



BOAT-IN CAMPGROUND NEARS COMPLETION

The staff at Lake James State Park has been working feverishly over the winter on its latest major project – 30 boat-in campsites on Long Arm Peninsula. The construction of these sites is the fulfillment of a longstanding desire from the people of Burke County who remember the days when lakeside camping was a popular weekend activity. In fact, when the Paddy's Creek Area was purchased by the state in 2005, a survey of potential users in the community listed boat-in camping as their most-wanted recreational opportunity.

The dimensions of each campsite is 16X24 feet, enough for a family-sized tent, and includes a picnic table, food

locker and fire pit for grilling and keeping warm. Also included is a fantastic view of the Linville side of Lake James. The boat-in campground is divided into three areas, each consisting of between 9 and 12 primitive campsites with immediate access to men's and women's toilet facilities. There will be no public access to the area by land. There will not be electricity, water or refuse receptacles available. Like the current campground facility at the Catawba River Area, all state park rules and regulations will apply to the new area.

"We have been focusing on completion of these sites for several months," said Park Superintendent Nora Coffey.

"Boat-in camping has been on the park's Master Plan since the inception of the Paddy's Creek Area and we are really excited to be on the verge of making it a reality. I have no doubt these sites are going to be extremely popular, especially among area residents who have fond memories of shoreline camping at the lake before it was developed."

When opened sometime during the 2015 camping season, the sites will be available by reservation only through the park system reservation hotline at 1-877-722-6762. Stay tuned to local news media outlets for information on when boat-in camping will be available.

If you would like to receive our monthly events list, contact Nora Coffey at 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.

TREE ID HIKE – SUNDAY, MARCH 1

A lot of the resource management decisions made at the park are based on the existing landscape and how it can be restored. Trees are an integral component of the ecosystem and there is great interest in learning how to identify them. Park Ranger Clay Veasey will lead this hike along the Lake Channel Overlook trail and explain how to use bark patterns, seeds, nuts and cones and fallen leaves and needles to figure out what trees are towering above. Meet at the Catawba River Area office breezeway at 10 a.m.

SPRING IS IN THE AIR – SUNDAY, MARCH 8

With spring only a couple of weeks away, park visitors are anxious to see the cold winter temperatures succumb. As the temperatures change, so do the behaviors of the resident plants and animals. Meet Park Ranger Kevin Bischof for a hike along the Fox Den Loop trail to discover the early spring activity at the park. The 2.5 mile hike will leave at 10 a.m. from the park office located in the Catawba River Area.

WATERFOWL BOAT TOUR – SUNDAY, MARCH 15

Lake James plays host to many species of waterfowl during the early spring migration, as well as the critters that stay here year-round. Renowned waterfowl expert, Ranger Earl Weaver will be your captain and guide aboard the park patrol boat as we search for loons, otters, eagles and scenic vistas. The weather could be blustery, so be sure to dress warmly if you are one of the eight lucky participants. Registration is required and available on a first-come, first-served basis. Call the park office at 828-584-7728 to reserve your spot. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area East Picnic Shelter at 1:50 p.m. for a briefing and prompt 2 p.m. departure.



SPRING PEEPER PROMENADE – SATURDAY, MARCH 21

What are those? They sound like crickets, maybe katydids ... but they aren't. When the temperatures warm up just a little bit, any wet drainage blossoms with the calls of one our smallest frogs - the Spring Peeper. This program will be designed as a hike and will set out to discuss various frog species, but specifically focus on the diminutive Spring Peeper. Several frog habitat types will be searched including a known Spring Peeper hotspot. Meet Park Ranger Kevin Bischof at the Holly Discovery Trail parking area at 2 p.m. and be prepared to walk about a mile.

Continued Next Page

WATERFOWL WATCH – SATURDAY, MARCH 21

Lake James is a spring stopover for many ducks, grebes, loons and other migratory waterfowl. These birds are once again massing for their northward migration in anticipation of the coming breeding season. Park Ranger Jamie Cameron will have his field guide and a spotting scope to help participants enjoy viewing some of these colorful travelers before they go. Bring binoculars if you have them and dress for the weather. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area bathhouse breezeway at 10 a.m.

AMPHIBIAN ROUND-UP – SUNDAY, MARCH 22

Warmer nights and early spring showers create perfect conditions for salamanders, frogs and toads. Park Ranger Jamie Cameron knows where to go to find some of these elusive critters and invites you to come along. The search will begin at the Holly Discovery Trail parking area at 2 p.m. Knee boots or hip waders will be helpful for more adventurous participants, but they are not required.

ASTRONOMY FOR EVERYONE – SATURDAY, MARCH 28

Back by popular demand, Lake James State Park will be hosting the Catawba Valley Astronomy Club for a night of star gazing. Learn some basic star gazing tips and take home your own star chart. There will be telescopes and binoculars set up for viewing the night sky, but feel free to bring your own if you have them. Folding chairs are also recommended. We will meet in the upper parking lot of the Paddy's Creek Area at 8:00 P.M. Register by calling the park office at 828-584-7728.



LOONS OF THE LAKE – SUNDAY, MARCH 29

Lake James is a wintering spot for dozens of common loons. On quiet, still mornings you can often hear their iconic cries echoing across the water. Join Ranger Earl Weaver aboard the park's patrol boat in search of these graceful waterbirds and others that call Lake James home before they head north for the breeding season. Registration is required and only the first eight respondents will get to enjoy this unique opportunity. Meet at the East Picnic Shelter at Paddy's Creek Area at 1:50 p.m.

for a briefing and prompt 2 p.m. departure. To register, call the park office at 828-584-7728.

SPRING PHOTO SAFARI – TUESDAY, MARCH 31

Shutterbugs and novices alike can capture great images at Lake James State Park during every season, but spring is especially rewarding. With new growth literally bursting out of the ground and birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians shaking off their winter doldrums, there's no telling what kind of subjects we'll find for the camera. Join Park Ranger Jamie Cameron, an award-winning photo-journalist, for a laid back hike in the woods. Bring whatever camera gear you have; from the top-of-the-line Nikon SLR, to a Smart Phone. Meet at the Holly Discovery Trail parking area at 5 p.m.

Continued Next Page

SPRING BOAT TOUR – SATURDAY, APRIL 4

The waters and shoreline of Lake James is bursting with life after the long winter and there's no better way to explore than by boat. Ranger Clay Veasey will be your captain and guide aboard the park patrol boat as we search for loons, otters, eagles and scenic vistas. The weather could be blustery, so be sure to dress warmly if you are one of the eight lucky participants. Registration is required and available on a first-come, first-served basis. Call the park office at 828-584-7728 to reserve your spot. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area East Picnic Shelter at 9:45 a.m. for a briefing and prompt 10 a.m. departure.

CONCERT AT THE CREEK – SATURDAY, APRIL 4

Taylor Swift won't be there, but you can bet on a great performance by some of the park's smallest musicians. Spring peepers, chorus frogs, Fowler's toads, whip-poor-wills and more will blend their sounds into a symphony to remember. Park Ranger Jamie Cameron will be on hand to pick out and identify the performers as the sun goes down. Meet at the Holly Discovery Trail parking area at 7 p.m.



OLD HOME SITE TOUR – SUNDAY, APRIL 5

Before there was Lake James, the Catawba River and Paddy's Creek were home to communities of farmers.

Their legacy remains along the lakeshore in the homesite ruins they left behind and we can learn a lot about life during those times if we consider the structures they built. Join Ranger Clay Veasey on a hike to some of the homesites along park trails. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area bathhouse breezeway at 10 a.m. for this popular and informative trip back in time.

SPRINGTIME AT FOX DEN LOOP – SUNDAY, APRIL 5

Spring is in the air and there's no better time or place to enjoy the warmth than the Fox Den Loop Trail. We'll be looking at wildflowers, trees, insects, birds and anything else that may be out and about. If we're lucky, we might even catch a glimpse of the red foxes that gave the trail its name. Meet Ranger Jamie Cameron for this moderate, 2-1/4-mile hike at the Catawba River Area picnic shelter at 2 p.m. Wear clothing and footwear that will be appropriate for the weather forecast.

Continued Next Page

WATER QUALITY AT THE MOUNTAIN GATEWAY MUSEUM – SATURDAY, APRIL 11

Not every ranger program takes place at the park. Ranger Kevin Bischof will be streamside at the Mountain Gateway Museum in Old Fort for a fun exploration of freshwater critters. Nets, magnifying glasses, ID keys and observation tanks will be set up on the banks of the Catawba River to show just how diverse and amazing our precious waterways can be. This program will begin at 1 p.m. For more information, call the Mountain Gateway Museum at 828-668-9259.



BIRDS OF THE HOLLY DISCOVERY TRAIL – SATURDAY, APRIL 18

Spring migration is in full swing as songbirds, raptors and waterfowl return from the tropics to answer the urge to nest. With its easy, ¾-mile loop through excellent, bottomland forest habitat, the Holly Discovery Trail is the perfect place to observe many species as they strive to complete their epic journey. Park Ranger Earl Weaver will lead the adventure, starting at the Holly Discovery trail parking area at 8:50 a.m. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them.

SPRING BOAT TOUR – SUNDAY, APRIL 19

Lake James plays host to many species of waterfowl during the spring migration, as well as the critters that stay here year-round. Ranger Earl Weaver will be your captain and guide aboard the park patrol boat as we search for loons, otters, eagles and scenic vistas. The weather could be blustery, so be sure to dress warmly if you are one of the eight lucky participants. Registration is required and available on a first-come, first-served basis. Call the park office at 828-584-7728 to reserve your spot. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area East Picnic Shelter at 9:50 a.m. for a briefing and prompt departure at 10.

EARTH DAY HIKE – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22

What better way to celebrate Earth Day, than by recognizing North Carolina State Park's Year of the Amphibian? The wonderful world of salamanders will be on display as Park Ranger Kevin Bischof leads a hike to different salamander habitats in search of these small, elusive amphibians. Meet at the Holly Discovery Trail parking area and come prepared to journey through woodlands, seeps, streams and pools. Bring appropriate footwear and keep in mind some of these areas may be a little muddy, so leave the new sneakers at home. The hike will begin promptly at 6 p.m.



Continued Next Page

SPEAK FOR THE TREES! – THURSDAY, APRIL 23

We all need trees for many reasons. Join Park Superintendent Nora Coffey for story time and activities with Dr. Seuss's The Lorax. This program is perfect for families with children in grades preK-8. Meet at the Catawba River Area basement classroom at 10 a.m.

TOAD TREK – SATURDAY, APRIL 25

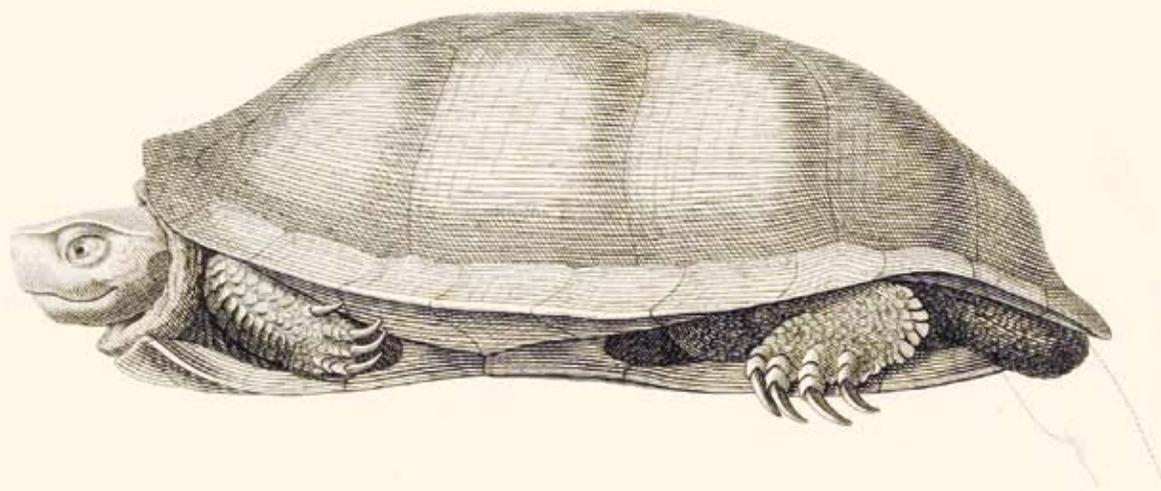
Wait! Did you see that? Ever wonder what that little critter was that hopped off the road as you drove through Lake James State Park? Join Park Ranger Kevin Bischof as he leads a group on a search for the amphibians that can be seen so commonly hopping off the roads. Meet at the West Picnic Shelter in the Paddy's Creek Area of the park and be prepared to walk about a mile. The program starts at 7:30 p.m. so don't miss out on this hopping good time!



SPRING MIGRATION BIRD HIKE – SUNDAY, APRIL 26

Bird life is abundant along the lakeshore as species make their annual trek from the wintering grounds in the south, to the nesting territories in the north. Some birds will end their journeys here to find a mate, build a nest and raise their young. It's an incredibly exciting time of year to be a birdwatcher and this hike is timed to

meet the greatest diversity of warblers, vireos, tanagers, grosbeaks and buntings. Meet Park Ranger Jamie Cameron at the Paddy's Creek Area bathhouse breezeway at 8 a.m. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them and dress appropriately for the weather.



NATURE NOTES

Spring is approaching and the amphibians of Lake James State Park are starting to make themselves seen, and especially heard. As the warming weather melts the winter chill out of the air, frog, toad, and salamander sightings increase. One of the most common frog species in the park can be heard much more easily than seen. The Spring Peeper announces its presence as the name implies, with a birdlike “peep” that can be heard on warm days around Lake James as early as February, and in some, rare cases, even January. Usually centralized around wet areas such as drainages and swamps, the Spring Peeper can congregate in large numbers, during which their cumulative calling (called a chorus) can be quite loud.

The Spring Peeper is a small frog approximately ¾-1-1/2 inches in length that comes in colors including tan, brown, grey and even orange. The Peeper is patterned with a distinctive “X,” located directly on the frog’s back. In McDowell and Burke Counties, the Spring Peeper breeds at the end of February and the beginning of March. Each female Peeper lays about 900 eggs which hatch in just a few days. From the eggs emerge tadpoles which will metamorphosis into a frog in approximately six weeks. Spring Peepers stay hidden, but are readily preyed upon by many opportunistic animals including other frogs, toads, snakes, turtles and even birds such as the Great Blue Heron.

The amphibians are not the only park inhabitants that will be on the move with the warmer weather. Reptiles, their cold-blooded cousins will be active on warmer days, in addition to many bird species that use Lake James State Park as temporary solace along their long migratory patterns. Say good-bye to the winter months and come out to the park and keep your ears and eyes open for the park’s emerging animals.

2015 is The Year of the Amphibian and there will be a wide variety of amphibian programs offered by park staff leading visitors to explore and discover the wonderful world of these amazing animals. Please keep an eye out for the program calendar of events located on the Lake James website and our bi-monthly newsletters.

See you in the woods!



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

Eric Jenkins - President

Robert Hunter - Vice President

Mike Sewell - Secretary

Bob Bielitz - Treasurer

Paul Braun - Member at Large

Annette Bryant - Membership Coordinator

Brock Hall - Member at Large

George Milner - Member at Large

Greg Norell - Member at Large

Alan Scholl - Member at Large

Wendell Shelton - Member at Large

Jim Williams - Member at Large

Ashley Wooten - Member at Large

To contact the Friends of Lake James State Park Group please email info@lakejamesstatepark.org

FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK

FRIENDS AT THE LAKE 5K RUN/WALK

Contact Information: Jacob Walker, 828-403-4580 • jr.walker242@yahoo.com

This event is held as a senior project. All profits made go towards The Friends of Lake James State Park.

Each participant must complete the form below. Use additional forms as needed.

LAKE JAMES STATE PARK

Saturday, April 25th 2015 at 9:00 am – Rain date May 2nd

5 & under are free, 6 – 12 \$10 (no t-shirt), adults 13 & over \$20 (includes t-shirt)

Priced as shown above if registration form postmarked in mail by March 31st

Race-day registration \$15 kids - \$25 adults (7:30 – 8:30 am) *shirt not guaranteed*

Awards to top 3 overall and top 3 in each age group



First Name _____ Last Name _____ Middle Initial _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Circle T-Shirt Size: S M L XL

Phone Number (Include Area Code) _____

Age as of Saturday, April 25: _____ Gender: M F

Email Address _____

Please make checks payable to "Jacob Walker". Please mail bottom portion with payment to 5068 Mt Olive Church Rd, Morganton NC, 28655

Liability and Waiver: I know that running a road race is potentially hazardous activity, which could cause injury or death. I will not enter and participate unless I am medically able and properly trained, and by my signature, I certify that I am medically able to perform this event, and am in good health, and I am properly trained. I agree to abide by any decision of a race official relative to any aspect of my participation in this event, including the right of any official to deny or suspend my participation for any reason whatsoever. I attest that I have read the rules of the race and agree to abide by them. I assume all risks associated with running in this event, including but not limited to: falls, contact with other participants, the effects of the weather, including high heat and/or humidity, traffic and the conditions of the road, all such risks being known and appreciated by me. I understand that bicycles, skateboards, baby joggers, roller skates or roller blades, animals, and personal music players are not allowed in the race and I will abide by all race rules. Having read this waiver and knowing these facts and in consideration of your accepting my entry, I, for myself and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, waive and release the State of North Carolina, The Friends of Lake James State Park 5k Run/Walk, the city of Morganton, Lake James State Park, all event sponsors, their representatives and successors from all claims or liabilities of any kind arising out of my participation in this event, even though that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of the persons named in this waiver. I grant permission to all of the foregoing to use my photographs, motion pictures, recordings or any other record of this event for any legitimate purpose. Payments are non-refundable. Participants must be present at the time of awards to receive award.

Signature of participant (Or Parent/guardian if under the age of 18) _____ Date _____

PARK OUTREACH AT SALEM ELEMENTARY



Lake James State Park employees did an exciting outreach program during January when they participated in Salem Elementary School's "Pioneer Days." Park Ranger Clay Veasey (left) and Maintenance Mechanic Darrin Oliver transported Veasey's iron forge to the school for a hands-on demonstration of blacksmithing. Park rangers are available to go to area schools, clubs and civic organizations for a variety of programming.

RIDERS TO RECEIVE FIRST TRAIL FEATURE



As part of its continuing effort to create a dynamic, fun-filled track for mountain bike trail enthusiasts, Lake James State Park's maintenance staff is recycling what Nature is finished with.

During the fall, disease killed a large white pine that loomed over sites 19 and 20 in the Catawba River Area campground. The tree was an immediate hazard to campers using those sites, so the staff decided to bring it down during the relative safety of the offseason. Once the formidable giant was on the ground, the wheel of creativity started to turn.

Trails specialist, Andrew Carswell looked at the massive trunk and imagined a fun, technical feature to add to the park's popular West Wimba mountain bike loop. With help from maintenance mechanic, Darrin Oliver and a lot of sweat equity, the two halved a 14-foot section of the lower trunk to serve as a natural water crossing.

"It's going to be our first technical feature for the intermediate loop trails," said Carswell. "There will also be a hard crossing option for riders to choose from. Once this bridge is in place, we'll be looking for more opportunities to add interest and difficulty to the Wimba loops."

Carswell said he hopes to have the new pine bridge in place sometime during the first half of March, with help from the volunteer Lake James Trail Crew, which has taken on much of the upkeep for the mountain bike trails.

LJSP TRAILS

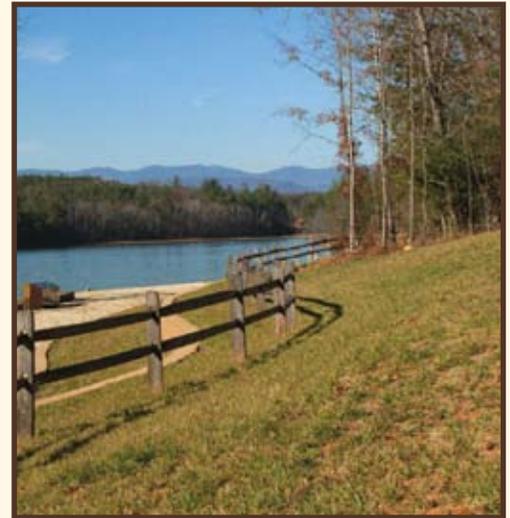


CATAWBA RIVER AREA:

- Fishing Pier Trail (0.3 mile, easy)
- Fox Den Loop Trail (2.25 miles, moderate)
- Lake Channel Overlook Trail (1.5 miles, moderate)
- Sandy Cliff Overlook Trail (0.5 mile, easy)

PADDY'S CREEK AREA:

- Holly Discovery Trail (0.75 mile, easy)
- Mill's Creek Trail (3.6 miles, moderate)
- Overmountain Victory Trail (2.0 mile, moderate)
- Paddy's Creek Trail (2.0 miles, moderate)
- Tindo beginners' mountain bike trail (4.0 miles)
- Wimba intermediate mountain bike trail (11.25 miles)



CAMPGROUND HOSTS WANTED FOR 2015

Since launching its inaugural campground host season back in 2013, the program at Lake James State Park has been a great success; benefiting campers, who get easy access to information, firewood, trail maps and peace of mind, park rangers, who get “eyes and ears” on the facility 24/7 and yet have more time to perform other essential duties, and the hosts themselves, who get to stay in one of the most scenic spots in North Carolina and meet some of the friendliest campers in the country.

The 2015 camping season is upon us and there are still a few openings for prospective campground hosts to apply. The park provides water, sewer and electrical hook-ups at no cost in return for dedicated volunteers that can provide a one-month commitment to the campground. Duties include registering campers, selling firewood, light clean-up around the sites and being good ambassadors for the park.

Anyone interested in becoming a campground host this year should email the park office at lake.james@ncparks.gov as soon as possible.

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.

PARK GENERAL INFO

- Gate hours during March and April are 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. (9 p.m. for campground and Hidden Cove boat access)
- The campground is open
- Hidden Cove Boat Access is open
- Canoe, paddleboard and kayak rentals will begin around Memorial Day

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 or email 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/Industry \$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.