



What's Happening at Blue Marsh Lake?

USACE

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Fall Fun at Blue Marsh Lake

Fall has arrived at Blue Marsh Lake. But unlike the area pools, we remain open year-round. The leaves are changing colors, and the days are getting shorter. Visitors to the beach drop off, but we see a lot of trail use, as well as plenty of boaters taking to the lake to try their luck at fishing. Get outdoors this fall at Blue Marsh Lake. We offer a variety of recreation activities, even when it is too cold to go swimming.

If your preference is water sports, please take the necessary safety precautions. This is a great time of year to go kayaking or canoeing. Always wear your Coast Guard approved life jacket. The water temperature in the lake will continue to drop as the days are shorter, and cooler weather has arrived. Prevent hypothermia by dressing in layers, and wearing fabrics that will wick the moisture away from your body.

There are over 5,000 acres of public land surrounding the lake that is open to recreation. Numerous trails dot the acreage, and many of them are multi-use. The nature trails (Great Oak, Eyes of the Eagle, and Squirrel Run) are only open to foot-use, but the Foxtrot Hiking and Skinner's Loops, as well as the Multi-Use Hiking Trail, are open to mountain bike riding, horseback riding and foot-use. However, hunting is also allowed in the non-developed areas, so wear bright colors, especially florescent orange. Feel free to bring your dog along on your outdoor adventures. Dogs always need to be on a leash when in developed areas, but when you are on the hiking trails, they can be off-leash. But they must be under your control. And watch for those pesky little ticks. See you on the trails.



Recreation Spotlight—Hiking

The fall season is a great time to go hiking at Blue Marsh Lake. If you prefer short distance strolls you can always visit one of our nature trails: Squirrel Run (State Hill Boat Launch), Great Oak Nature Trail (Parking Lot C, Dry Brooks Day Use Area) or Eyes of the Eagle Sensory Trail (Parking Lot D, Dry Brooks Day Use Area). These three trails are self-guided, and a brochure can be picked up at the trail entrances. Keep in mind there is no hunting in the Day Use Area.

If you prefer hiking greater distances than hit the Foxtrot Hiking Loop (1.5 miles long) or Skinners Loops (about 3 miles). Both of these trails start and end at the same location, and are open to walking, biking or horseback riding. The Multi-use Trail is just under 30 miles in length, and is also open to foot use, as well as horseback and mountain bike riding. Always wear bright colors when using the trails during the fall season, as hunting is allowed in many of these areas.

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Volunteer Project Days

November 9th
 December 7th
 January 18th
 February 15th
 March 15th

Projects will include trail work, bridge work and possibly olfactory garden rehab work.

Contact Volunteer Coordinator
 Nate Freiwald for more information,
 610-376-6337

2013/2014 Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits

SQUIRRELS: (Combined Species) Oct. 19-Nov. 30, Dec. 16-24 & Dec. 26-Feb. 22, 2014 (6 daily, 12 possession).

RABBIT: Oct. 26-Nov. 30, Dec. 16-24 & Dec. 26-Feb. 22, 2014 (4 daily, 8 possession).

PHEASANT: Cocks only in WMUs 2A, 2C, 4C, 4E, 5A & 5B - Oct. 26-Nov. 30, Dec. 16-24 & Dec. 26-Feb. 22, 2014. Cocks or hens in WMUs 1A, 1B, 2B, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2G, 2H, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4A, 4B, 4D, 5C & 5D - Oct. 26-Nov. 30, Dec. 16-24 & Dec. 26-Feb. 22, 2014 (2 daily, 4 possession).

DEER, ARCHERY (Antlered & Antlerless) Statewide: Oct. 5-Nov. 16 & Dec. 26-Jan. 11, 2014. One antlered deer per license year, and an antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

DEER, Regular Firearms (Antlered & Antlerless): WMUs 1A, 1B, 2B, 3A, 3D, 4A, 4C, 5A, 5B, 5C & 5D: Dec. 2-14. One antlered deer per hunting license year, and an antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

DEER, ANTLERLESS only, Special Firearms (Statewide): Oct. 24-26 for Junior and Senior license holders

DEER, ANTLERED or ANTLERLESS FLINTLOCK (Statewide): Dec. 26-Jan. 11, 2014. One antlered or antlerless deer with general license and muzzleloader license, plus an additional antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

RACCOONS & FOXES: Oct. 26-Feb. 22, 2014. Unlimited. **COYOTES, OPOSSUMS, SKUNKS & WEASELS:** No closed season, with certain exceptions during big game seasons. No limits.

TRAPPING: MINK & MUSKRATS - Nov. 23-Jan. 5, 2014. Unlimited. **COYOTES, FOXES, OPOSSUMS, RACCOONS, SKUNKS, WEASELS** - Oct. 27-Feb. 23, 2014. Unlimited. Cable restraint devices may be used by those with certification cards for coyotes and foxes from Dec. 26-Feb. 23, 2014.

Ducks, sea ducks, coots and mergansers, Oct. 19-26, and Nov. 15-Jan. 15. (for bag limits and combination possession limits, please refer to the Pa Game Commission Migratory Game Bird Brochure.)

Goose: Oct. 26-Nov. 30, Dec. 18-Jan. 15, and Feb. 1-28, with a 5-goose daily bag limit; 15-goose possession limit.

Snow Goose: Oct. 1-Jan. 25, 25 daily, no possession limit. Conservation Hunt: Jan. 27 – April 25; 25 daily, no possession limit.

****For additional hunting opportunities, hunting hours, orange requirements, and regulations please refer to the Pennsylvania Game Commission: www.pgc.state.pa.us/ ****

Hunt Safely

Before you take to the field this fall to harvest that trophy buck or squeeze the trigger on that rising pheasant, take the necessary precautions to enjoy your hunting experience safely. If you are not going to be hunting with a buddy, make sure someone knows where you are going and when you plan to return. Always carry a cell phone so you can get help in an emergency. Remember to dress for conditions. In addition to the required orange, wear sturdy waterproof footwear and enough layers for the appropriate temperature. We also recommend wearing a waterproof jacket. Always identify landmarks in your surroundings to prevent getting lost, carry extra batteries for your flashlight, and stay hydrated.

Most documented hunting injuries come from tree stand use. This hunting technique is very popular, but can be very dangerous if the proper precautions are not taken. Always wear an approved safety harness attached to the tree while climbing and while sitting. Do not climb a tree with your weapon, but use a rope to pull it up to you after you are seated. Never pull up a loaded gun or a bow with a knocked arrow. In the event of a fall, your safety harness will support your weight and you will not fall to the ground.

Always identify your target before you pull the trigger, hunt safely and return home the same way you left.

Mandatory Life Jacket Wear

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission created a new law late last year. Beginning November 1 if you are on a boat less than 16 feet in length or any canoe or kayak you are required to wear a Coast Guard approved life jacket during the cold weather months from November 1 - April 30. Recreational boating fatalities in Pennsylvania that occur November through April are primarily due to the effects of cold water immersion. According to the PA Fish and Boat Commission, "when water temperatures are less than 70 degrees Fahrenheit, cold water shock is a major factor in boating fatalities. Accident victims who are wearing a life jacket when exposed to cold water have potentially life-saving advantages including insulation from the cold, buoyancy for those who are unable to tread water, and a reduced risk of aspirating water." The Fish and Boat Commission have taken steps to reduce the number of cold water immersion-related fatalities by amending regulations requiring boaters to wear life jackets when in small, unstable boats during cold water months. Hypothermia is life-threatening, and putting that life jacket on when going out in the boat could save your life one day. So just wear it!

Fall Word search

APPLES ARCHERY AUTUMN

COLORS HALLOWEEN HIKING

HUNTING LEAVES PUMPKIN

RAKE THANKSGIVING TURKEY

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

Dog Days at Blue Marsh Lake

Numerous visitors enjoy walking their dogs at Blue Marsh Lake. Your canine friends are permitted throughout the park. In fact, the only areas where they are not allowed is at the swim beach and flanking picnic areas (below Parking Lot Lower F) and at the State Hill Boat Launch boat beach.

When walking your dog in developed areas your dog is required to be on a leash that is a maximum length of six feet. They do not need to be on a leash when swimming in the lake, or when you are walking on the Great Oak or Squirrel Run Nature Trails. Dogs can also be off leash when on the multi-use trail. When dogs are off-leash, they still need to be near-by and respond to verbal commands. In other words, your dog should be under your control at all times. Please clean-up after your dogs, especially in developed areas. There are MUTT Mitts provided for this purpose in the main lot of the Stilling Basin, Parking Lot C at the Day Use Area and at State Hill Boat Launch.



To avoid conflicts please be courteous to other users. If your dog has behavior issues when around other dogs take your walks at areas that are not heavily used. Step off of the trail with your dog when mountain bike and horseback riders are approaching you on the trail. Remember, when walking the trails during the fall there may be hunters so you and your dog should wear bright colors. These are just some tips to help you have a positive experience when walking at Blue Marsh.

Thank You Public Lands Day Volunteers

Blue Marsh Lake participated in National Public Lands Day on Saturday, September 28. The day was a great success. Eighty-six volunteers participated in a variety of work projects including planting trees, redoing the olfactory garden, litter pick-up and trail work. They contributed a total of 172 volunteer hours and saved the Federal Government \$5,712.12. Volunteers also led nature trail tours, a tour of the control tower, and a two-mile hike with students and parents from the Commonwealth Connections Cyber School.

We partnered with the Berks County Parks staff again this year. They set-up a display and were busy talking to participants. The weather even cooperated. It was a perfect day with plenty of sun, a nice breeze and temperatures in the 70's. Thank you to all of the volunteers from local Girl Scout troops, the Pagoda Pacers Running Club, local geo-cachers and Blue Marsh volunteers. We could not have done it without your help!



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

Fall 2013 Programs

Family Fun Day Turkey Trot: Saturday, November 2, 1:00 p.m., Dry Brooks Day Use Area. Do turkeys trot? Can white-tailed deer swim? Join us and we will answer these and other questions as we take a walk through the Dry Brooks Day Use Area. Since winter is approaching we will also take a look at how both the animals and the staff at Blue Marsh Lake prepare for the snow and ice.

Bird Walks: Wednesday, November 13, and December 11, 1:00 p.m., Visitor Center. Join local naturalist and bird 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. Don't forget your binoculars.

Control Tower Tour: Thursday, November 14, 10:00 a.m., Participants get a "behind-the-scenes" look at how the dam functions. Not only will you be out on the dam, but you will also 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).

Hike with a Ranger: Saturday, November 16 and December 21, 10:00 a.m., Visitor Center. Get outdoors and enjoy the fresh fall air! Join us on an enjoyable walk of about three-miles in length. We will stroll along portions of the Multi-use Hiking Trail, as well as our two nature trails in the Dry Brooks Day Use Area. If conditions permit, we will also walk along the lake shoreline. Wear comfortable walking shoes, and bring water to drink. Our hike will take place in "No Hunting" areas.

Family Fun Day Nature's Decorations: Saturday, December 7, 10:00 a.m., Conference Center. A variety of natural materials can be used to make creative decorations. Wreaths, bird feeders, and decorations for trees are some of the ornaments we might create at this workshop. Join us for this fun and creative session. All materials will be supplied.

Volunteer Project Days: Saturdays, November 9, December 7, 2013, January 18, February 15, & March 15, 2014, 9:00 a.m. at the Visitor Center. Projects include trail & bridge work. Pre-register by contacting Nate Freiwald, Volunteer Coordinator (see above).