

PADDLER

www.ricka.org

Newsletter of the Rhode Island Canoe & Kayak Association

Vol. XLIX

No. 5

May 2026

May Club Meeting Get to Know RICKA Night at the Kayak Centre

Tuesday, May 26, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

If you are a new paddler looking to get started, or a seasoned paddler looking to branch out into new types of paddling, then this is the meeting for you. Leaders from each of our practice groups – [Flatwater](#), [Sea Kayak](#), [Whitewater](#) and [Wilderness](#) – will provide an overview of their groups. You will learn the types of trips that we do, the equipment that you will need, how to sign up for trips, what happens on the water, and what training opportunities are available. It is a great opportunity to learn about all you can do with RICKA.

The meeting will be held at the [Kayak Centre](#) in Wickford, a great RICKA partner and the largest full-service paddle sports retailer in Rhode Island. You will also be able to check out their great selection of high quality boats and gear, and if you decide to make a purchase you will be eligible for special [discounts](#) available only to RICKA members.

The Kayak Centre is located in historic Wickford Village [at 70 Brown Street](#). We hope to see you there!



Last year's Get to Know RICKA Night at the Kayak Centre

Blackstone Valley Paddle Club Resumes Tuesday Evening Paddles

The [Blackstone Valley Paddle Club](#) (BVPC) will begin its 28th season on Tuesday, May 12th at 5:30 p.m. with a joint paddle with the [Southern New England Paddlers](#) (SNEP) on the Upper Pawtuxet River in Hope, RI. Trips will then continue every Tuesday through August. Come paddle with us as we enjoy the scenic waterways of the Blackstone River Valley.

To participate in the BVPC events, a RICKA membership fee of \$15.00 is required, as is a \$10.00 membership fee for the BVPC – [you can join here](#). See the schedule on page 6 or the BVPC website at <https://ricka.org/BVPCcalendar.html>.

RICKA elects Executive Officers for the 2026-27 Year

Congratulations to the Executive Officers for the 2026-27 year that were elected at our Annual Meeting in April:

President: Deb Britt

Vice President: Chuck Horbert

Secretary: Skye Pechie

Treasurer: Frank Cortesa

We are also pleased to welcome Leigh Besson and Steve Norris to the Executive Board as Members at Large.

Thanks to all of our Executive Board Members for your service to the club, and especially to Erik Eckilson and Steve Pechie who finished their terms as President and Vice President this year.

From the RICKA Library...

Sea Kayak Videos from Derek Hutchinson

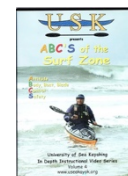
Beyond the Cockpit - Volume 3

Many paddlers do all of their strokes and maneuvers while keeping their body directly over their kayak. Most sea kayakers turn a lot easier when they are put on edge. However, when you put your kayak on edge it increases the possibility of a capsize. If you can support yourself with your paddle as you lean out "Beyond the Cockpit" you can begin doing amazing things in calm water or rough water conditions. Derek has developed a unique approach (techniques & progressions) for getting his students to edge and lean their kayaks without the fear of capsizing and looking good in the process.



ABC's of the Surf Zone - Volume 4

This video will help the sea kayaker successfully negotiate their way through the surf zone while launching and landing. Even though there are some surfing demonstrations in sea kayaks, the focus of this video is learning how NOT to surf and remain in control. A full list of flatwater drills and skills are demonstrated to prepare you for the surf zone. The main sections include: oceanography, ocean effects on your kayak, the ABC's (Attitude, Body-Boat-Blade, Control, Safety), flat water drills, surf zone drills, launching, landing, capsizing in the surf zone, group launching & landing, surfing and more.



These are just two of the great videos and books covering the range of paddling topics that are available in our [collection](#). If you would like to check out these or any other selections, contact Bill Hahn at librarian@ricka.org. Library selections can be mailed to you with a postage paid return mailer provided at no cost to the borrower.

RICKA is an ACA



Paddle America Club

Executive Board:

The next Executive Board meeting will be held on May 6th at 7:00 p.m. online as a ZOOM videoconference. To participate contact Deb Britt at botherbird@gmail.com and the Zoom link will be sent to you.

Newsletter Editor:

Erik Eckilson

Email: editor@ricka.org

Newsletter Archive:

<http://ricka.org/paddler/paddler/PaddlerList.HTML>

Membership:

Gary Powers

Email: rickamembership@gmail.com

Registration Form:

[Join the Fun!](#)

The **Paddler** is published monthly except December by the Rhode Island Canoe & Kayak Association, Inc.

Your RICKA membership expired on March 31, 2026...

Please renew your RICKA membership now!

Please visit the website at:

[Join the Fun!](#)

RICKA Executive Board Members

Executive Officers

President : Deb Britt

Vice President: Chuck Horbert

Secretary: Skye Pechie

Treasurer: Frank Cortesa

Practice Group Chairs

Conservation: Ron Entringer

Pat (Mayhew) Lardner

Flatwater: Cheryl Thompson

Librarian: Bill Hahn

Membership: Gary Powers

Safety & Education: Steve Pechie

Sea Kayak: Rich Coupland

Webmaster: Cheryl Thompson

Whitewater: Paul Leclerc

Wilderness: Chuck Horbert

Members at Large

Leigh Besson

Sharon Dragon

Michael Hazeltine

Peter Hill

Pat (Mayhew) Lardner

Steve Norris

Danny O'Shea

Brenda Rashleigh

Aaron Rouby

Jennifer Stanton

Due to frequent spam and phishing attacks, we have removed personal phone numbers and email addresses for executive board members from the Paddler. If you need to contact the club, please reach out to Deb Britt at botherbird@gmail.com.

Please Renew your Membership Now

It's Easy with Our On-line Registration Form!

You'll be supporting Rhode Island's oldest and largest paddle sports club

For 49 years, the Rhode Island Canoe & Kayak Association (RICKA) has been providing great paddling opportunities for its members. We are the oldest and largest paddle sport club in Rhode Island.

A new membership year began on April 1st, so please join or renew your membership today. To register for this year's season, use the online form by clicking: [Join the Fun](#)

You will see that there isn't a lot of "required" information, just ...

- Name
- Email
- Type of membership



Optional fields allow you to add more detail or a free household adult to your membership.

Types of membership include:

- RICKA-only
- Combined RICKA/BVPC
- Add-on BVPC (If already RICKA-only)

After entering your info, follow the flow of the form to enter your payment option.



Choosing the preferred no-hassle online payment option, you will be directed to a PayPal-branded online portal where you can choose to pay with credit or debit card. **You do not need to have a PayPal account.**

Choosing check payment is available with the address provided when that option is chosen. RICKA is run by member-volunteers so please expect several weeks for checks to be processed.

Upon registering you will be emailed a welcome message with important details related to our club. In that email will be a pdf attachment that includes a copy of your form and membership card (valid upon payment). Utilize either for store discounts.



Finally, if you have any issues or prefer not to utilize the online form, simply email membership at: rickenmembership@gmail.com

So why should you join RICKA? There are many good reasons, but let's start with the trips.

Each year RICKA organizes hundreds of trips ranging from easy daytrips to weeklong excursions. Whether you enjoy [flatwater](#), [sea kayak](#), [whitewater](#) or [wilderness tripping](#), there is trip for every interest and skill level at RICKA.

Are you looking to improve your paddling skills? Training is also an important part of the RICKA mission. Each year RICKA offers many fun and informative training sessions. Many of these sessions are offered free of charge, or at a significant discount to our members.

In addition to trips and training, we produce eleven monthly issues of our outstanding newsletter the [Paddler](#), hold [monthly meetings](#) with interesting and informative speakers, and maintain the [websites](#), [Facebook page](#), and message boards that keep you up-to-date on trips and activities.

Our [library](#) also includes an extensive collection of paddling books and videos covering all aspects of paddling.

Do you need to buy or sell boat? You should check out the [RICKA Classified Ads](#) on our website and in the Paddler. If you can't find what you need there, RICKA members also get [special discounts](#) at several area retailers.

Thank you for your support in the coming year, and we look forward to seeing you on the water.

Paddling with RICKA Sea Kayak

What is the RICKA Sea Kayak group?

The [RICKA Sea Kayak](#) group is specifically focused on kayaking in coastal environments. We organize trips throughout the spring, summer, and fall. We encourage people to join us and discover the joy of sea kayaking.

What types of trips do you do?

Our trips range in difficulty from novice to highly experienced. RICKA does not assign ratings to paddlers. We assign difficulty levels to our trips (see [RICKA Sea Kayaking Levels](#)). A trip's rating is designed to be a guide to help you judge if you have the skills to participate in a trip.

Who runs the trips?

RICKA is not a professional paddling organization. Our members coordinate paddles for their own enjoyment and the enjoyment of the rest of the paddling community. These trip coordinators are not professional guides or instructors.

How do I know if a trip is right for me?

You should assess your comfort level for participating in the trip based on the difficulty level, the forecasted conditions, your skill and experience, and your comfort with the other participants in the group. Each participant in the group trip shares the responsibility for the safety and enjoyment of the entire group.

Surf and rocks present special dangers to paddlers. Surf is unpredictable and powerful, and rocks can smash you or your kayak. Only skilled paddlers should venture into these conditions.



RICKA paddlers off Sakonnet Point in Little Compton

How do I find out about trips?

From June through September, RICKA Sea Kayak trips are posted on the trip calendar on our website:

<http://www.rickaseakayaking.org/forum2/calendar.php>

All times listed are **LAUNCH** times. Please arrive early enough to prepare. If necessary, paddles will be cancelled by 8:00 a.m. Check the [message board](#) for cancellation notices.

Off-season, "show & go" trips are posted on the message board:

<http://www.rickaseakayaking.org/forum2/forumdisplay.php?fid=3>

What equipment do I need?

In order to participate in RICKA Sea Kayak trips you **MUST** have a sea kayak (15 feet or longer with front and rear floatation and perimeter lines on the deck), a Coast Guard approved PFD, a spray skirt, paddle, paddle float, bilge pump, helmet (for surfing or rock gardening), appropriate clothing for the conditions, and a whistle (or other approved daytime signaling device).

We also recommend that you bring drinking water, food, sunscreen, a change of clothes, a knife and a compass. For sunset or night paddles, a headlamp and coast guard approved navigation lights are

also required. It is also a good idea to bring an emergency strobe light.

What about cold water trips?

When the water is cold hypothermia is a serious danger. Submersion in cold water dramatically reduces a paddler's ability to assist in their own rescue.

In cold-water conditions, we required that all paddlers wear a dry suit with fleece or polypro underneath, a hat or neoprene hood to protect the head, and neoprene gloves or poggies to protect the hands. A change of warm, dry clothes stored in a dry bag is also required.

Sea Kayak Trip Levels

Level 1: No previous kayak experience required.

Level 2: Participants should be able to:

- Paddle 6 miles in a day.
- Perform a wet exit.
- Perform an assisted deep-water rescue.
- Maintain a heading for short distances without the use of a rudder.
- Turn a kayak using forward and reverse sweep strokes.

Level 3: Participants should be able to:

- Perform skills listed under Level 2.
- Paddle 12 miles in a day.
- Control a kayak in 15-knot winds.
- Feel comfortable in 2-3 foot waves.
- Handle surf and beach landings.

Level 4: Participants should be able to:

- Perform the skills listed under Level 3.
- Paddle 15 miles in a day.
- Control a kayak in 20-knot winds.
- Handle large ocean swells.
- Handle currents.

Level 5: Participants should be able to:

- Perform the skills listed under Level 4.
- Paddle 20+ miles in a day.
- Control a kayak in 25-knot winds.

Saltwater Paddling for Everyone

In Rhode Island, we are fortunate to have great saltwater paddling not just for sea kayakers, but also for flatwater paddlers. Here are some of our favorite flatwater and sea kayaking venues.

Flatwater - these sites are somewhat protected and are suitable for experienced flatwater paddlers.

Point Judith Pond South Kingstown



[Point Judith Pond](#), or the Great Salt Pond is the second largest of the Rhode Island's South County salt ponds. It is a shallow, four-mile long pond located behind the barrier beaches that form Point Judith. The easiest put-in is boat ramp at [Marina Park](#). From there, you can paddle out into the Upper Pond, through the Narrows, and into Point Judith Pond itself. There are numerous coves and islands to explore.

Ninigret Pond Charlestown



[Ninigret Pond](#) is the largest of Rhode Island's South County salt ponds. Ninigret is separated from the ocean by the fragile barrier island that forms East Beach. It is connected to Green Hill Pond by a small tidal inlet. Putting in at [Ninigret Park](#) allows you to explore the west end of the pond, including a short hike across the barrier island for a view of the beach. Putting in at the [Charlestown Beach](#) put-in allows you to explore the east end of the pond including the Charlestown Breachway and [Green Hill Pond](#).

Narrow River North Kingstown and Narragansett



The Narrow River, also known as the Pettaquamscutt River, arises at Carr Pond

Dam at the Gilbert Stuart Birthplace and flows south for 6-miles forming the border between North Kingstown and Narragansett. Putting in at the [Narrow River Fishing Area](#) allows you to paddle upstream exploring the [Upper Narrows and the Upper and Lower Ponds](#). Putting in at the [Sprague Bridge](#) provides easy access to [Pettaquamscutt Cove and the Lower Narrows](#) where the river flows into Narragansett Bay.

Wickford Harbor North Kingstown



Wickford is located on the West Passage of Narragansett Bay, and is built around a large, well-protected harbor. Today, it is a picturesque village whose waterfront streets are lined with shops, restaurants and colonial-era homes. Putting in at [Wilson Park](#) allows you to explore the backwaters around Rabbit and Cornelius Islands before heading into Wickford Harbor and down into the Cove.

Sea Kayak - these sites are in open water and more exposed, and are suitable for experienced sea kayakers.

Sakonnet Point Little Compton



[Sakonnet Harbor](#) provides access to West Island, East Island, Little Cormorant Rock and the Sakonnet Point Lighthouse. It is one of RICKA's most popular rock garden venues. The water around the islands is very exposed and can be quite active. RICKA members also enjoy surfing Surfer's Beach near the Haffenreffer estate.

Kings Beach Newport



Launch at [Kings Beach](#) and you are paddling along the amazing

rocky shore of southern Aquidneck Island. If you head east you will pass mansions on the rocky cliffs along Newport's Ocean Drive and Cliff Walk. Seal Rock lies a third of a mile to the south - a wild, exposed area that is a favorite for advanced rock gardening. If you head west you will pass Brenton Point and will enter the open waters of Narragansett Bay.

Bay Campus Narragansett



The [URI Bay Campus](#) provides access the West Passage of Narragansett Bay. To the south lies Bonnet Shores and Whale Rock - a frequent rock gardening site. From there you can cross to Beavertail at the southern tip of Jamestown - one of the most scenic and exposed coastal locations in RI.

Fort Wetherill Jamestown



[Fort Wetherill](#) provides access to the lower East Bay. The southern Jamestown shoreline provides outstanding rock gardening and coastal touring, or head north to The Dumplings for easy tide race play during peak flows. Head east across the East Passage, with due caution in very busy waters, to reach Castle Hill Lighthouse, and from there around Brenton Point for rock gardening and coastal touring.

Potter Cove Jamestown



[Potter Cove](#) gives you access to Jamestown, Newport and the coves and islands of the upper East Bay. If you head south, you will pass under the Newport Bridge and into Jamestown Harbor. From there you can cross to Newport Harbor, Rose Island and Gould Island.

Before you Paddle...

Educate yourself about the area in which you will be paddling, and carry appropriate gear, clothing, water, food, etc. Always check the weather forecast before launching. **YOU ALONE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING THE DECISION TO LAUNCH YOUR BOAT.**

Blackstone Valley Paddle Club Trips

Unless otherwise noted, Blackstone Valley Paddle Club trips are suitable for all boats and skill levels. More detailed trip descriptions can be found on the [web site](#)

May 12th - meet at 5:30 (due to the early sunset)
Upper Pawtuxet – Hope, RI
Coordinators: Skye scitamb.2@juno.com and Steve Pechie resq1192@gmail.com

Season opener for [BVPC](#) is a joint paddle with Southern New England Paddlers ([SNEP](#)). A 4-mile round trip up the Pawtuxet River to the Scituate Reservoir and back again. Bring a headlamp.

May 19th - launching promptly at 6:15
West River – Uxbridge, MA
Trip coordinators: Julie Riendeau Julierie87@gmail.com, Steve Reindeau steverie154@gmail.com and Frank Cortesa frankcortesa@charter.net

You'll have the chance to see lots of wildlife as you paddle upstream through this stretch of clean, clear flatwater. Suitable for boats 15-foot and under in length. We will be paddling around obstacles and over beaver dams.

May 26th - launching promptly at 6:15
Hopedale Pond – Hopedale, MA
Trip coordinators: Frank Cortesa 508-369-8205 frankcortesa@charter.net and Jim Crowley crowbird888@msn.com

We will explore Hopedale Pond, which provided power to the mills of the Draper Corporation. Draper grew to become the one of the world's largest manufacturer of cotton looms.

Flatwater Trips

Late changes and cancellations will be posted on the [Flatwater Message Board](#). Please check the board before leaving for any trip. Check [web site](#) for directions and/or GPS coordinates.

May 16th – meet at 10:00 for a 10:30 launch
Charles River - Redwing Bay, Needham, MA
Trip coordinator - Erik Eckilson eckilson@cox.net 401-651-5062

We will put in at the [Charles River Peninsula/Redwing Bay](#) and paddle upstream - 11-mile round trip if we go all the way to [Elm Bank Reservation](#) in Wellesley. The river starts off as marshland and then turns to woodland with some large houses along the banks. After a break for lunch, we will head back downstream. Longer boats will do better on this trip. Bring a lunch.

May 28th - meet at 4:30 for a 5:00 launch
Mystic Seaport – Mystic, CT
Trip coordinator: Skye Pechie scitamb.2@juno.com

We will start off paddling around the seaport viewing the old sailing vessels then paddle under the rotating bridge. The river is suitable for canoes and kayaks 12 feet and longer. Bringing a light, a bilge pump, and skirts are required for kayaks in case of wake. Minimum boat length is 12-feet.

May 30th - meet at 10:00 for a 10:30 launch
Chipuxet River and Worden Pond - South Kingstown

Trip coordinator: Aaron Rouby aaronrouby@gmail.com

We will put in at Taylor's Landing and paddle down to the boat ramp on Worden Pond. The first half of the trip is narrow and twisty and more suitable for shorter boats. We will meet at Taylors Landing to organize the shuttle.

May 30th – meet at 5:30 for a 6:00 launch
Moonlight Paddle on Worden Pond - South Kingstown
Trip Coordinators: Jen Stanton bigredstantons@gmail.com Cindy Gianfrancesco and Chuck Horbert chorbert13@gmail.com 401-418-2838.

Worden Pond is the second-largest freshwater lake in RI. Bring a headlamp or waterproof light.

May 31st - meet at 10:00 for a 10:30 shuttle
Upper Wood River - Route 165
Trip coordinator: shdrag1@gmail.com 401-225-3942

The beginning of the river may be narrow, shallow and rocky but soon opens up. Trip is approximately 7 miles long. Paddlers with kayaks 15 feet and under will have an easier time navigating the river. Bring a lunch.

Sea Kayak Trips

Sea Kayak trips are now posted in the Show and Go Section of the [Sea Kayak Message Board](#). Appropriate skills and equipment are required

Sea Kayak Paddle and Potluck/Season Planning Meeting

May 2nd – Paddle at 10:30,
Potluck/Planning Meeting at 3:30

See the [Sea Kayak Message Board](#) for final details. Please come to the Planning Meeting even if you cannot come to the Paddle - we need your input.

RICKA Classifieds

Classified ads free for RICKA members and are printed here on space-available basis. Please see the [website](#) for the complete list.

- **P&H Virgo MV** – 2022, blue, excellent condition, little used. New value \$2,000 - asking \$750. johnjarrottharkey@gmail.com or text 401-654-3168
- **PRICE REDUCED: Perception Eclipse** – fiberglass with yellow deck and white hull. Length: 17 ft, width: 22.5 inches, weight: 52 lbs. with rudder. Ideal for a medium to large paddler - \$698. Contact sandbobo@yahoo.com
- **Eddyline Equinox** - \$500, needs work. I am moving and cannot keep a boat at my new place. Contact Weezrad@yahoo.com or 508-817-6931
- **Thule Square Bar EVO Roof Rack** - 58" long with installed Thule Outrigger II kayak assist, 2 torque wrenches, mounts for 2011 Sonata with installed locks and 2 keys. Complete system going for \$600 new, asking \$150 or best. Contact Gary at garpow28@aol.com
- **Thule Kayak Rack** - 53-inch Thule square Evo bars with end caps, Thule rain gutter low feet, 2 sets of Malone SeaWing saddles with four new straps. It is suitable for a car with gutters, a pickup truck with a cap or a small trailer. \$250 for the complete rack. Contact timothyjmotte@gmail.com
- **Necky Zoar Kayak** – yellow, 16'. Tough polyethylene construction with hatches and bulkheads in bow and stern and perimeter lines as well as bungees. Rudder that is operated by foot paddles. Comes with a black cockpit cover and a yellow spray skirt. Weight is 65 lbs. - \$450. Contact/text at 401-410-7434
- **Old Town Loon 120** - sunrise, one season old, \$850. Contact dbldl@cox.net
- **Eddyline Sitka ST** - excellent condition and has always been stored inside while not in use. White hull with yellow deck. Price includes a Seals 1.4 spray skirt and NRS neoprene cockpit cover. Location is Westport, MA - \$1,050 or best offer. Contact David.dewitt@outlook.com or cell 608-239-9646
- **Best offer for Necky Looksha** - 17' sea kayak, good condition. Used a half dozen times in the last 8 years. Best offer. Contact 860-428-5440
- **Valley Avocet** - yellow top/red trim. 2009, but mint, with keel strip and compass. Light layup, keyhole cockpit - \$1,000. Contact terry401@duck.com or 401-258-1016
- **Warren Light Craft Little Wing 15.5 kayak** - weighs only 28 pounds. The cockpit is 33" x 16". Selling for \$1,900. Cash and pickup only. Contact petekir@comcast.net
- **NDK Explorer Sea Kayak** - 2024, dimensions are 17'6" x 21.5". Cockpit: 32" x 15.0" Weight: 56 lbs - \$4,500. Contact sandy@ducharme.org
- **Necky Chatham 17** - full carbon with glass keel strip. Excellent condition. \$1,400. Contact aikijerry@gmail.com
- **Valley Anas Acuta Sea Kayak** – Fiberglass with gray body and blue trim. 17' 2" by 20", good condition. Ocean cockpit, Sea-Lect hatch covers, deck mounted compass, retractable skeg, and Jackson Sweet Cheeks seat. Comes with Greenlandic style skirt and cockpit cover - \$1,200 cash only, in person. Located near Mansfield, CT. Contact wsmith16@charter.net
- **PRICE REDUCTION: Necky Zoar Kayak** - yellow. 16'. Tough polyethylene construction. Hatches with bulkheads bow and stern. Perimeter lines on deck as well as bungees. Rudder that is operated by foot paddles. Comes with a black cockpit cover and a yellow spray skirt. Weight is 65 lbs. - \$550. Contact/text at 401-410-7434

RICKA Adirondacks Trip September 12-19, 2026

The Flatwater group will return to [Lake Eaton Campground](#) in Long Lake Village, NY for the 2026 Adirondacks camping and paddling trip.

You can make campground reservations now at Reserve America:

<http://www.reserveamerica.com/>

Please try to select a site in the 10-54 area (waterfront from 31-54).

If you are planning on joining the group, please contact Chuck Horbert at chorbert13@gmail.com to be added to the list for future organizational emails.

Emails will be sent only to those who sign up

Send your classified ads to RICKA Webmaster Cheryl Thompson, 53 Anan Wade Road, Glocester, RI 02857-2611 or webmaster@ricka.org. Include your name for membership verification. Please notify the Webmaster when your gear is sold so that the ad can be removed. Acceptance, duration and formatting of your ad are at the webmaster's and newsletter editor's discretion.