

## **M. R. Hyker's Latest Adventure**



**11/28/2010, Patuxent River Park Hike:** Janet and I were supposed to do this hike on the day after Thanksgiving but foul weather caused a change in plans. We cleaned carpets instead. Sunday was too nice to stay indoors so, even though we had spent four hours cleaning carpets and hiking 9 miles the day before, we grabbed the park map and Google maps directions and headed to this lowland park for a brisk hike. Being a lowland hike there was very little in the way of elevation gain (TOPO! Calculated 75 feet over 7 miles.). All of the trails are marked with color coded white stakes. First we took the purple trail to an open meadow which we followed the edge of to the blue trail. The blue trail is mostly a footpath while the other trails, for the most part, are old woods roads. We passed what appeared to be an old quarry trench before hooking up with the yellow trail. This trail mostly followed Swan Point Creek. We repeatedly found what were clearly dry remnants of abandoned beaver ponds and wondered what happened to the fury critters. After a brief snack at the loop around point we soon found out.

We descended on the red trail to a bridge crossing of the creek to find the entire valley flooded. It seems the beavers moved their abode a bit farther downstream. I was able to walk through the water to the bridge w/o getting water in my boots but a few steps farther I could tell the water was at least a foot deep. If this would have been summer time it would not have been an issue. We backtracked on the yellow and blue trails to a junction with the red trail that was above the beaver pond. Here we found an industrial artifact, an old concrete mixer. This might tie in with the quarry trench we found earlier. The hike along the Green Trail was pretty nice with large Tulip Poplars lining the trail. We took the time to walk the nature trail/boardwalk and took in the views of Jug Bay before ascending to the Rural Living Museums with its old log cabin and mail order Sears House before returning to the truck. This was a very nice quick get away hike and we will come back when things are greener and I don't mind getting my feet wet.