



The
Haw River
Canoe & Kayak Co.

Reconnect with nature, have fun paddling.

THE HAW RIVER PADDLER

April 2009

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Danger! Logjam Downstream of Red Slide Park Access

Beware. Normally the paddle trip downstream from the Town of Haw River to the Graham Access or Swepsonville River Park is a relatively safe and enjoyable trip. High water levels caused by winter and spring rains have left a huge logjam piled up against the old railroad bridge footings in the Town of Haw River.

As of late March, the right channel is open. The middle channel is not only plugged up, but probably 10 feet high. The left channel has logs across it and approximately 20 feet of ensnared fabric makes it particularly dangerous. If someone were to turn over and be swept under the debris in either the middle or left channel, they would almost surely be entrapped and drown.

When you launch at Red Slide Park, you have to paddle to the far left channel to negotiate through what was once a dam. In order to avoid the logjam downstream, keep working to river right as you approach the Highway 49 vehicle bridge. The old railroad bridge footings are immediately downstream of the Highway 49 vehicle bridge.

2nd. Annual YEE HAW! River Paddle; April 25th

The 2nd. Annual YEE HAW! River Paddle will take place on April 25, 2009. A rain date is scheduled for May 2nd. Paddlers with boats and paddling gear will paddle from the Glencoe paddle access to the Swepsonville River Park. Individuals and families without boats and paddling gear may rent them and paddle from the new Red Slide Park access in the Town of Haw River to the Swepsonville River Park.

There are two new features to the YEE HAW! River Paddle this year. One feature is a fundraising event that for a small donation will give paddlers a chance to win prizes. Called "Hold On & Hold EM", paddlers will select playing cards from each of five buckets placed along the river. Another new feature will be a post-paddle party called the "Mud Boggers Ball". From 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m., paddlers will enjoy local music, food and camaraderie. Prizes will be announced at 5:00 p.m. You don't have to be present to win.

For more information and to register for the YEE HAW! River Paddle, please go to **www.thehaw.org**. By the way, The Haw River Canoe & Kayak Company has been involved in organizing the YEE HAW! River Paddle both years as a way of supporting the creation and development of the Haw River Trail.

Schedule of Courses & Trips – April & May

If you are interested in a paddle course or a guided trip, you can find a schedule of activities on our website **www.hawrivercanoe.com** on both the Instruction and Guided Trips pages. Don't forget, you can rent a canoe or kayak and do a self-guided trip. A brief listing of activities for April & May follows:

April

4	Saxapahaw Whitewater
4	Swepsonville to Saxapahaw
5	Town of Haw River to Swepsonville
10	Full Moon Paddle
11	Sunset Paddle
11&12	Spirit Island Campout
18	Canoe & Kayak Classes * +
18	Owl Prowl
25	YEE HAW! River Paddle
25	Town of Haw River to Swepsonville
25	Paddle Dinner (Benjamin Vineyards & Winery)
25	Stargazing Float

May

2	Saxapahaw Whitewater
2	Swepsonville to Saxapahaw
3	Town of Haw River to Swepsonville
8	Sunset Paddle
9	Full Moon Paddle
9&10	Spirit Island Campout
16	Canoe & Kayak Classes * +
23	Paddle Dinner – Benjamin Vineyards & Winery
23	Stargazing Float
30	Paddle & Potluck

Classes include Quick Start for Canoe & Kayak (3 hrs.), Introduction to Canoeing & Kayaking (8 hrs.), Basic Whitewater Canoeing (16 hrs.) and Sea Kayaking Fundamentals (16 hrs.).

Ospreys & Anhinga are Back and so is Spring

It has been a cold, rainy late-winter, early spring, but spring is definitely here. The red bud and cultivated pear trees have been in bloom for a couple of weeks, but the surest sign of spring on the river is the presence of ospreys and anhinga. It won't be long before we begin to see native dogwood trees and mountain laurel in full bloom.

We tend to think of ospreys and anhinga as coastal birds, but over the years we have come to realize that the Haw River is a particularly important spring "hang out" for both of them. In fact, we sometimes can see as many as 100 anhinga roosting together in a couple of trees on our Sunset Paddles and ospreys almost always fly overhead during the day. Large flocks of sea gulls are on the river near Saxapahaw, too.

Spirit Island Clean-Up – Thanks

A wonderful group of volunteers from the Haw River Assembly and the Haw River Paddle Club joined us for our Spirit Island clean up earlier in March. We picked up 37 large bags of litter consisting of mostly soda bottles and Styrofoam along with the usual dozen or so tires. For now, the Island is mostly free of litter; however there is still some work to be done in a logjam between the Island and the mainland. We will "chip away" at it throughout the year.

We have additional River Clean-ups scheduled on June 14th. and October 11th. We provide canoes and trash bags for free on all scheduled River Clean-ups, so if you want to help, we would love to have you join us. By the way, on any of our guided or rental trips, we are more than happy to provide you with trash bags and dispose of what you pick up.

North Carolina really needs to pass a "Bottle Bill". It would save on resources and cut down on litter in our rivers and along the roadsides.

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PO Box 22 Saxapahaw, NC 27340 • 336.260.6465 • www.hawrivercanoe.com

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