar>.

CPA Classifieds

Kayak for sale. Kirton kayak; 18' w/rudder; fast touring boat. New hatch covers; like new condition. Asking \$1000 or best offer. Located on Eastern Shore, Maryland. George Hires, 443-366-6564. grhires@aol.com.

Kayak Storage. Storing your kayak outdoors? Were you worried about it during the Derecho last summer? Would you like to store it indoors and protected from the weather? The Pier 7 Pirates have indoor kayak storage spaces available at our weekly paddling site on the South River. Attend Pier 7 Wednesdays without having to load and unload your boat each week! With the location conveniently located near US-50, you can pick up your boat on the way to Eastern Shore paddling trips. Reserve now for the summer paddling season. The storage space is indoors, secure, climate controlled, with 24/7 access and free launching from the sand beach on Wednesday nights. Rates are \$30/month for a six month lease (rent for the warm paddling season, rent for winter storage, or both) or \$30/month if you need shorter term storage. Please contact Greg Welker at gdwelker@verizon.net or 301-249-4895 if interested.

Anacostia Water Trail

Maryland & Washington, DC

Anacostia Park, National Capital Parks – East
 Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail
 Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail
 National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

(Continued from page 1)

The Trail Map and Guide is a great tool for paddlers, informing users of the resources available throughout the Anacostia River.

Features of the Map and Guide include:

- Highlighted sites along the river including parks, marshes, marinas, an education center and an aquatic garden.
- Tips for experiencing the trail.
- A timeline detailing 400 years of the Anacostia River's history, use and restoration.
- Facts about the history and nature of the Anacostia.
- Boating Safety Tips.

Take a look at the Trail Map and Guide: <http://www.anacostiaws.org/userfiles/image/FINAL%20-%20AWS%20Map%20and%20Guide%20Combined%20Reduced.pdf>. For more information on the Anacostia Water Trail Map and Guide visit: <http://www.anacostiaws.org/anacostia-water-trail>.



"A Seneca Sunset with the Sugarloaf Pirates"
Rita Scherping and Liz Nemas
An Award Winning Photograph, Second Place Amateur
Regional Focus, FotoWeekDC
by DJ Manalo

Inside this issue:

- **A Paddler's Favorite Flora and Fauna on the Pocomoke**
- **Anacostia Water Trail Map and Guide**
- **Captain's Quarters: Kayaking Season Starts Now**
- **Paddler Profiles—Mike Ward and Sue Byerly**
- **Skills Article—Loosen Up: Hand Grip for Kayakers**
- **16th Annual SK102 Skills Clinic**
- **SK101 Flyer & Registration Form**
- **CPA Tentative 2013 Calendar**
- **CPA Classifieds**

The Chesapeake Paddler

Chesapeake Paddlers Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 341
Greenbelt, MD 20768-0341

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.