



What's Happening at Blue Marsh Lake?

USACE

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Fabulous Fall Fun

The fall season ushers in cooler weather, and beautiful orange, red and yellow leaves on the trees. It is a great season for a variety of recreational activities. No matter what recreation activity you are participating in, you need to keep safety in mind at all times.

Hunting activities occur throughout the fall season and into the winter. There is no hunting permitted on Sundays. When you recreate on the water and land keep in mind that hunting is also occurring. Seasons are covered on page two of this newsletter. Hunters must wear fluorescent orange when partaking in their activity. Anyone who ventures out into the woods and on the trails should also wear fluorescent orange or bright colors. When walking your dog you should also have an orange vest on them as well. No structures may be built in the trees. We must all share the land, so please respect one-another's recreational pursuits.

Hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders should stick to the trails. Also, it is probably a good idea to keep your dogs with you and out of the woods and fields during hunting season. Remember; both mountain bikers and hikers must yield to horseback riders on the trails. Ticks are still quite active, especially on mild days, so check yourselves when you complete your outing. There is no drinking water available, so make sure you carry some with you.



Blue Marsh Lake's primary purpose is flood control. During the fall—winter seasons we lower our pool level five feet to 285 feet above sea level. This typically begins in mid-October and is completed by November 1. To prevent damage to the courtesy docks they have been pulled for the season, and will be back in the water in April. The reason for the lowering of the lake level is to allow for extra storage capacity in the event of rain and/or snow melt. Boating is still permitted on the lake, but keep a look out for tree stumps, etc.

Life Jacket Wear Required November 1–April 30

Boaters must wear a life jacket on boats less than 16 feet in length or on any canoe or kayak. The majority of boating-related fatalities that occur November through April are due to the effects of cold water immersion. Cold water shock is a huge factor when water temperatures are below 70 degrees F. Those who are wearing life jackets when exposed to cold water have possible lifesaving advantages including insulation from the cold and being able to float. A person without a life jacket lacks buoyancy and may not be able to tread water, leading to the risk of swallowing water. With the goal of reducing the number of cold water immersion related fatalities, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission has amended regulations to require life jackets to be worn on small and unstable boats during the cold water season.



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Upcoming Volunteer

Work Days:

Meet at the Visitor Center at 9:00 am
 November 14
 December 12
 January 9

Programs

Hike with a Ranger 10am
 November 14
 December 26
 Control Tower Tour 10am
 November 19
 Nature's Crafts 10 am
 December 12

National Public Lands Day

The staff at Blue Marsh Lake and employees of Berks County Parks and the Spring Township Recreation Department joined together with volunteers to celebrate National Public Lands Day (NPLD) on Saturday, September 26th, 2015. This annual event showcases our nation's public lands and the importance of protecting natural resources through responsible use and volunteerism.

The litter pick-up project was led by Ken and Karen Speicher, Peter and Jane Wolfe, and Jo Spilde from the Geo Cache Club. They had 59 other volunteers that assisted them with picking up trash around the circumference of the lake. They collected 18 bags of trash, 3 pallets, and large pieces of concrete. There was a total of \$3579.20 in government savings from the help of participants.

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission held a family fishing event with 45 participants at the Stilling Basin. Education Specialist, Andrew Desko brought fishing rods for families to learn to fish. A coupon for free entry to any federal park was given to volunteers for participating in the event. We hope to see you at NPLD on September 24, 2016.



Hunting Seasons

Hunt Safely! Hunters wear orange and so should you. Blue Marsh is located in wildlife management unit 5B.

Deer: Archery (antlered & antlerless) Oct. 3-Nov. 14, & Dec. 26-Jan 9

Regular Firearms (antlered & antlerless) Nov. 30-Dec. 12

Flintlock Muzzleloader (antlered or antlerless) Dec 26-Jan 9

Squirrels: Oct. 17-Nov. 28, Dec. 14-24, and Dec. 26-Feb. 29

Rabbit: Oct. 24-Nov. 28, Dec. 14-24, and Dec. 26-Feb. 29

Pheasant: Oct. 24-Nov. 28, Dec. 14-24, and Dec. 26-Feb. 29

Groundhog: No closed season except during regular firearms deer season. Groundhog hunting is permitted on Sundays.

Ducks: Sea ducks, coots, and mergansers Oct. 17-24, Nov. 14-Jan. 14

Canada Goose: Nov. 14-28, and Dec. 19-Jan. 30

Snow Geese and Ross' Geese: Regular hunt, Oct. 1– Jan. 30

Conservation hunt, Mar. 1-Apr. 22

Doves: Oct. 17-Nov. 28 and Dec. 26-Jan. 1

Woodcock: Oct. 17-Nov. 28

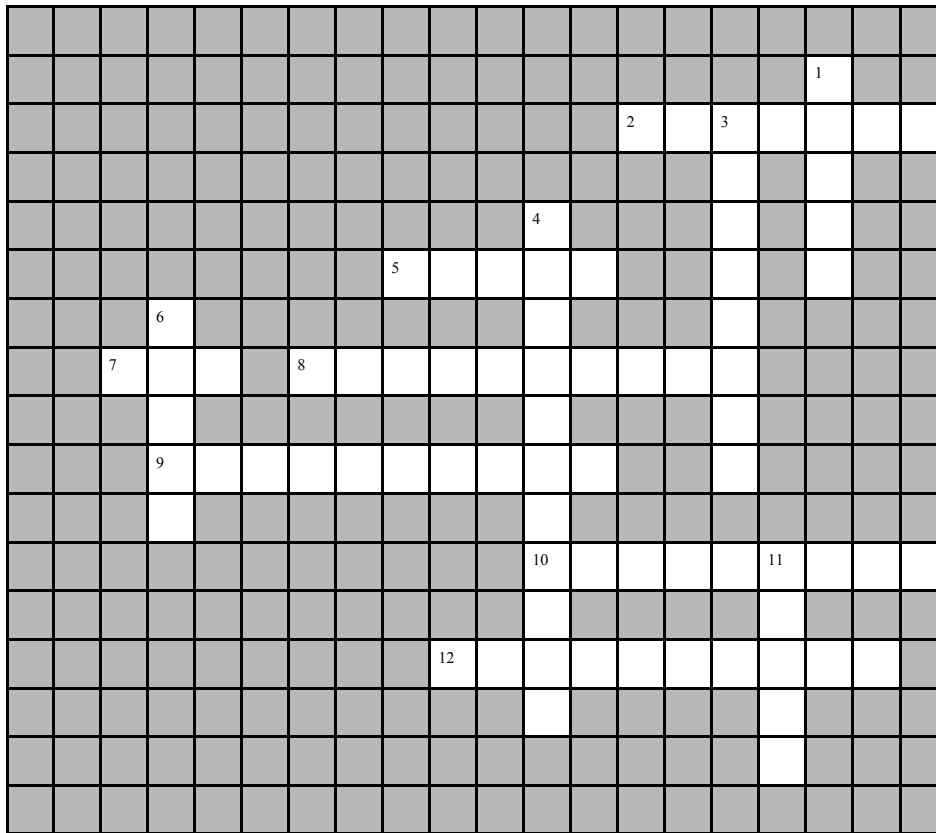


Mountain Biking

On October 4 the Berks Area Mountain Bike Association (BAMBA) held the annual Take Your Kid Mountain Biking Day at the Church Road Access. BAMBA has been partnering with us for various events over the past few years. They do a fantastic job of promoting mountain biking. Blue Marsh is one of several areas available for mountain biking in Berks County. There are over 30 miles of trails open to bike riding. The majority of the 29 mile Multi-use Trail consists of single-track (four feet wide), and grass and dirt lanes. We recommend that you wear a helmet when riding on any of the trails. In addition to the Multi-Use Trail, Foxtrot Hiking Loop (1.5 miles), Skinner's Loops (3 miles) and the Union Canal Connector Trail (1.8 miles) are also open to mountain biking. Our trails are multi-use, so you will encounter hikers as well as horseback riders. We are always looking for volunteers to assist us with the extensive trail work. Contact us if interested!



Fall Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 2 A popular fall activity that you need a license for
- 5 A flower that blooms in the fall
- 7 Sharecroppers harvest this in the fall
- 8 The natural event that forces you to harvest vegetables
- 9 When boating, you must wear this from November 1st through April 30th
- 10 Birds that are stocked at Blue Marsh each fall
- 12 The term for when the lake is lowered from 290ft to 285ft above sea level

DOWN

- 1 This person yields to horses on the trails
- 3 A frequent visitor to bird feeders in the fall
- 4 The act of viewing the many colors of fall
- 6 This tree turns a variety of red and yellow
- 11 This nut provides food for wildlife

Meet Volunteer Nicholas Saknit



Nicholas Saknit is a criminal justice student at Alvernia University. Nick enjoys traveling, hiking, and the great outdoors. He recently completed a 285 hour internship. He started his internship just before the Labor Day holiday, so he had the chance to observe the park on one of it's busiest weekends of the year. During his internship, he assisted with patrol, visitor safety, fee collection, park maintenance, and public programs. He also routed eight signs, cleaned out blue bird boxes, assisted with stocking pheasants, completed a 30 mile trail check, and helped maintain the multi-use trail. He was a great asset to our staff.

Nick graduates from Alvernia University in December and hopes to obtain a permanent position with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

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Visit us on Facebook!

ACROSS

2 Hunting
5 Aster
7 Hay
8 First Frost
9 Life Jacket
10 Pheasants
12 Winter Pool

DOWN

1 Hiker
3 Nuthatch
4 Leaf Peeping
6 Maple
11 Acorn

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

Fall/Winter 2015 Programs

Hike with a Ranger: Saturday, November 14, 10:00 am, Visitor Center. The fall season is a great time to hike, so join us for this three-mile hike at Blue Marsh. We will traverse the hiking trail, as well as portions of two of our nature trails in the Dry Brooks Day Use Area. Our return trip will take us along the lake shoreline. Dress for the weather.

Get Outdoors Who Lives in a Tree: Wednesday, November 18, 10:00 am, Conference Center. A variety of animals live in trees. Some build nests, and try to figure out who is actually living there. But the adventure will not end there, as we will also be doing a variety of activities indoors and outdoors focusing on trees and wildlife. Bring your journals along, and if you have a pair of binoculars you might want to bring them along as well.

Control Tower Tour: Thursday, November 19, 10:00 am, Visitor Center: This is the last chance for you to take part in a tour of the control tower in 2015! The tour is an excellent opportunity to get a “behind-the-scenes” look at the dam and the control tower. Also, you will have the chance to get those answers to any questions you may have about how Blue Marsh Lake functions.

Nature’s Crafts: Saturday, December 12, 10:00 am, Conference Center: Join us for a fun, creative session that will put to use all types of natural items that are found throughout the Blue Marsh area. You can make wreaths, centerpieces, bird feeders and all types of ornaments and decorations. All materials will be supplied.

Get Outdoors Bird Beak Buffet: Wednesday, December 16, 10:00 am, Conference Center: Did you ever notice how bird’s beaks differ from species-to-species? Why is this? Find out when you participating in this fun session. Recommended for home school students.

Hike with a Ranger: Saturday, December 26, 10:00 am, Visitor Center: Welcome winter by joining us for a 3-4 mile hike. We will be walking in “No Hunting Areas.” Our trek will take us along a portion of the hiking trail, a nature trail or two, and the lake shoreline.