

M. R. Hyker's Latest Adventure



04-30-2010, Tuckahoe SP, MD day hike: We wanted to test Mrshyker's new boots so we rounded up the dogs and drove across the bay bridge to a little talked about state park, Tuckahoe. The park boasts of a small stocked lake, campground, picnic area, water trails for canoers and kayakers and an equestrian center. What most of the public doesn't know about is its highly under-utilized but well maintained trail system. The trails, for the most part, were remarkably dry for a sea level venue, the sandy soil offering better than average drainage. The few really wet spots had either by-pass trails or boardwalks to traverse them. The canopy was tall and thick except in a couple of areas. The forest was comprised of Maple, Beech, Oak, Pine, Poplar and, along what was once a road, Cedar. The trails were lined in spring wildflowers, the most prominent of which was May Apple with its single, hidden white blossom. There were also a fair number of violets and Spring Beauties as well as Wild Geranium, Iris, False Solomon Seal, Hispid Buttercups and Star of Bethlehem.

We did essentially a "dumbbell" circuit using the middle "bar" to join two loops. First we hiked nearly the entire blue blazed Valley Trail, circling back to the "bar" on the yellow blazed Creek-side Cliff Trail. The Valley Trail follows the edge of the ... Arboretum with its own maze of trails. A person can really get a quick education on native plants and trees here. A section of the Creek-side Cliff trail was along an open power line swath but that was pretty short. We crossed the creek on a bridge near the mid-point of the blue trail and turned right onto the orange blazed Pee Wee trail. For the most part this stayed in the woods following the bank of the creek but followed a large open pasture for a little bit, a nice change in scenery. The only bad part of the hike was the last 0.6 miles. It was a 0.6 mile road (shoulder) walk back to the truck. By this time of the day you could feel the heat coming off of the asphalt. To add to this our local park trails are paved. Joey and Precious found absolutely nothing wrong with constantly trying to walk on the road as vehicles

slowed down to pass us. This subpar ending was redeemed by a nice view of the lake and the chuckling of young children, probably going fishing for their first time with their dads.

Oh, by the way, Mrshyker's feet were just fine after 9.2 miles of hiking at a pretty good pace. I think we finally got the boot issue resolved.