

Maine Wilderness Guides Org.

An Association of Registered Maine Guides



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Outfitting Your Canoe for Guided River Trips

Kevin Slater (Board Member and Past President)

Greetings Fellow Guides! I thought I would share with folks our current, but constantly evolving, canoe outfitting tips from Mahoosuc Guide Service. We would also like to hear from you about these. If you have other ideas or suggestions, email them to newsletter@mwgo.org or share them with us via Facebook!

PORTAGE YOKE PADS & TUMPLINES

Adjustable portage yoke pads make carries much easier and more comfortable. I make my own and you can adjust them to different shoulder widths. We use tumplines on our wanigans and coolers but I don't want to take them off and retie them every time we portage a canoe. So, I outfit each canoe's curved center thwart with its own tumpline. There is a reason indigenous people from the arctic to Himalaya and throughout the Americas use tumplines. *Trivia: Tumpline is an anglicized version of "Mattump," the Eastern Algonquin root word for it.*



KNEE PADS

Plastic & ABS canoes are slippery, especially when damp or wet inside. Paddle strokes are more effective when done in a kneeling position; having a wide triangular base (knees wide with your butt against the front edge of the seat) increases paddler stability; and a lower center of gravity significantly reduces the likelihood of a capsize in white water. Cut generous sized 10"x14" rectangles (to accommodate different leg lengths) of 1/2" closed cell foam that doesn't feel "slippery." Rough up the hull with 40 grit sandpaper and attach with an adhesive such as Weldwood Contact Cement.

CAM CLEATS



Many years ago while picking up some supplies at Hamilton Marine I found cam cleats. I knew right away they had usefulness for paddlers. I like to have them mounted on the guide's canoe on the gunwale near the stern seat. If you ever had to tow

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Short Bytes:

MWGO Sponsors Maine Canoe Symposium



MWGO is a long time sponsor of the Maine Canoe Symposium and we are excited to join them at their new location this year! We plan to have a table, so please stop by and say hi! Sharpen up your canoe skills and get inspired to enjoy Maine on the water this summer! The Maine Canoe Symposium offers something for everyone with a program encompassing the whole range of paddling, including basic recreational, competitive, freestyle, and whitewater, as well as traditional canoe tripping and poling. In addition to the on-water program, they also feature land-based workshops on a variety of related topics including history, geography, cooking, and bushcraft - just to name a few. The Maine Canoe Symposium also offers a children's program which includes kid-friendly canoeing, outdoor safety, and other wilderness related experiences.

Deer and dog ticks are out early and in quantity

Both deer and dog ticks are out earlier and in larger quantities than usual this year, in large part due to an early spring and a mild winter. While dog ticks generally do not carry as many diseases here in Maine, deer ticks carry bacteria that can cause Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, and more. Experts warn those heading outdoors to take proper precautions such as treating clothing with permethrin or similar repellent, using an appropriate repellent on yourself, wearing long-sleeved and long-legged, light colored clothing (to more easily see ticks on it), and doing thorough tick checks of persons, clothing, and pets when returning indoors. Also, it may look ridiculous, but tucking your pant legs into your socks will keep ticks from crawling up under your pant legs. [Check out more tips from the CDC](#) to help keep yourself, your pets, and your clients safe from ticks this year!



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a capsized canoe to shore you'll love these. Instead of taking the time to tie the capsized canoe's upstream painter to tow a canoe, just fish the painter line out of the water and slam it into the cam cleat. The cam cleat also provides a technique to pick up an unconscious/face-down swimmer and keep their head up and out of the water while you ferry them to shore.

Note: There is also something called a jam cleat - I do NOT recommend it because a change in the angle of pull could result in an accidental release. Get the ones with 2 swivel cams and make sure it is sized for your painter line's diameter.

PAINTER LINES WITH LINING BRIDLE



I prefer 25-30' long painter lines on rivers I may end up doing some lining on. If you're lining a loaded canoe through technical rapids you should always attach the painter to the canoe with a lining bridle. I have a 7' long pigtail already attached to the painter line with a prusik knot close to where the

painter is tied to the boat. Tie a 10"-12" loop using a bowline and do a 3 or 4 wrap prusik onto your painter. This way it is easy to center the bridle under the stem of the canoe by sliding the prusik knot one way or the other. Long painters should be secured under a tight bungie on the deck plate (see photo below) to prevent accidental release if a capsize occurs.

END BLOCK FLOTATION

End block flotation in the bow & stern really helps keep a capsized canoe floating high in the water, reducing the likelihood of a pin. It is also a safety factor if you have a swimmer downstream of a capsized canoe and makes taking it to shore easier. We have mostly styrofoam end blocks which you can't get anymore. You can make your own by gluing 2" foundation insulation together & cut to fit. The other option is inflatable bow & stern airbags which are readily available. Check them out at [Northwest River Supply \(NRS\)](#).



Hope to see you on the river!

Upcoming Events and Dates

- Jun 5-6: [Wilderness First Aid](#) by Northeast Whitewater, Shirley, ME. Contact: info@northeastwhitewater.com or 207-695-0151 for more information.
- Jun 12: [Maine Canoe Symposium](#), Bryant Pond, ME. Contact: info@mainecanoesymposium.org or 207-650-2669 for more.

MWGO Professional Members are eligible for a \$50 reimbursement (\$25 for Supporting Members) for WFA, WAFA, WFR, WEMT or Recertification Courses.

Guide Tips: Parachutes and Throw Bags

Always pack your own parachute and stuff your own throw bags!

Before any paddling trip, give your throw bag a good test throw and repack it yourself to make sure it will deploy properly when you need it most. There is not much worse in an emergency than a throw bag that goes 15 feet out and yanks to a stop because it wasn't stuffed properly. With the line over your shoulder, use your thumbs and pointer fingers to feed the line into the bag. Never coil or ball up throw bag lines!

Invasive of the Month: Variable watermilfoil

Myriophyllum heterophyllum

Variable watermilfoil is the most widely distributed aquatic non-native, invasive plant in Maine's ponds, lakes, and rivers. It grows very rapidly and reproduces primarily by fragmentation.



Variable watermilfoil

is a submerged aquatic plant that has densely packed whorled leaves. It is usually found along the shorelines of lakes and ponds. Watermilfoil can grow in depths of up to 10-12 feet, forming dense mats near the surface of the water. The plant produces a spike-like flower that grows above the water's surface from mid- to late-summer. Dense mats of variable watermilfoil disrupt native habitat, decrease property values, diminish water quality, and reduce fishing and water recreation opportunities.

Do your part to stop the spread: CLEAN, DRAIN, and DRY your watercraft, trailer, and gear!

Photo credit: Maine Department of Environmental Protection

From the Field



If your truck looks like this, you better bring a head net with you!
Bonus points if you bring them for your clients too...

Photo Credit: [Maine Forest Rangers](#)

Do you have an article, recipe, tip, event, or photo to share in the next eNews?
Send your submission to: newsletter@mwgo.org!