

Anthony Shoals Shuffle – Paddle Georgia 2010

June 22 –Broad & Savannah Rivers

Distance: 18 miles

Starting Elevation: 400 feet

Ending Elevation: 340 feet

Obstacles/Rapids:

Mile 15 Anthony Shoals—This series of shoals starts gentle and reaches a crescendo as it spills into Clarks Hill Reservoir. Start river left and work your way to the middle of the river through the upper shoal's many small shoots and ledges. Go right of the large island to set up the final run through the main body of the shoals. This is a long, straight run through standing waves.

Restroom Facilities:

Mile 0 Porta Toilet at Ga. 77

Mile 8 Porta Toilet at Ga. 17

Mile 18 Flush toilets at Broad River Campground

Points of Interest:

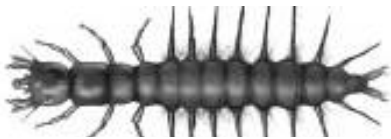
Mile 0—Hwy. 77 Party Spot—Don't think of this location as a dump—collecting the refuse of a careless society; think of it as a future archaeological site. A favorite hang out of local revelers, this private property gets somewhat abused because like native cultures, we are drawn to the river and just like the natives, when we're done with our food and drink we tend to throw it in the woods. 3000 years ago it was shellfish that were discarded; today it's beer cans and potato chip bags. This site looked much worse on our scouting expeditions; members of the Broad River Watershed Association organized a clean up at the site prior to Paddle Georgia.

Mile 2.5—Goosepond Creek—Not far upstream on this creek once thrived the community of Goosepond, founded in the late 1700s by immigrants from Virginia who were lured to Georgia by tales of fertile land. Goosepond took its name from a 50-acre pond that was likely beaver-engineered. The Virginians settled in and planted tobacco, grains and later cotton. So extensive was their farming that the community's namesake pond was fully drained and converted to agricultural production by 1827. No doubt, a few beavers were eliminated along the way.

Mile 7.5—Oglethorpe/Wilkes County Line at Long Creek—Paddling From Ga. 77 to Ga. 79, you will touch four counties: Elbert, Oglethorpe, Wilkes and Lincoln. The lands of east Georgia were, of course, the first lands settled and cultivated in the state and one of the first counties established was Wilkes in 1777. Wilkes modern day neighbors were all carved from Wilkes in the late 1700s. The area's first settlers plied up river from Savannah or came overland from the Carolinas and Virginia. The fertile river bottoms along the Broad were the first to be cultivated, and the plantation system soon developed. In the 1850s, the combined population of Oglethorpe and Wilkes County was 23,600, of which 15,392 were slaves.

Mile 10—Wahatchee Creek & Nancy Hart—About a half mile upstream on this creek is the historic homestead of the Hart family, including Revolutionary War heroine Nancy Hart, a frontierswoman described as cross-eyed, rough-hewn, rawboned, ill-tempered and fearless. During the War, she and her eight children tended the homestead while her husband, Benjamin, fought in the Georgia militia. According to the New Georgia Encyclopedia, she was known to spy on the British and their loyalists by disguising herself as a simpleminded man and wandering into the British garrisons, but the most famous tale of her war-time exploits took place just up Wahatchee Creek when six Tories came to her cabin demanding information about rebel leaders. As the questioning became more intense, the Tories shot one of her prized turkeys and demanded that she cook it for them. While she cooked she fed them wine and with the help of one of her daughters surreptitiously removed their muskets from the cabin—sliding them through a hole in the cabin wall. When the inebriated Tories discovered her ruse, they cornered her, but she responded by shooting and killing two of the men and holding the other four at bay until help arrived. The remaining four were reportedly hanged from a nearby tree. In 1912 workmen grading a railroad near the site of the old Hart cabin unearthed a neat row of six skeletons that lay under nearly three feet of earth and were estimated to have been buried for at least a century. This discovery seemed to validate the most oft-told story of the Hart legend. The Daughters of the American Revolution maintain a replica Hart cabin which was reportedly built using chimney stones from the original cabin. Whether or not the stories of Nancy Hart are myth or fact, she has been forever memorialized in Northeast Georgia. Nearby Hart County is named in her honor and thus, the town of Hartwell and nearby Lake Hartwell.

Mile 10.5—Rock Garden & Macroinvertebrates—At low water levels near the mouth of a small unnamed tributary on river left is an almost river-wide rock garden. These shoals make an ideal place to turn over rocks and search for macro invertebrates—small aquatic insects that will some day become the flying insects that we are more familiar with. These nymphs and larvae dwell under the rocks in rivers and streams and play an important role in the aquatic food chain. They include dragon and damselfly nymphs, caddis and mayfly larvae and a host of other young critters. When the time is right, they will climb out of the water and on to a rock and transform themselves. They also serve as a good indicator of water quality. A diverse and robust population of macro invertebrates is an indicator of a healthy stream.



Hellgrammite (larvae of Dobsonfly)



Dragonfly Larvae



Mayfly Nymph



Aquatic sow bug

Mile 14—Bald Eagles & Ospreys—During scouting trips through this section, we spotted both ospreys and bald eagles. You will see the ospreys soaring above the water, sometimes hovering, before they plunge to the water to capture their quarry. Bald eagles are less industrious. They routinely steal fish caught by ospreys. Bald eagle populations have rebounded since the 1970s, but since 1995, 45 bald eagles have perished at Clarks Hill Lake, the result of a mysterious neurological disorder called AVM -- or avian vacuolar myelinopathy. In January, biologists counted 8 eagles during an annual survey of the lake—half the number spotted in 2009.

Mile 15—Anthony Shoals—This massive shoal complex stretches a quarter mile wide and three-quarters of a mile long. Though it looks wild and untouched, these shoals have been harnessed, blasted and inhabited by humans for generations. On far river left are the remains the Broad River Manufacturing Co., a textile mill of the 1800s that used the river's fall here to turn its looms. In mid-channel, you will paddle through a cut in the shoals that creates a series of rapids and waves. This "cut" was blasted out of the shoals in the 1800s to allow barges to pass through the shoals. Though not obvious from ground level, aerial views of the shoals clearly show the hand of man—the channel extends about a quarter mile from the base of the shoals.

Mile 15.5—Shoals Spider Lilies—These lilies attracted William Bartram during his travels through Georgia in the 1700s. Of them he wrote: "nothing in vegetable nature was more pleasing than the odoriferous *Pancreatium fluitans*." Today, the scientific name is *Hymenocallis coronaria*. Peak bloom time is mid-May, but occasionally blooms hold out into mid-June. The spider lilies grow only in the rocky crevices of shoals along the fall line in the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama. Some colonies also survive in the Savannah below the Augusta Canal Dam. Fall line dams have wiped out much of the plant's habitat. It is now found in only eight Georgia counties and is protected as a threatened species by the state, making it unlawful to cut, dig, pull up, or otherwise remove it from public land.