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Fletchers Cove Fishing Report, July 4, 2005



Happy Birthday to the good-old USA! Over the years many variations of the celebration of our country's birth have taken place at Fletcher's Cove. Before mid-century many people lived along the river bottom land above Georgetown and family gatherings, picnics and parties were the norm. To escape the summer heat folks would naturally head down to the water for a bit of relief. Some of my ancestors had a summer place or "camp" called Restmore just above the site of the Washington Canoe Club.

As the old-timers who had been allowed life tenancy in the now Federal Park passed away or moved, recreation rather than habitation became the activity du jour. During the 60's, 70's and early 80's (times I can remember!), Fletcher's was the site of a sizeable fireworks display with many Palisader's drifting down the hill to "blow off a little steam" literally. As private pyrotechnic displays are now seriously frowned upon, the focus has shifted to the National Mall's festivities and to school and community parties lighting the sky around us.

Picnicking is still very popular at Fletcher's Cove on the beautiful swath of land next to the Potomac. It is free, open to all, dawn to dusk and close in to town with plenty of parking. When I see a recently arrived family of two or three generations picnicking on Independence Day, smiling in the luxury of their freedom and hope, then the true meaning of America becomes a visceral reality and not just an abstract ideal.

With the mid-summer heat comes a new opportunity at Fletcher's Cove. The lush growth that defines Washington's nearly sub-tropical climate begs to be appreciated up close and personally. One good way to do that is to take a kayak trip along the emerald still waters of the C&O Canal. Fletcher's now has new twelve-foot single kayaks for use on the canal. On a trial run the other day, my daughter and her friend saw many turtles and birds. Despite a bit of noise from the urban surroundings out there somewhere, the canopy of green seemed to insulate the paddlers from the twenty-first century. Come give it a try. A little later in the summer the Kayaks will be available on the Potomac too.

Hot weather fishing in D.C. should be a relaxed affair. It's too torrid and humid to get all worked up over catching... it is the act of fishing that matters. Nourish the soul, float a bobber with your kid or neighbor, all the while leaving the world's problems to someone else for a few hours. Once you've stepped off the routine path, looked outside the box, you've succeeded and you may see comfort and renewal in simplicity.

Here's hoping your summer is a good one and come see us at Fletcher's.

Dan

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