

# The Chesapeake Paddler



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## River Reverie

### *Pocomoke satisfies the curious*

By Jaclin Gilbert

The Pocomoke Car Camper was a commitment to battling heat and bugs in pursuit of fine paddling and companionship over the long Fourth of July Weekend. Luckily, it was a successful battle and fine adventure was the reward.

CPA campers were fortunate to be clustered in one of the prettiest loops of the Shad Landing section of Pocomoke State Park, with a good river view from many of the campsites. The campgrounds are nicely set up, and those who found themselves heading out early in the morning were rewarded with beautiful misty views of a pastel river. Evenings were also quietly lovely.

The paddling was structured so that people could choose from an informal array of options. On Friday two trips were offered: one, a paddle on the Pocomoke River from Snow Hill, and two, a trip right out of Shad Landing to view the cypress forests along Nassawango Creek. The wildlife in the protected areas along the Nassawango was great. We saw a beaver and many birds, including prothonotary warblers. It was a hot day for paddling, but the route became shadier as we headed up the creek, which helped a great deal. It was peaceful to be so removed from civilization for a day, and the paddlers who opted for the Pocomoke River trip were happy, too.

After showers and rest period, and swims in the pool for some folks, we headed into Snow Hill for dinner and the annual fireworks show. Dinner was at the Harvest Moon Restaurant, which makes a mean Oyster Po'boy. The surprisingly robust firework show was a fantastic end to the day.

On Sunday, a group of paddlers decided to try Chincoteague Bay in hopes of a sea breeze to keep the day cool. The start of the paddle was unpromising, hot and still. As the day progressed, the breeze arrived and cooled our circumnavigation of several small Islands on the mainland side of the Bay. We departed from George Island



Photo/Maxine Mead

Landing, paddled north around Tizzard Island and then headed back down south towards Mills Island. In the Assacorkin Thoroughfare (Is that a name or what?) we ran into a nice boater who invited us to explore his historic house on a tiny nearby island. We detoured over and tramped around, marveling that it had survived quite a few storms. Another group of paddlers

chose not to paddle on salt water and explored the local creeks for the day, but we all met up for a potluck dinner in the evening. Great food led to great conversation, mostly about kayaking.

Monday morning we were down to one paddling group that headed back to George Island landing to explore some of the tidal creeks dotting the area near where we had paddled the day before. The tidal marsh and grasses were peaceful and lovely, but we were disappointed that the water ran out just before we reached the shade. We tabled the exploration of other similar creeks and decided to head for a shaded beach attached to the mainland just north of the put-in. Here we found a little piece of paradise, a sand beach with lovely shade overhead. Keeping our legs in the water to discourage biting flies, we became interested in some smallish fish that were very interested in us. Rick thought they were mummichog, and they were clearly meat eaters, showing no interest in the bread dropped to them by "careless" eaters. After a coordinated attack by the mummichog on Suzanne and me - timed to the exact second - we pulled our legs out and watched them from a distance.

After the last paddle, some members drifted away home, while others stayed on another night, heading down to Pocomoke City for dinner. All in all, a great way to celebrate the Fourth of July Weekend. ♦