

Paddler Profile: Maxine Mead

Lives in: Severn, MD

Real job: lawyer

Do you regularly attend a Piracy? I have paddled a few times with the Baltimore Pirates. I'm hoping to be able to get out with them more regularly this season.

Number of years paddling: Off and on, about 10 years.

How did you get involved in sea kayaking? I used to have a very short, fat plastic rec boat that I would bring along on sailboat trips. I enjoyed mucking about in that, and soon found myself wanting a boat that would let me do more, and go further and faster. I bought a half rec/half sea kayak (a 12-foot Perception with one bulkhead that could accommodate a spray skirt), attended SK102, loved it and learned so much, bought the Delta. I have no doubt that at least one more boat is probably in my near future.

What boats do you paddle? Delta Expedition, 14.5 feet, green over white. I also own a 13-foot Advanced Elements Advanced Frame Expedition inflatable, but I haven't used it in quite a while.

Rudder or skeg? The Delta has a rudder. I don't always deploy it.

Type paddle used: Euro. I am intrigued by the Greenland paddles, though.

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

Do you regularly do any other outdoor activities? I am an avid bicyclist (long distance, bike camping, bike commuting, general moseying about, etc.). I also hike.

How often on average do you paddle between May and October? About once a week.

Do any winter paddling? No. I don't have the gear, and I've got a weird phobia about constricting clothing, especially around my neck (I can't even wear turtleneck sweaters!) so I can't see myself getting into a drysuit any time soon. :)

Favorite local paddling location: During a mini-vacation in Rock Hall, MD, last summer, I paddled on the West Fork of Langford Creek. Beautiful!

Favorite CPA trip you've ever been on and why: I've only been on one J – the Practice Kayak Camper on the Patuxent, Jug Bay area to Spice Creek, last summer. It was a fantastic introduction to kayak camping, with a great group of people. I want to do more of that!

Coolest paddling trip you've ever been on anywhere? A few years ago I did a guided trip in the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge in North Carolina. Some of it was on narrow water trails, ducking under overhanging tree branches, some of it on more open water. Beauti-

by Bob Browning



Maxine Mead

photo by Michele Platz

ful and varied plant life (massive bald cypress trees, aquatic flowers) and turtles, snakes, birds – and we did actually encounter an alligator!

Scariest/most dangerous trip/experience and why: I paddle alone most of the time, and, acutely conscious of my "advanced beginner" status, I tend to paddle very conservatively, so I haven't had any truly dangerous/scary kayak experiences. (I've been subject to a few in my past life on sailboats, fishing boats, and speed boats.) Probably the most tense I've been was negotiating the chaotic swarm of boat traffic around Ego Alley on a day when I paddled from Truxtun Park over to the Naval Academy. I was wishing I had the "rear view mirror" that I attach to my eyeglasses when bicycling!

Future bucket list trip: Florida Keys in winter; Adirondacks in summer.

Three things you like most about paddling? It's a peaceful, quiet, low-impact way to enjoy nature; it's a wonderful way to mentally de-stress; it's a fantastic, whole-body workout.

What do you like about CPA? The people are the best – from trip leaders to instructors to fellow paddlers, what a great group of fun and supportive folks!

One unusual, non-paddling thing other people find interesting about you? I served 10 years in the U.S. Air Force as a Russian linguist and intelligence analyst, back in the Cold War days. ☺

We would like to know about you! Contact Bob Browning if you are interested in being featured in the Paddler Profile or if you know of someone else he can contact. Contact Bob at: BBBrowning43@verizon.net