



Horizons proudly supports and adheres to the standards set out by AECSKO. Our guides, boats, equipment and operations follow these standards as well as our own personal codes, which in turn meet or exceed all applicable codes and standards as set out by law. All Horizons guides receive training by Sirius Wilderness Medicine, and Paddle Canada Instructor training. Our guides undergo several weeks of preparation every spring to get ready for the summer, no matter how many years they have been working for us. In fact, many other companies and organizations choose Horizons to help them train their staff as well. We are proud of our staff and our commitment to training. For more information on guide training, our employees and volunteers, check out our website. Additional information about Sirius Wilderness Medicine, and Guides and CRCA courses can be found on the website as well (see certifications

REFUND POLICY: *If we are unable to accept your application a full refund will be issued. Cancellations four weeks or more before the program start date may incur a 25% administration fee. No refunds will be issued after that date without medical certification. Refunds are not issued if participant withdraws from an ongoing program early. HORIZONS reserves the right to cancel registration without notice. In such a case, a full refund will be issued.*

Travel and Health Insurance

Travel cancellation insurance can be purchased through a travel agent or your local CAA. Some credit cards also provide travel and health insurance benefits that can include lost luggage.

www.horizonsadventures.ca
 info @horizonsadventures.ca
 Toll Free 1-877-404-4142 or Locally 705-866-6069
 Fax: 705-866-6070

Horizons is also a member of



www.peat.on.ca



Information Package



Art of the Benjamin Islands

Level 1,
 Beginners Welcome

What to Bring

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Member of



1-877-404-4142 or 705-866-6069

Welcome to Horizons

Thank you for registering with **HORIZONS - Adventures for Life**. We have planned a wonderful excursion for you and are looking forward to a great experience. The 'Art of the Benjamins' is a Level 1 trip. This means beginners are welcome, no experience is necessary and wet exit and rescue instruction is included in the program. Distances paddled per day average 8-16 kilometers. Please note that all of our programs are **smoke-free**.

Included in this booklet are all the essential forms, lists and information for your program. Please also check the WHAT TO BRING LIST and suggested packing techniques. Let me know if there is anything that you cannot bring or don't understand.

Horizons will be providing kayaks, paddling equipment, life jackets, (if you have your own, please bring it), group camping equipment and other miscellaneous gear. These however, should not be considered replacements for any other item on the 'what to bring' list. We would like to check in by phone with you prior to your experience to finalize the details of the trip and go over the route and other information. Because we will not all be together before the trip or program begins, this contact is important. Please be sure to mail or fax your medical information form and waiver before the program starts so we have it with us when we are finishing the packing details. **Keep a copy** of this as well in case it does not reach us. Food allergy information is particularly important early. Participants who do not fill out these forms may be precluded from the event without a refund. Although we will be carrying a complete first aid kit, it will not be a substitute for any medication that you may be presently taking or require in an emergency. Take the time to pack these as required. The North Channel is often warm and friendly but it does **demand** respect at all times and should never be taken for granted. Please read the included material carefully and follow the WHAT TO BRING list accurately. Call me if you have any questions. Horizons is committed to **Minimum Impact** camping techniques that protect both campers and the environment. Precautions must also be taken in regards to animal life. Although a thrill to observe in the wild, they are a concern so extra attention will be given to food storage and waste management. We will get a chance to discuss these issues as the program proceeds. I look forward to meeting you all.

Yours truly,

Rick Wise
Director

INTENDED ITINERARY

Art of the Benjamin's

Instruction Day

For those novices joining us for the first time, we meet in Sudbury at the Sudbury Canoe Club on the afternoon prior to the first paddle day. The Canoe Club is located on Lake Ramsey, turning from Paris St. west on John St. and south on Elizabeth. Follow Elizabeth two blocks to the lake and parking.

First Paddling Day Itinerary

Morning

Meet the group at 28 Sleepy Hollow Rd. off Hwy #17, 30 minutes west of Sudbury at 9:00 am. Here you can secure valuables, change into your paddling gear and use the washrooms. We review day's events, equipment and go through the gear list to ensure you have what you need. From here we travel to the launch site. We will then pack and travel to the first night's site after a hearty lunch. Later in the trip we may learn about boat, paddle & equipment basics, which may include wet exit, forward and reverse, turns, basic assisted rescue, depending on participant experience.

Paddle Itinerary

Day 1-5 Everyday we explore in a new direction. The Benjamin Islands, Croker Island, Hook and Fox Islands all call to us and our paint brushes and cameras. Bob will help us bring out the best of these magical places by tuning our eyes and senses to art in nature.

Robert Little – artist

Lives in Sudbury and has spent 28 years at the high school level teaching art. Now in retirement he is currently practicing watercolour art on his own, likes to travel and spend time in the outdoors in winter and summer. Bob has had works displayed in various art shows and done various workshops throughout the region and with various local clubs. We are very happy to have Bob join us this year.

Generally, we will be up early to take advantage of cooler temperatures and lower winds. Sunrise is about 6:45 am and sets at about 8:30 pm so early to bed and early to rise is a good practice, but not always necessary. It's important to listen to the rhythms of nature and realize that our agenda does not always suit the weather. Out on the Great Lakes, Mother Nature is in charge. We go when she says it's time to do so. Be prepared to be wind or stormbound and don't make immediate travel plans for the last day that you might not be able to keep due to weather. Group safety is more

Fashion Wear to Paddle-in

- polypro T shirt
- ‘quick dry’ shorts
- sandals
- big straw hat for maximum sun protection
- sunglasses with a strap behind your head
- whistle on your PFD
- PFD
- spray skirt

Items that are stuffed in your kayak but not organised in stuff bags or zip bags

Items kept where you can reach them

- rain coat (behind your seat)
- sponge (under your seat) so you don't sit in a puddle and can keep your kayak clean

Items supplied by Horizons, shared by all and placed anywhere appropriate in or on the kayak:

- food bags
- collapsible water containers
- stove and fuel containers
- pots, fry pan, ladel, stir spoon, outback oven
- tarps
- paddle float (behind your seat close at hand)
- pump (on your deck close at hand)
- repair kit (easily assessable if a hatch is removed)
- first aid kit, emergency kit, radios usually carried by the instructors.



GENERAL INFORMATION

All programs follow the guidelines set out by the Association of Eastern Canadian Sea Kayak Outfitters, of which Horizons is a member.

BE PREPARED!!!

Be prepared to spend your week on the water in the sun, rain, wind and everything in between. The emphasis will be on relaxation and enjoying the natural world while bringing up your skill level to a point where you can get out and enjoy the activity on your own. Please be sure all medical forms are filled out and that all medical information is included. Of particular importance are food and medication allergies and medical conditions, no matter how remote the possibility seems that they will affect your trip. This information is confidential and vital to your leaders planning. Sign the waiver. This must be received by Horizons before the event.

TOPICS

Safety

- Trip/route planning, team approach and emergency action plan

Navigation

- Map reading, compass work, shoreline identification

Boat Handling, Paddling Strokes and Rescue

- Gear, boat, paddle/paddler, launch and carry, wet exits, edging, forward stroke, reverse stroke, stopping, linking strokes, braces, sweeps, draws, sculls, feathering, rescues

Campsite

- Selection and preservation
- Animal precautions

Hygiene

- Toilet
- Body washing
- Food prep

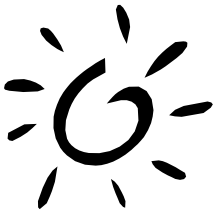
Cooking and Nutrition

- Stove use and maintenance
- Food selection and preparation



THE NORTH CHANNEL and THE Benjamin Islands

The North Channel of Lake Huron is defined as that area of the lake that is bordered by Manitoulin Island in the south, Sault Ste Marie in the west and the Bay of Islands in the east. It includes a variety of geologic rock types representing over a billion years of earth history. Manitoulin and some adjacent islands are comprised of younger sedimentary rock that often yields interesting fossils. All of the “Benjamin’s area” consist of a much older Pre-Cambrian Shield that has been molded and worn by countless glaciations, the most recent of which are responsible for the present shape and volume of the existing Great Lakes. “Whalesbacks” are rock formations that reveal the direction of the ice flow about 15,000 years ago. They are rounded and resemble the backs of whales in the water. They are particularly pronounced in this area and are expressed as graceful curves and hills of pink and black smooth crystalline rock. These islands vary in size. They are home to a variety of animals and plants, beaches, coves and bays. The Benjamin Islands are so named after Benjamin Baker, a lighthouse keeper on Clapperton Island to the south in the late 1800s. He disappeared mysteriously one night after visiting a bar in Little Current. These waters will add their own mystery to the channel and enchant boaters from all over the Great Lakes.



Weather

Weather in the North Channel will vary from day to day as all weather does in Ontario, but generally you can expect highs from 22-30 degrees Celsius and lows from 5-18 degrees in the evening. It can be humid. Be prepared for both warm and cool weather. Winds can vary from light to gales. Recent winds this summer have downed many trees in the area.

WHAT TO BRING



ON THE WATER (all weather)

- Light pile or wool layer
- Paddling jacket (s)
- Sun screen and bug spray (lots of both)
- UV blocking sun glasses with retainer band
- Wide brimmed sun hat (s)
- Bathing suit and towel
- 2 t-shirts
- 2 pair shorts
- “Quick dry” long sleeves and pants for sun and wind protection
- Rain wear
- Water bottle (s)
- Sturdy, snug fitting shoes for use in water. Sandals are acceptable if equipped with a heel fastener, but full toe protection is preferred.
- Whistle with string
- Small fanny or other bag in which to store your misc. gear while on the water.

OFF THE WATER

- ONE complete set of dry clothing that protects you from sun and insects. This includes underwear, socks, long sleeves, pants, warm sweater or pile, and a wind breaker. Wool Hat.
- Dry shoes for the campsite
- Sleeping bag and sleeping pad
- Toiletries - (toothpaste, brushes, toilet paper, hair care, etc.)
- Bug hat or bug shirt is highly recommended
- Dry bags and/or stuff bags with garbage bag liners
- Flashlight with fresh/extra batteries, bulb

Other Gear

- Camera, fishing gear, binoculars, or reading material

Label your clothes, gear, packs and dry bags clearly. Remember, there will be several other people on your trip.

What follows are some packing ideas. There may be a few extra things mentioned so take note. Please don't disregard your own experience and working systems. This is a guideline but it works well. Keep things as compact as possible.

Dehydration

The key to avoiding dehydration is to drink lots of water. Watch the colour of your urine. If it becomes dark, drink until it is clear again. You must act quickly. Use fruit crystals if necessary. Monitor your water intake. Others can monitor your behaviour as well - irritable, not enthusiastic, tired, or headaches. Drink and the headache goes away within 20 minutes.

West Nile Virus

For those of you with any concerns regarding the recent problems with West Nile, be assured that mosquitoes in the north are very unlikely carriers of the disease. The species of mosquitoes we have up here are not known to be a bridging species for the disease to transfer from birds to humans. The kind that typically carries the disease is very rare, particularly in the north.

BOAT AND EQUIPMENT CARE

While paddling

Don't scrape the plastic as you come to shore; get out and stand up before your kayak hits bottom. Lift your rudder before you are in shallow water - it is fragile.

At night

The boats will be tied together and pulled up on land. We need to select a spot and place all of the boats there right after unpacking so people can seal them up when they choose to. Paddles should be placed higher up or in the kayak where no one will step on them at night. Food, toothpaste etc should not be taken into the tents - it should be left in the kayak hatches. Maps, pumps etc can remain bungied on the deck of the boats if they are left right side up at night. Other gear can be left in bags and stuffed in the cockpit to discourage snakes and spiders etc., from finding a great hideaway at night. Finding them later when you are paddling could be really exciting!

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Water

Although the Great Lakes are full of relatively clean water, Horizons ensures that all water consumed is as free as possible from pathogens. Water is filtered for drinking or boiled for hot drinks and cooking.

Sun and Heat

At this time of year UV ray intensity is typically near its height so don't take chances. Keep covered from the sun and wear lots of sun block.

Human Waste Disposal

There are no toilet facilities on our trip. Most people will choose to dig a cat hole in organic soils using the following criteria.

Site Selection: Look for a flat, private spot at least 200 feet from any water source.

Techniques: will vary upon the environment but general options include:

- **Cat Holes** – Holes dug six inches/12 cm deep in soil and covered when finished.
- **Smearing** – Surface deposits that are spread to promote maximum UV exposure for fast break down. Consider human traffic and rain fall drainage when deciding to smear.
- **Latrines** – Should be avoided whenever possible. They do not decompose and contribute to the hazard of water contamination through poor leaching. Group size and location is the determining factor. The frequency of users on the site will limit your options.



Horizons has an excellent waste disposal system that works well near the sandy beaches. Using a can to burn toilet paper in conjunction with a cathole is excellent. For those that are very environmentally conscious it is possible to use natural toilet paper.

CREATURES OF CONCERN

Snakes

North Channel snakes are not a problem. The Massasauga rattlesnake was once indigenous to the area but has virtually been exterminated. This is the only species of venomous snake native to Ontario and is a relatively slow moving and non-aggressive snake. They can still be found further east around the French River area. Other snakes we might see would include Garter Snakes, Milk Snakes, and Black Water Snakes, which can be quite large.

Mice, Chipmunks, Raccoons and Bears

All of these animals make their home and a good living in the North Channel. Our objective is to minimize the living they make, or think they can make, off of camping parties like ours. Mice are the most plentiful and by far the biggest nuisance. They get into anything they can ruin things in doing so. Tents, sleeping bags, rubber stuff bags and even neoprene lids can be destroyed by rodent teeth. Raccoons come next in the pest department and have a greater potential for damage. They are also widespread in the North Channel but not as prolific as mice and chipmunks. Bears are good swimmers and will be seen out on the islands frequently in late July and August. They come out for the blueberries that always appear several weeks later than on the main land. Bears of course, seem to worry humans most but the likelihood of a threatening encounter is low if proper care and precautions are taken.



For all these animal hazards the same protocols are advised: NO food of any kind in tents and sleeping areas. This includes cosmetics and hygiene products such as toothpaste and deodorant. Tents should be pitched far from the kitchen (200 feet or more) and food should not be left in lifejackets or clothing pockets unattended. Food may be stored properly in sealed kayak hatches or, where necessary, hung properly in the trees. Dishes and cooking ware should be cleaned thoroughly before storing.

HEALTH CONCERNS

General Injuries

Feet – never go bare foot. Glass, etc will get you sooner or later and that could mean evacuation. Put on footwear before getting out of the kayak if you must paddle bare foot.

Backs - lift empty single kayaks with two people and a minimum of four if loaded. Four people should lift an empty tandem and at least six or eight if it is loaded. Stretch before kayaking and lifting boats!

Paddling Injuries

Hands – blisters, calluses and sores can occur on palms and the web between thumb and index finger. Prevention is the key. Use of gloves, tape, bandages and so on will help reduce the likelihood of these ailments becoming serious.

Forearm tendonitis – watch the “death grip” on the paddle. If your forearm creaks, swells, or becomes sore you need to change from a feathered to a non-feathered paddle.

Back pain – (or discomfort) adjust your foot pedals, change posture - sit upright and don't slouch.

Leg pain - may disappear with a water bottle under your knees, or by adjusting your foot pedals.

Fatigue – use a rotational stroke, don't use your arms in a pumping motion. Change the position of your hands on the shaft from wide to narrow grip and vice versa.