

## **PROJECT BOX TURTLE**

### Turtle Tagging in Our State Parks



It's a familiar scene along Carolina roadways, especially those that run through state parks – a two lane road with heavy traffic. It's a summertime weekend and everyone wants to get a good spot at the Paddy's Creek Area swim beach. Most people don't even notice the softball-sized Eastern box turtle crossing the road and there's a good chance he'll be hit before he makes it to the other side. Luckily, an observant motorist notices the turtle before that happens and gently moves him to the edge of the woods in the direction he was heading.

Turtle experts warn that Eastern box turtle populations are in serious decline throughout their range. Likely causes include habitat fragmentation and

destruction and increased mortality on expanding roadways.

Since 2009, the staff at Lake James State Park has participated in Project Box Turtle, a joint research venture of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and the University of North Carolina Greensboro, studying the movement patterns of these endearing creatures. To date, more than 80 turtles have been measured, weighed and marked inside the park boundary.

Most recently, an ancient male turtle was found crossing the park road at Paddy's Creek Area by two seasonal staffers. They dutifully brought the turtle to the ranger office, where Ranger Jamie Cameron recorded its data and gave it the unique identifying



sequence of H-I-K. Marking turtles is accomplished by filing a notch on three of the outer shell scutes which are designated according to the alphabet. The process is harmless and painless to the turtles and provides a permanent means of identifying individuals.

With any luck, H.I.K. will be recaptured some day and provide new insight into the unseen lives of North Carolina's box turtles.

# FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK

## LJSP INTERPRETATION & EDUCATION PROGRAMS August 2013

If you would like to receive our monthly events list, contact Nora Coffey at [nora.coffey@ncparks.gov](mailto:nora.coffey@ncparks.gov). Please note: In an effort to reduce idle time, please make a reasonable effort to arrive a few minutes before the times set for programs.

### SHORELINE BIRDS BOAT TOUR - Saturday, August 3

What better way to see the wide variety of waterbirds that call Lake James home than to sign up for this ranger-led boat tour? Join Park Ranger Earl Weaver as he scours the backwaters in search of herons, ospreys, eagles and kingfishers. Pre-registration is required, as there are only eight spaces available. Bring sunscreen, water, binoculars and anything else you may require for an hour or more on the water. Life jackets will be provided. This program leaves from the law enforcement boat ramp at the east end of the Paddy's Creek Area main parking lot promptly at 10 a.m. Meet up at the East Picnic Shelter several minutes prior for a safety briefing. To register, call the park office at 828-584-7728.

### TREE ID HIKE - Saturday, August 3

The forest surrounding Lake James is filled with dozens of species of trees that make our ecosystem unique. Learn how to identify them by their leaves, bark patterns, fruits and flowers with Ranger Clay Veasey on this short and scenic hike to the Sandy Cliff overlook. Meet at the Catawba River Area office breezeway for a 10 a.m. departure.

### PREDATORS OF LAKE JAMES - Sunday, August 4

There are two types of organisms on this Earth; predators and prey. Learn about the fascinating adaptations native predators use to capture their food. We'll be looking at hawk talons, snake teeth and fox ears at the Paddy's Creek Area breezeway, starting at 11 a.m.

### EDIBLE WILDFLOWERS - Sunday, August 4

Did you know you can harvest a delicious and nutritious bowl of wild greens and flowers right out of the woods and fields? Ranger Clay Veasey will lead participants on a foraging adventure that's sure to open your eyes to the possibilities of gathering food the way native peoples did thousands of years ago. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area breezeway at 9 a.m.



### BUILD-A-BEAVER - Saturday, August 10

What makes a beaver so good at building dams, constructing lodges, felling trees and living across the state's rivers and lakes? Find out in this fun-filled program for kids at the Catawba River Area classroom, starting at 10 a.m. Bring your enthusiasm and imagination.

### DISCOVER THE DISCOVERY TRAIL - Saturday, August 17

Make a loop around Lake James State Park's newest attraction; the interactive, fun-filled educational experience that is the Holly Discovery Trail. Eighteen activity stations geared towards young learners are placed around the ¾-mile loop trail that runs along Paddy's Creek. Can you talk to a woodpecker? Walk like a raccoon? Build a fairy house? Join Park Ranger Jamie Cameron for this informative and fun hike. Meet at the Holly Discovery Trail parking area (just across the Paddy's Creek Bridge) at 10 a.m. P.S. It's been a very wet spring and summer – bug spray is recommended for this program.

### NATURE THROUGH INDIAN EYES - Sunday, August 18

Native Americans relied on all of their senses to survive in the forest. Park Ranger Jamie Cameron will lead this exercise of sight, sound, smell, touch and taste as we experience Nature in new ways. The program is geared toward children ages 5-12, but parents are encouraged to participate as well. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area bathhouse breezeway at 10 a.m.



### EXPLORE LAKE JAMES BY CANOE - Sunday, August 25

Lake James by morning is the most peaceful and beautiful time to be on the water. Wildlife abounds, with fish jumping, herons stalking, deer browsing and dragonflies buzzing. Enter this quiet realm by canoe and see life on the lake in its undisturbed state. Park Superintendent Nora Coffey will lead this special tour that includes instruction on proper paddling techniques and entering and exiting a canoe. Pre-registration is required for the limited number of vessels available. Bring sunscreen, binoculars and cameras, along with clothing and footwear that can get wet. Meet Supt. Coffey at the Paddy's Creek Area office at 9 a.m. To register, call the park office at 828-584-7728.

### EXPLORE LAKE JAMES BY CANOE - Saturday, August 31

Lake James by morning is the most peaceful and beautiful time to be on the water. Wildlife abounds, with fish jumping, herons stalking, deer browsing and dragonflies buzzing. Enter this quiet realm by canoe and see life on the lake in its undisturbed state. Ranger Clay Veasey will lead this special tour that includes instruction on proper paddling techniques and entering and exiting a canoe. Pre-registration is required for the limited number of vessels available. Bring sunscreen, binoculars and cameras, along with clothing and footwear that can get wet. Meet Ranger Veasey at the Paddy's Creek Area office at 9 a.m. To register, call the park office at 828-584-7728.

# FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK

## NATURE NOTES



It seemed summer finally decided to make an appearance during the month of July and the hot, sticky weather that we're used to this time of year moved in. With animals avoiding the heat of the day, wildlife sightings typically go down during mid-summer and last month was no exception. One animal that did make its presence known was an adult black bear; seen on two separate occasions crossing the park road near Obeth Cemetery. Black bears are rarely seen by visitors at the park, but there's no doubt of their permanent residence here. Paw prints are occasionally seen crossing the hiking trails and evidence of bear foraging is sometimes encountered.

If you are lucky enough to see a bear at Lake James State Park, the rule of common sense applies as it does with all human encounters with wildlife;

- Do not attempt to approach the animal, but at the same time, do not turn your back and run away.
- Observe at a safe distance. If the animal approaches you, make loud noises and spread your arms out to look big and intimidating.
- If you encounter young cubs at close range, back away slowly and leave the area.
- Never attempt to feed the animal. Problems arise when bears learn to associate humans with food.
- Enjoy the experience. Black bears are typically shy, retiring creatures when they have not been habituated to humans. They are an iconic species of the North Carolina wilderness.

It would not be surprising if, after all the rain we have received, that the late summer and fall see an explosion of fungi. There are hundreds of varieties of mushrooms that can grow in the Piedmont of North Carolina and this could be the year to see them. Look for more information and updates on that in coming newsletter issues. Until then, hope to see you out on the trail.

## WHO WE ARE

A group formed in 2010, made up of dedicated people work together to help Lake James State Park meet its mission of providing opportunities for public enjoyment and education while still protecting the natural beauty and historic integrity of the State Park.

## BOARD MEMBERS

**Greg Norell** - President

**Eric Jenkins** - Vice President

**Wendell Shelton** - Vice President

**Mike Sewell** - Secretary

**Bob Bielitz** - Treasurer

**Paul Braun** - Member at Large

**Joe Carey** - Member at Large

**Robert Hunter** - Member at Large

**Ashley Wooten** - Member at Large

**Frank Dean** - Member at Large

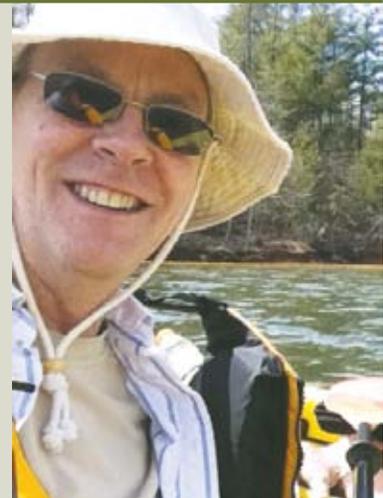
**Jim Williams** - Member at Large

To contact the Friends of Lake James State Park Group please email [info@lakejamesstatepark.org](mailto:info@lakejamesstatepark.org)

## FRIENDLY FACES Joe Carey - Board Member

One of the folks who has a hand in the direction the Friends of Lake James State Park is board member Joe Carey. "I enjoy serving on the Board of Directors for Friends of Lake James State Park and hope my input and marketing knowledge will help the organization grow. The Friends organization is an effective way to help Lake James State Park become an even better place to enjoy nature," said Carey. "Residents of Burke and McDowell counties live in a special place and I feel fortunate to call this area home. While life may be a bit slower here than in the 'big city,' it is still easy to forget how lucky we are to have beautiful natural resources like Lake James and the State Park.

"The park is a great resource for enjoying the outdoors," Carey continued. "My family and I like canoeing, kayaking, hiking, and camping, so the park is a natural fit for us; especially on a Saturday or Sunday when a quick morning decision to hit the lake always leads to a great weekend."



# FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Do you have an interest in Lake James State Park? Whether you enjoy hiking the trails, swimming at the beach or just picnicking with your family, there is some part of the park for everyone.

Join the Friends of Lake James State Park group and learn about all the opportunities to help make the park a better place for everyone to enjoy. The Friends of Lake James State Park focus on working together to help Lake James State Park meet its mission of providing opportunities for public enjoyment and education while still protecting the natural beauty and historic integrity of the State Park.

There are a variety of opportunities to get involved from trail work days, to volunteering at RiverFest and other festivals. Become a member of Friends of Lake James State Park, and know that you are helping to preserve the natural beauty and historic resources of Lake James for generations to come.



### SAVE THE DATE

## TENTH ANNUAL CATAWBA RIVERFEST

SEPTEMBER 21, 2013

## HOW TO JOIN THE FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK GROUP

Become a member of Friends of Lake James State Park, and know that you are helping to preserve the natural beauty and historic resources of Lake James for generations to come.

**For more information please visit [www.lakejamesstatepark.org](http://www.lakejamesstatepark.org) or email [info@lakejamesstatepark.org](mailto:info@lakejamesstatepark.org).**

## FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK - MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Be a Friend of Lake James State Park

Select class of annual membership:

- Individual \$10
- Family \$25
- Corporate \$50
- Patron \$100 - \$999 \$\_\_\_\_\_
- Lifetime \$1000 (or more) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to be contacted about volunteer opportunities with the Friends of Lake James State Park

Where did you hear about us? \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Return to:  
Friends of Lake James State Park, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1327  
Nebo, NC 28761**

*Friends of Lake James State Park, Inc. is a registered 501(c)3 charitable organization. Receipt of membership will be supplied upon request.*