



What's Happening at Blue Marsh Lake?

USACE

Volume 2, Issue 2

Let's Move Outside at Blue Marsh!

Spring has arrived! The trees are in bud, wildflowers are blooming, and the tree swallows and red-winged blackbirds are busy at Blue Marsh Lake. It is time to get outdoors and enjoy all that it has to offer. Whether you like to hike, ride bike or horses, bird watch, kayak or canoe, fish, enjoy a picnic, or just relax and soak in the sun's rays—you can do it all at Blue Marsh Lake.

Recreation opportunities are numerous at Blue Marsh, and you do not need a lot of expensive equipment! However, if you do enjoy horseback or bike riding you have to bring your own horse or bike! If you prefer to go on a ranger-guided hike, join us for our monthly hikes! We also offer monthly kayak cruises that take off from the Church Road Access. And starting this month you and your canine can join us on the "Wagging Tails on the Trails" walk, or you can go on our guided bird walks. There is something for everyone, whether you want to be land or water-based.



Outdoors recreation is also good for your health. Studies have shown that by regularly getting outdoors and taking a walk or bike ride, you are lowering your stress levels. Not only that, exercise is great for you physically as well. No excuses! Move outside and get active! Visit Blue Marsh Lake and take a hike on one of the trails, or put that canoe or kayak on the water and do some paddling.

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

Family Fun Days

Family Fun Days is a new monthly program that we created so that family units could participate in an activity together. We try to make the activities both fun and educational. The next Family Fun Day is on Saturday June 16, 2012, at the Stilling Basin, This is a Family Fun Days Fishing Outing that will be presented by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. They will be providing the fishing rods, so all that is needed is you! No fishing license is needed for this adventure.

July's Family Fun Day will be an educational and entertaining water safety program at the swim beach. You will learn many tips on how you and your family can stay safe around the water. We will try out a variety of life jackets, learn safe rescue techniques and have a lot of fun.

Family Fun Day on Saturday August 4 will be Monarch Butterfly Magic with volunteer and butterfly enthusiast Ruth Blatt. It will be at the Conference Center at 10:00 a.m.

Inside this issue:

Bowfishing at Blue Marsh	2
Get Outdoors Day	2
Summer Letter Tile	2
2011 Ranger Staff	3
Overuse Leads to Closure	3
Goose Banding	3
Stay Safe this Spring	4

Wee Ones Walk: May 23, Wednesday, 10:00 a.m., Day Use Area

Wagging Tails on the Trails: May 31, Thursday, 6:00 p.m., Stilling Basin

National Trails Day Bike with a Ranger: June 2, Saturday, 10:00 a.m. at the Visitor Center

Bobber the Water Safety Dog: Saturday, June 2, 2:00 p.m. at the swim beach

Bird Walk: Wednesday, June 6, 7:30 a.m. at Church Road Access

Blue Marsh Lake's Get Outdoors Day: Saturday, June 9, 11:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. at the Day Use Area

Family Fun Day Fishing Outing: Saturday June 16, 10:00 a.m. at the Stilling Basin

Take Pride In Blue Marsh Day

On April 21st, the 32nd annual Take Pride In Blue Marsh Day was held. Approximately 650 volunteers converged on Blue Marsh to help with the yearly clean-up and to accomplish various projects. As always, there was litter pick-up that deployed volunteers to various trouble spots around the lake. Three truck loads of garbage were removed as a result. Playground pits and gardens received a fresh layer of mulch and picnic table received a new coat of paint.

There were a few more labor intensive projects that were completed. A new hiking trail bridge was constructed using three 21 foot long utility poles as the base. The Eye's of the Eagle Sensory Trail was improved by adding a new layer of crushed fine stone. The picnic area adjacent to the single vehicle lot at State Hill Launch had crushed stone walkways installed. Some of the other tasks accomplished were a tire dump was removed, flowers were planted, trails were cleared, and over 5,000 seedlings were planted.

As always, all participating scout troops were given the opportunity to camp in the Dry Brooks Day Use Area for the weekend in exchange for their volunteer service on Saturday. A hot dog lunch with soda and snacks was provided to each volunteer from donations made from local businesses. A huge amount of work was completed in one day thanks to the selfless service of volunteers who care about Blue Marsh Lake.



Blue Marsh Lake's Get Outdoors Day

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District, will be hosting Blue Marsh Lake's Get Outdoors Day on Saturday June 9, 2012, 11:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. at the Dry Brooks Day Use Area. The focus of the event is getting people outdoors, increasing awareness of recreation opportunities, the value of public land stewardship and how to enjoy the outdoors safely. Blue Marsh Lake's Get Outdoors Day will strive to meet the goals of the Administration's "America's Great Outdoors" and "Let's Move Outside" Campaigns. It is also a celebration of National Trails Day, National Get Outdoors Day and National Safe Boating Week. While attending this event you will not only learn about the variety of outdoor opportunities available at Blue Marsh Lake, but also throughout Berks County.

Forty-one partners are joining the Corps of Engineers at this year's "GO Day." There will be a variety of displays and presentations occurring throughout the day. Activities will include a fish pond, a fun run, trail hike, guided nature trail tours, fly fishing demonstrations, guided bike rides, geo caching, kayaking, K-9 demonstrations, a scavenger hunt and fire and rescue demonstrations. The children will enjoy seeing Smokey Bear and Bobber the Water Safety Dog.

Some of the events, such as the Fun Run, will take place earlier in the morning. A trail hike and bike ride will most likely occur between 8:00 and 11:00 a.m. The displays and presentations will start at 11:00 a.m. We hope to have the schedule of events ready for distribution by early May. Mark you calendars and join us at Blue Marsh Lake's Get Outdoors Day on Saturday June 9. Hope to see you then! The event is free!

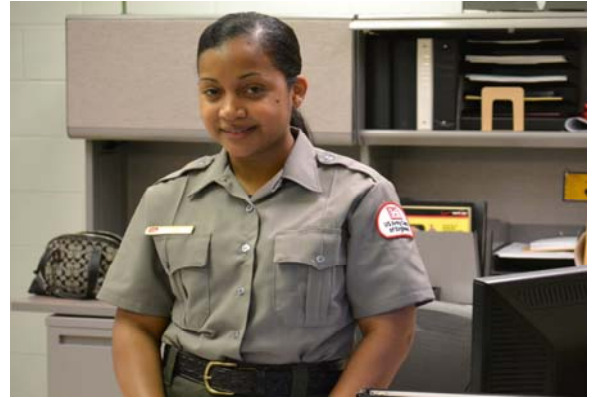
Spring Is Here!

AN UTI FUL BLU TDO E M BEA HE
OU H L ARS WE NJO AKE Y T ORS
ER GET ! AT ATH D E

New To The Family



Kirk Wirth is our new maintenance employee. He came to us from the National Park Service at the Upper Delaware Scenic & Recreational River.



Sonia White has taken over as our new administrative assistant. She came to us from the VA hospital in Coatesville, Pa

Environmental Degradation and Safety Issues Lead to Closure

Starting the first of the year, the cliff area north of Old Church Road Bridge was restricted to all users. Unfortunately, the visitation to this popular area has resulted in the hillside at the cliffs being trampled down to hard-packed earth making the area difficult to traverse. The area lacks any ground cover on the hillside. Why no vegetation, such as shrubs, etc.? No plants are able to grow there due to the heavy pedestrian traffic. The lack of plants has led to a serious erosion concern. Hopefully, closing down the area will give this area a much needed respite, and a chance to regenerate plant growth. The users also left large amounts of trash there, as well as along the trail. Every Monday during the summer months the ranger staff has to pick up a weeks-worth of accumulated trash. Not only is this trash an eye-sore, but it is also a hazard to wildlife. Also, while the area itself was not a major factor in the recent fatalities that occurred, it is considered an attractive nuisance, drawing folks to that part of the project. The management at Blue Marsh Lake looked at numerous alternatives, and the closure seemed to be the most effective way to alleviate the problem. We have posted the area with signs notifying the public that it is now closed. Only the cliff area is closed, hiking is still allowed in that area, as the multi-use trail passes through the woodlands above the cliff area.

End of an era

For the first time in over thirty years it will be a different voice on the phone and different face to greet you when you walk in the park office. After a long and fulfilling career, Kathryn Warner has retired. On Friday, March 30th, Kathryn strolled to her car in the employee parking lot for the last time as the secretary of Blue Marsh Lake. Kathryn knew the ins and out of the federal system, there were few problems that could not be solved by a trip to her desk. The staff at Blue Marsh held a luncheon to celebrate Kathryn's career and to wish her well in future endeavors. All of us at the lake would like to again say congratulations!



Kathy Warner Accepting Certificate from George Sauls

USACE

Blue Marsh Lake
1268 Palisades Dr.
Leesport, Pa 19533

Phone: 610-376-6337
Fax: 610-376-1919
http://www.nap.usace.army.mil/sb/bm_guide.htm

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**

Letter tile answer: Get outdoors and enjoy the beautiful weather at Blue Marsh Lake!

Stay Safe This Spring

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers encourage everyone to get outdoors and participate in outdoor activities, but we want you to stay safe! Here are some tips for you as you move outside to hike, ride, run, swim, and fish:

- Check before you go! Make phone calls, check the park's web site, etc. to see if there are any special regulations in effect, or if there are any hazards that you should be aware of on the water or in the forests.
- Stretch before doing any vigorous activities, such as running or riding bike
- Watch out for ticks! With the warm weather this past winter, this spring promises to be accompanied by lots of ticks. I have found numerous ticks on me and my dogs already this spring. Wear insect repellent, and always check yourselves after spending time outdoors.
- Carry water or beverages that will replace electrolytes
- Leave a friend, neighbor or family member know what your plans are, including time of day that you plan on returning home
- If recreating on the water, wear a Coast Guard approved life jacket
- When around the water remember that it is still spring, meaning water temperatures will still be a bit cool - dress to prevent hypothermia
- When hiking or bike riding, stay on the designated trails. This will help prevent erosion and lessen your chances of getting into poison ivy or ticks!
- A little time spent on pre-planning can lead to a day of great fun and adventure! Let's move outside!