



River Chicks Trip Report July 4th, 2008

This trip was not planned; however, several of the chicks decided to celebrate our country's birthday with a sunrise (well almost sunrise) paddle up Raccoon Creek. Reta Blair, Ellen Colodney (this was Ellen's maiden chick voyage-welcome), Chi'Mur Knight (it's been too long) and Wendy Jewett met at Hertford Municipal dock at 7:30. What a beautiful and warm morning. We left before all the boat traffic began.

The River Chicks

We paddled along the Front St. shore. Reta and Chi'Mur chatted about some mutual friends and Ellen kept an eye out for native plant species in order to gather seeds for her nursery. Wendy just paddled along. After going under the first bridge, the splendor of the creek was evident. Still and quiet, the creek was flat-perfect flat water paddling. The discussion was lively and included the rumor that Wendy was very wealthy, having a handsome trust fund. Many laughs were had and no one knows how that rumor was started. Most surprised, of course, was Wendy as she wondered where this great treasure was hidden. The rumor had the treasure at a million dollars.....

As we paddled we came across heron, osprey and a number of birds that were heard and not seen. None of which were we able to identify. Reta demonstrated her favorite warbler call, which really impressed Ellen! Ellen found a patch for wild blackberries and stopped to snack on them. She asked Reta if she would like to share. Here is one of Reta's secrets. Remember what gets said on the river-stays on the river.....Reta must have her fruit refrigerated!!!!

We continued up the creek and made it all the way up to highway before we turned around. It was lovely. On the way back, as we lazily paddled, Ellen came upon some very good plants for seed collecting and will return when they the seeds are ripe. We took our time and several hours later, upon reaching Hertford Harbor we decided to check out the Bear Garden platform. Chi-Mur left at this point, having another commitment.

The platform is well marked and in a great location and looks great from the water. Since we were tired from paddling, we did not try to access the platform. The dock was too high and it would have been difficult for us to get out and then back in. We would really like to have either some steps along the dock and/or some handholds to make it easier for those of us who are upper-body challenged.

It was a delightful and soothing paddle and we look forward to our next scheduled "River Chick" paddle on July 20th. We will meet at the Hertford municipal dock at 4:00 pm and paddle to Newbold to listen to bluegrass and snack and then paddle back.

Happy paddling
Submitted by Wendy