



# What's Happening at Blue Marsh Lake?

U.S. Army Corps of Engineer

Volume 3, Issue 3

## Get Outdoors at Blue Marsh!

As many of you know there are a multitude of things to do at Blue Marsh Lake. When most people hear our name mentioned they think of the swimming, boating and fishing opportunities. But there is so much more to experience. We have over 30 miles of trails open to foot use, as well as mountain bike and horseback riding. For those who enjoy a slower paced experience take a stroll along one of our nature trails. Keep a sharp lookout for wildlife!

Blue Marsh Lake is also designated as a Audubon Important Bird Area. Our diversified habitats, including the lake, woodlands and fields provide homes for approximately 200 species of birds. So get out those binoculars and bird guides and come on out and hone those bird watching skills! The observation area at State Hill Boat Launch is a great place to watch for broad-wing hawks as they soar overhead during their migration, which typically occurs in late August into September.



Water-based recreation is what many of the visitors participate in when at Blue Marsh Lake. Please think safety when recreating in or around the water. Never swim beyond your skills, or dive into water without knowing the depth of the water and what may lay submerged beneath the surface. Coast Guard approved lifejackets are your best friends when boating or swimming at the lake.

Get outdoors and take it all in, but do so safely! Enjoy!

## Operation Mighty "Mo"

Record snowfalls have covered the mountains in Montana and other western states. The snows continue to melt and drain into the Missouri River. Heavy rains have exceeded more than a year's worth of rainfall over much of the Missouri River Basin in a two-week period. This has necessitated higher releases from the Missouri dams and reservoirs to evacuate the stored floodwaters. This is what is being termed as Operation Mighty "Mo." Flooding continues along the banks of the Missouri, and has led to extensive flood fighting undertaken by the Corps.

Blue Marsh Lake was built for just such a purpose. In June 2006 the Lake had experienced record-high water levels, which led to record releases. Reading experienced minor flooding due to the high level of the Schuylkill River north of Blue Marsh. Without Blue Marsh Lake, there would have been catastrophic flooding along the banks of the Schuylkill. The lake has saved millions of dollars in flood damages.

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### Wild about getting outdoors at Blue Marsh Lake!

- Hike with a Ranger: Saturday, August 6, 8:00 a.m.**
- Bat Program: Thursday, August 18, 7:00 p.m.**
- Hike with a Ranger, Saturday, September 3, 8:00 a.m.**
- Star Watch: Friday, September 16, 8:30 p.m.**
- Public Lands Day: Saturday, September 24, 2011**

## Bow Fishing Blue Marsh Lake

If you are an archer looking to fill a void before deer season, why not try bow fishing. It is a great way to stay sharp on the draw and it is another reason to get outside and enjoy the beautiful surroundings here at Blue Marsh.

Some of the things you will need are as follows. You need a valid Pennsylvania state fishing license, A bow fishing rig that mounts to the stabilizer hole on the riser of your bow, and it helps to have a boat to troll the shorelines in shallow water. Canoes and flat bottom boats are the best options. The vessel should be something you feel comfortable standing in. If you are standing in your vessel, please wear your lifejacket.

There are three types of fish that are legal to be taken. These are catfish, carp, and suckers. The best technique for bow fishing is to slowly troll the shallow waters near the shoreline and look underneath overhanging vegetation and around stumps and downed trees for the fish. When you draw on your target it is best to aim below your target because of the refraction in the water and the planing of your arrow when it hits the water.

Be sure to check all rules and regulations of the body of water you are bow fishing in to make sure it is a sanctioned activity, after all, you are using a projectile weapon. Bow fishing can be a great hobby that takes stealth and skill, so come out and give it a try.



## Summer Program Schedule

**Hike with a Ranger:** Saturday, August 6, 8:00 a.m. at the Old Church Road Access. Join us on a hike following the northern loop of the multi-use hiking trail. The route we will be hiking offers some views of the lake, and passes through woodlands and fields. Be ready for some hills! Approximate length of the hike is seven miles. Wear comfortable shoes, bring along water, and you may want to wear some insect repellent. There will be another Hike with a Ranger on Saturday September 3 at 8:00 a.m. We will meet at the State Hill Boat Launch observation area parking lot.

**Bat Program:** Thursday, August 18, 7:00 p.m. at the Conference Center. Join Dr. Karen Campbell, biology professor at Albright College, for a very informative and entertaining program on bats. You will learn why they are an important part of our environment. Dr. Campbell may even have a live bat with her that you can see up-close and personal! We will then visit a near-by bat colony where we can view the bats as they head out for their nightly feeding frenzy.

**Star Watch:** Friday, September 16, 8:30 p.m. location to be determined. Cloud-cover or rain will cancel this program. This program is presented by the Berks County Amateur Astronomical Society (BCAAS). The program will start with a brief talk/orientation to the night skies. As the sun sets, and the skies darken we will move to the telescopes, which are provided by the BCAAS. This promises to be a fun program!

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L I V I T ! W E S O

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## 2011 Blue Marsh Lake Ranger Staff



**Sitting:** Julie Bennick, Nathan Freiwald

**Kneeling:** Kathy Grim, Kim Goodhart, Hallie Groff, Christine Esterline, Eve Dietrich, Mark Bucci,

**Standing:** Jake Singerling, Leah Page, Roland Zitzman, Steve Werner, Scott Sunderland, Jeff Piscanio, Leann Carroll, Ryan Stubbeltine, Tim Weiser, Ron Klumpp, Jake Shultz, Josh Shartle, Pat Turnick

**Missing From Photo:** Corine Koiro

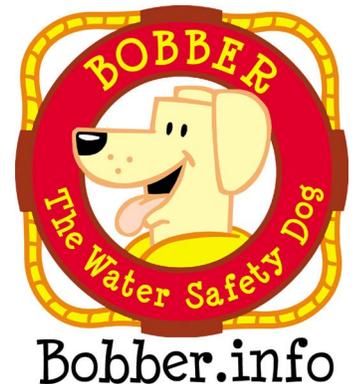
## Meet Bobber, the Water Safety Dog

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the leading provider of outdoor recreation on all Federally-managed public lands in the country. Annual visitation to Corps lakes is 370-million people. Statistics show that 10% of the U.S. population visits a Corps project at least once a year, and 70% lives within 50 miles of a Corps lake. We are also the number one provider of water-based recreation.

The large numbers of folks who visit our lakes has led to many creative ways to reach out to our visitors and educate them on how to be safe around the water. Bobber, the Water Safety Dog is just one way of reaching our diverse visitors.

The Corps' National Water Safety Program web site has games, cartoons and teacher's activities that are part of the "Bobber" program. You can check out some of these cartoons and games by visiting: <http://watersafety.usace.army.mil/>

Our staff at Blue Marsh Lake distributes "Bobber, the Water Safety Dog" activity books to children at various programs. We have also recently acquired a "Bobber" costume, so be on the lookout for Bobber, the Water Safety Dog at Blue Marsh Lake. Don't worry, he does not bite! Bobber hopes to see you soon!



## Canada Goose Banding at Blue Marsh

The Pennsylvania Game Commission conducted a Population Study of the Canada Geese at Blue Marsh Lake. Game Commission biologists along with park rangers used kayaks to make the geese swim to shore. They then herded them into a holding pen. The study was strategically done in early summer because the geese were molting their feathers and were incapable of flying.

One by one the geese were taken from the pen and sexed before being banded. After the banding the Canada Geese were released back into the wild. The banding of these birds is to keep tabs on the populations of the flocks and to collect data on the migration habits of the Geese. During the hunting season for the Canada Goose, banded birds can be reported and information can be retrieved on where that particular bird came from.



## Swimming Safety

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Water Safety Program lists some of the best ways to stay safe and enjoy water-based recreation:

- **Learn to Swim and Practice Floating** - Learning to swim is one of your best defenses against drowning, besides wearing a life jacket. Also, teaching those you love simple survival floating skills can help, because hopefully when your swimming ability is reduced from exhaustion, remembering how to relax and float can save your life.
- **Never Exceed Your Swimming Abilities or Swim Alone** - Regardless of how well you swim you could have to fight for your life due to unexpected conditions. A fellow swimmer can help you out when you encounter the unexpected.
- **Don't Dive in Lakes & Rivers (Open Waters)** - Open water situations where water depth is unknown and conditions are constantly changing with floating or underwater debris can be very dangerous.
- **Wearing a Coast Guard Approved Life Jacket Can Save Your Life** - it only takes an adult an average of 60 seconds to drown and on average it takes 10 minutes for a strong swimmer to put on a life jacket after entering the water. If you will not wear a life jacket for yourself then wear it for those who love you.
- **Alcohol and Water are a Deadly Combination** - When underwater and under the influence of alcohol or drugs you can suffer from an inner ear condition (caloric labyrinthitis) that causes you to become disoriented and not know which way is up. The use of alcohol and drugs can also affect your coordination, judgment and reaction time, and could lead to deadly consequences.

Park Manager John Cave emphasizes that diving, jumping or swinging from trees, bridges or other structures which cross the water is prohibited and enforced by park rangers at Blue Marsh Lake.

## U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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Letter Tile Answer: Life jackets save lives, so wear it!



**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,  
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