



A CommonHealth Presentation

Your Virginia State Parks

- 35 state parks
- 54 natural areas
- More than 112,300 total acres
- 500 miles of trails
- 241 cabins
- 19 lodges
- 1,834 campsites in 25 different parks
- 87 picnic shelters
- 23 visitor centers
- 11 swimming beaches
- 5 swimming pools
- 2 restaurants; 19 snack bars

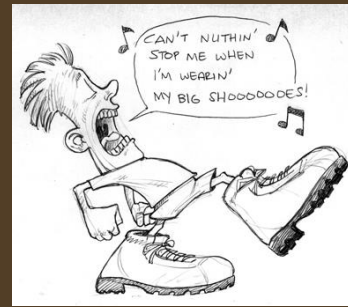


www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/

Take a hike basics

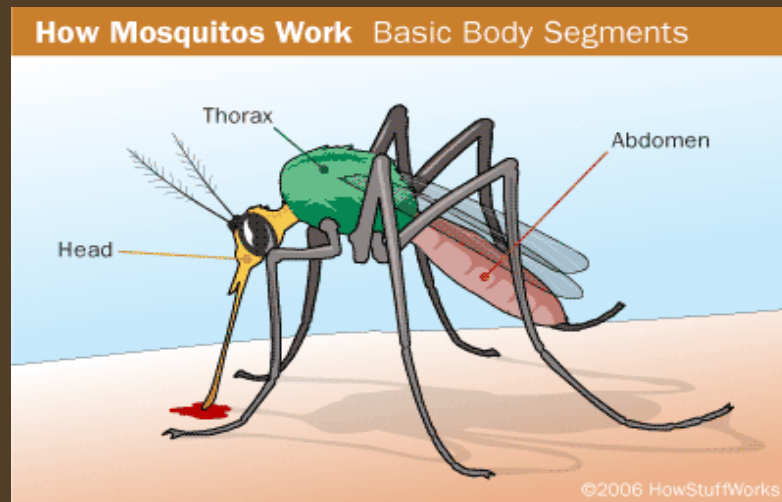
BE PREPARED

- Have a map
- Wear protection (Sunscreen and Insect Repellent)
- Dress in layers and wear the right shoes
- Buddy up



Little buggers

- Who do mosquitoes prefer to bite...
males or females?
- Which blood type do they find most delicious...
Type A, Type B, Type AB, or Type O?
- A slim person or an overweight one?
 - A cool body or a hot one?



If you are a warm, overweight male with type O blood...you are a mosquito's dream dinner.



Try DEET, Picaridin, Oil of lemon eucalyptus, or other plant based oils repellents. Always follow the application guidelines for the best results.

Poison Plants

- Is this poison Ivy? How can you tell?



What to avoid

Poison Oak

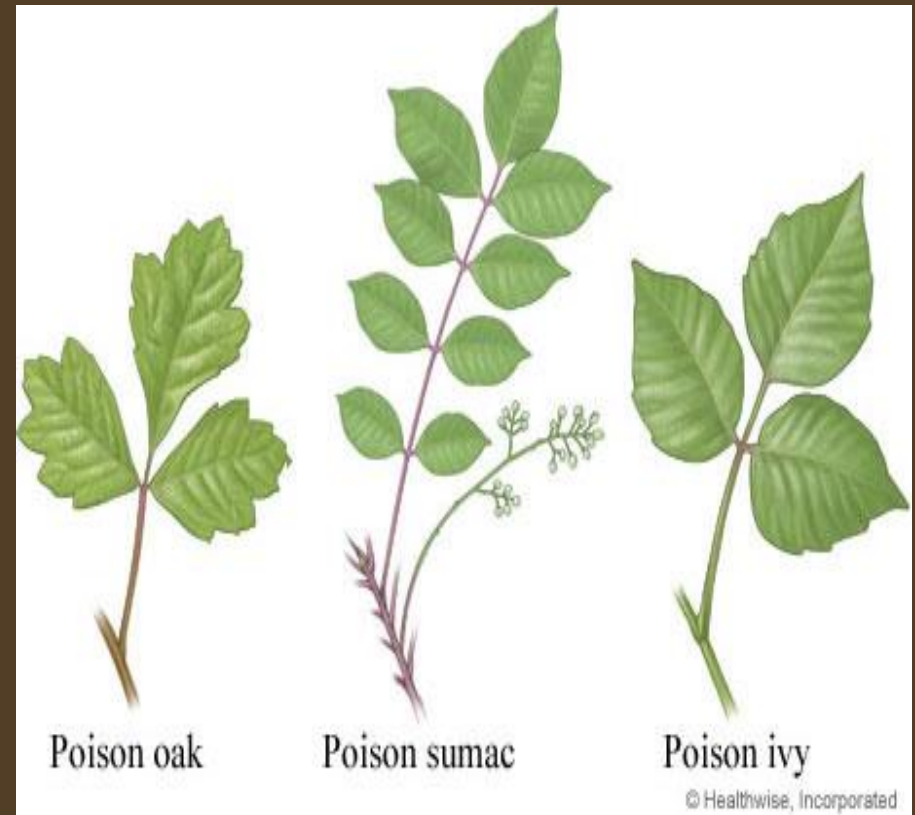
- Shrub less than 10 feet tall
- Grows on dry sites, mainly in eastern VA

Poison Sumac

- Small tree
- Grows on moist sites in the southern and eastern VA
- Many other varieties of sumac are not poisonous at all

Poison Ivy

- Leaves of three – Let it be
- Fuzzy rope vine
- Can be shiny, dull, red, green





Bears - oh my!



What would you do if you saw a bear?

- A) RUN!!!!!!
- B) Lay down and play dead
- C) Stop and stay calm, giving the bear plenty of room to escape while backing away slowly and using a soothing voice
- D) Go right up to it and punch it in the snout

There have been no unprovoked bear attacks in Virginia

Ticks & Lyme disease

- Wear enclosed shoes or boots, long-sleeved shirts, and long pants. Tuck pant legs into shoes or boots to prevent ticks from crawling up legs.
- Use an insect repellent containing 20% to 30% DEET
- Wear light-colored clothing to help you see ticks more easily.
- Keep long hair pulled back or tucked in a cap for protection.
- Don't sit on the ground outside.
- Check for ticks regularly — both indoors and outdoors. Wash clothes and hair after leaving tick-infested areas.



Bites



It's important to know and watch for symptoms of Lyme disease because ticks are hard to find and it's easy to overlook a tick bite — in fact, many people who get Lyme disease don't remember being bitten.



1. Circular rash appearing within 1–2 weeks of infection
2. Flu-like symptoms such as swollen lymph nodes, fatigue, headache, and muscle aches
3. Without treatment - arthritis, particularly in the knees, and memory lapses

Geocaching – a high-tech treasure hunt

Geocaching is played throughout the world by adventure seekers equipped with GPS devices, which are often even on cell phones. The basic idea is to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, outdoors and then share your experiences online.

Easy Steps to Geocaching

- Register for a free basic membership at www.geocaching.com
- Click "Hide & Seek a Cache."
- Enter your postal code and click "search."
- Choose any geocache from the list and click on its name.
- Enter the coordinates of the geocache into your GPS Device.
- Use your GPS device to assist you in finding the hidden geocache.
- Sign the logbook and return the geocache to its original location.
- Share your Geocaching stories and photos online.



I want to ride my bicycle

Many of Virginia's State Parks offer road or mountain biking

- To avoid traumatic brain injury, wear a helmet.
- Check out your bike and be sure it can handle the terrain
- Follow the rules of the road
- Be visible and focused



Beach adventures

At the Beach:

Don't worry about sharks...rip currents are much more common
(aka riptides or undertows)

Look for:

- Channel of churning, choppy water
- Area having a notable difference in water color
- Line of foam, seaweed, or debris moving steadily seaward
- Break in the incoming wave pattern



To safely get out of a rip current, swim parallel to the shoreline until you are out of the current. If you are not a confident swimmer; stay calm, tread water, and signal for help--never fight to swim toward shore.

Swimming Holes



- Learn to swim. The American Red Cross has swimming courses for people of any age and swimming ability. To enroll in swim course, contact your local Red Cross chapter.
- Select a supervised area and never swim alone.
- Select an area that has good water quality and safe natural conditions.
- Make sure the water is deep enough before entering headfirst. A feet first entry is much safer than diving.
- Be sure rafts and docks are in good condition. Never swim under a raft or dock.

Boating

- Wear a life jacket
- Don't drink alcohol
- Boat with a friend
- Have drinking water
- Know the weather conditions before heading out
- Let someone on shore know where you are going and when you expect to return



The heat is on



Dos or Don'ts?

- Drink plenty of fluids - Do
- Eat regularly - Do
- Drink fluids while swimming – Do
- Wear light, loose fitting clothes that can breathe - Do
- Wear sunscreen - Do
- Check the weather forecast - Do
- Diet through sweating – Don't
- Cool your body down as fast as possible – Don't

Heat Illness

- **Heat cramps:**

Heat cramps are involuntary muscle spasms that can occur during or following physical exertion, which generally result from an electrolyte imbalance due to excessive loss of salts. **Direct pressure, massage, and stretching of the cramped muscle should help alleviate the cramp.** This is the first sign of heat illness and is a signal to drink more water and/or reduce the amount of intensity of physical exertion.

- **Heat exhaustion:**

Heat exhaustion is a more serious state of heat illness that usually occurs in a person who has not acclimated himself or herself to exercising in the heat. Excessive sweating, cold clammy skin, dizziness, nausea, and a weak and rapid pulse are some of the symptoms to be aware of. **Anyone experiencing these symptoms should immediately stop exercising and get into the shade, or better yet, get inside an air-conditioned building.** An abundant amount of fluid should be consumed. If the situation seems severe enough, elevate the feet and seek medical help.

- **Heat stroke:**

The most advanced stage of heat illness is called heat stroke. In simple terms, heat stroke is a break down of the cooling mechanisms of the body induced by high body temperature. Someone who is experiencing heat stroke may stop sweating altogether and the skin will appear dry and hot. The pulse is usually strong but very rapid. The individual may have labored and difficult breathing. Body temperature may exceed 106 degrees Fahrenheit. **Heat stroke is an emergency that requires medical attention! Transport the individual to the hospital as quickly as possible (hose down, ice packs, complete submersion in cold or icy water).** Remove as much clothing as possible and treat for shock by elevating the feet slightly.

Storm Basics

Do you know the difference between a Watch and a Warning?

- ***Watch***: The C in watch stands for Check . Check the news alerts on radio and TV and keep alert for weather that is changing.
- ***Warning***: Remember the R in warning stands for Run ... you may need to take immediate Action! The condition is definitely approaching or is already in your local area.





Thunderstruck

If you are inside during a thunderstorm do you...

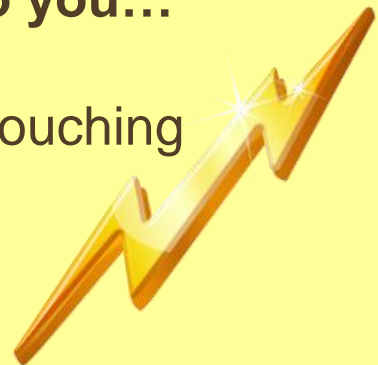
- A) Open up the windows for fresh air. Draw a nice bath and call a few friends to chat since you are stuck inside.
- B) Keep all windows and doors closed. Avoid metal pipes and electrical equipment. Wait until 30 minutes after the last thunderclap before going outside.

If you are caught outside during a thunderstorm do you...

- A) Hide under a tree by the lake
- B) Try to get to a building or a car but if not available, squat low on the ground in an open space

If you are caught in a car during a thunderstorm do you...

- A) Drive faster to outrun the lightning
- B) Pull over where trees can not fall on the car and avoid touching metal inside the car





Flooding



What to do when a flash flood watch is issued and you are away from home:

- Conditions are in place that could cause rapid and dangerous (flash) flooding in your area.
- Be alert to signs of flooding and be ready to evacuate at a moment's notice.
- Move quickly to higher ground away from rivers, streams, creeks and storm drains.
- If you are driving and come upon rapidly rising waters, turn around and find another route.
- If your car stalls in rapidly rising waters, abandon it immediately and climb to higher ground.

Visit Virginia Parks this summer &
Stay safe



THANK YOU!

For more information go to....

www.commonhealth.virginia.gov

