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Chesapeake Chat

SUMMER 2016

Dirctors Note

I have a passion for paddling. Whether camping in the wilderness with my canoe or kayak, taking a day trip to a local water body, or leading a group of kids or adults on an adventure, I'll jump in. Local flatwater opportunities abound if you look for them. "Sunset or Full Moon Canoe Floats" and "Stand Up Paddle Boarding" are a couple of ways to provide quality interpretive programs – the focus of this edition of the Chat.

I also encourage you to look over the upcoming Fall Workshop to be held Sept. 20-23 in Berkeley Springs, West Virginia. We are thrilled to welcome internationally acclaimed interpretive author and speaker, Steve Van Matre for a Pre-Workshop and Keynote presentation.

Enjoy the rest of your summer!

Linda Bailey
Director
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E. David Garcia fully equipped to lead one of his Stand Up Paddleboard programs.

Stand Up Paddleboarding is quickly becoming a popular way to enjoy the outdoors. On page 2 you will learn about how David engages audiences in interpretive experiences on the water while enjoying this new sport.



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continued
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Interpreting Waterways on Stand Up Paddle Boards

E. David Garcia

Roving Park Naturalist

NOVA Parks (Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority)

James I. Mayer Center for Environmental Education

One of the most inspiring ways to introduce the public to the wildlife found along our waterways has recently emerged from the sport of stand up paddle boarding, otherwise known as SUP. Interpreters working in natural sites near large water habitats are often challenged on finding ways to go beyond just communicating information or facts about wetlands and aquatic wildlife. Instead, they aim to enrich, engage and help park visitors forge new relationships with the natural world. It is here where SUP can become a powerful interpretive tool primarily because of the gentle, inviting manner it lures the paddler into a deeper connection with nature and wildlife.

At first glance, people may think that a nature tour on SUP is similar to one on a kayak or canoe. But that is akin to stating that a journey through a majestic national forest in a van or on a motorcycle is essentially the same trip. The sceneries may certainly be

Photos on this page by E David Garcia



**For more information on
NOVA Parks visit their
webpage: [http://
www.nvrpa.org](http://www.nvrpa.org)**

Region 2 Leadership continued

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Photo by Camilla Ng

similar, but the two vehicles offer a very distinct experience making them very different journeys. In a car, one feels more like an observer of the landscape; whereas on a motorcycle the rider is part of the scenery and in full experience of the weather and the surroundings of the forest itself. Similarly, a SUP journey allows the paddler to experience nature through a greater range of human perceptions. Most of us were taught in grade school that we use five senses to experience the world. Our understanding of human perceptions, however, has since been updated. Step onto a SUP board for the first time and one quickly realizes that our sense of balance is but one of the 54 senses that we humans possess. Our bipedal condition that allows us to stand and walk efficiently is certainly a distinguishing trait of being human; walking erect is how our ancestors explored the Earth for tens of thousands of years. What makes exploring on SUP so unique is not that we explore nature being upright, but that it's done standing on the fluid properties of water.

Three summers ago the Washington DC region followed a national growing trend of interest in SUP. It was a perfect opportunity to design a SUP Nature Tour and introduce it at one of our parks in a bay along the Potomac River in Northern Virginia. As the Roving Naturalist for NOVA Parks, I'm fortunate to work for a park system that is 85 percent self-funded. The entrepreneurial spirit of NOVA Parks allowed it to quickly outfit Pohick Bay Regional Park with a fleet of 25 SUP boards and offer free promotional classes. NOVA Parks boasts of 12,000 acres of diverse habitats in over 30 parks spread across six jurisdictions servicing one of the most populous regions of the Washington Metropolitan area. As a certified instructor, I taught more than 700 people how to SUP at our parks over the past two summers. The age groups of first-time paddlers range from children just entering school up to senior citizens enjoying their retirement. Many of them are now avid paddlers and often join me on our nature tours.

Exploring on SUP can create emotional connections with nature because it allows one to venture deeper into wetlands and into coves that otherwise would not be possible with other vessels. On one tour, I took paddlers into a hidden cove where hundreds of butterflies descended to feed on nectar of flowers in the marsh. One participant sat on





her board as she described the beauty of the moment as her eyes welled up. On another moonlit night tour, I had participants lay on their boards once they had paddled out to the middle of the bay. There, in the midst of the darkness and silence, they came face-to-face with the Universe just as our ancestors had done for thousands of years. We toured the celestial dome with my astronomy laser pointer and I used a waterproof iPad to show the most recent deep-space images from the Hubble Telescope. These types of nature experiences can activate people's imagination and inspire them with a sense of awe. On a more profound level, such experiences are transformative as they can point people into a deeper journey of meaning and connectivity with all the life around us.

Modern science indicates that the topic of water might soon begin to eclipse some of the environmental challenges we see in our current news. When water conservation does take center stage on a global scale, the role of interpreters at our waterways sites will have a great positive impact in helping people create new meaningful connections with our water habitats. Stand up paddle boarding promises to become a new way to reveal the wonders of nature along our waterways. In doing so, it may well inspire and stimulate people in designing a more sustainable relationship with the rest of the natural world.

Photos on this page by Sharon Swab





Just Keep Paddlin': Summer and Fall on the Delaware Coast

Hallie Kroll, MA, CIG
Historical Interpreter
Delaware Seashore State Park
Rehoboth Beach, DE

While it goes without saying that most of Delaware Seashore State Park's programming is either physically located on the water or about the unique barrier island ecosystem, we enjoy highlighting our amazing location by getting out and enjoying our aquatic environment first-hand. During the summer, the park offers four kayak eco-tours every single week to connect visitors and locals to the inland bays of Delaware. Participants are able to paddle around the nesting grounds of terns, laughing gulls, and osprey (just not too close!). What makes our eco-tours so fun is that they are solely conducted by our three environmental education interns, each summer. This means that they are in charge of learning the environmental interpretation of the Delaware inland bays, the heritage of the area, as well as the physical process of safely leading kayak tours for the public. In doing so, our interns gain valuable experience in the fields of interpretation, environmental education, public speaking, and park management. Meanwhile, our park visitors get to experience the amazing resources the Delaware Park System has to offer in an engaging and exciting way. Paddling and interpretation gives programming an entirely new perspective.

In the Fall, when the environmental interns have left to return to college or a new career, our year-round interpreters begin a cycle which changes just like the seasons. Delaware Seashore is lucky enough to maintain several smaller tracts of land outside of its six miles of coastline, including the largely unknown Thompson Island Nature Preserve. In late August through September, myself and another interpreter lead guests on a five mile paddle across the Rehoboth Bay to the small and often overlooked Thompson Island. While skirting the island's shore, we offer a look back 20,000 years in history to the people who would have lived here, far before John Smith was ever paddling the region himself. The group then circles the island, watching for the resident bald eagle or perhaps one of the many great blue herons that call the Rehoboth Bay their home.

No matter the paddle, the staff at Delaware Seashore State Park makes sure that all participants understand how to maneuver their crafts safely (while wearing their PFDs of course!), are prepared with plenty of water and sunscreen, and receive an exciting and informative interpretive tour. We have found that while information about the Delaware inland bay ecosystem and its special flora and fauna is interesting and essential to a kayak tour, most participants enjoy paddling without constant chatter. This allows for everyone to enjoy the “bayscape” without the clutter of human voices distracting from its visual beauty and charming sounds. Additionally, giving yourself enough time for set-up is important. Transporting and moving kayaks takes a lot of physical exertion, planning, and time. The beginning of the program should also include, if this is a basic or intermediate-level paddle, a refresher on the parts of the boat, paddles, and other equipment, as well as other safety tips. Doing this will ensure a safe and enjoyable paddle for not only the participants, but also the interpreters. So no matter the environment, whether you’re interpreting a pond, river, lake, bay, or ocean, be sure to plan ahead, let the scenery speak for itself, and just keep paddlin’.

Photos with this article courtesy of Hallie Kroll



For more information on Delaware Seashore State Park visit their webpage:
<http://www.destateparks.com/park/delaware-seashore/>

Calendar of Events

- **Region 2 Fall Workshop**
September 20-23, 2016
Cacapon Resort State Park
Berkley Springs, WV
Early Bird Deadline: August 15
- **InterpNET Virtual Conference**
Zoos, Wildlife Parks and Aquaria
section
September 24, 2016
Visit: <http://zwpa.wordpress.com/>
- **Process of Interpretive
Planning Workshop**
September 26-30, 2016
Washington Crossing Historic Park
Washington Crossing, PA
Go to the NAI website for more info
- **NAI National Conference**
November 8-12, 2016
Corpus Christi, TX
Early Bird Deadline: August 15
- **CIG Courses**
September 27-30, 2016
The Maryland Environmental Service
Millersville, MD
- **CIG Train-the-Trainers**
September 19-23, 2016
Wildwood Preserve Metropark
Toledo, OH



Photo by Cynthia Rabbers

Eco-Paddle

Rebekah Sheeler
Environmental Education Specialist
Nockamixon State Park
Quackertown, PA

This was originally written as a guided kayak tour but could certainly be adapted for other vessel types. The main tour is included here but don't forget to add your introductions and safety info for being out on the water.

The species listed here are just some you may encounter on your own lake. Try to plan a route that will take you past areas where these species are likely to be sighted so participants can see a real, live example of the species as you discuss it. Gauge interest in your group for how long your discussion breaks should be. Try and space out your breaks to give the slower participants time to catch up and others a chance to catch their breath. These are only recommended species, feel free to discuss any species that are seen along your path or add and subtract species that are more appropriate to your region.

Lake Animals

What are some examples of lake animals we have here at the park? Nockamixon has a wealth of aquatic animals and animals that utilize the lake, including ducks, geese, cormorants, osprey, bald eagles, great blue heron, beavers, water snakes and aquatic turtles. As we kayak around the lake today, we'll hopefully see a few examples of some of these species and even discuss how you can help some of these animals.

Osprey

Large hawk with a wing span of 4 1/2 to 6 feet and up to two feet tall. It is dark above with white below. Head is mostly white, with a dark patch or stripe at the cheek. It has a noticeable crook in the wings and a black mark at the "wrist".

Ospreys live near large rivers and lakes. They can create large stick nests in trees or manmade structures such as hacking platforms. They are a spectacle to see hunt as they dive feet first into the water for fish. Osprey, as well as bald eagles, pelicans and other fish-eating birds, suffered from population losses due to the use of DDT to combat mosquitoes. The chemicals in DDT caused thin eggshells in these birds causing them to be unable to reproduce successfully. Since the banning of DDT and a concerted effort by biologists and scientists, these birds have started to make a comeback. Some osprey will winter in PA but many migrate to the southern US and Central America.

Bald Eagle

Large bird with a wing span of 6-8 feet and a height of two feet. Dark brown body with white head, yellow bill and yellow feet, and white tail. Immature eagles are brown with white mottles on the body and head; they do not get adult plumage (the characteristic white head) until their fifth year.



Simon Carrasco/CC BY 2.0

**For more information on
Nockamixon State Park visit
their webpage: [http://
www.dcnr.state.pa.us/
stateparks/findapark/
nockamixon/](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/findapark/nockamixon/)**

continued on next page

Bald eagles feed mostly on fish, although they will eat birds and small mammals. They are known to harass osprey forcing the osprey to drop its catch which the eagle grabs midair. Eagles build large nests that they reuse every year and can grow to be larger than a bathtub! The presence of humans near a nest may cause a pair to abandon its nest. Bald eagles do not migrate, they tend to stay near their nest sites although they can wander in the general area. They can live to be 30 years or older with few natural enemies. Bald eagles were victim to the same problem as osprey with DDT and their populations are finally beginning to recover.

Great Blue Heron

Wading bird that can be 4 feet tall with a 70 inch wing span. Head is largely white, with a black crest, back and wings area a grayish-blue with dark long legs and a long pointed spear-like beak.

Great Blue Herons are quite often seen wading in shallow water areas. Be sure to look in trees around the edge of the water too. You may also see one perched up high. They are easy to recognize in flight as a large bird flying slowly with an "S" shaped neck (they almost look like pterodactyls). They use their massive beaks to impale fish. Herons nest in colonies, near fresh or salt water, with nests built high in trees. One problem herons have is getting caught in leftover fishing line. Tangled line can get caught around heron's beaks as they hunt or on other body parts as they wade in the water. This can lead to starvation and death of these magnificent birds. If you are an angler, please do your best to remove all fishing line when you are done for the day.

Red-eared Slider

Aquatic turtle, often seen basking on rocks. Easily identifiable by red mark on the side of head, where the ear would be.

Red-eared Sliders are native to the southern United States. They are a very popular and common pet turtle species. They have been introduced to the northern United States by people releasing unwanted pet turtles into waterways. These turtles have adapted to the colder portions of the United States. They outcompete our native turtle species for food and basking spots. They can be a nuisance to other turtle species such as red-bellied turtles. In Pennsylvania red-bellied turtles are threatened. They are smaller and less aggressive than the red-eared slider but they outcompete the native species. While they are legal to keep as pets it is illegal to introduce non-native animal species into the wild. When buying a pet always consider the lifespan, diet and space needs of the pet. Also remember turtles don't do "tricks" like dogs, many people get bored with turtles quickly. If you have an unwanted turtle call your local nature centers, zoos or other educational organizations to see if they would consider taking it for their programs, never release it into the wild.

Painted Turtles

Aquatic turtle, identifiable by colorful markings on edge of shell. Markings are often yellow and orange in color.

Painted turtles are a common native aquatic turtle. They are commonly seen in shallow areas. They eat both aquatic vegetation and aquatic invertebrates. They are quite quick in the water and don't seem as bothered by the red-eared slider as other turtles although the slider does still impact them.

Beavers

Beavers make their homes along the edge of lakes and ponds or build dams to create lakes and ponds. They don't create dams on lakes but they will build lodges along the edge. Their lodges act as shelter and beavers gain entrance from under the water.

Cormorants

Large blackish water birds. They are often seen in groups; they sun themselves by spreading their wings out. They do not have the good oil waterproofing that ducks and geese have so they sun themselves to dry out their feathers.



The Great Beaver Watershed: Then and Now

Fawn A. Palmer

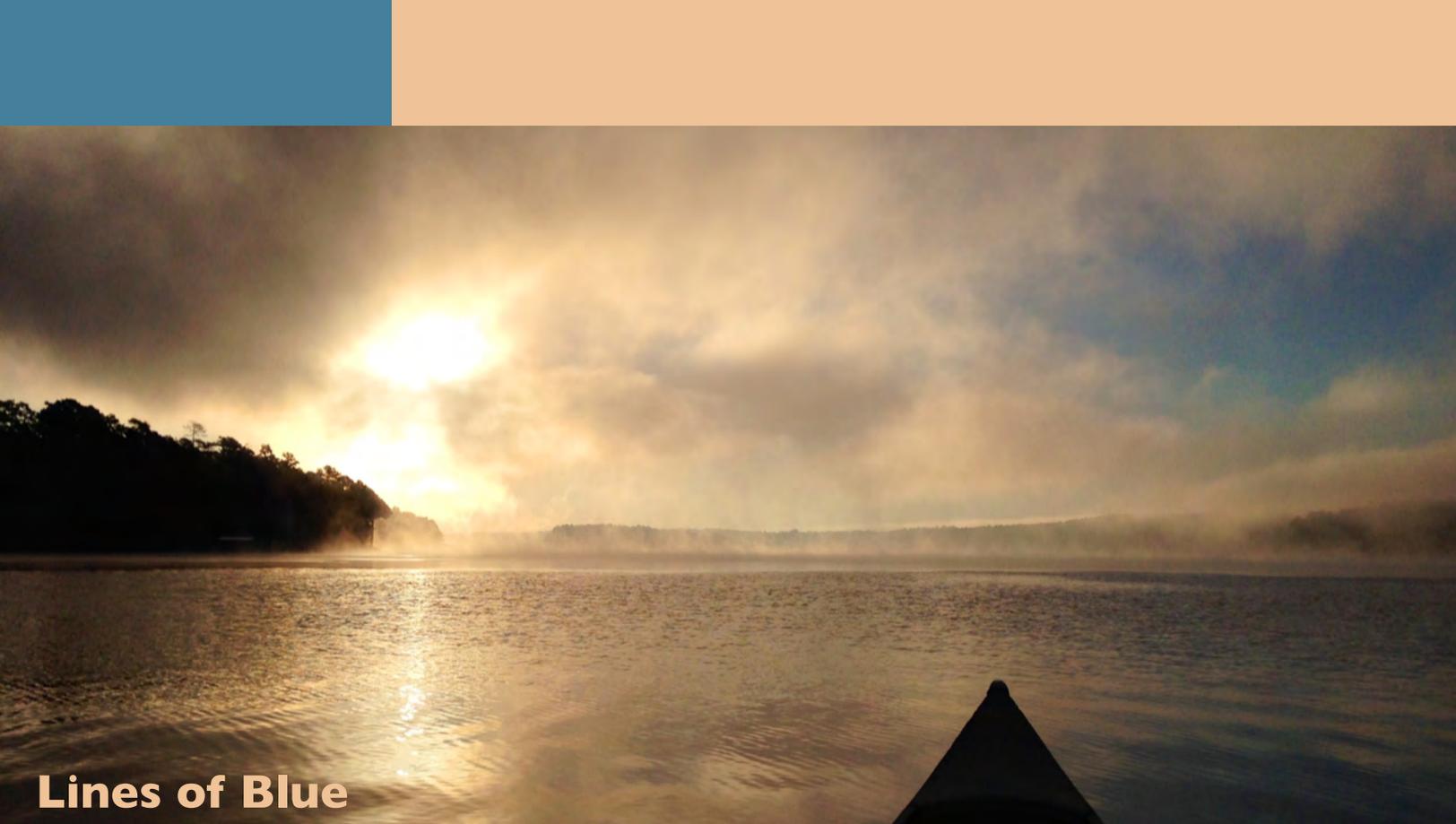


What was the Chesapeake Bay watershed like before the Europeans arrived? Wildlife biologists estimate that beaver numbered in the millions. With a stable and enduring family structure, and few natural predators, beaver colonized almost every part of North America. Beavers are extraordinary hydro-engineers, altering their surroundings, cutting down trees, building dams and lodges, and digging canals. Beavers change their environment to suit their semi-aquatic lifestyle, acting as a keystone species, and attracting other species to their impoundments and associated wetlands.

Paleoecologists have used fossilized pollen, seeds and microorganisms found in core sediments drawn from the Chesapeake Bay and tributary rivers to construct a timeline of change dating back 18,000 years when a warming climate began to melt the continental ice sheet. Sea level rose, drowning river mouths and creating estuaries. Boreal spruce-fir forests changed to hemlock-pine and, about 6000 years ago, to mixed hardwoods--oak, maple, hickory, chestnut and gum. The watershed was over 90% forested with a pervious forest floor that absorbed rainfall runoff and constantly recharged groundwater. Sediment that washed into streams was captured by beaver ponds, stair-stepping like "speed bumps" downslope. All of the evidence points to a soggy watershed dotted with ponds, swamps and marshes. Rivers, streams and bays were clear of excess sediment and nutrients. The benthos or water bottom was dominated by submerged aquatic grasses and bivalves such as oysters, clams and freshwater mussels.

Colonists came to settle, clearing forest to bring land into cultivation. Ragweed pollen in the sediment cores, a marker for this change in land use, goes from being less than 1% to over 10% as forested land was converted to agricultural fields. Beavers were over-trapped to near extinction by the early 1700s. As population grew, forest shrank to less than 50% of its former extent. By the beginning of the twentieth century, only 20% of the land remained in forest. Sediment poured into rivers, silting in former navigable channels and harbors. Lush underwater beds of submerged aquatic grasses were smothered, many of the species eventually going extinct.

Today, the Otter Point Creek/Winter's Run watershed is 37% forest, 34% urban-developed, 16% pasture/grassland, 12% farmland and 1% other. Beaver have returned. Perhaps their impoundments and canal workings, if effectively managed, will help in watershed wetlands restoration, water quality, and control of polluted stormwater runoff. Perhaps Otter Point Creek will regain clarity and once again support a thriving benthic and planktonic community.



Lines of Blue

Jay S Miller

I had the old blue canoe in the water a while back and begin to think about canoes. I have been toying with the idea of getting a fishing kayak or a canoe to replace this one. There are some nice crafts out there. A lot of technology is going into material, design, comfort, and rigging for fishing. Nice, state of the art work.

A year ago at a lakeside resort, I used a canoe from the lodge for some daybreak fishing. As I headed out, the canoe didn't feel right: it lumbered, it waddled, it was a fat duck that could barely move. I guess I'm naïve, but I realized that the canoe was built by a makers of flat-bottomed aluminum boats, and that's what this was – a wide, flat boat, but with tapered ends. It might be good for a resort where families just play around with it; it's not going to tump unless you really, really want it to. But it's also not going to get me across the lake with sleek, streamlined, speed. Paddling this tub was tough. Sadly, a lot of people who have their first attempt at canoeing with this boat are not going to like it, we'll loose a lot of potential canoeists and they'll lose a wonderful pastime.

Now I was seeing my old blue canoe with new eyes – eyes of appreciation. Now I paid attention to the gentle taper from bow to mid section, the rounded but stable hull, the slight tumblehome, the ease that it moved across the lake, the relationship of length to width to produce stability yet having a sleekness that produced speed and control, I felt the response as I j-stoked and skulled ... and I liked it.

I didn't know what I was buying for less than \$250 nearly 50 years ago, but the company knew what they were making – not a boat, but a canoe. Yes, it's an aluminum canoe, and its been dragged over gravel bars, bounced off rocks, tumped under limbs and has seen miles of lakes and streams. It has dents and scrapes and last year a neighbor's tree fell across it bending the side, a thwart, and the rear seat. But the lines are still there, it still moves sleekly through the water and takes me where I want to go. It's not a tub, it's a canoe, and there's a very nice difference. I think I'll keep this old blue canoe a while longer.

Celebrate the Journey Fall Workshop

Join us this September 20-23 for "An Interpretive Journey From the Mountains to the Stars," at the beautiful Cacapon Resort State Park in Berkeley Spring, West Virginia. Discover new insights, tools and techniques and diversify your network contacts with fellow professionals.

NAI Chesapeake Region 2 invites all interpreters to come—whether you are an NAI member or not, a regional resident or live and work elsewhere. This beautiful location has been paired with a dynamic Pre-Workshop and Keynote presenter, Steve Van Matre, pertinent sessions and wonderful choices in offsite trips.

Cacapon sits in the shadows of a wide expanse of Cacapon Mountain, part of the Appalachian Mountain range that for a century, barred British colonial westward expansion with its roughness, heavy forests and dense undergrowth. Today the mountains still host a huge variety of flora and fauna due to the wide range in geology, elevation, latitude and moisture. From colonial expansion to today's hikers and campers the mountains draw people in and challenge them on their way, inspiring our conference's theme. Join us in celebrating the journey.

Workshop Highlights

Tuesday, September 20 – Pre-Workshop with Steve Van Matre

"Interpretive Design...and the Dance of Experience"



Wednesday, September 21

Bird Walk, Silent Auction, Continental Breakfast

Keynote Address – Steve Van Matre

"Mapbearers, Toolkeepers, Starmakers – lost roles for helping young people on the path of life"

Concurrent Sessions I

- *How to Develop Visitor Connections Using Citizen Science* (Dave Smalldone)
- *Interpreting Our New Cosmic Story* (David Garcia)
- *Raiders of the Lost Woods and Other Camp Adventures* (Tom Meier)

Region 2 Business Lunch and Awards

Concurrent Sessions II

- *Engaging Visitors with NASA Citizen Science* (Kristen Weaver)
- *Gadgets & Gimmicks from a Career Interpreter* (Pete Stobie)
- *Interpretation in Recreational Paddle Sports* (Chris Raab)

Dinner and Entertainment at Panorama at the Peak

Thursday, September 22

Bird Walk, Continental Breakfast

Concurrent Sessions I

- *NASA on Earth: Resources for Interpreters* (Kristen Weaver)
- *John Muir and I Have a Lot in Common* (Jennifer Soles)
- *Finding Your Way with Map and Compass* (Linda Bailey)

Concurrent Sessions II

- *Special Event Planning for Effective Fundraising* (Crystal Witt)
- *Transforming Your Audience Through Creative, Informal Stories* (Mimi Dempsey)

Lunch provided

Concurrent Sessions III

- *Writing Right – A Crash Course in Interpretive Writing* (Ned Reddrop)
- *Exploring Open Science Inquiry Programs at Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary* (Liana Vitali)
- *Ferns Unfurled* (Rachael Tolman)

"Interpreters Gone Wild!"

Wine, Cheese, Chocolate...and Chili Cook Off!

Guest Presentation – *Alyssum Pohl* – "Paddle On" --solo kayak adventure on the Mississippi River from source to sea

Live Scholarship Auction

Friday, September 23

Offsite Trips

- *Bon Voyage: An Interpretive Water Journey on the C&O Canal*
- *Biking the Canal: An Interpretive Cycling Journey through C&O History*
- *Darkness in Daylight: An Interpretive Journey through the Paw Paw Tunnel and Shale Barrens*
- *Reaching Mountain Heights: An Interpretive Journey up the Tunnel Hill Trail and through the Paw Paw Tunnel*

**Download the workshop Packet
or Register Online:**

<http://nairegion2.weebly.com/>

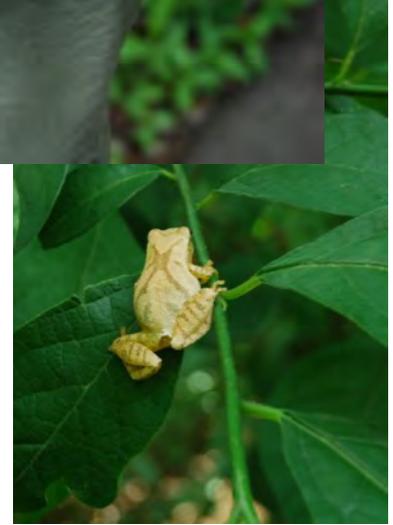
Hope to see you in September!

Beltway Chapter Session

Huntley Meadows Park

Critter Sightings

These pictures were taken during the June 6 Beltway Session at Huntley Meadows Park. From left to right: a swamp milkweed beetle (we believe), a spring peeper, a great spangled fritillary, and another spring peeper. Photos submitted by Linda Bailey



NAI REGION 2:

Delaware

District of Columbia

Maryland

New Jersey

Pennsylvania

Virginia

West Virginia

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.interpnet.com/2/



National Association for
Interpretation Region 2
Chesapeake

Submission Guidelines

Each edition will be theme-based so if you have something to contribute short or long refer to the table below for upcoming deadlines and themes. Submissions for other sections can be sent at any time but if it fits in with a particular theme send it by that edition's deadline otherwise it will be used for a future edition.

Recommended lengths for submissions: 500-600 words for articles
100 words for each tip or trick

Pictures should be submitted as an attachment to your email. Other materials may be sent in the body of your email or as an attachment.

If you have any suggestions for a theme for future newsletters, please send your suggestions or requests. Themes can be anything related to interpretation that would be of interest to the region.

Newsletter submissions including calendar items should be sent to:
ChesapeakeChat@gmail.com

	Deadline	Theme
Winter Newsletter	January 15	
Spring Newsletter	April 15	
Summer Newsletter	July 15	Water & A Sneak Peek at the Fall Workshop
Fall Newsletter	October 15	Roving Interpretation/On The Trail