



What's Happening at Blue Marsh Lake?

USACE

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The Fall Season at Blue Marsh Lake

As I write this the first day of fall has come and gone. There is a bit of a crisp feel to the air, and I love it! So do the trail-users. Hikers and mountain bike riders are out using the trails, and enjoying a perfect fall day. Fall is a great time to get outdoors, and here are some tips for a great experience:

- Wear brightly colored clothes, as you might be sharing the area with hunters
- Deer ticks are very active in the fall, so check yourselves after an outing
- Bring along binoculars as there may be opportunities for viewing wildlife
- Share the trails with other users; bike riders and hikers should yield to horse-back riders



- Wear sturdy shoes when hiking
- Carry water with you
- Tell somebody where you are going before heading out
- Carry a small first aid kit (just in case)

These are just a few tips to help you have a more enjoyable experience. Also remember to carry out what you carried in - in fact we don't mind if you pick up trash along the way! Getting outdoors is great for our health as well. So get outdoors this fall! Join us on one of our hikes, ride bike on the trails, do some fishing! Enjoy Blue Marsh Lake - a lake for all seasons!

Home School Field Day a Success

Blue Marsh Lake hosted their first Home School Field Day, and it was a success. Education Volunteer Audrey Wells led the morning session, and she did a fantastic job. The field day was held at the Stilling Basin, where the children learned about aquatic life through hands-on experiences. They used nets to catch crayfish, damselfly and dragonfly nymphs, as well as some other small critters. Audrey had one child wear and hold a variety of props to help them understand the number of adaptations an aquatic insect needs to survive in its watery environment. We were all in agreement that we need to hold more of these field days. Our next home school field day will be on a Friday during the winter.



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Family Fun Day Nature's Crafts, December 1, Saturday, 10:00 a.m., Conference Center
Hike with a Ranger, December 17, Saturday, 8:00 a.m., Visitor Center
Bird Walk, December 19, Wednesday, 1:00 p.m., Visitor Center
Hike with a Ranger, January 12, 2013, Saturday, 8 a.m., Visitor Center
Wee Ones Nature Detectives, January 16, Wednesday, 10:00 a.m., Conference Center
Control Tower Tour, January 19, Saturday, 10 a.m., Visitor Center
Family Fun Day, January 26, Saturday, 10 a.m., Day Use Area. If there is snow bring your cross-country skis or snowshoes!

2012-2013 Hunting Seasons (For additional hunting info, contact the Pa Game Commission)

SQUIRRELS, Red, Gray, Black and Fox (Combined): Oct. 13-Nov. 24; Dec. 10-24 and Dec. 26-Feb. 23 (6

RABBIT (Cottontail): Oct. 20-Nov. 24, Dec. 10-24 and Dec. 26-Feb. 23 (4 daily, 8 possession).

PHEASANT: Male only in WMUs 2A, 2C, 4C, 4E, 5A and 5B – Oct. 20-Nov. 24. Male and female may be taken in all other WMUs – Oct. 20-Nov. 24, Dec. 10-24 and Dec. 26-Feb. 2 (2 daily, 4 in possession).

DEER, ARCHERY (Antlered and Antlerless) Statewide: Sept. 29-Nov. 12 and Dec. 26-Jan. 12. One antlered deer per hunting license year. One antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

DEER (Antlered and Antlerless) WMUs 1A, 1B, 2B, 3A, 3D, 4A, 4C, 5A, 5B, 5C and 5D: Nov. 26-Dec. 8. One antlered deer per hunting license year. An antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

DEER, ANTLERED OR ANTLERLESS FLINTLOCK (Statewide): Dec. 26-Jan. 12. One antlered deer per hunting license year, or one antlerless deer and an additional antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

National Public Lands Day

Numerous events were held at Blue Marsh Lake as part of Public Lands Day on Saturday September 29. Middle Creek Search and Rescue, Kutztown University, Albright College, WEBELOS II Pack 432, Pagoda Pacers Running Club and local geo cache volunteers participated in a variety of work projects, including clearing brush and building water bars along the multi-use trail, picking up trash and bluebird box work. A total of 44 bags of trash, as well as other assorted garbage, was collected by the Pagoda Pacers and Geo Cachers. Students from Kutztown University and Albright College performed trail work on the multi-use trail and Great Oak Nature Trail. Members of Middle Creek Search and Rescue cleared thick brush growing around the Crane Creek Bridge, along the multi-use trail. And members of WEBELOS II Pack 432 repaired, replaced and cleared brush from around bluebird boxes, improving wildlife habitat. Berks County Parks and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers also announced the opening of the Tulpehocken Creek Valley Geo Trail. Volunteer Schoenebeck guided 45 persons on a tour of the control tower. Thank you volunteers for all of your hard work! It was much appreciated!



Kutztown University Volunteers Installing Water Bars Along the Hiking Trail

Hunters Wear Orange, So Should You

It is that time of year again, when sportsmen and trail users flock to Blue Marsh Lake to enjoy all it has to offer. Can you hunt close to the hiking trail? That is a common question posed to the rangers every year. The answer is yes. But there is no need to worry, Blue Marsh can be enjoyed by all with minimal effort. Hunters wear blaze orange to identify each other. Hikers and bikers should do the same. If you do not have any blaze orange, just wear bright colors. Trail users and hunters need to respect each other. If you are a hunter, you might want to hunt away from the trail and if you are a hiker, you might want to stick to the trail. As always, there is no hunting on Sundays.



Fall Fun Word Search

APPLES	ARCHERY	AUTUMN	R	S	A	R	C	P	Y	X	G	P
			W	L	A	R	O	Z	W	T	N	U
COLORS	DEER	HIKING	T	H	U	S	C	G	N	M	I	M
			Y	N	T	E	O	H	C	S	K	P
LEAVES	PUMPKIN	SQUIRREL	S	Q	U	I	R	R	E	L	I	K
			F	S	M	Y	D	L	E	R	H	I
TURKEY			M	X	N	E	P	A	W	U	Y	N
			N	D	E	P	V	M	K	O	U	M
			S	R	A	E	S	R	O	L	O	C
			X	Y	S	T	U	R	K	E	Y	O

Small Game Strategies

Blue Marsh Lake provides some great small game hunting opportunities. So here are some hints and tips to give you a fun experience in the field. The small game species you will find at Blue Marsh include pheasant, rabbit, and the squirrel.

Pheasant and rabbit are most easily hunted with the use of a dog, but it is not impossible to take these game species without one. Hunt the fields and fence rows, and stay out of the standing hardwoods. If you are hunting fields, walk through them in a zigzag pattern to cover more ground. As you get close to the ends of the fields, get ready for your shot because the game will stay in the cover as long as possible. Sometimes the smallest patches of vegetation are being used as cover, so don't overlook them. The pheasants at Blue Marsh are stocked birds and tend to stay together, so be aware of multiple birds flushing in the same general area. The stocked birds tend to run more than take to the air, so be patients and keep after them. If you are able to flush out a rabbit, be aware that they will not run far in a straight line. Anticipate the quick direction changes when taking your shot.

If you are squirrel hunting, you will want to find the standing timber. I have found that the best technique is to sit quietly and let the squirrels come to you. They have very keen senses and will take cover if you are detected walking through the woods.

Above all, enjoy your time outdoors. The Fall at Blue Marsh Lake is a great time to be in the field. Take advantage of the cool weather, the colors, and the beautiful scenery.

Tulpehocken Creek Valley Geo Trail

The Tulpehocken Creek Valley Geo-Trail (TCVGT) is a geocaching interpretive trail consisting of 20-caches along the scenic Tulpehocken Creek and around Blue Marsh Lake in Berks County. This trail was a result of a partnership between the Berks County Parks and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The Geo-Trail intertwines the region's rich cultural heritage with its wonderful natural resources. Users will travel through Berks County Parks and Heritage sites and visit points of interest around Blue Marsh Lake. Every stop will offer a chance to enjoy a number of recreational or interpretive opportunities.

For those of you who do not know what geocaching is, it's a treasure hunt that you navigate by using a GPS unit. Participants follow a specific set of coordinates using their GPS unit or smart-phone, and attempting to find a geo cache (container) hidden at a certain location. These caches can be as small as a dime, or as large as an ammo can. Each one is different, but most contain trinkets and a log book. Record your visit and trade "swag" while remembering to "Cache In, Trash Out" by taking trash when you leave. Check out this latest recreation attraction at Blue Marsh Lake and the County Parks.

USACE

Blue Marsh Lake
1268 Palisades Dr.
Leesport, Pa 19533

Phone: 610-376-6337
Fax: 610-376-1919
<http://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Missions/CivilWorks.BlueMarshLake.aspx>

Newsletter prepared by:

Natural Resource Specialist Ranger Kathy Grim
Email: Kathleen.J.Grim@usace.army.mil
Natural Resource Specialist Nathan Freiwald
Email: Nathan.T.Freiwald@usace.army.mil



**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,
Philadelphia District**

Fall–Winter Programs

Family Fun Day Nature’s Crafts, Saturday, December 1, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon, Conference Center: Join us for this fun and creative session, where we will be making decorations from natural materials. Wreaths, bird feeders, and decorations for trees are some of the ornaments we might create at this workshop. All materials will be supplied.

Hike with a Ranger, Saturday, December 15, 8:00 a.m., Visitor Center: Avoid cabin fever by getting outdoors on a hike at Blue Marsh Lake. We will hike from the Visitor Center via the multi-use hiking trail to the Dry Brooks Day Use Area. Our route will take us on area nature trails, and along the lake shoreline. The hike will be in “No Hunting” areas at all times. Please wear comfortable shoes, and dress for the weather.

Bird Walk, Wednesday, December 19, 1:00 p.m. at the Visitor Center. Join birding expert Joan Silagy as she guides you along trails and roadways in search of a variety of birds. Walking should be easy, with few hills. Bring binoculars!

Hike with a Ranger, Saturday, January 12, 2013, 8:00 a.m., Meet at the Visitor Center. Ring in the new year by getting outdoors. Join us on a hike from the Visitor Center that will take us through fields and forest, and even along the lake shoreline as we start out the new year by getting physical! The hike will be in “No Hunting” areas, so no worries!

Wee Ones Nature Detectives? Wednesday, January 16, 10:00 a.m. at the Conference Center. Learn how to be a animal detective by following clues that wildlife leave behind as they pass through the area. We will be both indoors and outdoors for this session.

Control Tower Tour, Saturday, January 19, 10:00 at the Visitor Center. Participants get a “behind-the-scenes” look at how the dam functions. Not only will you be on the dam, but you will be going inside the control tower. Be prepared to go down and up numerous steps. For those of you who cannot handle the steps you can go as far as the control room (about 10 steps).

Family Fun Day Winter Wonderland, Saturday, January 26, 10:00 at the Dry Brooks Day Use Area. Details to come.