

Canoes make wilderness more accessible

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were going out in was too heavy for that, so, thankfully, we resorted to the second lift technique, which has one person grab under the bow deck and the other hold the stern deck on the other side. Then you just walk the canoe to the water.

Before venturing out on to the deck, it's important to put your life-jacket on in case you tumble into the water. Hey, I can see it happening to me.

The canoe is lowered into the water hand over hand.

To select a paddle, put one hand on the end that you grip, which is called the butt.

Put your other hand on the throat, which is the part where the shaft of the paddle branches out into the blade.

Lift the paddle above your head with your arms bent. Your arms should be at right angles.

Getting into a canoe is a mental battle of making yourself get into something that feels as if it will flip over at any moment.

But Mr. French assured me you would basically have to roll the canoe on its side so water could run over the gunnels for it to tip.

Once in the canoe, that relaxing, soothing feeling can finally begin.

"It's super peaceful, that's why I



STAFF PHOTO/ERIN RILEY

Staff writer Lisa Queen stays afloat with the help of Kevin French, program manager of the children's camp and outdoor education centre at Seneca College King campus.

love canoeing." Mr. French said, as we paddled around the pond surrounding Seneca's Recreation Island.

"I think the attraction of canoeing is you can go anywhere in a canoe.

"They displace such a small amount of water, you can travel in very shallow water. Canoes make a lot of wilderness areas accessible

and a lot of urban areas that have water accessible.

"You don't have to drive to Temagami and do a 14-day canoe trip to experience a little wilderness."

There are only a couple of basic strokes you need to learn to canoe, meaning anyone from kindergarten to old age can take up the pastime.

A canoe has a pivot point, the centre of gravity, and will move in relation to how you use your paddle.

Simple forward or backward strokes move the canoe back and forth.

Well, I figured even I could master that. But I kept choking the paddle by gripping it around the throat rather than farther up to get more of

the blade deeper into the water.

Then there are push or pull strokes, also known as draws and pries, which will move you sideways or send you in circles, depending on whether the paddlers in the bow and stern paddle in harmony or opposing each other.

Since the person in the back or stern has to steer the boat, he or she needs to learn an irritating stroke called the J-stroke.

Start off doing a normal forward stroke until your bottom hand reaches your hip. Then roll your top thumb away from you toward the water.

Sounds easy, but in a quickly moving canoe, it's tougher than it sounds.

Here's a tip, however. Cheat. Rather than rolling your hand, just let the blade drag like a rudder in the water for a second of two. Don't tell anyone I said that, though.

That tricky J-stroke aside, as Mr. French and I paddled around the still-as-glass pond, looking at Lady Eaton's mansion on one shore and birds nesting near shore, I think I finally found a sport that's just my speed.

Been There, Done That is a regular column highlighting the exploits of staff who try to keep up with experts in a wide variety of recreational activities.

MARKHAM TRAFFIC CALMING PROJECTS NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The Town of Markham is considering proposals to implement traffic calming measures on various streets in order to address speeding. Options that are being considered include installation of physical measures (such as raised intersections, intersection narrowings, speed humps, traffic circles, mountable centre medians) or other operational measures that may be warranted.

These projects are being planned under Schedule B of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment.

The Town is holding public meetings in the Council Chamber at the Town of Markham Civic Centre, 101 Town Centre Boulevard, as follows:

Time for all meetings is 7 p.m.

COMMUNITY	WARD	STREET NAME	MEETING DATE
Unionville	3	Fred Varley Drive / Sciberras Road	Wed. Apr. 24
	6	Village Gate Drive	
Thornhill	1	Kirk Drive	Mon. Apr. 29
	2	Willowbrook Road	To be determined
(Further consultation required. For information call: 905-479-7756)			
Milliken Mills	7	Coppard Avenue	Wed. May 1
	8	Aldergrove Drive	
Markham Village	4	Windridge Drive	Thurs. May 2
	5	Lower East Village (from Main St. to Elm St./Albert St. from Hwy 7 to Parkway Ave.)	

Town staff and the Ward Councillors will be available to discuss issues and the proposals with members of the public. Further public input from the affected community will be sought prior to making a final decision to proceed with the project.

For further information or to inspect a copy of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, please contact Timothy Oketch, Traffic Engineer, Town of Markham, 101 Town Centre Boulevard, Markham, Ontario, L3R 9W3, Tel.: 905-477-7000, ext. 7960.

This notice published April 18, 2002.



Fish found in deep pools

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treuse finishes.

Mr. Wegman emphasized proper presentation of bait is the difference between those who catch fish and those who don't.

"Keep in mind that the key difference to fishing for crappies is that they are accustomed to looking up to feed, whereas perch look straight ahead or even down. This means anglers need to present their baits accordingly; usually a float with a suspended bait for crappies and a bottom type of rig for yellow perch. At times, a straight hook-minnow combo rig works best for both."

Tackle, anyone? For small fish such as yellow perch and black crappies, a seven-foot light to medium-action fishing rod with a high-quality, open-faced spinning reel spooled up with four-pound monofilament test line is all that's required.

Based on his experience, Mr. Wegman said it's common for anglers to accidentally catch largemouth and smallmouth bass from the same waters yellow perch and black crappies inhabit. These fish must be released immediately as they don't become fair game until the last Saturday in June.

Anglers should know there's a catch limit on yellow perch: 50 in one day and a possession limit of 100 for those with a sport fishing residential licence and 25 in one day and a possession limit of 50 for those with a conservation fishing licence.

While streams that possess

rainbow trout, brown trout or brook trout do not open until April 27 (the last Saturday of the month), there are private facilities not bound by provincial regulations, which, in turn, allow anglers to get an early jump on the action.

These spots provide an ideal setting for the novice piscator, since tackle and bait are available. As well, those who fish at these facilities do not require a residential angling licence.

More importantly, the fish are generally easy to catch.

The cost to fish these places includes an admission fee plus payment for fish caught. Some of these operations include: Burd's Trout Fishing in Whitchurch-Stouffville (905-640-2928); The Ponds Fishing Preserve in Mount Albert (905-473-5291) and Woodland Ponds Fish Farm in Sandford (905-852-5487).

In addition to these public-access ponds, there are some private fishing clubs that offer more exclusivity and amenities such as playgrounds, fine dining, overnight accommodations and even a meeting room to conduct business on the side. One such place in York Region that has membership openings is The Franklin Club in Mount Albert (905-473-1469).

Nestled in rolling hills and teeming with wildlife, this 200-acre parcel of land has three ponds occupied by rainbow trout that can tip the scales at 10 pounds and brook trout up to five pounds. Two of the ponds are restricted to fly fishing. The club has its own hatchery.

For those willing to bide their

time and wait for the traditional opening day, Mother Nature will play a key role for those in pursuit of the migratory rainbow trout that inhabit the Rouge River feeder streams to spawn. A prolonged cold snap in days leading up to the opening could hold these fish before they make their way back toward Lake Ontario to spend the summer months.

In seeking these fish, which average four to five pounds and can reach 15 pounds, anglers should focus attention on deep holding pools for fish that are dropping back after spawning. Donning a pair of polarized sun glasses can also assist anglers in spotting fish in these areas.

Specialized tackle becomes key. The seasoned veteran will use sensitive graphite rods measuring up to 13 feet in length, along with single-action float reels, fluorocarbon line or monofilament line down to two-pound test material and balsawood or quill floats.

Spawn bags, cured single eggs, garden worms, meal worms, wax worms or maggots placed on a size 12 style 42 hook are commonly used baits seasoned trout anglers employ. There's also a variety of artificial offerings, including: artificial flies (woolly buggers and nymphs), small tube jigs in white or chartreuse, spinners (number two or three Vibrax) or wobbling plugs (skunk finish Kwikfish).

Because much of these waters meander through private property, anglers should obtain permission from landowners prior to setting foot on the land.