



# What's Happening at Blue Marsh Lake?

USACE

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## Summer Fun at Blue Marsh Lake

Though it has been a hot summer, visitors have been coming to Blue Marsh Lake to participate in a variety of recreation activities. They just work with the weather! Much of our hiking and mountain bike use occurs in the morning and evening when the temperatures are a bit more comfortable for strenuous activity. If you are looking for a shorter and easier walk during the warm summer months, I suggest you visit one of our nature trails. Great Oak Nature Trail (one-mile long) can be accessed from Parking Lot C, and Sensory Trail (1/4 mile long) can be reached by parking in Lot D of the Day Use Area.



Water sports are always popular summer activities. Those that like to go fishing typically fish in the early morning, evening or at night. The fish are actually more active when it is cooler. Dry Brooks, State Hill and Sheidy Boat Ramps are open 24 hours a day for fishing and boating. You are allowed to actively fish at those areas during the night. Another popular water-based activity is kayaking and canoeing. You can't get any closer to the water when you need to cool down! But make sure you are wearing your Coast Guard approved life jacket when kayaking, canoeing, water skiing or on board any recreation watercraft. A great way to stay cool is to go water skiing or tubing! Remember, when pulling a water-skier or tuber, you have to have an observer on-board the boat to watch the person being towed.

No matter the temperature or season, get outdoors and play!

## Sensory Trail Garden

We are redoing our olfactory garden at the Eyes of the Eagle Sensory Trail. The garden is out of control, as the weeds are taking over. Therefore, we are regrouping and starting over. Our plan is to eliminate the weeds in the garden, as well as the numerous butterfly bushes. That will be accomplished in August. The soil will then be prepared for future plantings, which will occur in spring 2013. The shade portion of the garden will be maintained as is, since there are many native plants currently well established in that area. Native plants will be planted in the remainder of the garden. We will plant the sunny end with a variety of native meadow wildflowers. Landscaping rocks will also be placed in the garden, and the waterless pond will most likely be removed. Suggestions on how to make this garden a beautiful, but yet low maintenance garden are welcome. We are also recruiting volunteers for this endeavor. Please contact us if you have a green thumb, and are interested in helping us out. **We would really like to hear from you!**

### Inside this issue:

2012 Seasonal Rangers	2
Get Outdoors Day	2
Summer Trail work	2
Summer word search	3
Coast guard Approved?	3
Paddle Sports Safety	3
Summer Programs	4

**Paddle Up the Tulpehocken:** August 10, Friday, 3:00 p.m., Rt. 183 Pull-off

**Hike with a Ranger,** August 11, Saturday, 8:00 a.m., State Hill Boat Launch Overlook

**Star Watch,** August 18, Saturday, 8:30 p.m., Church Road Access

**Kayak/Canoe Cruise,** August 25, Saturday, 9:00 a.m., Church Road Access

**Butterfly Walk,** September 8, Saturday, 10:00 a.m., Visitor Center

**Wee Ones Walk,** September 12, Wednesday, 10:00 a.m., Stilling Basin

**Wagging Tails on the Trails,** September 13, Thursday, 1:00 p.m., Visitor Center

## 2012 Ranger Staff Photo



**Front Row:** Sonia White, Molly Laird, Derrick Rice, Andrew Douventzidis, Leah Davis, Kasey Allwein, Harry Geib, Kathy Grim, Hallie Groff, Josh Shartle, Nate Freiwald

**Back Row:** Scott Sunderland, Jeff Piscanio, Alex Manwiller, Steve Werner, Abby Ross, LeAnn Carroll, Josh Clark, Ron Klumpp, Cale Hoover, Ryan Stubbelbine, Alex Talarico, Roland Zitzman, John Cave

## Blue Marsh Lake's Get Outdoors Day

Blue Marsh Lake's Get Outdoors Day (GO Day) was a great success. More than forty organizations and agencies participated in the event, which was on Saturday June 9. We estimate that 2,114 visitors attended the event throughout the day. Assistant Secretary of the Army, Honorable Ms. Darcy, visited the event and spent several hours at the event. Pennsylvania State Senator Schwank also visited GO Day, thanks to Walk Bike Berks. There were numerous activities to take part in, including a Fun Run led by the Pagoda Pacers, a catfish pond courtesy of the Federated Sportsmen's Clubs of Berks County, a GO Day Scavenger Hunt, geo caching, kayaking courtesy of 3D Outdoor Rentals, and fly fishing instructed by Edgar Payne. Presentations and demonstrations took place throughout the day, and there was a great variety of displays to enjoy.



The focus of the event was health, wellness and recreation opportunities that are available throughout the region. Get outdoors and take advantage of the many great opportunities not only in Berks County, but throughout the area. Let's move outdoors!

## Multi-use trail Maintenance by Summer Rangers

Each Summer, the seasonal park rangers work very hard to maintain the hiking trail. As of July 15th, all thirty miles of the trail have been cleared with brush cutters, weed eaters, and tractor mowing. Some of the other completed tasks were water bar construction/repair, erosion repair, tree removal, and bridge maintenance. Despite the heat and humidity, most of this work is done by hand or by using gas powered tools. The staff at Blue Marsh takes great pride in our trail and the hard work has paid off. The multi-use trail received a designation as a National Recreation Trail in 2010. If you would like to get involved in helping to keep the trail system looking good, you can become a Blue Marsh Lake volunteer by contacting the office at 610-376-6337.



# Summer Fun Word Search

HIKING  
BIKING  
SWIMMING  
HEAT  
SUN  
TRAILS  
BOATING  
WATER

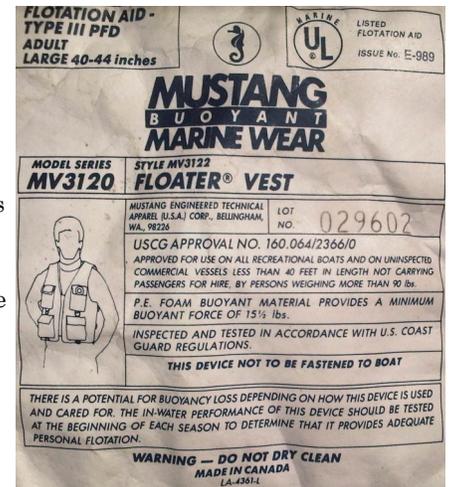
S O W G G O P S W C  
U M O K N I L J A K  
G N I M M I W S T O  
B N V E A A T V E M  
Y A U R F J G A R E  
S D T S A G N P O H  
B I K I N G I J D B  
I T A E H C K D M O  
W L V F G N I D X T  
Y P O Q U Q H P E L

## Coast Guard Approved Flotation Device.....What is that?

If you spend a lot of time at the beach at Blue Marsh, chances are you have heard a park ranger explain that only U.S. Coast Guard approved flotation devices are permitted in the water. You might ask, what does that mean? Well, the Coast Guard has approved certain devices as capable of being a sufficient life saving devices, especially if the wearer goes unconscious in the water.

Park rangers are constantly removing water wings, inner tubes, noodles, and boogie boards from the water much to the disappointment of the users. The park rangers next job is to educate the visitors as to why those devices are not permitted. Anything inflatable has the potential to pop or leak air and then would not provide flotation. Water wings could slip off of your arms and will not keep an unconscious victim's head above the water. If you are using an inner tube, you could fall off of it or fall through the middle. A boogie board or a water noodle also has the potential for the user to fall off or be separated from the item.

You can tell if the device you are using is Coast Guard approved by checking the label and looking for the U.S. Coast Guard logo or a Coast Guard approval number, and any of the park rangers would be happy to show you where to find this information.

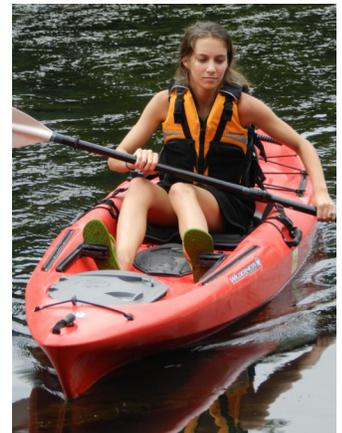


## Sports Safety

Thinking of going out canoeing or kayaking? Here are some safety tips:

- Know Before you Go - know the waters on which you plan to paddle, and leave others know your plans
- Wear a Coast Guard Approved Life Jacket - be safe and keep your life jacket snug
- Pay Attention - stay alert and be aware of your surroundings, especially if you are around power boats
- Stay Visible - carry a flashlight if boating in the evening or night, and attach a whistle to your life jacket
- Never Boat Under the Influence of Alcohol or Drugs - when paddling a canoe or kayak you always need to be responsible, safe and aware of everything around you. Alcohol or drugs can affect your judgment and reaction time.
- Plan to Get Wet - expect the unexpected, and dress appropriately for the conditions. Avoid wearing cotton as it does not insulate when wet, or wick moisture away from your body

## Paddle



Stay Safe on the Water!

## USACE

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

## Summer Programs

**Paddle Up the Tulpehocken**, August 10, Friday, 3:00 p.m., Meet at Route 183 Pull-off (north of Sheidy Ramp and south of North Heidelberg Road): All levels of paddlers welcome, limited to 15 boaters, bring your own boat, life jackets required, pre-registration required

**Hike with a Ranger**, August 11, Saturday, 8:00 a.m., Meet at State Hill Boat Ramp Overlook. The length of the hike will be 3-5 miles. Bring along water, and wear comfortable shoes.

**Star Watch**, August 18, Saturday, 8:30 p.m., Church Road Access. Join members of the Berks Astronomy Club, who will have telescopes set up for observing the night sky at Church Road Access. From route 183 turn onto Old Church Road, turn left into the parking lot just before the bridge crossing over the lake.

**Canoe/Kayak Cruise**, August 25, Saturday, 9:00 a.m., Church Road Access: Join volunteer Tony "Doc" Schoch on a fun and informative paddle on Blue Marsh Lake. Participants must provide their own equipment, and are required to wear a Coast Guard approved life jacket.

**Family Fun Days Butterfly Walk**, September 8, Saturday, 10:00 a.m., Visitor Center: Join Karl Gardner, local naturalist and butterfly expert, for a butterfly walk at Blue Marsh Lake. He will discuss and show you caterpillars, and then head out for a walk in search of butterflies. Karl always brings some extra nets for participants to use to try to catch these beautiful insects.

**Wee Ones Walk**, Wednesday, September 12, 10:00 a.m., Stilling Basin: This adventure will give the children a close-up look at some of the animals that live in the water. The session will be conducted in a safe environment, and promises to be a fun time for all!

**Wagging Tails on the Trails**, Thursday, September 13, 1:00 p.m., Visitor Center. Bring your dog for a walk along the Blue Marsh Lake trails. You can socialize with other dog lovers, and learn interesting facts about Blue Marsh Lake. Dogs should be leashed.