



More Than Just a Rusted Car: Traces of Tuckahoe's Farming Past

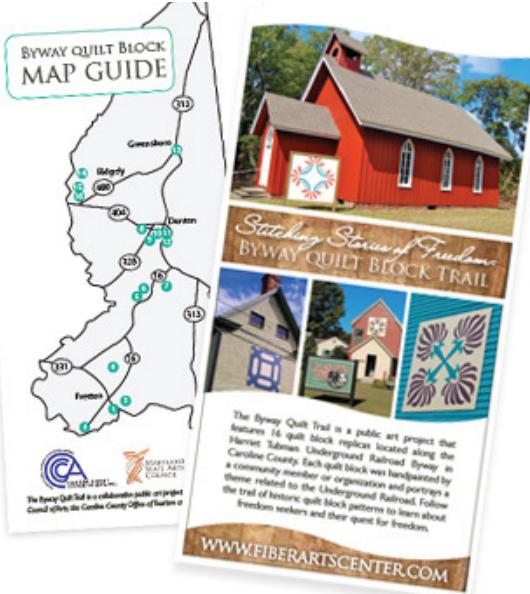
Before it became Tuckahoe State Park, much of this land was used for agriculture. In the days before municipal waste management was widely available, it was common for rural residents to dispose of household and farm-related waste in out-of-the-way areas on their properties. While organic materials like food scraps, plant matter, and paper have long since decomposed, more durable items such as glass, metal, and plastic can remain for generations.

This car is one of the more visible remnants of that era, and if you look carefully while hiking, you may notice several other historic dump sites throughout the park. Though it may appear to be just old trash, this material offers valuable insights into the daily lives and practices of those who lived and worked here in the past. We ask that you help preserve this part of the park's history by leaving these artifacts undisturbed.



This car is believed to be a late 1940's era Studebaker.

Following the Thread to Freedom: Maple Leaf Quilt Block



The Byway Quilt Trail is a collaborative public art project supported by the Caroline County Council of Arts, the Caroline County Office of Tourism, and the Maryland State Arts Council. It includes 16 quilt block replicas, on (or near) historic structures along the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway in Caroline County. Scan the QR code to find other locations.

Block #14: Maple Leaf

To many freedom seekers, Canada represented a new land where African Americans could live without worry. Untold numbers made their way across the waters of the great lakes to seek what was described as the Promised Land. Harriet Tubman herself guided many of her passengers all the way into Canada, including a number of family members. Although slavery was outlawed in Canada, racial tensions were high. As a result many small towns along the border were created as "black only" communities.



American Discovery Trail Shelter



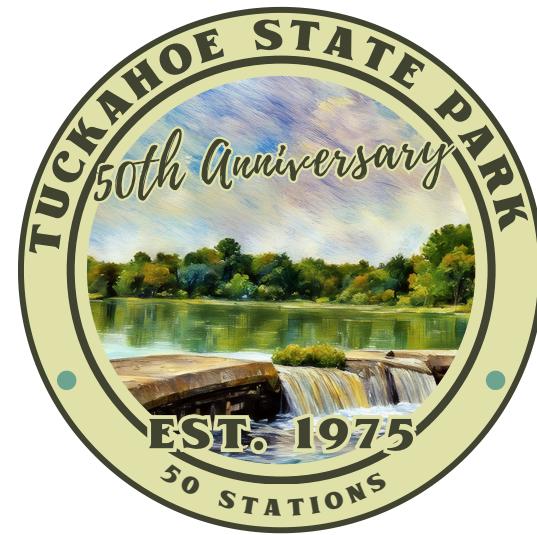
Scan the QR code to learn more about the trail!



The American Discovery Trail (ADT) is a unique, coast-to-coast, non-motorized trail that links city streets, small towns, forests, mountains, and deserts into one continuous 6,800+ mile route. It stretches from Cape Henlopen State Park in Delaware to Point Reyes National Seashore in California—passing right through Tuckahoe State Park.

The ADT connects communities across the country and offers users a chance to experience the diverse culture, heritage, and landscape of America.

Denton, Maryland, holds the distinction of being the first official “American Discovery Trail Town.” This program strengthens connections between the trail and the communities it traverses, promoting tourism and local pride along the way.





Arrow Arum *Peltandra virginica*

A Plant with Deep Roots

Arrow arum is a native wetland plant with large, arrowhead-shaped leaves. It grows in shallow, freshwater areas throughout the Chesapeake Bay region and is common in Tuckahoe Lake—easily spotted from shore or while paddling by canoe or kayak.

Historically, some Native American groups referred to similar wetland plants as "tuckahoe." While there are reports of arrow arum being used as a food source, it must be noted that the plant contains natural toxins and required careful preparation to be safely consumed. Its roots and fruits were only eaten after drying, roasting, or other processing.

Today, arrow arum is valued not as a food, but as an important part of the ecosystem. It helps stabilize shorelines, filter water, and provides habitat for frogs, birds, and other wildlife.





Tire Playground



The recycled tire playground at Tuckahoe was installed in April of 1997. It was developed through a collaboration among Maryland's Department of the Environment, Environmental Service, and Department of Natural Resources, and built with the help of local volunteers. The planning process took several months, but the construction was completed in just a few days!

Recycled tire playgrounds offer a safe, sustainable, and durable option for playgrounds. They provide excellent shock absorption, reducing the risk of falls and injuries, and are made from repurposed tires, minimizing landfill waste.



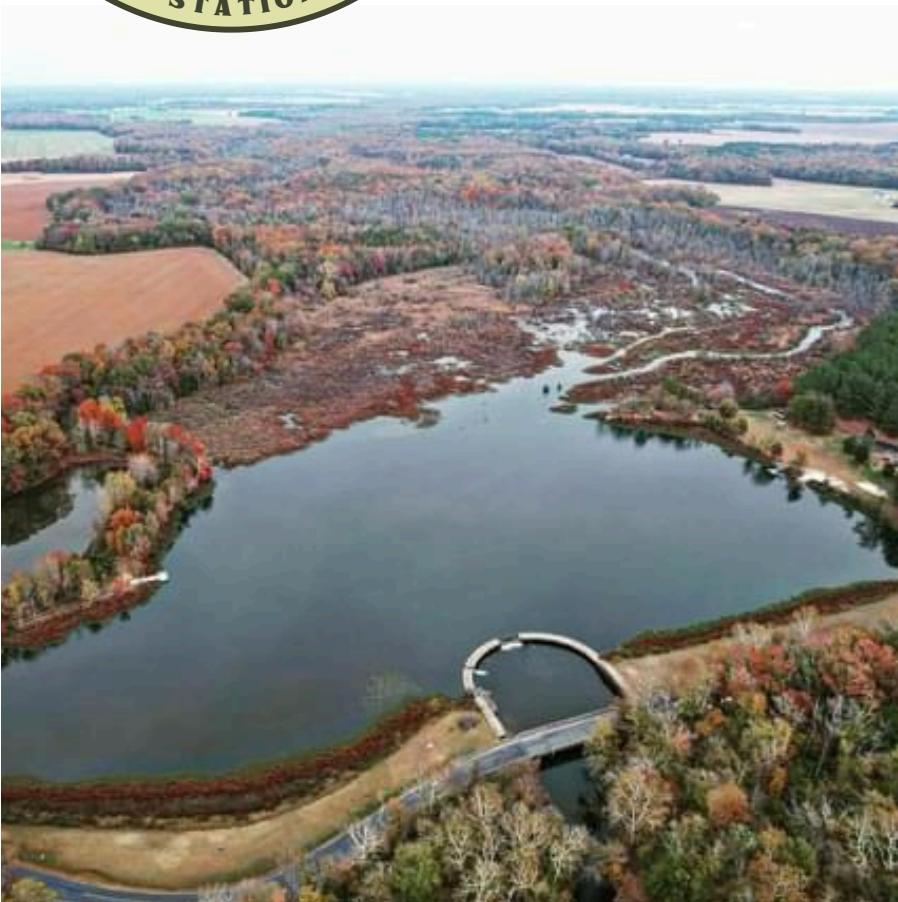
Pines in Formation



Have you ever noticed the pine trees are in straight rows?

These Loblolly Pines were planted by Maryland Department of Natural Resources' Forestry unit in the early 1970's. Original plans call for planting 2,304 trees in the Lake Picnic Area, including the Fitness Trail area, at \$15 per tree, totaling \$34,506 which is equivalent to approximately \$281,182 today.

Loblolly pine trees are known for their fast growth rate. They can grow up to 2-3 feet per year, reaching heights of around 125 feet and trunk diameters of 2-5 feet.



The Winter That Was

Just a few decades ago, Tuckahoe Lake was a popular local spot for winter ice skating. But in the last 20 years, the lake surface has only frozen solid twice—clear evidence of our warming climate.

The effects of climate change extend far beyond winter recreation. Across the park and the surrounding region, warming temperatures and shifting weather patterns are impacting the health of the ecosystem in noticeable ways: declining plant health, more pests and weeds, drier summers, and more intense storms.

Tuckahoe, like many natural areas, offers a living snapshot of how climate change is reshaping the environment. As you explore the park, take a moment to notice these subtle (and not-so-subtle) changes—and consider how small actions can add up to help protect our shared natural heritage.

Mussels Matter



Tuckahoe Creek is home to many rare, threatened, and endangered species—including the Triangle Floater, a critically imperiled freshwater mussel. This 3-inch mussel has a chunky shape and greenish-brown shell, and it lives in smaller streams with slow currents and a mix of gravel, sand, and mud.

As a filter feeder, the Triangle Floater helps clean the water by removing algae, bacteria, and organic particles, making it an important part of a healthy aquatic ecosystem. However, it is highly sensitive to pollution, sedimentation, changes in water flow, and water withdrawal.

Protecting our waterways supports not only species like the Triangle Floater, but also the entire ecosystem—including the people and wildlife that rely on clean water.



Nature Had Other Plans

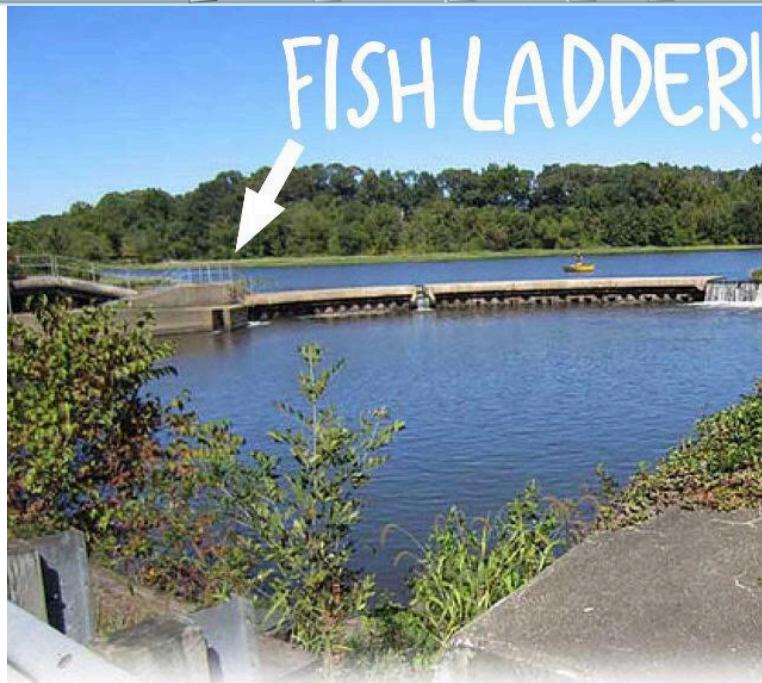
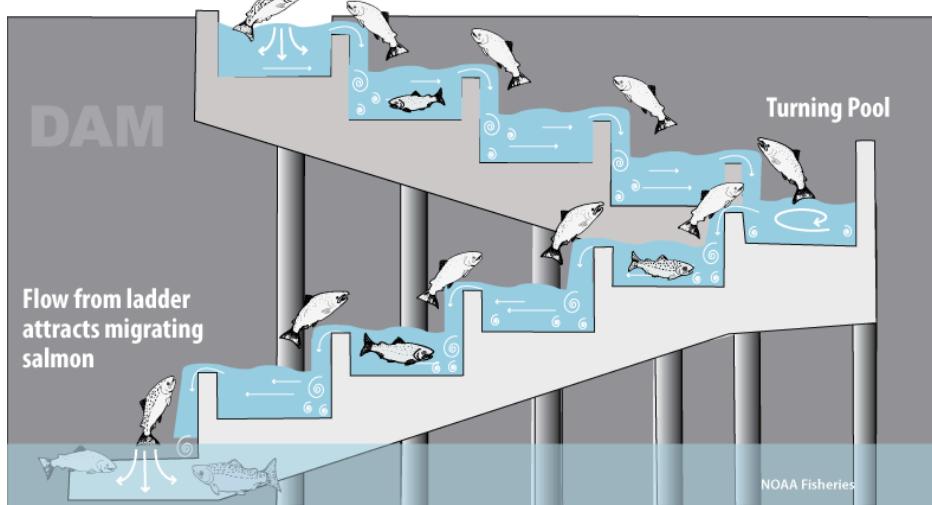


Tuckahoe Lake wasn't always meant to look like this. The original plan in the 1960s was ambitious: an 800-acre impoundment of 4 lakes with a marina, swimming beaches, a hotel, a golf course—even a fully developed recreation complex. But nature had other plans.

When a national champion overcup oak—the largest known of its kind—was discovered in the proposed 360-acre lakebed (though it no longer stands today), the design was scaled back. The lake was reduced to its current 63 acres, and many of the original development ideas were left behind.

Instead of becoming a bustling resort destination, Tuckahoe evolved into a more natural stream valley park. Today, the lake is a peaceful place for fishing, paddling, and wildlife watching—proof that sometimes, less really is more.

The Upstream Express



Migrating fish face big challenges when trying to navigate rivers, and fish ladders—also called fishways—are here to help. These clever structures feature a series of pools and currents, like stepping stones, allowing fish to swim and leap their way around obstacles like dams.

By providing safe passage, fish ladders play a vital role in maintaining healthy fish populations and supporting the natural flow of migration.

A Quick Reminder: Please avoid standing on the fish ladder. Your presence can scare the fish and make it harder for them to use the ladder. Plus, it helps protect this important structure. Thank you for helping protect the fish and their journey!