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James RiverWatch



June 2009

From our Environmental Educator

James River Association Website

In This Issue
 From our Environmental Educator
 ESM III
 2009 Run-Off Run-Down
 Rain Barrel Workshop
 Regional Cleanup
 Our New Website

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 9 South 12th Street,
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 Richmond, VA
 23219

Easy Ways to Support



Students from Richmond's Open High School A.P. Biology class were transported back in time as they paddled canoes up Four Mile Creek, participating in JRA's first Captain John Smith Water Trail Educational Float Trip.

I met sixteen students and two teachers at Deep Bottom Park in east Henrico with JRA's canoe rig on a beautiful late May morning. I had an intensive day of learning planned for our time together along this first-ever National Historic Water Trail, which covers 3,000 miles of John Smith's travels around the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

We covered general boating safety and then dove into proper paddling technique. The students, most of whom had never canoed before, impressed me with how quickly they picked up the skills and began to enjoy controlling their craft. We paddled to the confluence of the James and Four Mile Creek and then began to explore the marshes upriver. All around us, busy male prothonotary warblers bringing food to their young made for interesting sights and sounds. We explored an impromptu lesson on this rare bird, that distinguishes itself among warblers by nesting over swamps in dead trees.

At many points of interest we "rafted up" in the boats and learned about the history of Algonquian Indian life in the area

JRA:**Join**

Keep your membership up to date and encourage your friends to join. Check out our [website](#) for membership information!

Only through the strong support of our members can JRA continue its efforts to protect and restore the James River for current and future generations to enjoy.

What you can do**Volunteer**

Visit JRA's [Website](#) to find out about Volunteer Opportunities

Search

Use [GoodSearch.com](#) as your search engine with JRA listed as your charity and earn money for JRA while searching the Web!

Drink

When you buy Ukrop's Super Markets bottled spring water, JRA receives part of the proceeds.

Please Recycle!

Don't let your bottles end up in the river!

Donate

We accept donations of Gifts of Stock, bonds and other investments. You can also donate through the [Donate Now Link](#) on our [Website](#).

To keep up with important events visit our [Calendar of Events](#) on our [Website](#)

and the story of the English colonists and the changes they brought with them to the watershed. Students considered the continuum of four hundred years of natural history on the James River, linking the changing landscape to the deteriorating water quality. Back at the park, we conducted chemical water tests on water from both the creek and the river and finished the program with a lively pop quiz on all the history and ecology we had learned that day.

Overall, the day was a very auspicious launch for this new program.

~ Gabe Silver
JRA Environmental Educator

Responses from participants on the John Smith Water Trail Education Programs:

I learned that....

"People have lived here for 18,000 years. They didn't have other sorts of transportation besides the river...the river was the highway for people living here long ago. They had dugout boats.... Crabs live here! There are fish here that lived with the dinosaurs...all the various kinds of birds living here, the vegetation near the water, and all the history involving the colonists and John Smith...Our water comes from this river."

If I could tell everyone one thing about helping the James River, it would be to...

"Conserve water. Don't pollute the river...put less chemicals in your yard...don't use pesticides...stop polluting and using so much pesticides and fertilizer because it washes into the river...don't use so many pesticides and learn to be energy efficient."

"Canoeing was the most fun part of the trip. I also enjoyed learning about the wildlife while we were on the water, especially the red-winged blackbird and the warbler."

"I want to conserve energy now, and not be so wasteful because being up close and personal allowed me to realize that there really is life and the organisms deserve to live."

If you know of a student or youth group interested in this sort of experience, please contact Gabe Silver at 804-788-8811 ext. 214 or gsilver@jra.org.

Extreme Stream Makeover: Blackwater Creek

Extreme Stream Makeover: Blackwater Creek is quickly approaching. This year's makeover will encompass the entire Blackwater Creek watershed and includes projects in the City of Lynchburg, Campbell County and Bedford County. The makeover will take place October 19-24, 2009.

Visit our new ESM website for more information on this year's projects and how you can be involved.

www.extremestreammakeover.org.

JRA's Annual Run-Off Run-Down



On July 11, 2009, JRA will host the second annual Run-off Run-down - a one-day event celebrating America's Founding River. The goal is for individuals to collectively traverse the entire 340 miles of the River. Through our combined efforts, participants and supporters will celebrate the heritage of the James River, increase awareness of JRA, support efforts to improve water quality and use the River for recreational enjoyment.

Have a great day out on the river, while helping to protect it at the same time! Visit the Run-off Run-down Website:

www.runoffrundown.org

Rain Barrel Workshop

There is still limited space available for the rain barrel workshop on Saturday, July 18. The workshop is being held from 9:30-11am at the Home Depot at 6501 West Broad Street. The cost is \$45 per barrel and includes the barrel and all supplies. All barrels must be taken home the day of the workshop.

To register for the workshop please contact Michelle at volunteer@jrava.org or 788-8811 ext 204.

Please confirm that you have a spot in the workshop before sending in payment.

10th Annual James River Cleanup

Thank you to all the volunteers who participated in the 10th Annual James River Regional Cleanup sponsored by the James River Advisory Council.

On Saturday, June 13th, volunteers picked up debris at sites along a 70-mile stretch of the James River. From James River State Park in Appomattox and Buckingham Counties to the VCU Rice Center in Charles City County, volunteers collected 479 large bags of trash and 321 bags of recyclables. And it took less than 4 hours!

The James River Association sponsored cleanup efforts at the Reedy Creek site in the City of Richmond's James River Park system. There, 150 volunteers walked the banks and paddled the river to remove debris. Some people planned ahead and made it a family effort. Others stopped by our registration table to turn their morning dog walk into a river cleanup project.

We hope to see you next year at the James River Advisory Council's annual James River Cleanup.

Visit our new website!

See what's happening at JRA and on the James at our new website. Take a look at www.jamesriverassociation.org.

You'll find more information, more news about events, easier navigation, and more ways for you to connect to the James River. Be sure to bookmark our site and keep checking back, because there are still more interactive features yet to come! Tell us your favorite places on the river and we'll share them on our site. E-mail your favorite places and comments to: jwarrington@jrava.org

**The James River Association is a member supported, nonprofit organization that works to provide a voice for the James River and its natural resources. If you'd like to help us continue our work, please call Sherrie Tribble to find out how you can join or donate at
(804) 788-8811 Ext. 202**

If you have any questions/ comments about the James RiverWatch please email awilliams@jrava.org.

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