

CPA Paddler Profile ~ Ben Mayock

Interview by Rick Wiebush

Name: Ben Mayock

Lives in: Ellicott City, Maryland

Real job: The Community College of Baltimore County/
Associate Professor

Member of a Piracy? I'm an intermittent paddler with Pier 7.

Paddling Buddies: Anyone who will paddle with me.

Number years paddling: 3

How did you get involved in kayaking? I rowed boats and paddled canoes as a child, then paddled canoes in the Adirondacks, so I've had a love for being on the water and exploring new adventures before kayaking. In 2010 I bought a used 10' Manatee from Craig's List and have loved kayaking ever since.

How did you learn to sea kayak? I'm still learning.

Any formal training or ACA/BCU certifications: SK101, SK102, SK203, CPA Navigation Skills

Boat usually paddled: Tempest Pro 170 & Tempest 170 RM

Type paddle used: Greenland

Do you do any other type of paddling besides sea kayaking? I take my canoe out once a year to help with the CPA cleanup of the Patuxent River.

Do you regularly do any other outdoor activities? I like to go hiking.

How often (per week or month) do you paddle in summer? This past summer I only paddled about once a week.

Do any winter paddling? Yes

Go to pool sessions? Yes, University of Maryland, Fairlands, and Catonsville YMCA.

Favorite local paddling location: Patapsco River at Daniel's Dam – it's close to my house.

Favorite non-local location: The more I paddle around Kent Island the more I enjoy it.

Best paddling trip/experience ever and why: I've had three experiences that top the list. 1) Paddling from Truxtun Park in my brand new (used) Tempest 170 for the first time. After paddling rec boats for a year I was thrilled with the speed of the Tempest, and I felt safe paddling with experienced paddlers from the CKA Meetup group. 2) Crossing the Delaware Bay from Cape Henlopen, Maryland to Cape May, New Jersey led by Rick Wiebush. It was a blast! 3) Circumnavigating 34 miles around Kent Island with Marshall Woodruff and the KIPPers this past October. We prepared for the trip by getting together once a month since March and practicing teamwork, rescue, navigation and other skills.

Scariest/most dangerous trip/experience and why: Capsizing! The first time I got in a sea kayak was during a "Dolphin Watch" tour in Sarasota, FL about 15-20 years ago and I capsized. I wasn't scared but I've had a healthy respect for keeping my balance in a kayak ever since. Last summer I capsized in rough water and did my first combat roll. I wasn't scared but I supposed I may have been if I wasn't with experienced paddlers. I don't think I've had a really dangerous experience, and I credit that to wise judgment of the trip leaders.

Bucket list trips: I would love to circumnavigate Manhattan! My other trips would be to the Adirondacks and Florida.

Three things you like most about paddling? The camaraderie with other paddlers, the freedom and responsibility of paddling my own kayak, and being on the water in fresh air enjoying the elements.

What do you like about CPA? The helpfulness of the members and their willingness to share their skills.

One thing other people find interesting about you: I'm a cabin overseer and regional cabin supervisor for the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. [Editor's note: Ben is the overseer of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club's High Acre in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.]



Ben kayaking at Kent Island, Maryland

Photograph by Kevin Lawrence