



Pocomoke Paddler

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 4

2009 FALL NEWSLETTER

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Not sure if that spider is friend or foe, check out page six for details.
- Looking for something fun to do Saturdays this fall? Check out our upcoming events!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Upcoming Events 2

Park-ticulars 3

Park Guidelines 3

Changing seasons and staff! 4

Civic Justice Corps 5

6

Arachnophobia!

by Sally Shoemaker, Naturalist

With fall knocking at our door, we think of the spectacular fall colors, cooler temperatures and SPIDERS!!!! Though spiders can be seen year round we really start to notice them in late summer and fall, it is a time when they are most active, spinning webs, stocking up on food and finding a nice warm place to hunker down for the winter.

We think of spiders as creepy crawlies, things you find in dark places like the woods or maybe your basement. Their webs are sticky and many times you run face first into them because you can't see them until it's too late. Though spiders have a bad reputation, they play a very important role in nature. They make intricate webs and eat many insects we consider to be household pests!

Have you ever wondered how long it takes a spider to build its web? It turns out that it takes about an hour for a it to spin a web using the silk it produces from its body. The most efficient way for a spider to construct a web is to make an Orb Web. The orb web covers more

area and uses less silky thread to capture food. You have probably seen these orb webs in the mornings when they are covered in dew.

Orb Web spiders construct a new web everyday to keep the stickiness in the threads for capturing prey. If needed they will make repairs to the threads of their webs. An example of an Orb Web spider you can see here at



An orb web is the type of web we typically associate with spiders.

Shad Landing is the Garden Spider.

You may see one really cool type of spider web called the Zipper Orb (dotted line) Web. It is made by a garden

spider called the Black and Yellow Orb Spider. Zipper webs are unique because the spiders will make a zigzag pattern in their webs. There are other types of spider webs as well. These include Cobwebs, Funnel, Tubular, Sheet and Dome webs.

Spiders are often seen as



Here is a Black and Yellow Garden Spider in its "zippered" web.

being something scary to many people, they have a place in our environment. Rather than being afraid or getting rid of spiders from anywhere we see them, we can enjoy the beauty of their webs and know that they eat insects that may bite us. In a way, spiders are our friends!

Check out page four for a fun spider web craft for the whole family to enjoy!

Upcoming Events....

To make
event
reservations

Call
(410)632-2566
extension 115

Email
Pocomokepad-
dler@dnr.state.
md.us

October

“Fall Colors Paddle”

October 3rd, 3-5pm

Enjoy an afternoon paddle full of fall colors on the serene waters of the Pocomoke. Meet at the Boat Rental Area by the river-front. \$20 per canoe or tandem kayak, \$15 per single kayak. Have your own canoe or kayak? Bring it along for just \$5 per person.

“Wildlife Detectives”

October 17th, 2pm

Wildlife isn't always out when you are, but it often leaves clues that can show us it's been there. Join us as we look for tracks, scat, and other signs of wildlife. \$3 per person or \$10 for a family of four. Call to make reservations.

November

“Feathers in Focus Photo Shoot”

November 7th, 1-3pm

Whether novice or expert, all are welcome to photograph our birds of prey in their natural setting. \$10 per photographer. No reservations needed.



Looking to January 2010...



“Eagle Watch”

January 9th and 23rd

Catch a glimpse of the majestic Bald Eagle along the banks of the wild and scenic Pocomoke River. Join a naturalist for a short walk and explore the wonderful world of the Bald Eagle. \$5 per person. We will be taking reservations starting January 1st 2010.

Park-ticulars

What's going on at Pocomoke River State Park this Fall? All information and hours are subject to change, so please call ahead before your visit at (410) 632-2566.

Camp Store, Extension 107:

Camper registration, snacks, fishing tackle, and a refreshing drink are a few of the items you can pick up at the camp store. The Shad Landing Camp will be open on a limited basis throughout the fall. Call ahead for hours.

Boat House, Extension 107

The Boat House hours will be based on the weather. Canoes, kayaks (double and singles) motor boats, and Craig cats may be rented. Call for boat rental fees and availability and hours.

Trails, Extension 149:

Hike the Trail of Change at Shad Landing, a 3/4 mile trail through the forest and cypress swamp. There are also several "camper" trails throughout the park that are marked by colored posts for easy hiking.

Camping, Extension 107:

Electric, non-electric, and mini cabins available. Call 1-888-432-2267 to make your reservations.

Pool, Extension 109:

The pool is closed for the year. Please visit us next summer.

A Few Reminders.....

There are so many changes going on in the park; here is a quick reminder of the new do's and the don'ts at the park!



- You may have seen signs like the one to the left in your travels to Maryland State Parks this year. This is because our alcohol policy is about to change. Currently in Maryland State Parks you are permitted to have alcohol on your camp site only. As of November 1st, 2009 alcohol will be prohibited in all Maryland State Parks, with the exception of full-service cabins and designated shelters. Alcoholic beverages will be prohibited in all Maryland State Park Campgrounds.

- Hammocks at Pocomoke River State Park will only be permitted if they are suspended from a self sustained stand. This will also include hammock tents. Due to the damage hammocks are causing the trees they will no longer be able to be hung on trees.

- The Maryland Park Service pet policy is under review . The park service is considering making more areas of the parks pet friendly. Please keep checking the DNR website : <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/> for the open comment period this fall.

All of these changes come with you all, the park visitors, in mind. We want to be able to provide you with the very best park experience possible while keeping both you and the resource safe.



Nature Center, Extension 106:

The nature center will be closed for the winter. If you would like to include a group tour of the nature center please call to check availability.

Want to make your science lessons come to life? Environmental education programs can be scheduled for your group by calling the Nature Center. Schedule an environmental or live animal program today!



Come visit the Nature Center in 2010 and see what's new!

How to Make a Spider Web Picture

2 Years and Up

30 minutes (Does not include drying time)

Materials:

Black Construction Paper

Paint

Cake Pan or cardboard box

Marble

Scissors

Instructions:

Trim black construction paper so it fits in pan or box. Squirt a few drops of white paint in the middle of the paper. Put a marble in the pan and wiggle the pan back and forth so the marble runs through the paint and makes white lines all over the paper. Continue until you get the desired web design. Let the paint dry and then hang up your spider web painting for everyone to enjoy. If you like, add a few small plastic spiders to your spider web!



Ranger Roundup!

By Ranger Bitzel, Ranger Johnson and Ranger Sochowski

This year has brought many changes to Pocomoke River State Park staff. We have gained two new rangers and have had two more leave us. Ranger Christine Jirikowic has taken a position at Jane's Island State Park, near Crisfield MD and Ranger Meghan Sochowski has taken a position at Assateague State Park.

Our new staff at the park includes Shawn Johnson and Jeanette Bitzel. Here is a little about the members of our new park staff family.

Meet Shawn Johnson:



Hi! My name is Shawn Johnson. I was born and raised in Snow Hill, Maryland. As a child I remember coming to Pocomoke River State Park (PRSP) to ride my bike with friends and cool off in the famous chlorine filled pool. In April of 2008 I accepted a contractual position at PRSP as an Environmental Educator. I previously worked with Department of Juvenile Services, Worcester County Board of Education and most recently State Highway Administration. All of

those jobs were wonderful, but this position at PRSP was a life changing experience.

I was greeted by warm and loving staff that really enjoyed their jobs. One particular Ranger Meghan Sochowski, opened my eyes to a world that I had overlooked all these years growing up in Snow Hill. That world was the beauty and diversity of PRSP. I learned about pond studies, kayaking, stewardship, birds of prey and the list goes on. Although, the most important thing PRSP showed me was that it does not matter what ethnic background you are from, or who you voted for in the last election.

The Park has a way of embracing you with an unexplainable peace that no word can describe. I am thankful that in July of 2009 I started working as a Park Ranger at PRSP. I am eager to get out and share these wonderful experiences to everyone whom I encounter.

Meet Jeanette Bitzel:



Hi! My name is Jeanette Bitzel. I am the newest ranger at Pocomoke

River State Park, and I am very excited to be working with the Maryland Park Service. How did I get interested in working for the park service, you ask? A moose. (No, I am not a Dr. Dolittle, and I don't often get great ideas from random wild animals. It's really a great story. Remind me sometime and I will tell it to you.)

A little about me: I am a Frostburg State University graduate, and I have worked seasonally at Cunningham Falls State Park and the National Aquarium in Baltimore. I have also served two years with the Maryland Conservation Corps (MCC) at Assateague State Park. (Keep reading the Pocomoke Paddler to learn more about MCC.) Near the end of my second year of service I was interviewed and hired as a Maryland Park Ranger at Pocomoke!

Enjoy this beautiful fall season, and I hope to meet all of you during your travels to Pocomoke.

Please help us welcome these newcomers and be on the lookout for familiar faces at some of the Eastern Shore's other state parks.



Maryland Civic Justice Corps!

By Ranger Shawn Johnson

What is the Maryland Civic Justice Corps (CJC)? This is a summer program that is expanding across the state of Maryland that offers a unique opportunity to connect today's youth with the environment. This program is a six week non-residential camp where teens 14-17 years old can get outdoors and help conservation efforts with the Maryland Park Service.



Our CJC team works on new parking area for group sites.

In addition to receiving on the job training in landscaping, construction, and the park service you also will be compensated \$7.25 per hour.

This year the program came to the Eastern Shore and was based out of Assateague State Park. The crews were comprised of 20 youth and four crew leaders. They travelled across the Shore making stops at Pocomoke River State Park, Jane's Island State Park, and Tuckahoe State Park.

At each park projects were assigned to the crew for the week. Here at Pocomoke, the crews worked for four weeks assisting our maintenance team in converting current camp sites in our Blue Heron camp loop into

our brand new group camp sites that will open in 2010.



CJC team members helping clean out fire rings.

Not only did the crews get the opportunity to spend their days outside working but they also got to experience the park at its best. They were able to spend time enjoying the Shad Landing swimming pool, watch a Scales & Tales presentation, and see the beauty of the cypress swamp as they hiked

the Trail of Change.

This program allows kids to explore the outdoors, see what parks have to offer, and learn about ongoing conservation efforts in their area. It allows for a connection with the outside world. Not only are they protecting and conserving natural resources for the present but for the future. These kids will be able to go back and visit these parks and see that they made an impact on the environment that might last a life time.

If you are interested in learning more about the Civic Justice Corps please log on to : <http://dnr.maryland.gov/cjc/index.html>.

Look Who's "Getting things done!"

by Ranger Jeanette Bitzel

The next time you visit Pocomoke you may see a sign that reads, "Getting things done!" At the park, everybody is "getting things done," but that sign refers to the work of the Maryland Conservation Corps (MCC). For you Lois Lane's out there (or Clark Kent's), here's the scoop on MCC:

What: MCC is an AmeriCorps program that partners with the Department of Natural Resources.

When: October through August

Where: Pocomoke!

Why? The crew is like the "extra pair of hands" (4 to be exact) for the park. They will be helping with projects ranging from maintenance to environmental education.

For more information visit: <http://dnr.maryland.gov/mcc/>



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www.dnr.maryland.gov

EMAIL THE NATURALIST:

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MARTIN O'MALLEY, GOVERNOR



JOHN R. GRIFFIN, SECRETARY

The facilities and services of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources are available to all without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin or physical or mental disability. Call toll free in Maryland 1-877-620-8DNR ext. 8780, TTY via Maryland Relay: 711 (within MD) 800-735-2258 (out of state) or visit www.dnr.maryland.gov. Accommodations for individuals with disabilities will be provided upon request. Seven days advance notice is requested.

Spiders: Friend or Foe?

Not all spiders leave a nasty bite but these are two you want to avoid.

Brown Recluse:

The brown recluse spider has the dark violin marking on its body. Their body is about 3/8 inches long and about 3/16 inches wide.



Black Widow Spider :

The Black Widow Spider is black and has a red hour-glass shape on its abdomen. Their body is about 1-2 inches.



A New Addition

By Ranger Meghan Sochowski

Many of you enjoy our Blue Heron camp loop, but starting next year we will have a new way to enjoy! We will still have 30 primitive sites available for family camping but in addition to these sites, we have created three new group sites.

These new group sites will come equipped with a fire pit, group grill, a large parking area, and picnic tables. Currently these sites do not come outfitted with electricity. Water spigots are available in dispersed areas throughout the camp loop. Two sites will be large enough to hold



up to 40 people and one site will be slightly smaller holding up to 20 people. Proposed rates are \$100 per night for the larger sites and \$75 per night for the smaller site.

The new sites were designed for families or groups who all want to stay close together.

Starting in spring of 2010

if you would like to make a reservation for these sites you can contact our reservation line at 1-888-432-2267 or visit our webpage at <http://reservations.dnr.state.md.us/>.

A Year in Review

Thank you for your support this summer. Between January and October here is a peek at our attendance numbers.

Type	Attendance	# of Programs offered
Public Programs	118	9
School/Civic Programs	12845	33
Camper Programs	1071	91
Canoe Trips	70	10
Nature Center	2247	N/A
Totals	16351	143