

Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club

Appalachian Hiker

Banner Photo by Mark Ferguson



PREZ SEZ

As we emerged from winter, TATC schedules several annual spring events to prepare the AT for the busy warmer weather hiking season. Here's a short summary of our April activities:

(1) Spring Backpacking Walkthru (a weekend trip used to understand the condition of our portion of the AT and nearby trails, so we know what maintenance work is needed). John Sima, our Trail Supervisor, led a group on the AT - Mar-Har loop trail and Andy Grayson led a group on the St. Mary's loop trail. (see article with photos within for additional information about this walkthru weekend).

(2) The April Cabin Maintenance & Orientation, led by Tom Miano, consisted of 11 participants (15 members have signed up for the May 30 - June 1 Cabin Maintenance & Orientation being led by Greg Hodges, our Cabin Chair).

(3) Spring Maintenance (tasks included: removing blow downs, cleaning out water bars, picking up trash, cleaning shelter areas, replacing a sign on the Mau-Har, and more). Thanks to

* John Sima and Kaci Midgette, Assistant Trail Supervisor, who led over 60 TATC members who removed blow downs, cleaned out water bars and shelter areas, picked up trash, replacing a sign on the Mau-Har, and more.

* Evan Brown, our ATC Ridgerunner for last year has returned this hiking season and joined us for our maintenance event. (Thanks, Evan, for your energy and passion for protecting the AT.).

I also want to recognize and thank several others that helped to make this event successful: Rich Seriani our Toolboss, for bringing, organizing, distributing, collecting, and cleaning the tools that were used; Bruce Davidson, our Safety Chair, for bringing fully charged InReach devices and training members to properly use these devices to communicate status and any safety issues encountered while in the forest; Catherine Fowler, our Social Chair, who planned and led our cooking team. We all enjoyed appetizers before our grilled burgers and corn-on-the-cob with all the fixings and desserts brought by various members; and Sherry McQueen

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June 2025 - July 2025
52nd Edition, 3rd Issue

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for taking all the quality photographs during our event and for being a part of Catherine's cooking team.

And, thanks to everyone who participated in all these events. We would not be a viable club without YOU and your hard work. Please see John Sima's article within for the Spring Maintenance Event details with photographs.

All our Swingblade and Lopperfest events have been scheduled with the first one being held on June 21, so please mark your calendars now as this is why we are a club - to maintain our 10.2-mile section (from Tye River to Reid's Gap) of the Appalachian Trail! If you are concerned about the level of work, please reach out to me and we will work with you for your assignment. We all want to have fun while working.

I want to recognize and thank TATC members Mike Martin, John Barnes, Keith Forbes, Milton Beale (2 sessions), and Pete Burch (4 sessions) for their time to help the HistoriCorp restore the Sherando Lake Recreation Area's CCC Kitchen Pavilion structure and roof. Most of us know that we use this area as our basecamp for our Swingblade and Lopperfest events throughout the summer. Please see Mike Martin's article within for his experience.

Our members continue to help our local trails with maintenance activities. Paul Heymann, our Local Trail Supervisor, has at least one local maintenance workday each month so check out our calendar to sign up early for these events. Paul has recruited members to lead a maintenance event for the rest of the calendar year. Please let him know if you are interested in helping in this capacity for future events. Special thanks is owed to John Oakes for his leadership of the Amphibious Trail Crew at the West Neck Creek. This work includes picking up trash; cutting alligator grass; removing snags, blockages, and trash-rafts from the waterway; and cutting back creek bank vegetation overhanging the water.

In addition, for local trail maintenance, at the suggestion/push of Bill Bunch/Facebook Chair, we have been collaborating with Elizabeth River Trail (ERT) on walks/fun runs along the ERT and we most recently adopted a small section of the ERT Sentara Loop which happens to be the most travelled portion. Although Greg and I have started maintenance work there we plan to solicit volunteers soon. Stay tuned for details but please see Greg Reck's article within if you are interested.

Our Tuesday Group continues to keep up their commitment of holding an event every Tuesday so check out our calendar if you have Tuesday mornings available for a hike, bike, or kayak trip. Thanks to each trip leader for hosting these events and for those that support them.

Thanks to Jim Newman and Jim Sexton again for leading the TATC Trail Magic Day on Memorial Day Weekend at the Tye River Bridge area. I also want to thank the many of you that donated to this special event for the AT thru-hikers and those that volunteered during the event. In addition to supporting hungry hikers, this event also promotes awareness of the TATC mission. Special thanks to both Jim and Chris Sexton for hosting the volunteers at their lovely home nearby.

Nine of us made it to Delaware Water Gap, PA, for the 2nd Annual "For Hikers and Jazz Lovers" event over the weekend of May 17. Please read the article written by Sharon Salyer to see what you missed. I must say that Greg, Bridgett, and I had a blast (both hiking and listening to the live Jazz) and it brought back awesome memories of our AT Thru-hiking days. (Bridgett had fun despite the number of ticks we found on her. Yikes!!!) We have already talked with the owner, Mary Carrig, about coming back for the 3rd Annual "For Hikers and Jazz Lovers" event which is being planned for the weekend of May 16, 2026.

Catherine Fowler, our Social Chair, is bringing back our "Day in the Park" event on July 26 with a tour of the Brock Center and a discussion of the Pleasure House Point "Wetlands Restoration Project" which started in March and should be completed in October 2025. Join us for lunch after the tour and a hike after lunch. Please see the TATC Calendar for details.

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Lastly, "thanks" goes out to many of you that purchased tickets to the movie "Granite Rapids Moon" and special thanks goes to Lee Lohman for working out the detailed arrangement with John Meyer (Producer, Assistant Director, and actor) to bring this beautiful story to us. Please see Lee's article within to learn more.

As always, stay safe while having fun on the trails and in the woods, -Lelia

Lelia Vann President - Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club

Virginia Beach Trails Committee Recognition

On May 6, 2025 the City Council of Virginia Beach recognized the 20th Anniversary of the Virginia Beach Bikeways and Trails Advisory Committee (now the Active Transportation Advisory Committee) of which Reese Lukei was on the initial committee in 2005. He was honored for initiating the Virginia Beach bikeways/trails planning 40+ years ago. Lillie Gilbert, former owner of Wild River Outfitters, was honored for being instrumental in blueways network development.



Minute for Maintenance June 2025

By John Sima

Full Speed Ahead!! Our 2025 maintenance season kicked off with a bang. We had four events scheduled in quick succession since our last newsletter.

First was our "Giving back to Sherando" event where we helped Jonathan Zimmerman and the Sherando Lake Recreation Area get ready for the 2025 camping season. Since we use this facility 5 or 6 times a year, we are obligated to help them out. 38 people showed up to lend a helping hand. What a turnout!!!

Mike Martin, John Barnes, Keith Forbes, Milton Beale, & Pete Burch helped Historicorp with the CCC Kitchen roof replacement & some structural repairs at Sherando. These were week-long efforts, Milton & Pete signed up for multiple weeks. What dedication!! Thanks guys, way to represent.

Spring Backpacking Walkthrus, we split up into 2 groups to survey our trails and report work that needed to be done for Spring Maintenance. Bonus, we had an excuse to go backpacking. Andy Grayson led a crew of Randy Smith and Bob Veverka into the St Mary's Wilderness and I lead a group of Brittany Collins, Tom Mitchell, John Reed, and Jennifer & Luke McNesfield from England into Three Ridges Wilderness. Everyone enjoyed getting away up in the mountains.

Spring Maintenance, we had a great turnout despite a rainy forecast. 55 people showed up for Maintenance, a few more family members stayed back in camp. We performed many maintenance tasks to include; Shelter shingle repair at Maupin Field, Thanks Milton. Trail Sign replacement at Maupin Field, Thanks Jim Newman & crew. We also had 6 Saw crews out clearing many blowdowns. Our Ridgerunner, Evan Brown showed up to lend a hand with blowdowns. It's always a pleasure to see Evan show up. Cathy Fowler organized and lead the cook crew to a wonderful and much appreciated Saturday supper. Thanks Cathy!

Maintenance Schedule:

Swingblade & Lopperfest 1, June 20th-22nd

Swingblade & Lopperfest 2, July 18th-20th

Swingblade & Lopperfest 3, Aug 22nd-24th

Fall Backpacking Walkthru, Oct 10th-12th

Fall Maintenance, Oct 24th-26th

Let me know if you're interested in signing up for any of these events. Follow the links in our calendar to sign up using Signupgenius or Email trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com and assistantts@tidewateratc.com.

Happy Trails

John (CrazyLegs) & Kaci

Trail Supervisor and Assistant TS



TATC Education Corner

Tents for Backpacking

By Don Williams

A tent is your home away from home. It provides shelter from bad weather, animals, and provides privacy for you in group tenting/shelter areas. It's intended to keep you dry in the rain and it will, barring any leaks. Inside a tent will be a few degrees warmer than outside the tent because the wall of the tent acts as a layer of insulation. This is nice in cold weather, but uncomfortable in hot weather. It also blocks the wind which stops the wind chill effect. Most animals will be discouraged from entering your tent to varying degrees. Even black bears will usually not invade the tent if people are inside the tent (frightened and yelling at the bear), but mice will chew through the fabric to get your snacks. Snakes and insects will be stopped fairly well. Most people will like the privacy of a tent to change clothes and will likely sleep better because you'll (somewhat) feel like you're in your bedroom.

Tents are one of the heavier items in your pack. It is part of the Big 3 or Big 4 in backpacking gear. The other big items are your backpack, sleeping bag, and sometimes included in the list is the sleeping pad. Why do many backpackers focus on the weight of their gear? The added effort to carry weight up and down rugged mountainous terrain is a significant factor in your total energy expenditure. This has two effects: you feel the fatigue in your body and muscles, and you need to eat more to compensate for this loss.

Even when comparing the weights of tents from well-known backpacking equipment manufacturers, the differences can be substantial. Typical range of backpacking tent weights for a 1-person tent range from 1.1 - 4.1 pounds. Weights for a 2-person tent range from 2.0 - 6.3 pounds. Note, be careful since tent weight specs sometimes include stakes and bags, but sometimes don't.

Most of this article will address typical 3-season tents for backpacking. I will address winter or expedition tents, but to a lesser degree. This article will not address two other shelter types used by some backpackers: hammocks and tarps. Hammocks and tarps are loved by their adherents, but they are a relatively small subset of backpackers. According to TheTrek.co. 2024 survey of thru hikers, only 5% used hammocks and 1% used tarps (NOTE 1). Of course, much of the information here about tents is true whether you are camping in wilderness areas or car camping at a developed campground. The biggest difference is that when car camping you don't have to worry about the weight of the tent.

The first issue to consider when selecting a tent is the size and shape. Most backpackers use either a one or two-person tent. Sometimes a solo hiker will use a 2-person tent (more than half of the solo thru hikers in The Trek survey did this), or two hikers will use a 3-person tent (less common), just to have extra space inside the tent. Of course this incurs a weight penalty. So, if you want this extra space, you should find a very lightweight tent in the two or three-person category.

The structure of a tent is what gives it the ability to withstand heavy rain and wind. The majority of tents now use flexible poles that cross in a variety of patterns to create a grid structure over a rectangular (or near rectangular) floor. These can be tricky sometimes to set up, but it creates a good volume in the interior of the tent and can be fairly resistant to strong winds. There are also tents that have two peaks (one toward each end), or are peaked at the center and lower at each end. Whichever shape you choose, we can make some general statements that will be true of any tent:

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1. Tents with smaller sloped or rounded surfaces will withstand wind forces better than those with larger, more nearly vertical surfaces, and they will be more aerodynamic.
2. Tent material should be held taut by the pole structures without sags or ripples. These sags or ripples would be buffeted by wind and could cause the tent to give way. A catenary cut to the tent fabric will provide the most reliably taut surface. It should appear to hang with uniform tightness in every direction. The fabric panels will not lay flat on the ground because they are only taut when held in the designed 3D shape.
3. A tent will have to be staked to withstand wind and driving rain. Multiple attachment points for stakes at the floor of the tent and some guy lines to aid in the support of the upper structure should be provided. (Note: if you are confident that a given night will be calm, you can forgo installing the stakes. If a storm is forecast, you should install the stakes prior to the onset of the storm. See below for staking recommendations.)
4. Stronger tents are usually heavier. A real four-season tent will often be made from heavier fabric (higher denier), have stronger poles, and have heavier reinforcing at seams, pole attachments, and joints in the structure.

Another general structural determinant of a tent is whether it is free-standing or it must be staked to stand up. A free-standing tent can be erected without stakes and then picked up. You can move it if you decide to change the orientation or location of the tent. This shouldn't happen too frequently if you carefully observe the proposed site, but it could happen as more people join the camp or the weather changes. Many flexible pole tents are free-standing, but not all of them. Trekking pole tents will never be free-standing.

A final significant issue to decide before selecting a tent is whether you want a single or double-walled tent. In a single-wall tent, the bathtub floor and roof are one integrated piece of material. Nothing can be separated. A bathtub floor is a single piece of fabric that forms a floor with stitched corners to form short walls around the floor. These walls reduce splash from rain and intrusion of water running along the ground. In a double wall tent, there is an inner tent body, usually with mosquito netting above the bathtub style floor, then a separate fly covers the tent body. All other things being equal, such as the fabric type and weight (denier), the general shape and volume of the tent, and tents with all doors closed, we can make a few general statements. If we compare two similar tents, one single-walled and the other double-walled:

1. A single-walled tent will usually be lighter than a double-walled tent since there is only a single layer of fabric once you get above the bathtub floor.
2. A single-wall tent will likely be easier and faster to set up. Most flexible pole tents require the setup of the main tent body and poles to be completed before the fly is placed over the structure. However, some double wall tents overcome this general pattern by an arrangement where the inner tent body and the fly can remain attached, or you can pitch just the fly first to keep the inner tent dry if being set up in the rain. This makes the setup similar to a single-wall tent. The Durston: X-Mid series and the Tarptent: Moment are examples of this type of double-wall tent.
3. A double-walled tent will usually have better ventilation since it has a large netted area under the fly that gets air flow from around the edges of the fly.
4. A double-wall tent will likely have less condensation problems on the inside of the body of the tent in wet or cold conditions because of the better ventilation (which will help carry away the condensation) and because the user is less likely to rub their sleeping bag or clothes against the underside of the fly.
5. Most double wall tents can be set up with just the main tent body and leave the fly off if you know the weather will be good yet you still want bug netting over you.

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6. Whether the tent is single-walled or double-walled, make sure the fly extends far enough to prevent splash from rain getting through the mosquito netting. Yet it should have some ground clearance to provide ventilation. This often takes the form where the fly extends horizontally far enough beyond the perimeter of the inner tent to prevent splash-up from rain.

Tent materials are now stronger, lighter, and equally weather resistant to anything in the past. To understand tent materials, we first need to understand fabric weights. Fabric thickness is measured in denier (abbreviated “D” in tent specs). Generally, a stronger and more durable fabric will be higher denier, but this comes with a significant weight penalty. The question then becomes, what is the lowest denier fabric that will meet the strength and durability needed in a tent? There are ultralight tents made with as low as 15D materials. But there is more to strength than just thickness. The particular weave, thread count, effect of waterproof coating, and the effect of water absorption on fabric strength. Nylon is hydrophilic (water-attracting). Polyester is hydrophobic (repels water). Fabrics behave differently when dry and when wet.

The most common material is still nylon. However, manufacturers have been able to improve the water resistance and durability of the coating by using silicone coating, usually on both sides, as compared to the older polyurethane coating, which was usually only applied to one side. Silicone-coated nylon (sil-nylon) is stronger than nylon alone. Polyurethane weakens the fabric. Silicone is also mold and mildew resistant, won't degrade over time, and is inherently UV resistant. It also makes seam sealing easier because the manufacturer, or the tent owner, can coat the seams with a compatible silicone sealant that is waterproof and long-lasting. Nylon is very strong and durable. There are even special types of nylon such as nylon 6.6, which is stronger than regular nylon. Its only drawback is that it absorbs water by the nature of the material. To a small degree, even when coated with silicone, it still absorbs water. This adds a small amount to the weight of a wet tent, can get other gear wet from the tent material when packed together, and the tent will sag when it first gets wet. As such, you may have to adjust the tension in guy lines after the start of rain.

Polyester has become another option for tent materials recently. Polyester doesn't absorb water and can be coated with silicone to make a very waterproof tent. Polyester hadn't been used as much as nylon because of its lower tear strength. However, when Durston started making tents with a polyester fly and eventually the floor also, it changed the perception of this fabric for tents. Durston X-Mid series is one of the favorite thru hiker tents for many reasons including its design, and polyester hasn't shown to be a weakness. Black Diamond now makes a good four-season tent, the HiLight, which shows how tough even 30D material is. The Six Moon Design Lunar Solo is made from a 20D fly and 40D floor.

The next material to consider is Dyneema Composite Fabric (DCF). It is a laminated material that was originally used for boat sails. It is very strong, lightweight, and waterproof without any coating. It isn't a woven material. It is an outstanding material for tents, but it has only two cons: price and durability. It is very expensive. Some manufacturers make the same tent in nylon or polyester, and DCF. The DCF tent may be twice the price. Also, while its tensile strength and tear strength are unsurpassed in tent materials, it suffers from low abrasion resistance, which can result in pinholes at places where the fabric wears. This is obviously bad for a tent. The fly wouldn't be prone to this sort of abrasion, but the floor would. And the pinholes can form where the tent is repeatedly folded, creased, or pinched. Therefore, you roll up the tent gently, without folding the same way every time, and do not stuff it. However, it should be remembered, for a strong but superlight tent, nothing currently beats DCF (if you are willing to spend the money). According to Tarptent, “DCF has a lower life span than our silicone coated woven fabrics and we expect DCF tents to last $\sim\frac{2}{3}$ as long under similar use.

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That translates to something like 200 nights use compared to 300 nights in a sil-nylon tent.” Fortunately, DCF is easy to patch with very strong adhesive DCF tape.

Tent poles provide the backbone of the structure of the tent. The most common materials for poles today are aluminum and carbon fiber. High-strength aluminum such as 7001 or 7075 are very good, or the heat-treated version 7057-T9, which is even stronger while still being lightweight. However, carbon fiber or carbon fiber composite poles are lighter than an equivalent diameter aluminum pole and are still strong enough for most 3-season trail conditions. Winter tent poles, when snow loading is expected, should be 7000 series aluminum.

You should be prepared for a tent pole break while you are out backpacking. Carry a tent pole splint made of aluminum that is just larger than the diameter of your poles and some tape (even tape from your medicine kit) to make a suitable field repair of your bent or broken pole. Under excessive stress loads, aluminum tends to bend while carbon fiber tends to break, but the repair in the field is the same.

The latest ultralight scheme for tent poles is to use your trekking poles as the tent poles. If you are already a trekking pole user, this is a great idea. It will save a significant weight from your tent and the trekking poles are very strong for tent pole use. Of course, the tent has to be designed for this. The typical setup of a trekking pole tent is pretty simple, also: stake out the corners and erect the tent by propping it up with the trekking poles. Set the height of the trekking pole as directed by the tent manufacturer. It's no wonder that this type of tent is among the favorites of thru-hikers and are also some of the lightest-weight tents made.

Besides the characteristics of tents already discussed, there are other features and accessories to consider. Let's look at them one at a time:

1. Single or double door? I'd definitely suggest a double door for a 2-person tent. I even find it useful on my 1-person tent. Double doors also allow maximum ventilation for hot but dry weather.
2. Many tents provide vestibules for the storage of your pack and shoes. The items are stored under the fly, but not inside the main body of the tent. If you don't oversize the tent (solo hiker using a 2-person, or 2 people using a 3-person tent, then certainly look for a tent with sufficient vestibule space. This protects your gear from getting rained on and likely discourages animals pestering your stuff to some degree.
3. Most tents provide some pockets on the interior for storage of small lightweight items.
4. A separate fly allows the user to remove the fly during fair weather to sleep under the stars, but still have bug netting surrounding them.
5. Check the zippers to see if they are high-quality and slide easily. This is one point of failure on tents.
6. Check out the headroom inside the tent. This makes getting dressed easier, sitting and relaxing if you don't want to lie down, and may feel better to some people.
7. How easy is the tent to set up? Most manufacturers have set-up videos. If so, watch them. Then imagine setting it up in the wind. If it can't be staked before putting the poles in, it will likely be difficult to set up in the wind.
8. The use of a footprint (ground cloth) is a debated topic. A footprint isn't essential to the tent, but it is optional. It's meant to protect the floor of the tent from wear. Ultralight hikers often skip this item. The two most common lightweight options are polycro and Tyvek. Polycro is lighter, but so thin it provides less protection and is less durable. Tyvek is still very light and very strong. If your tent maker doesn't offer a footprint, you can buy the material at hardware stores or specialty backpacking stores.

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9. Seams of tents must be sealed. Every tiny hole from the stitching is a source of a leak. Seams can be taped with special waterproof tape, but this may not be available for silicone-coated fabrics. Otherwise, the seams can be carefully brushed by the manufacturer or the owner with the correct compatible seam sealer. You must know if your tent is urethane or silicone-coated fabric, and you must use the matching seam sealer.

10. Let's not forget the tent stakes. Which tent stakes are the best? Forget the skinny round shepherd hook spikes of the past. Stakes now can be made from high strength alloys like titanium or 7075 aluminum, Y or V shaped for better bending strength, pre-tied loops of strong cord and/or notches for guy line attachment. Hollow round stakes made of titanium or 7000 series aluminum are good for soft or medium dense soil. The stakes need to be at least 6 inches long to hold well in various types of soil. You might choose to carry a couple of each type in case the soil you encounter could be difficult. For example, I carry two Y shaped and two hollow round stakes for my tent that needs four stakes total. I put the stronger Y shaped stakes in the tougher places and the rounds in the easier soil.

Finally, we can consider some practical advice once you have bought a tent and are out in the wilderness. These recommendations will hopefully make your camp more successful:

1. Where to set up the tent?

a. Don't set up in a low spot or at the base of a slope. You will get flooded if it rains heavily. Look at the leaf litter, vegetation and soil to see if it appears to have had standing or flowing water.

b. Don't set up in the middle of a game-trail

c. Don't set up next to a cliff or drop off (goes along with the sentence on strong winds)

d. Don't set up in a field of poison ivy

e. Set your tent a good way from other tents if you aren't in the same group.

f. Don't set up immediately adjacent to a lake, stream or marsh. Mosquitoes and other bugs will be worse.

g. Look up in the trees above you. Don't pitch your tent under dead or hanging limbs, or other suspicious material that could fall on you. Be even more careful if windy weather is expected, widen your upward search. These are called "widow makers." Sadly, people have died in this manner.

h. Practice Leave No Trace (LNT). Don't trample vegetation to set up your tent and don't cut pine boughs (or other vegetation) to cushion your sleeping area.

i. Avoid setting your tent on sloped ground. You may have trouble sleeping. To determine if there is a slope (just looking at it can be deceptive) take your water bottle and lay it on the ground. If it rolls, it is definitely sloped. Even if it doesn't roll (because the ground may be rough), you can detect which direction the slope is by looking which way the air bubble in the bottle goes. The bubble will go toward the high end of the slope. If the slope isn't too bad, sleep with your head at the high end of the tent.

j. Avoid rocky areas or areas with small sharp features like sticks and gravel. If you have to clear some minimal amount of such debris, your tent footprint can be useful here. Lay out the footprint in the potential arrangement. Then get on your hands and knees, and feel around it for objects under it. You will find objects you might have missed otherwise. This will save your tent and air mattress from a puncture and just make you more comfortable at night.

k. What to do if there is strong wind? First, see if there are large boulders or dense evergreen trees in the area. Set up your tent on the lee side of these objects. Then, get the poles and stakes ready because you won't be able to let go of the tent. Assemble the poles before laying out the tent fabric. Have your pack and other gear ready to throw into the tent asap to help anchor the tent. As soon as you lay out the tent, stake the windward side first,

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then stake every available corner/floor attachment point. Make sure to stake every guy line provided by the manufacturer also. Set the guy lines fairly tight, but not so tight as to rip the tent or stretch the fabric and create ripples (hopefully you learned at home how to use the line tensioners that came with your guy lines or have pre-tied adjustable loops in the lines if they don't have tensioners built-in). Angle the stakes at up to 45° away from the tent (if you have long stakes, or less if your stakes are shorter) as you drive them into the ground firmly. When the initial set up is complete, adjust the guy lines to remove irregularities in the tension of each fabric panel. You want equal tension in every direction without any ripples. Slide the footprint or groundsheet under the tent after the initial set up is complete. Otherwise, it will blow away. Keep door flaps closed during windy conditions. See note 2 for extra advice for set up and staking recommendations.

2. Don't hang your food bag in a tree or stow bear canister near your tent. Don't bring snacks into your tent. This may help you avoid animal problems overnight. For example, if your tent is setup near an AT shelter, there are enough mice there to have one come visit your tent and it will chew through the fabric to get to your late-night snack

3. Making/Breaking camp

a. If you can, avoid setting up a tent in the rain. Either setup upon arrival or wait until after dinner, but before dark, if it's actively raining. Take advantage of any lull in the rain to set up.

b. If you have to pack up in the rain, pack your gear while you're inside the tent. Then take down the tent. If the inner main tent separates from the fly, pack it up dry separately. Either way, don't put the wet muddy tent into your pack with other dry stuff. Stuff wet tent into stretch pocket on pack or strap to outside of pack. If it is sunny and warm later that day, layout tent to dry while you eat lunch or get to camp early that evening because you'll need extra time to deal with a wet tent.

4. Always dry and clean your tent before storing.

Tent recommendations:

This isn't intended as an endorsement of any manufacturer or tent model. These are just some examples of tents with great reviews on multiple backpacking sites, some of those chosen by thru-hikers, or those I've seen in use.

1. Single wall, ultralight, trekking pole supported tents:

Gossamer Gear The One, Zpacks Plex Solo, Outdoor Vitals Fortius, Tarptent Aeon, REI Flash Air, and Six Moon Designs Lunar Solo



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2. Double wall, ultralight, trekking pole supported tents:

The Durston X-Mid 1 or 2, Lanshan 1 or 2, and Tarptent Notch or Stratospire



3. Double wall tents, free standing, flexible pole structures (this is the most common design currently):

Nemo Hornet or Dragonfly, SlingFin Portal, Big Agnes Tiger Wall or Copper Spur, Sea to Summit Alto or Telos, Mountain Hardwear Nimbus, MSR FreeLite or Hubba Hubba or Tarptent Double Rainbow.



4. Single wall tents, free standing, flexible pole structures

Black Diamond HiLight (4 season)



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5. Double wall, not free standing, various structures:

Tarptent Moment, Hyperlite Mountain Gear UltaMid 2 (4 season, teepee style DCF only),



6. Single wall, not free standing, various structures:

Tarptent Protrail



Notes:

<https://thetrek.co/appalachian-trail/top-tents-and-shelters-on-the-appalachian-trail-2024-thru-hiker-survey/>

<https://slowerhiking.com/shelter/tents-in-strong-wind-how-to-pitch-your-tent>



TATC Cabin Report

By Gregory Hodges

TATC Cabin Maintainers and Club Members,

Hello. Wow, the year has flown by, and we're already in the midst of a busy Spring season! Our April cabin maintenance and orientation trip was a great success, led by Tom Miano with support from Chris Butler. Six fully trained cabin team members participated, along with two additional guests who joined in the fun. We're excited to share that two of our newly qualified cabin maintainers have already booked time at the cabin.

The start of 2025 has been a whirlwind for me. During this busy period, I fell behind on the monthly cabin reports to the board and regular updates to club members. Changes at work, along with a three-week trip to Vietnam, pulled me away from cabin maintenance and reservation responsibilities. However, I'm back in the saddle and ready to refocus my efforts on supporting the cabin and the club.

2025 Cabin Maintenance Weekends

Friday 5/30 thru Sunday 06/01

- Weed whacking

- Chimney cap re-installation

- Dedication of the new wood stove with plaque

- Community spaghetti meal

- Hiking of White Rock Falls trail

Friday 9/26 thru Sunday 9/28

Friday 11/07 thru Sunday 11/09 - Firewood cutting weekend



Available Weekends

April thru June are historically the busiest times for cabin rental. The cabin can be rented up to 8 weeks in advance. There are 6 of the next 8 weeks available.

Here are some important cabin links (see the TATC website for more information):

Cabin Availability Schedule: <https://www.tidewateratc.com/Cabin-Schedule>

Cabin General Information: <https://www.tidewateratc.com/General-Information>

Cabin Rules: <https://www.tidewateratc.com/Cabin-Rules>

Please contact me to sign up for these weekends. Thank you.

Breathe and smile... and take a hike,

Gregory Hodges, Cabin Chair, tatccabin@gmail.com

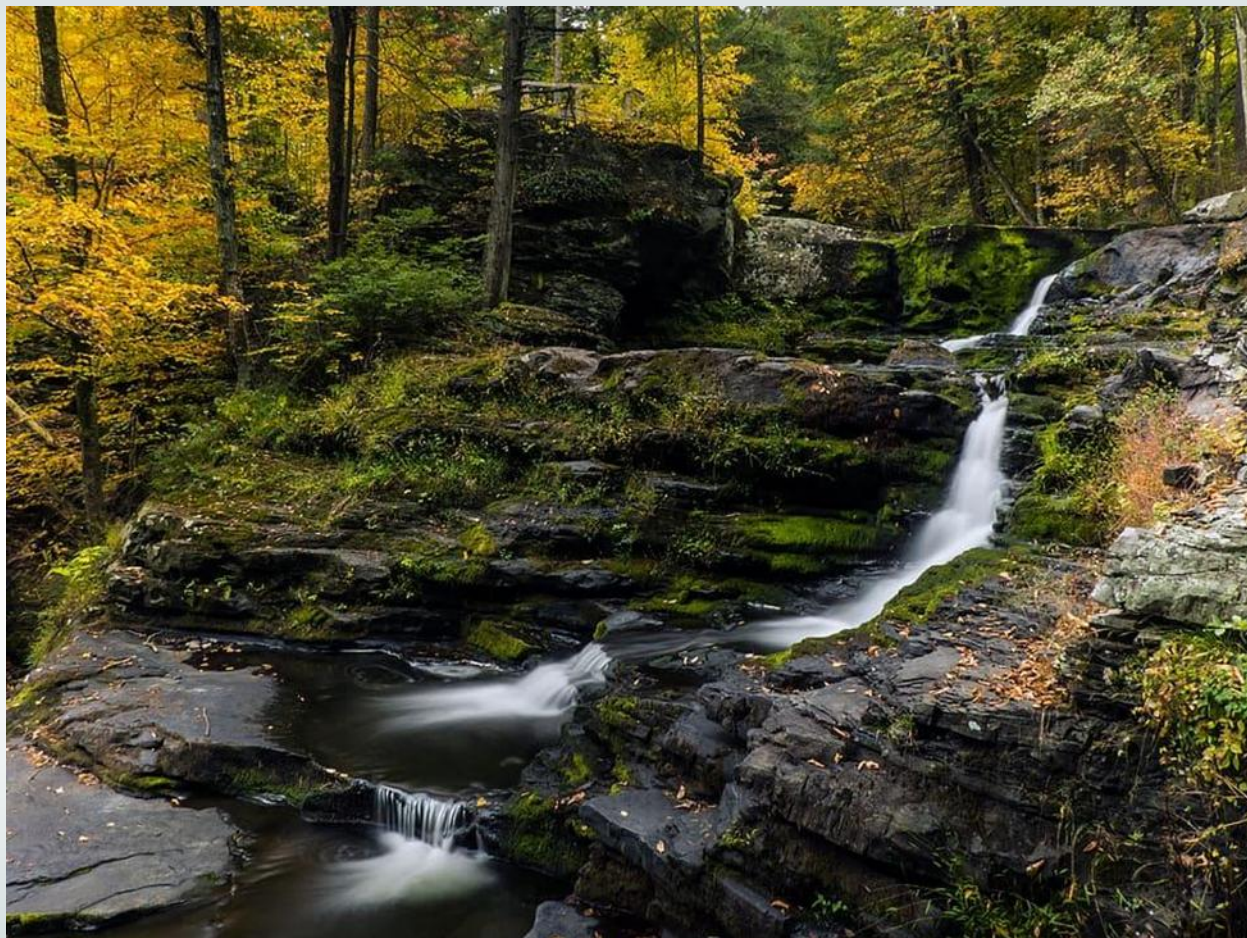


TATC at Delaware Water Gap

By Sharon Salyer

Photos by Lelia Vann

TATC members know that maintaining our section of the AT is a rewarding and meaningful group activity that promotes fellowship and fitness while giving back to the community. Local trail maintenance allows those with less available time to share similar activities. You may be unaware, however, that other less advertised activities are planned by those who have located spots of particular beauty and interest that they want to share with members. One such opportunity is hiking and jazz at Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania. Lelia has organized this trip for 2 years now, and this year Cecil and I were able to join her and Greg along with Tom and Laurie Mere, their friends Barbara and Frank, and Amanda Hartwig.



The Appalachian Trail enters the Delaware Water Gap at the Delaware River on the Route 80 Bridge. The Borough of Delaware Water Gap is a small community with a rich history intertwining hiking and music to create a unique spot along the AT. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUxt9Ef5Qec&t=78s>

During a long weekend in May, We met at the Deer Head Inn, the oldest continuously running jazz venue in the US, for 2 days of strenuous hiking in "Rocksylvania", an apt nickname for the portion of the AT in Pennsylvania, followed by evenings of great food and music.

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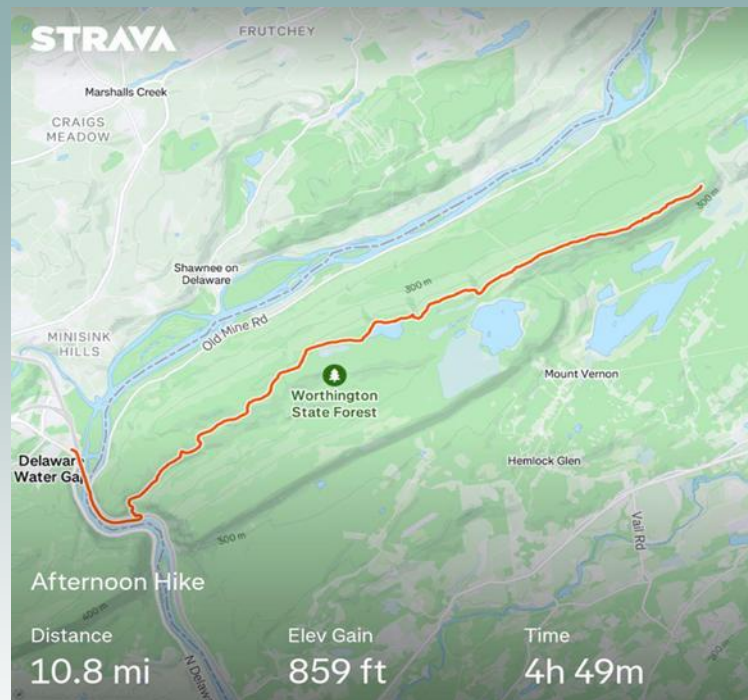
On Saturday, the group was shuttled to the trailhead by our trusty driver, Barbara. We began our 7-mile hike mid-morning with a moderate climb into a canopy of trees lined with wildflowers and little ground critters. The recent heavy rains created a slick and muddy surface on the rocks along with stunning views of small waterfalls and some rock skipping across shallow crossings. Most of us (☺) remained upright the entire time. Newsworthy events included Lorie receiving her trail name of “Stylish” by Cecil because of her carefully coordinated and colorful outfits and a minor emergency requiring a few hikers to return to town.



A couple of us withdrew from Sunday's 10 miler to wander the town, visit the bakery and do a little bit of shopping. Truth be told, my legs were like rubber and wouldn't have lasted very long on this more difficult hike. Although I can't imagine rocks more treacherous than Saturday's, I was assured that they were. Those who braved the second day's hike returned no worse for wear though, including Bridgett.

Plans are in the making to hold this special event again next year on May 15 - 17. If you're interested, contact Lelia for details.

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CCC Kitchen Repairs with HistoriCorps

By John Barnes

Photos by Pete Burch

Sherando Lake State Camp Ground is one of my favorite places on the planet. I camped there a bunch with buddies back in college and get there now once or twice a year with the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club. So, I was definitely interested when I heard HistoriCorp was looking for volunteers to repair the CCC Kitchen roof. Trail maintenance is vital and ongoing and something I truly love. But this was an opportunity work on a project with an element of permanence in a place I plan to continue to visit for as long as I can

The CCC Kitchen, and the other log structures at Sherando Lake were built by the Civilian Conservation Corp back in around 1933-34 as part of a depression era jobs program. Seems obvious now, but I didn't realize it was built to feed the CCC workers. The structure was overall sound, particularly given its age, but the cedar shake roof had an abundant growth of moss, leaked badly and had for some time. As the first of several week-long work crews, our task was to remove the cedar shake, including bazzillions of staples (this part was very tedious but necessary). Once the roofing was off, the structure was evaluated for moisture damage for repair or replacement as necessary. Once the repairs were made, a new roof could be constructed using a layer of plywood, a water proof membrane, topped with a "composite cedar shake" that, although not original material, looks good and will last considerably longer than cedar shake.

According to their website, "HistoriCorps is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that provides volunteers of all skill levels with a hands-on experience preserving historic structures on public lands across America. Volunteers work with HistoriCorps field staff to learn preservation skills and put those skills to work saving historic places that have fallen into disrepair. HistoriCorps works to ensure America's cultural and historical resources exist for generations to come."

HistoriCorps provided all the tools and materials, and a field staff of four. Aric was lead, Beckett and Erin were co leaders, and Emily was the cook that keep us all well fed. HistoriCorps staff members are from, and travel to, places all over the country. They were enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and skilled in leading volunteers. Training was provided as needed and safety was stressed continuously, including hardhats, gloves, eye and fall protection. Did I mention we were working on the roof?

The other volunteers during the first week came mostly from the within the state or so, with one driving from Michigan. All were eager and passionate to do their part and make a difference. TATC was well represented; including our merch guy Mike Martin, and TATC legend and Sherando volunteer extraordinaire Pete Birch. Katy, our former ridge runner, was even able to work in a day with us.

The rhythm of the work day, the intensity of the work, the focus required learning and doing new things, the lack of phone service, and the overall beauty and serenity of Sherando Lake made it an immersive experience. Within a day or so I'd lost track of time and didn't know just how long we'd been there. I left at the end of the week exhausted, but very satisfied that I'd been able to contribute to the restoration of a piece of history. The staff and subsequent volunteers have since completed the repairs and the work looks great! I can't wait to go back, again and again.

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My experience volunteering with HistoriCorps - Sherando Lake Recreation Area Kitchen Pavilion in April 2025

By Mike Martin

We all have fond memories of the CCC Kitchen at Sherando and a lot would probably involve the roof. My fondest memory now is being part of the group of volunteers working under the direction of 3 HistoriCorps Project Supervisors tasked with replacing the roof, addressing rotted timbers and masonry work on the fireplace.



But before I get too far ahead, who is HistoriCorps? From their website: "HistoriCorps is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that provides volunteers of all skill levels with a hands-on experience preserving historic structures on public lands across America. Volunteers work with HistoriCorps field staff to learn preservation skills and put those skills to work saving historic places that have fallen into disrepair. HistoriCorps works to ensure America's cultural and historical resources exist for generations to come."

To be honest, I don't believe I had ever heard of them until a March 3rd email forwarded from the Forest Service. One topic talked about the renovation project and how to volunteer. In short, they were looking for 5 volunteers per week that could commit to Mondays-Fridays for the 4 weeks of April 21 through May 16. HistoriCorps provides all meals, tools, training, equipment, and we camped in the Group area. Volunteers are responsible for bringing their own gear, work gloves, sturdy work clothes and boots, and appropriate sleeping equipment. Free room and board? Opportunity to try something outside my comfort zone? Available vacation time from work? Count me in! I signed up for the first week of April 21st because this ended with our Spring Maintenance week-end. I signed up online and found out later that I was accepted as a volunteer.

Volunteers were instructed to arrive no earlier than 5PM on Sunday April 20. Sunday was really just a day for the volunteers to arrive and set up their camp. There were already 4 HistoriCorps field staff onsite, Aric, Beckett, Erin and Emily. TATC was represented by volunteers John Barnes, Pete Burch and I. There were also two other

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volunteers in the ranks, Jennie from Richmond and Carolyn from Michigan (a repeat volunteer for HistoriCorps). We all sat around a few picnic tables Sunday evening getting to know each other and getting an idea of the daily schedule ahead of us. Breakfast at 7AM. Meet at the job site at 8AM for stretching and question of the day. Morning break around 10AM, lunch around noon, afternoon break around 2PM and work starts to wrap around 4:30 or so. Dinner at 6PM.



Monday was a somewhat easier day. A good portion of the morning was spent going over JHAs and PPE, including the proper use of harnesses and rigging for anyone on the roof. First, we started assembling the scaffolding and getting the jobsite ready. Then the real fun started! Removal of the cedar shakes and staples. Monday's work ended a little sooner thanks to Jonathan who gave us a talk about the history of Sherando.

Tuesday through Thursday settled into a more routine schedule. Everyone had their jobs to do, removal of shakes, pulling staples, preparation of logs for dutchman work, etc... We were also visited by a representative from EnviroShake, the company that supplied the composite roofing material. He worked with us for over a day to start a small section of the new roof. My understanding is this was a requirement for the warranty.

Friday was a half day of work. People's spirits seemed high, I think because we knew it was a short day but also there was a sense of accomplishment. We could see the old roof was cleared, some rotted timbers and rafters were cut out and ready to be replaced, and a small section of new roofing had already started going in. Work was scheduled to end at noon with lunch but some of us were working on replacing a rotted log on the back of the kitchen. We worked a bit longer until the replacement section was cut, fitted and attached. And with that, our week was over.

I can't say enough good things about the experience. It was a good cause, even better because of the Club's relationship with Sherando. The work was not easy! But I was proud to look back at the contributions that I made over the week and the new experiences. The camaraderie of the group at mealtime and around the campfire at night. And of course, the whippoorwill each night!

As I write this, work should have ended yesterday. Can't wait for Lopperfest to see the finished product...

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Backpacking 101: False Cape State Park

By Don Williams

On May 23, we took off from Little Island parking lot intending to do a three-day backpacking trip in False Cape State Park. That may seem simple enough, but it did have a few difficulties before we even got started.

There was a discrepancy between the website and the reservation documents as to how many tents were allowed on each campsite. This was resolved after calls to the reservation staff, the park ranger and emails to the people signed up for the trip.

I did a scouting hike a week before the trip. I hiked into the first- and second-night's campsites. Then hike back to the car. I hiked around 16 miles that day with a daypack with minimal gear. By the time I returned to Little Island parking lot, I had small blisters on both inner heels. I don't usually get blisters. I think it was the fine grit from the gravel road walking through Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge and sand from the first campsite near the beach. So, I warned the rest of the group to wear ankle high shoes, gaiters, liner socks or some combination of these things. They all came adequately prepared in this sense.

One other small hiccup the morning we started was that I forgot to print the reservation forms that we were supposed to leave on the dashboard of our vehicles parked at Little Island. That turned out to be no issue because the attendant said if we parked at the south end, they wouldn't ticket our cars. I learned the lesson: printed reservations are being added to my backpacking checklist.

Before we put our packs on, I offered to weigh everyone's backpack. Some people had weighed their packs at home. Others saw the final weight for the first time. The packs ranged from just over 20 pounds up to 40 pounds. As we might expect, the owner of the heaviest pack was the least experienced backpacker. This sort of thing happened on the first Backpacking 101 trip last November also. Both then and this trip, people with heavier packs tend to have more fatigue and soreness.

We inquired what was in the pack that might make it so heavy. Some of the unnecessary weight came from multiple sweatshirts, full size beach towel, two deodorant cans, too much food and water, a two-person tent for a solo sleeper, etc. We learn what we really need by getting experiences like this. I'm sure this person will pack lighter on their next trip.

Happily, by 4:30 pm we all started hiking. We enjoyed the walk-through Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge and finished the six-mile hike to camp well before dark. Most of the people had at least some experience backpacking, but one person was entirely new to it. He got his tent setup properly because he had practiced at home. As planned, I boiled water for his dinner since he didn't have a stove yet. Then we all walked down to the beach at dusk. We had great weather and chatted long into the night.

Saturday morning, we all took a six-mile loop hike. We walked south through the central forest of the park and came back north by walking along the beach. The diversity of nature was appreciated by us all.

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Friends of False Cape State Park were serving hot dogs, watermelon and brownies Saturday for lunch. We met other TATC members who were also in the park at lunch.

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After lunch we hiked 2.5 miles south to the next campsite area. The first campsites had potable water. These did not, but we knew that. We had read about this on the park info sheet and I had seen it on my scouting trip. So, we all carried enough water for that night and the next morning. Carrying water isn't a rare thing when backpacking whether at the coast or in the mountains.

This campsite offered a few different experiences than the first one. There was a large field. It had many butterfly milkweed plants with their clusters of bright orange flowers and monarch butterflies were plentiful. There was also a dock on Back Bay nearby. We went there and watched a beautiful sunset over the bay.

The final morning, we all ate a quick breakfast and packed up. It was an eight-mile hike back to Little Island parking lot. Four of us hiked the whole way back that day. One member of the group was lucky enough to have the time to spend another night in the park.

In the end we all hopefully learned something and we certainly had a great time.



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Colorado Springs

By Spencer Layne

I was fortunate enough to be sent to Colorado Springs for work in April for a few months and have made good use of the time by visiting and hiking at as many places as I can get to. So far, I've been to Rocky Mountain National Park a couple of times, that is where these pictures were taken and to Pikes Peak, Leadville and a Garden of the Gods. Most of the hikes I have done have been between 9-10,000' in elevation, a big change from home. I started a recent Saturday hiking in several feet of snow with micro spikes and finished the day hiking at a lower elevation on rocky dry ground. As you can see, there's no shortage of wildlife. I hope to do one of the easier 14K hikes before I return home.



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TATC Volunteers Helping the Elizabeth River Trail

At the suggestion of Bill Bunch, TATC is collaborating with the Elizabeth River Trail (ERT) organization and has begun maintenance efforts for a very short but important section of the ERT. The ERT consists of approximately 20 miles of hiking/biking trails running through Norfolk from Old Dominion University to the Norfolk Naval Facility. Initial joint events included a “Lunch Walk/Hike” event led by Lelia Vann on National Walk Day, and a “Fun Walk/Run” event led by Don Williams prior to a TATC Happy Hiker Hour at Bench Top Brewery in Ghent. More recently, TATC has initiated maintenance efforts on the “Sentara Loop” section of the ERT that connects the footbridge over the Hague with Brambleton Avenue. According to ERT data, this beautiful section of the footpath—crowned by mature live oak trees—is the most heavily travelled section of the ERT. Initially Lelia Vann solicited advice from an ERT Master Gardener (who is providing tools), and Lori and Paul Heymann have already helped with cleanup of the area and identified maintenance needs associated with the trees and shrubs along the path. Lelia has also asked John Oakes, the Amphibious Trail Crew leader, to make a cleanup assessment of the Hague in the vicinity of the footbridge.



Lori and Paul Heymann dealing with an uninvited mulberry.

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Greg Reck & Bridgett excising graffiti from the ERT Wayfinding sign.

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After 30 minutes of scrubbing with a Mr. Clean sponge, much of the trail map reappeared! Paul suggested rubbing alcohol as a solvent and it worked much better.



New Walking/Hiking Trails Near Riverview Farm in Newport News

By Andy Grayson

I had the chance to walk some new trails that connect into Riverview Farms trails in Newport News recently and they are a great addition to the area's growing network of outdoor spaces. I started at Menchville Marina and followed the Marina Trail (.27 mi) to the James River Trail (.32 mi) to the Flax Mill Trail (.62 mi) that then ties into the existing Riverview Farm trails (a 2-mile figure eight loop). The trail follows Deep Creek out to the James River, then along the James for a bit, and then turns up at Flax Mill Creek until it joins the Riverview Farms trails. See included photo of the map for details. The walk included a variety of wooded areas and open creekside views in a relatively short distance and includes several overlooks that give peaceful views of the water and surrounding marsh. They are all easy, well-maintained paths that are a mix of asphalt trail and boardwalk. A short section is open to bike traffic, but I think that section is too short to bother with on a bike. You can also park at Riverview Farms and start from that end. I will note that the Flax Mill Creek section runs adjacent to the sewage plant, but both times I've walked these trails the breeze has been blowing in from the James River side, so it was very pleasant. Newport News is planning some future additions (the Warwicktowne Trail) that will add some better looping options, but for those that reside on the Peninsula (or are willing to make the drive), and are looking for quiet, scenic walking routes this is a spot worth checking out. Note for the Tuesday Group - you can find nearby ice cream at the DQ on Warwick Blvd.



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TRAIL INFORMATION

WELCOME TO RIVERVIEW FARM PARK



LEGEND

Riverview Farm Trail East - 1 mi	Boardwalk
Riverview Farm Trail West - 1 mi	Recharge well
Flax Mill Creek Trail - 0.62 mi	Public Restrooms
James River Trail - 0.32 mi	Parking
Warwicktowne Trail - TBD (Future)	Trailhead
Marina Trail - 0.27 mi	



PLEASE:

- **Dispose of Trash Properly:** To keep the park looking nice, please use the designated trash containers instead of littering.
- **Respect Others:** Show consideration for fellow visitors by keeping your pets on a leash and cleaning up after them.
- **Protect Wildlife:** Avoid feeding, chasing or disturbing the animals in the park. This not only keeps them safe but also allows them to maintain their natural behaviors.
- **Stay on Designated Paths:** To prevent damage to the vegetation and reduce erosion, please stick to the paved pathways and trails that weave through the woods and along the waterfront.
- **Bicycle Restrictions:** For safety reasons, bicycles, scooters and skateboards are not permitted on the Flax Mill Creek Trail. The area is reserved exclusively for pedestrian traffic (wheelchairs are permitted).
- **Park Hours:** Unless otherwise indicated, the park is open daily from sunrise to sunset.



SCAN FOR MAP

For park concerns regarding wildlife issues, maintenance concerns or violations, please contact our park rangers at (757) 888-3333. For urgent matters requiring medical or immediate attention, call 911.



Upcoming Programs

By Paul Heymann, Program Chair

May 14, 2025 - Lance Deaver, Wound Management

June 11, 2025 - Don Williams, Food on the Trail

July 9, 2025 - Suzanne Moss, The Nature Bus

August 13, 2025 - Rich Wittecar, Formation & Legacy of Chesapeake Bay Impact Crater

September 10, 2025 - Ned Kuhns, Hadrian's Wall - Part Two

October 8, 2025 - Jim Newman, Awards Ceremony

November 12, 2025 - TATC Silent Auction

December 6, 2025 - TATC Holiday Party

Granite Rapids Moon: Good Movie and a Fun Night

By Lee Lohman, Past President

TATC member who attended the Granite Rapids Moon screening on April 28th seemed to thoroughly enjoy the movie. The buzz in the lobby suggested we were all delighted by the quality of the production, the story line, the actors' performances and the terrific photography of the Grand Canyon. The intro by John Meyer and his Q&A after the movie was fun and gave us a look behind the curtain at how an independent movie is made.

That curtain was pulled back further at the Peck & Pour tavern later where John discussed the complications and frustrations that an independent movie producer encounters. Theaters are apparently reluctant to show indie films, funding is challenging, and actors, directors, and other support staff may be difficult to recruit. The woman playing John's wife was--John's wife. The older gentleman playing Theia's grandfather, Sam, was--John's father.

TATC received \$277.49 as our portion of member ticket purchases. A generous and anonymous TATC member added a special contribution bringing it up to \$300.

So, we had a fun and profitable night.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

JUNE 7

AT BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

9:00am - 1:00pm:

- *Freshwater Fishing at D-Pool* - Join our friends from the Izaak Walton League for some freshwater fishing. The D-Pool area is located ¼ mile south of the parking lot.
- *Surf Fishing on the Beach* - The Dolphinettes fishing club will be on the beach and ready to inspire new anglers interested in the wonderful world of surf fishing.
- This weekend is Virginia's Free Fishing Days so no fishing license is necessary. *These clinics are for ALL AGES so come on out and enjoy the fun!*

10:00am: National Trails Day Guided Walk

Did you know that seven trails at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge have been designated as National Recreation Trails. Reese Lukei, long-time volunteer and local raptor expert, will guide a walk along several of these trails, discussing the history of the trail system and wildlife that call this wild place home.

NO REGISTRATION NEEDED - COME ON OUT AND JOIN THE FUN!



NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
REFUGE SYSTEM



Get your tickets @ TheNatureBus.com > Calendar



Beginner friendly kayak paddle. Kayaking a new part of the creek this year. Experience new waters! Navigate the serene waters of the Powhatan Creek cypress swamp, immersing yourself in the beauty of flourishing plants and diverse bird species, concluding your adventure with a refreshing stop at a nearby brewery – Billsburg Brewery.

This is a public tour. It is also available as a private customizable group tour for up to 16 people. Email info@TheNatureBus.com to arrange a tour for your group.

TOUR DATE: Saturday, September 6, 2025

(Rain date is Sun. Sept 7) Before purchasing your ticket, be sure you can go on the actual tour date and the rain date. This rain date is an alternate tour date, reserved for “severe” weather and lightning. The trip ordinarily goes rain or shine. We provide umbrellas.

TIME: 8:30 am – 4:00 pm (7.5 hour tour)

PRICE: \$65/person + \$10 kayak rental + 2.6% credit card fee = \$76.69



Get your tickets @ TheNatureBus.com > Calendar

Floating Eco Adventure + Lunch



Guided by naturalist James Abbott, this one-of-a-kind boat tour includes hands-on wildlife exploration with a trawl net—and a relaxing brewery lunch on the waterfront.

TOUR DATE: Saturday, September 20, 2025

(Rain date is Sunday, September 21) Before purchasing your ticket, be sure you can go on the actual tour date and the rain date. This rain date is an alternate tour date, reserved for “severe” weather and lightning. The trip ordinarily goes rain or shine. We provide umbrellas.

TIME: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm (6 hour tour)

PRICE: \$90/person + 2.6% credit card service fee = \$92.34 total (this fee includes the \$40/person boat fee)

*Important Note: We do not offer ANY refunds after tour is booked.



Get your tickets @ TheNatureBus.com > Calendar

Eastern Shore Bird Migration and Lunch



Bird Migration Spectacle on Virginia's Eastern Shore: A Coastal Adventure with Award-Winning Naturalist James Abbott

TOUR DATE: Saturday, October 18, 2025

(Rain date is Sunday, October 19) Before purchasing your ticket, be sure you can go on the actual tour date and the rain date. This rain date is an alternate tour date, reserved for "severe" weather and lightning. The trip ordinarily goes rain or shine.

We provide umbrellas.

TIME: 9:30 am – 4:30 pm (7 hour tour)

PRICE: \$70/person + 2.6% credit card service fee = \$71.82 total

***Important Note: We do not offer ANY refunds after tour is booked.**



Get your tickets @ TheNatureBus.com > Calendar

New Year 'First Day Hike' with Naturalist James Abbott



Begin the New Year by setting the intention to get outside more and meet more nature-loving friends!

TOUR DATE: Thursday, January 1st, 2026

TIME: 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm (3 hour tour)

PRICE: \$30/person + 2.6% credit card service fee = \$30.78

*Important Note: We do not offer ANY refunds after tour is booked.

DEPARTURE LOCATION: REI 350 Independence Blvd, Virginia Beach, VA (Private groups can choose the pick-up location).



TATC Merchandise Catalog

You can order TATC shirts, polos and hats online from the **TATC website** or buy them at the monthly **General Membership Meetings**.

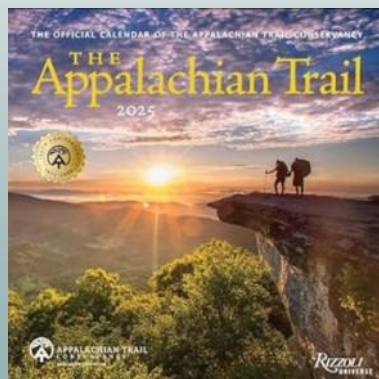


ORDER YOURS

ATC Trail Store

Appalachian Trail Conservancy Calendar 2025

The official Appalachian Trail Conservancy 12" x 12" wall calendar for 2025 features professional photography by users of the Trail! Order yours today from the Official A.T. Store.



ORDER YOURS



Disaster + Travel + Wilderness First Aid

& WFR Recert for current SOLO grads

2025 SCHEDULE



IN-PERSON dtWFA

(2 days 8am-7pm each day)

Jan 11-12: Charlottesville VA area
Jan 25-26: Harrisonburg/Staunton VA area
Jan 25-26: Richmond VA
Feb 1-2: Baltimore MD area
Feb 8-9: Fincastle, VA
Feb 22-23: Charlottesville VA area
Mar 8-9: Lexington VA area
Mar 8-9: St. George UTAH
Mar 22-23: Wilmington DE area
Mar 29-30: Charlottesville VA area
Mar 29-30: Experience Learning, WV
Apr 5-6: Washington DC area (Camping available)
Apr 12-13: Philadelphia PA area
Apr 12-13: Richmond VA
Apr 12-13: Triad / Triangle NC areas
Apr 19-20: Blacksburg VA
Apr 26-27: Baltimore MD area
May 3-4: Charlottesville VA
May 17-18: Washington DC area (Camping available)
May 17-18: Wilmington DE area
May 31-Jun 1: RIVERSIDE RETREAT (Camping available)
near Winchester VA / Leesburg VA Charles Town WV
Jun 7-8: Richmond VA
Aug 30-Sep 1: MOUNTAIN-TOP RETREAT near
Blacksburg, VA

Learn how to SAVE LIVES & LIMBS

Choose 1 of 3
formats:

- All-In-Person
- Blended
- At-home All-Online

Blended Learning dtWFA Skills Day

(1 day 8:30am-6pm, after one month self-paced online learning)

Feb 8: Blacksburg/Roanoke VA area
Mar 15: Charlottesville VA
Mar 15: Richmond VA
Apr 19: Washington DC area
May 10: Triangle NC area
Jun 14: Washington DC area

ALL ONLINE dtWFA Skills Day

(1 day 8:30am-6pm, after one month self-paced online learning)

Jan 25: in your home with live instructor online
Mar 1: in your home with live instructor online
May 3: in your home with live instructor online
May 31: in your home with live instructor online
Jun 14: in your home with live instructor online

ADVANCED WFA Bridge

(2 days 8am each day)

Jun 28-29, 2025: Williamsport WV area (Camping available)

WILDERNESS FIRST RESPONDER (9 days)

Aug 11-19: Experience Learning, WV

CPR/AED/Choking for Adult, Child, Infant

(6pm-9:45pm)

Jan 10: Charlottesville VA
May 11: Triangle NC area
Aug 29: Mountain-top retreat near Blacksburg VA

Topics Include: Patient Assessment System, Medical Emergencies, Environmental Issues, Skin Injuries, Musculoskeletal & Spinal Injuries, Evacuation & Care-giving for Hours to Days.

No prerequisites. Spaces limited!

Register now at:

www.solowfa.com

In-Person course fee starts at \$295

Online classes \$99-\$279

Gift cards available

(434) 326-4697



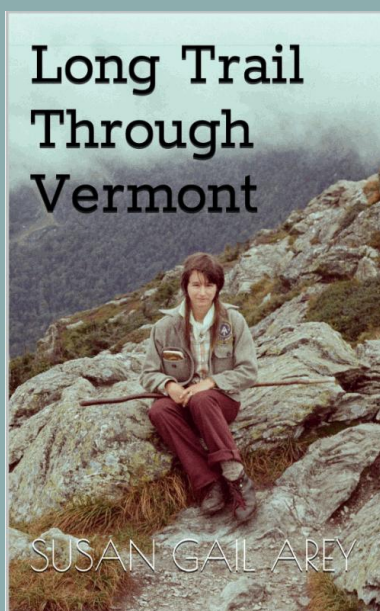
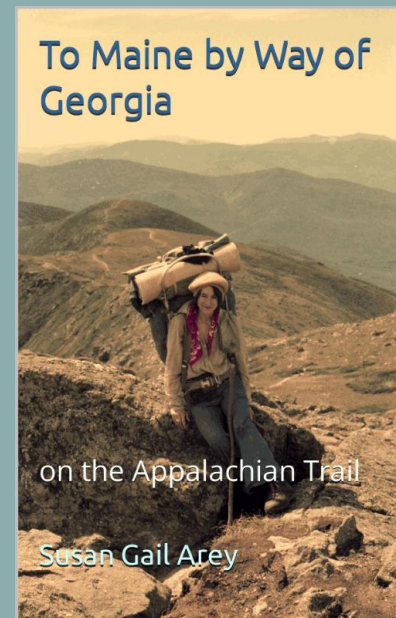
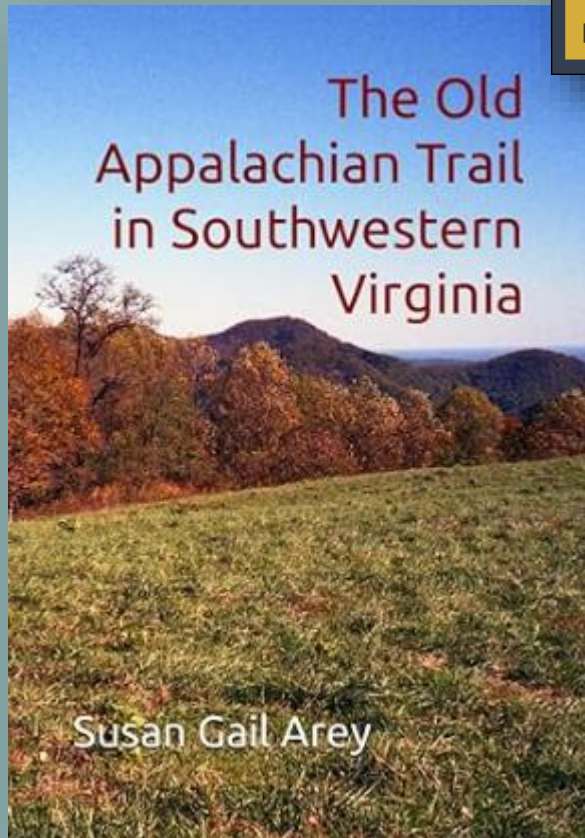
Are you prepared to give vital first aid care
when professional help is far away or busy?

www.solowfa.com

Books on Hiking by Susan Gail Arey

Available on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) as Print or E-books

2023
RELEASE



Activities Schedule

PLEASE NOTE: Most hikes are limited in the number of participants. The hike leader will take reservations on a first-come, first-served basis. You can include your name on the sign up sheets available at each meeting or call the hike leader. If you sign up for an activity and then decide not to participate, please contact the leader in advance.

A Hike in the Park - York River State Park, Sunday June 1, 2025

York River State Park, 9801 York River Park Rd, Williamsburg, VA 23188, USA

Sunday, June 1, 2025 - 9:00 AM

Hike the foot trails east of the parking lot (4 to 12 miles)

Online Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-56863564-ahikein>

York River State Park has some great hiking trails with modest elevation gain and loss as well as history and great York River views. I plan an all-day hike, but this is a great one for someone who only wants to do a few miles and then can peel away from the group. I plan to start the hike at 9 AM so be in the parking lot parking on the right closest to the check in station where you pay for parking. Look for my charcoal F150 crew cab pickup truck. York River State Park

Please note the following:

We meet in the parking lot of the park to start the hike. There is a \$5 fee to park unless you have a park pass. The address of the park is 9801 York River Park Road Williamsburg, Virginia 23188. You take the Croaker exit off I-64 on to Croaker Road and then right onto Riverview Road.

I have maps and they are available at the park and on line. This is an all day planned hike with a lunch stop while hiking so bring snacks and lunch packed in your day pack. Pack plenty of water and would suggest sun screen and bug spray. Dress for the weather. This is a great trip for beginner hikers as well as experienced hikers. Short of a hurricane or monsoon I plan to go so check the weather for Williamsburg that day and dress accordingly. I practice Leave No Trace so pack out all you pack in. This trip will start at 9AM and plan to be back at our vehicles at 4PM. For those interested we could go to a brewery or winery after.

Costs: To park at the park which is \$5 and any personal expenses. I encourage you to call me if you have any questions and you must call me if you plan to go on this trip.

Mark J Wenger , swfl1951@gmail.com, phone: 948-529-0043

Cashie River Wilderness Camp/Paddle/Bike - June 2-5, 2025

When: Monday, June 2-Thursday June 5

Where: Cashie River Campground and Treehouses

Address: 400 Elm Street, Windsor, NC

Description: The Cashie River is the only river in the nation that starts and finishes in the same county, which is Bertie NC. After 55 miles, it joins with the Roanoke River where it enters the Albemarle Sound. It is part of the Roanoke River Paddle Trail and Riverside Camping System, which offers more than 200 miles of interconnected river and waterways. With over 15 riverside camping platforms. Almost all of these are accessible only by water. Check out the website at roanokeriverpartners.org

The Cashie River Campground has sites adjacent to a boat and kayak launch on the Cashie River. Tent sites are \$15, no electricity and trailer or motor home with full hookup is \$35/night.

[Visit our TATC Calendar](#)

(Continued on Next Page ...)

Activities Schedule

PLEASE NOTE: Most hikes are limited in the number of participants. The hike leader will take reservations on a first-come, first-served basis. You can include your name on the sign up sheets available at each meeting or call the hike leader. If you sign up for an activity and then decide not to participate, please contact the leader in advance.

Contact [www/windsornc.com/Cashie-River-Campground](http://www.windsornc.com/Cashie-River-Campground) for reservations

Agenda: Day One: Monday June 2 Arrive and set up your campsite if camping.

Day Two: Tuesday June 3 Launch time 0930 (for those wanting to attend the day paddle only.)

We'll paddle upstream (no current) about 4 to 5 miles to the Powell Stokes Road Bridge, gliding through mysterious Blackwater with Spanish moss and cypress trees, surrounded by the wild sounds of the creatures that live there. There's a pier and kayak ramp here, and that's where we'll have lunch before heading back. This is also where the Cashie River Paddle Trail begins.

Day Three: Wednesday June 4 we'll paddle downstream for about 4 miles, passing by the Cashie River Treehouse Village to a spot where we'll have lunch. Afterward we'll take a pontoon boat ride 12 miles down the river to my cabin, about 1 mile upstream from the free, 2-car, San Souci Ferry.

Day Four: Thursday June 5 we will bike to town to visit the zoo. Then we will have lunch at the Cashie River Visitor Center. Finally, we will head back to break camp and head for home.

What to pack: kayak, paddle, life jacket, bike, helmet, and meals if camping. Event Leader: Richard Tarr

TATC Board Meeting

When: Wednesday, June 4, 2025, 7:00 – 9:00pm

Where: Episcopal Church of the Advent, 9629 Norfolk Ave Norfolk, Virginia 23503

Description: Our board meetings are held at the Episcopal Church of the Advent. Please use on-street parking.

Contact Lelia Vann at president@tidewateratc.com if you have any questions!

Happy Hiker Hour Event June 5th at St. George Brewing in Hampton

Thursday, June 5th at St. George Brewing in Hampton, VA 6-8 pm

Online Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-56811988-stgeorge>

Food truck serving onsite until 7:30 PM. Contact: Kaci Midgette

Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) - Day Hike - June 7

Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, 4005 Sandpiper Rd, Virginia Beach, VA 23456, USA

National Trails Day hike at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge on National Trails Day

Saturday, June 7, 2025, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Online Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-56928439-back>

Meet at the Visitor Center BBNWR hike on the recently rebuilt boardwalk trails near the Visitor Center. To register, call BBNWR at 757-301-7329 Ext. 3106

Trails - Charles Kuralt, Sunset Point, and Reese F. Lukei, Jr Raptor Trail

Meet at the Visitor Center. Easy hiking mostly on boardwalks and stone dust path. Event Sponsor: Reese Lukei

Back Bay NWR/FCSP Bike Ride – Saturday, June 7 - 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Saturday, June 7

Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, 4005 Sandpiper Rd, Virginia Beach, VA 23456, USA

Saturday, June 7: Back Bay NWR/FCSP Bike Ride – 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Online Sign-Up - <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-56823256-back>

[Visit our TATC Calendar](#)

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Activities Schedule

PLEASE NOTE: Most hikes are limited in the number of participants. The hike leader will take reservations on a first-come, first-served basis. You can include your name on the sign up sheets available at each meeting or call the hike leader. If you sign up for an activity and then decide not to participate, please contact the leader in advance.

Meet at 8:00 AM at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Parking Lot

(Vehicle entrance fee. The foot/bike entrance is free. No dogs or trailer)

Bring water, snacks, and lots of bug spray as the deer flies are numerous and aggressive.

Bike south promptly at 0815 for 8.5 miles along packed gravel and clay roads to the remains of the Wash Woods settlement. A short .75-mile footpath through the dunes and live oaks leads to the settlement. After visiting the settlement, participants may retrace their route back to parking or accompany me east @1/2 mile where we will steer south on the beach (MTB or wide tires preferred) for @2.5 miles. At a point 1 mile north of the NC border the remains of the SS Clythia will be visible at the 1130 low tide. After an oceanfront lunch, we'll retrace our steps back to the parking lot. We can expect to return @1600. The event sponsor will bring 1st aid, bike tools, flat repair kit, and emergency transponder. The sole water point and latrine is at the FCSP visitor center 3.5 miles south of our parking/5 miles north of the settlement. Contact: John Reed, n.john.reed2@gmail.com

Harbor Cruise - Steve Babor

Tuesday, June 10

1 Waterside Dr, Norfolk, VA 23510, USA

Victory Rover Naval Base Two-Hour Cruise 11:00 - 1:00 Approx.

Each person will need to purchase their own ticket/s for the June 10th, 11:00 am, cruise. The cost is \$29.00 per person. Go to their website for more information and to purchase your tickets: <https://www.navalbasecruises.com/>

We will meet at 9:00 at the Newtown Rd, Tide, station. Free parking and porta potties are available. Tickets can be purchased in advance online: <https://gohrt.ticketleap.com/> (recommended) or at the station kiosk (cash or credit card). Discounted tickets (seniors 65+, etc.) are half price. So, a single day adult fare is \$4.50 and the discounted (senior) rate is \$2.25. The Tide tickets may be slightly cheaper purchased at the kiosk. The train departs promptly at 9:38 and arrives at MacArthur Square 9:55. From MacArthur Square we will walk approx. 1/2 mile to Nauticus. Meet at the Victory Rover Dock by 10:30 for boarding Option from Portsmouth: The Elizabeth River Ferry from Portsmouth leaves the North Landing every 15 minutes approx. Plan trip to arrive at Victory Rover dock NLT 10:30. I believe the ferry cost is \$2.00 per person. After the cruise we will go to The Blue Moon at Waterside for lunch: <https://watersidedistrict.com/eat-and-drink/blue-moon-taphouse>.

Other options exist including bringing lunch. If you decide to sit on the grass might want to bring something to sit on. To sign up for the cruise, email Steve Babor: Babor1@cox.net. Please indicate (1) that you have your Victory Rover ticket/s, (2) riding the Tide or ER Ferry, and (3) if you will be eating lunch with the group. To see who has signed up already: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jUihb9a8K6reDw-bOVZKgtGFmrlkqtzjwUTsba1tTYA/edit?usp=sharing>

TATC General Membership Meeting

When: Wednesday, June 11, 2025, 7:00 – 9:00pm

Where: Episcopal Church of the Advent, 9629 Norfolk Ave Norfolk, Virginia 23503

Description: Our meetings are held at the Episcopal Church of the Advent. Please use on-street parking. Contact Lelia Vann at president@tidewateratc.com if you have any questions!

[Visit our TATC Calendar](#)

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Activities Schedule

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First Landing State Park Trail Maintenance - 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Thursday, June 12

First Landing State Park, 2500 Shore Dr, Virginia Beach, VA 23451, USA

First Landing State Park Trail Maintenance - Live Oak and Cypress Swamp Trails. Time: 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM.

Online Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-56820214-first>

Meeting location: parking lot by picnic area. From Shore Drive traffic light, head south on Rt 343 (Cypress Swamp Dr.) At the guard shack, advise the ranger you are with TATC. Then turn right onto Conservation Ct into the parking lot.

At least 4 volunteers are needed. Tools will be provided, or bring your own lopper, pruner and/or small silky saw.

If you have one, please wear a hat, shirt, or jacket with the TATC logo when participating in FLSP work days to identify you as a member of the club. Contact: Paul Heymann localtrails@tidewateratc.com to sign up.

Devil's Backbone - 30th Blue Ridge Outdoor Fest - June 14-15th, 2025

June 14 – 15, 2025

Roseland, VA

<https://www.dbbrewingcompany.com/blueridgeoutdoors30th>

TATC will set up a display table for this event. Stop by! Contact: Kaci Midgett

St. Mary's Wilderness Backpacking Trip - June 14 and June 15

June 14 – 15, 2025

Saint Mary's Wilderness, Raphine, VA 24472, USA

Online Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-56878572-stmarys>

For a summer backpacking trip how about one with a cool flowing small river and even swimming holes. St. Mary's Wilderness bounded by the parkway to the east and mountains to the west is home to the St. Mary's River that starts here and flows south the Maury and then the James. I plan on leaving Williamsburg June 14 early Saturday morning at 7AM and head west to the Blue Ridge Parkway and then head south to just beyond mile post 22 on the right or west side is a parking lot to a forest road and Bald Mountain. I hope to get there about 10AM and hike 7 1/2 miles on the forest road to green pond (one of the few natural lakes in Virginia) then south on the St. Mary's trail crossing St. Mary's River which is just a small stream at this point three times till I reach the ore processing site which is a huge flat grassy area to camp. This area has ample camping and time to play in the river maybe even hike down to one of the swimming holes as well. Camp the night then on Sunday June 15 hike the 4 1/2 miles up Mine Bank Trail to Bald Mountain Trail to the Forest road and back to my vehicle. It should be noted that on Saturday there is about a 1000' in elevation drop and on Sunday there is about a 1000' elevation gain. From there back to Williamsburg maybe by way of the Devil's Backbone Brewery.

Please note the following: I am driving my truck and I can carry three people besides myself. Any more sign up they will have to have a driver. I have maps but not sure these trails are on any app or site. I use the National Geographic map #789 and the PATC map #12 also features it. This trail does not have any shelters or privies or any places to resupply so pack accordingly. I do not mind sharing my water filter but you need to pack everything for meals as well as sleeping and hiking. Also, it is summer so plan for sun, heat and bugs.

[Visit our TATC Calendar](#)

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Activities Schedule

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Water is not available until I reach the camp site on the first day so pack what you need to hike on Saturday. Sunday water is along both trails out. This is a good trip for first time backpackers as well as seasoned backpackers. I go regardless of weather. Check Waynesboro Virginia for weather but subtract a few degrees when we are in the mountains. I practice Leave No Trace so pack out what you pack in. This is a wilderness area so the trails are not marked or have directions on them. Costs: I expect anyone riding with me to split equally the cost for gas. You are responsible for making all arrangements if you have to leave the trail early. I encourage you to call me if you have any questions and you must call me if you plan to go on this trip. Mark J Wenger AIA, 105 Thorpe's Parish, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185. swf11951@gmail.com. Phone: 948-529-0043

Hasty Hiking with Lelia, Greg, and Bridgett - June 14, 2025

Online Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-56820254-hasty>

Where: First Landing State Park

When: Saturday, June 14, 2025

(Rain date: Sunday, June 15, 2025). There is a \$7.00 fee per car to enter the park unless you have a park pass. You can also use a REI receipt to enter the park or park outside the park and walk in. Carpooling is recommended. Activity: Hike several trails at FLSP totaling 5.5 miles without taking breaks. This is designed to be a workout hike averaging 20 minutes a mile or less. Meet no later than 8:45 AM to sign waiver. Hike starts at 9 AM.

Meeting Place: First Landing State Park, 2500 Shore Drive in Virginia Beach. Turn towards the Trail Center. Once you pass the Contact Station (pay station), take the first right into the parking lot. Before the Hike: We will meet in the parking lot. Everyone needs to sign a waiver to join. The hike will start from the parking lot at 9:00 am. (There are restrooms at the end of the parking lot so arrive early to take care of your business before we start hiking at 9:00 AM). The Hike: This hike is designed to be a "work out hike"; so, we will be averaging 20 minutes a mile or less with no rest or sight-seeing breaks. Be ready to move and keep moving! The total hike should be about 5.5 miles and relatively flat. POC: Lelia Vann: leliavann@gmail.com

County Bike Ride-Melanie

Tuesday, June 17

2600 Greenway Road, Suffolk VA 23438

Meet at Mel Potter's home: 2600 Greenway Road Suffolk VA 23438. Park in the yard to the left of the driveway. From 9:00 am to 9:15 we will sign in and use restrooms if needed. At 9:20 we will circle up for trip info, introductions and a group picture. We will depart at 9:30. This is an 18.5-mile country ride. Helmets required and reflective vests highly recommended. You will see all kinds of farm animals, raptors and other birds. I have also seen bear, deer, coyote and a beautiful owl! Afterwards we will enjoy smoked brisket and potatoes for lunch. The billiard table will be open if anyone is interested in playing after lunch. This is capped at 16 riders. To sign up please email me melaniepotter1@icloud.com. Click here to view roster: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zalya7VYmHIHxXaEVTuN1LP3igfquAAxa2S5YI6kLGs/edit?usp=sharing>

[Visit our TATC Calendar](#)

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Swingblade & Lopperfest 1

June 20 – 22, 2025

Sherando Lake Recreation Area, 96 Sherando Lake Rd, Lyndhurst, VA 22952, USA

It's the first Swingblade and Lopperfest of the year! Online Sign Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-55617538-tatcs>. The fun starts by setting up and camping out in the Sherando Lake Recreation Area at the CCC Kitchen. On Saturday we will get out and cut back encroaching plant growth from trails using swing blades, loppers, and shears. Additionally, we will be removing any smaller blowdowns we encounter. Free Park entrance; Free camping; One day of work, what could be better? Friday & Sunday are travel days. Ten to fifteen people needed. To sign up or for more information, contact: John Sima -TATC Trail Supervisor - trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com. Kaci Midgette - TATC Asst Trail Supervisor - [assitantnts@tidewateratc.com](mailto:assistantnts@tidewateratc.com). More information on Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club can be found at Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club.

Foothills Trail Thru Hike

June 21 – 29, 2025

Oconee State Park, 624 State Park Rd, Mountain Rest, SC 29664, USA

Online Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-56819877-foothills>

Oconee State Park (South Carolina) 77 miles to Table Rock State Park (South Carolina)

This trail has long been on my bucket list, and at 77 miles, even though I am a section hiker, I believe this can be done in a week. I plan to leave Williamsburg around 5 AM on June 21 and drive to Table Rock State Park in time to get a 3 PM shuttle to Oconee State Park. There is a daily fee to park, which was \$5, and I will need to confirm as well as register my vehicle. Obviously, if I have another driver going, we can shuttle ourselves without paying parking fees at both state parks. Arriving at Oconee I plan to hike just a few miles and camp for the night. The next day Sunday June 22 I will begin a 7 day backpacking trip on the Foothills Trail with an arrival date of the afternoon of Saturday 28. Will load up the truck and drive to Greenville, South Carolina, stop at a motel to clean up and get a good night's rest, heading home on Sunday, the 29th. If I make really great time, which I am not anticipating, I could arrive a day early at Table Rock and then return a day early.

Please note the following: I am driving my truck and I can carry three people besides myself. Any more sign up they will have to have a driver I have maps. I use FarOut, which is on their site. Before you decide to hike this trail, go to the Foothills Trail Conservancy website and familiarize yourself with it. You can also get maps and a guidebook from them. This trail does not have any shelters or privys. There may be one resupply point but I would not count on it so pack accordingly. I do not mind sharing my water filter but you need to pack everything for meals as well as sleeping and hiking. Water should not be a problem on this hike. This is not a good trip for first-time backpackers nor for children. I go regardless of the weather. Check either state park for the weather to get an idea of what to expect. I practice Leave No Trace. For the shuttle, there will be a cost, and I am working on getting that tied down. Costs: I expect anyone riding with me to split equally the cost of gas, parking, and the shuttle. You will also need to pay for your one-night motel stay on the way back and, of course, any personal expenses. You are responsible for making all arrangements if you have to leave the trail early.

I encourage you to call me if you have any questions and you must call me if you plan to go on this trip.

Mark J Wenger, swfl1951@gmail.com.

[Visit our TATC Calendar](#)

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Activities Schedule

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Shingle Creek Paddle - Richard Tarr

Tuesday, June 24

Shingle Landing Boat Ramp. 129 Creekside Dr, Moyock, NC 27958

Date: Tuesday, June 24, 2025

Launch Site: Shingle Landing Boat Ramp. 129 Creekside Dr, Moyock, NC 27958.

Launch Time: 9:30 AM

Description: Paddling through cypress tree forests, Shingle Creek flows into the Northwest River, which is one of the more picturesque rivers in the area. It is not unusual to see deer, bald eagles, or possums if they successfully crossed a road. Don't forget your PFD, it's required to be worn. We'll paddle a couple of miles down Shingle Creek, gather everyone together, then take the snye to the Northwest River. From here (in NC) we'll paddle to VA and the Northwest River Park, where we can take a break for lunch, and use the restroom. If you don't have your lunch, you can order from the Burger King. After lunch, we'll paddle back to the launch site for a round-trip paddle of about 10 miles. To sign up, email Richard: rpt@cox.net, or call (757) 478-3341

To see roster, click:[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UIFOZvuVn-](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UIFOZvuVn-R1IHTRtgRH4Czni5e8ppqC_a9QCVVAN4c/edit?usp=sharing)

[R1IHTRtgRH4Czni5e8ppqC_a9QCVVAN4c/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UIFOZvuVn-R1IHTRtgRH4Czni5e8ppqC_a9QCVVAN4c/edit?usp=sharing)

The Deadrise Restaurant - Thursday, June 26, 2025 – 6:00pm to 8:00pm

Thursday, June 26

100 McNair Dr, Hampton, VA 23651

Tidewater Appalachian Trail Eatery Reviewers (TATERS)

Thursday, June 26, 2025 – 6:00pm to 8:00pm

Online Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-56813574-thedeadrise>

100 McNair Dr, Hampton, VA 23651

Website: thedeadrisefishhouse.com

The Noland Trail Saturday, June 28, 2025 - 9:00am – 1:00pm

Saturday, June 28

Mariners' Museum and Park, 100 Museum Dr, Newport News, VA 23606

The Noland Trail

Saturday, June 28, 2025 - 9am – 1pm

5 miles

Located at The Mariners' Museum and Park, 100 Museum Dr, Newport News, VA 23606

Online Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-56813406-thenoland>

Website: <https://www.marinersmuseum.org/park/noland-trail/>

Optional: Eat out at afterwards at Plaza Azteca, 12428 Warwick Blvd, Newport News, VA 23606

POC: Jim Sexton

[Visit our TATC Calendar](#)

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Elizabeth River Trail x Norfolk Kayak Rental Group Paddle

Sunday, June 29

Parking for Plum Point Park, Norfolk, VA 23510, USA

June 29, Sunday: Elizabeth River Trail x Norfolk Kayak Rental Group Paddle, Distance 3-5 miles

ERT + Norfolk Kayak Rentals are excited to offer a FREE kayak experience on the Elizabeth River. Join us for a 90-minute group paddle, launching from the Plum Point Park kayak launch. Previous kayak experience is REQUIRED.

Arrive: 8:30-8:45 AM, Launch: 9 AM, Return: 10:30 AM

Limited FREE kayak reservation link coming soon off the calendar link on ERT homepage; <https://elizabethrivertrail.org/>

This is not a TATC-led event

TATC Board Meeting

When: Wednesday, July 2, 2025, 7:00 – 9:00pm

Where: Episcopal Church of the Advent, 9629 Norfolk Ave Norfolk, Virginia 23503

Description: Our board meetings are held at the Episcopal Church of the Advent. Please use on-street parking.

Contact Lelia Vann at president@tidewateratc.com if you have any questions!

TATC General Membership Meeting

When: Wednesday, July 9, 2025, 7:00 – 9:00pm

Where: Episcopal Church of the Advent, 9629 Norfolk Ave Norfolk, Virginia 23503

Description: Our meetings are held at the Episcopal Church of the Advent. Please use on-street parking. Contact Lelia Vann at president@tidewateratc.com if you have any questions!

First Landing State Park Trail Maintenance

Thursday, July 10 9:00 – 11:00am

First Landing State Park, 2500 Shore Dr, Virginia Beach, VA 23451, USA

First Landing State Park Trail Maintenance - Live Oak and Cypress Swamp Trails. Time: 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM.

Meeting location: parking lot by picnic area. From Shore Drive traffic light, head south on Rt 343 (Cypress Swamp Dr.) At the guard shack, advise the ranger you are with TATC. Then turn right onto Conservation Ct into the parking lot.

At least 4 volunteers are needed. Tools will be provided, or bring your own lopper, pruner and/or small silky saw. If you have one, please wear a hat, shirt, or jacket with the TATC logo when participating in FLSP work days to identify you as a member of the club. Contact: Paul Heymann localtrails@tidewateratc.com to sign up.

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Hasty Hiking with Lelia, Greg, and Bridgett - July 12, 2025

Online Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-56855068-hasty>

Where: First Landing State Park

When: Saturday, July 12, 2025

(Rain date: Sunday, July 13, 2025)

There is a \$7.00 fee per car to enter the park unless you have a park pass. You can also use a REI receipt to enter the park or park outside the park and walk in. Carpooling is recommended. Activity: Hike several trails at FLSP totaling 5.5 miles without taking breaks. This is designed to be a workout hike averaging 20 minutes a mile or less. Meet no later than 8:45 AM to sign waiver. Hike starts at 9 AM. Meeting Place: First Landing State Park, 2500 Shore Drive in Virginia Beach. Turn towards the Trail Center. Once you pass the Contact Station (pay station), take the first right into the parking lot. Before the Hike: We will meet in the parking lot. Everyone needs to sign a waiver to join. The hike will start from the parking lot at 9:00 AM. (There are restrooms at the end of the parking lot so arrive early to take care of your business before we start hiking at 9:00 AM.). The Hike: This hike is designed to be a "work out hike"; so, we will be averaging 20 minutes a mile or less with no rest or sight-seeing breaks. Be ready to move and keep moving! The total hike should be about 5.5 miles and relatively flat. POC: Lelia Vann: leliavann@gmail.com

Capital Trail Bike Ride

Virginia Capital Trail, Virginia, USA

Capital Trail Bike Ride (kid friendly- please read description!!!)

Sunday, July 13, 2024 - 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM, Meet at 9:00 AM to ride out at 9:30 AM

Online Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-56813188-capital>

Meet: at 2206 Colonial Pkwy Parking (Jamestown Settlement parking lot)

Website: [Capital Trail Link](#)

Details: This is a great way to get comfortable with the trail if you have yet to ride it - as a group! We are riding approximately 12 miles in and 12 miles out on the trail for a total of 24 miles. The trail is flat for a majority of the ride but there are some sections with steep hills and a bridge so plan for those. This is a kid-friendly ride, two of our leaders are 9 and 13 years old and regularly ride this trail. That said, this could be a strenuous ride for those not routinely riding for extended lengths. Our group adheres to common bike trail etiquette found here [Trail Rules](#) and like all TATC events we practice Leave No Trace. There are bathrooms at the trailhead - Jamestown Settlement, 2 miles in at Spoke N Art, and 6 miles in at Chickahominy. Click here for trail map to familiarize yourself with restroom availability. Please bring plenty of water, a lunch (or money for), snacks, sunblock, bug spray and anything else you might need. We will plan to stop for lunch at the Chickahominy Riverfront Park either on our way in or out - will let the group decide based on timing. A stop will be made at the SpokeNArt store along the trail for anyone that wants provisions for the ride. Contact: Kaci Midgette by email Kacithemidge@gmail.com or phone (757)-386-1905

[Visit our TATC Calendar](#)

(Continued on Next Page ...)

Activities Schedule

PLEASE NOTE: Most hikes are limited in the number of participants. The hike leader will take reservations on a first-come, first-served basis. You can include your name on the sign up sheets available at each meeting or call the hike leader. If you sign up for an activity and then decide not to participate, please contact the leader in advance.

Swingblade & Lopperfest #2

Sherando Lake Recreation Area, 96 Sherando Lake Rd, Lyndhurst, VA 22952, USA

July 18-20, 2025

Online Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-55617647-tatcs>

Location: Sherando Lake Recreation Area, 96 Sherando Lake Rd, Lyndhurst, VA 22952

This is part two of three. The fun starts by setting up and camping out in the Sherando Lake Recreation Area at the CCC Kitchen. On Saturday we will get out and cut back encroaching plant growth from trails using swing blades, loppers, and shears. Additionally, we will be removing any smaller blowdowns we encounter. Free Park entrance; Free camping; One day of work, what could be better? Friday & Sunday are travel days. Ten to fifteen people needed. To sign up or for more information, contact: John Sima -TATC Trail Supervisor - trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com. Kaci Midgett - TATC Asst Trail Supervisor - assistantts@tidewateratc.com
More information on Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club can be found at Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club

TATC Picnic in the Park - July 26, 2025 - 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

3663 Marlin Bay Dr, Virginia Beach, VA 23455, USA

TATC Day-in-the-Park Picnic and Hike along Crab Creek & Pleasure House Creek.

Saturday, July 26

11:00 AM-3:00 PM (time may be adjusted)

Location: Brock Center, 3663 Marlin Bay Ct, Virginia Beach, VA 23455

The Brock Center is located at Pleasure House Point, which overlooks the Lynnhaven River.

Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-55660295-tatc>

Website: <https://www.cbf.org/about-cbf/locations/virginia/facilities/brock-environmental-center/index.html>

Contact: social@tidewateratc.com. Parking is limited, but there is a small parking area at the center and parking on the street. Carpooling is suggested if possible. Terri Gorman will lead us on a tour of the Brock Center. She will be discussing the Pleasure House Point "Wetlands Restoration Project" which started in March and should be completed in October 2025. We will eat lunch after the tour. Sternos may be used to keep the food warm, we will be discussing the menu in June. After lunch members may explore by hiking the trails. Since it is an environmentally sensitive building, it only requires refillable water containers. No styrofoam products are allowed.

TATC members will come together to enjoy a picnic lunch at the pavilion. Please feel free to relax in the Adirondack chairs located on the upper deck and enjoy the view. After lunch, we will hike along Crab Creek and Pleasure House Creek. <http://www.cbf.org/document-library/maps/pleasure-house-point-trail-map.pdf>

Since there are no bathroom facilities, if you are in need of a bathroom break you may drive to the Lynnhaven Boat Facility (three minutes away).

[Visit our TATC Calendar](#)

(Continued on Next Page ...)

Activities Schedule

PLEASE NOTE: Most hikes are limited in the number of participants. The hike leader will take reservations on a first-come, first-served basis. You can include your name on the sign up sheets available at each meeting or call the hike leader. If you sign up for an activity and then decide not to participate, please contact the leader in advance.

North Bend Camping

WHEN: The nights of SUNDAY JULY 27, MONDAY JULY 28, TUESDAY JULY 29; break camp WEDNESDAY JULY 30. As always, feel free to arrive earlier or stay longer.

WHERE: North Bend Park, Kerr Lake; 64 North Bend Drive, Boydton, VA 23917 ~ 2½ hours from Norfolk.

DESCRIPTION: Camp, hike, bike (both in the park and on the local low traffic roads) and paddle. Several sites are on either little beaches or have easy access to water for boat launching. There are also several official swimming beaches (no lifeguards). Well behaved woofers are also welcome (on leashes, of course). They have great bathrooms and showers too. Learn more about this park here: [https://www.virginia.org/listing/north-bend-park-campground-john-h-kerr-reservoir-\(buggs-island-lake\)-us-army-corps-of-engineers/8240/](https://www.virginia.org/listing/north-bend-park-campground-john-h-kerr-reservoir-(buggs-island-lake)-us-army-corps-of-engineers/8240/)

We like the C loop, but you're free to choose your own site. There's plenty of room to park your canoe or kayak at the C loop beach during your entire stay, and most of us do that. These are non-electric sites, but there are several sites with electricity nearby that will accommodate an RV. For the tent sites, most accommodate 2 tents/6 people; 2 cars. For a fee, you can add another car. If there's nothing available in loop C, nearby sites are available, and all are close enough to be part of the group!

Note: Check in is 4 PM. If you arrive early, the folks at the front gate will let you check in IF your site is available. If it's not, you can either wait at the gate, or pay a day use fee to drive into the campground, but you won't be able to set up your tent until the previous guests leave.

You need to make and pay for your own reservation—and cancel it if necessary. The sooner you make your reservation the better chance you have for getting one of suggested sites. Reserve your site at <https://www.recreation.gov> (if this won't open, just google Recreation.gov and search for North Bend Park).

The non-electric sites are \$24 a night. Cancellation policy: I believe there's a \$10 cancellation fee and may-be forfeiting one night depending on when you cancel. Be sure and read their cancellation policy on this same site. <https://www.recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/233563?tab=fees>

NOTE: If you have an Interagency Lifetime Senior Pass (for those of us over 62), or other pass, be sure and use it when making your reservation. You can get up to a 50% discount off your camping fee! Here is more info: <https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/senior-pass-changes.htm>

Bring canoes/kayaks and PFDs, bikes and bike helmets, tents, camping gear, games, food for your meals. We'll do potluck heavy appetizers for Sunday's evening meal, and a potluck dinner Monday, July 28.

Please bring sharable items! Breakfasts and lunches are on your own. For those interested, Tuesday night dinner will be at a nearby restaurant TBD. There's a small convenience store for ice and other stuff about 2-3 miles away. SIGN UP BY: no deadline, but reserve your site sooner than later if you want one of the 'preferred' sites. If anyone wants more info, please contact Stephanie at stephaniestringer15@gmail.com or Steve at waldo1089@gmail.com or call or text—Stephanie – 757-228-5704. Steve – 757-359-8868.

Be sure to review the park reservation/cancellation policy and reserve your campsite!

If you can come, please sign up at this link so we know you're coming (and please provide other info requested.) https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EEjDcu_F-b5VbegORMAEsuXlvmuecMJOVIYqx6BLZN8/edit?usp=sharing

[Visit our TATC Calendar](#)

TATC Officers & Board



Position	Name	Email Address
President	Lelia Vann	president@tidewateratc.com
Vice President	Jim Sexton	vicepres@tidewateratc.com
Treasurer	Andy Grayson	treasurer@tidewateratc.com
Secretary	Peg Seriani	secretary@tidewateratc.com
Trail Supervisor	John Sima	trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com
Assistant Trail Supervisor	Kaci Midgett	assistantts@tidewateratc.com
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Counselor	Christopher Butler	counselor@tidewateratc.com
Counselor	Sandra Canepa	counselor@tidewateratc.com
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Alt ATC RPC Representative	Jim Sexton	rpcrep@tidewateratc.com
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Membership	Sharon Salyer	membership@tidewateratc.com
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Tool Boss	Rich Seriani	toolboss@tidewateratc.com
Webmaster	Jim Sexton	webmaster@tidewateratc.com

Visit our TATC Facebook group page.

We invite you to create a post and upload photos of any club related activity.



Also please send TATC events to hikemaster@tidewateratc.com for inclusion in the club schedule and the next newsletter.

Please consider sponsoring a club event this Summer.



PHOTOS -- February on the Trail

by Pete Burch



Lady Slipper



Rhododendron

PHOTOS – April West Neck Creek Clean-up

Photo by Jane Oakes



Members of the amphibious trail crew

PHOTOS – Dismal Swamp Bike Ride and Study Brewing

Photos by Jim Sexton



PHOTOS – Dismal Swamp Bike Ride and Studly Brewing

Photo by Jim Sexton



PHOTOS – TATC trail maintainers at New Quarter Park and then eating out at Shorty's Diner in Williamsburg, Sunday, on April 6th, 2025

Photos by Jim Sexton



PHOTOS – Sherando Maintenance

Photo by Robert Veverka



PHOTOS – Sherando Maintenance

Photo by Robert Veverka



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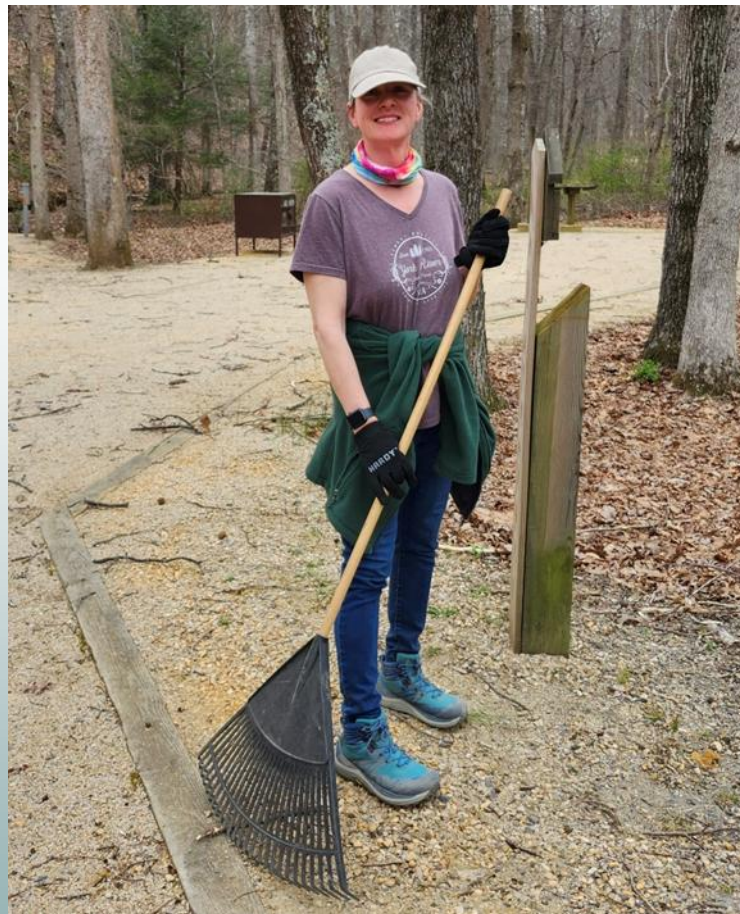
PHOTOS – Sherando Maintenance

Photos by Robert Veverka



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PHOTOS – Sherando Maintenance

Photo by Robert Veverka



PHOTOS – Botanical Gardens

Photo by Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS – Chippokes State Park

Photo by Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS – FLSP Bike Ride

Photo by Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS – Lamberts Point

Photo by Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS – Merchants Mill Pond

Photo by Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS – Phyllis Neuman

Photo by Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS – Sherando Spring Maintenance

Photo by Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS – Sherando Spring Maintenance

Photo by Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS – Sherando Spring Maintenance

Photo by Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS – Windsor Castle

Photo by Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS – York River

Photo by Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS – Capital Trail Bike Ride

Chickahominy River Bridge

Photo by Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS – Trail Magic 2025

Photo by Jim Sexton



PHOTOS – Trail Magic 2025

Photo by Jim Sexton



PHOTOS – Trail Magic 2025

Photo by Jim Sexton



PHOTOS – Trail Magic 2025

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