

# Stewards of the White Oak River Basin

2003-12-13 SHACKLEFORD BANKS

PAGE 1 OF 3

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2003-12-13 Shackleford Banks

It was a very interesting trip. There was good sunshine too for the most part but accompanied by a strong cold northeast wind which got stronger and colder as the day wore on. So much so that they called it quits shortly after twelve.

I'm distressed that I have no pictures. I always carry extra batteries with me in the dry bag in the canoe. On this trip I put all in a back pack as we were going over on a ferry. Alas, no batteries.

The ferry was a large open boat with flat bottom and seats along the sides. He opened it up full speed and I was surprised at how smooth it was going over the waves with white caps. This of course was going with the wind. It was a very large expanse of open water. As we approached Shackleford Banks, marsh lands and oyster beds appeared and these cut down the waves.

He had a hard time getting us ashore. He had on hip boots and jumped over board and kept the front end toward the beach and was able to put us off on dry sand.

We got what we went after. Trash, trash and more trash. It was every where and we filled up bags quickly. I was shocked and dismayed at the sheer volume of litter discarded from boats or just left on the island by picnickers or party occasions. It is a sad state of affairs to have our beautiful Cape Lookout National Sea Shore marred by this carelessly discarded trash. We have got to find a way to stop people from doing this. This is no way to encourage tourism. It is a definite turnoff!

I worked my way back into the woods. I wanted to see how far in tides and winds had pushed this stuff. I filled up bag after bag very quickly. Probably about 200 feet back in from the sandy beach the trash was no more.

The woods were dense low bushes and stunted cedars with sheltered grassy openings here and there. The horses, we saw a herd of twelve who stayed close by all day, made trails through this dense growth and you could see where they bedded down.

# Stewards of the White Oak River Basin

2003-12-13 SHACKLEFORD BANKS

PAGE 2 OF 3

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This dense, low forest growth broke the wind and it was very comfortable and cozy in the woods.

In other areas there were wide open grass lands and sand dunes. It is a beautiful and intriguing island. I want to go back and explore some more.

The wind was very strong as we waited behind a bush for the ferry to come and get us. Again he had to work hard to keep the prow toward the beach so we could load. After we all got on board he pushed and pushed and got us off the beach and floating. He then had to jump in quickly and get the engine started to get away from shore. He mastered all very well and soon he had it opened up wide again.

This time it was against the wind which was blowing hard and the white caps on top of the waves were high. Again I was surprised at how relatively smooth it was. We bumped and banged down hard sometimes but not consistently. Also, he was able to shield us by cruising by oyster beds and marsh lands which broke the waves.

We were soon in open waters again and the waves were higher and the wind very strong. We bumped and bange now and then but not consistently. Everyone was dressed for it and we were laughing a joking about it. We did not get wet. Once or twice a little spray.

Stewards Of The White Oak River Basin participating were Marie Justen, Ed Yon, Matt and Jamie Haynes and the writer. There were about a dozen others and Dave Carter, "Ranger Dave" and his wife. Ranger Dave was an excellent leader and our Captain, pilot of the Ferry, Local Yokel performed flawlessly under difficult circumstances.

We Stewards were very happy to be on his ferry boat instead in our canoes and kayaks.

All enjoyed it. It was a fine, hard working group. We need many more trips like

# Stewards of the White Oak River Basin

2003-12-13 SHACKLEFORD BANKS

PAGE 3 OF 3

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this with groups of girl and boy scouts and all other concerned folks to clean up this island.

2003-12-16 Northeast Creek.

This Tuesday Weather prediction is 63 degrees. We can't pass this up in the middle of winter without doing something.

We will meet at McDonalds, in the Amoco Station at Western Blvd and 24 as on previous occasions at 9:00 AM.

We will put in at Tarawa Terrace and paddle over to Northeast Creek, southern/eastern shore. Brian Wheat will meet us at Tarawa Terrace with his power boat to carry our trash. When we finish this section we will have cleaned up all of Northeast Creek. Elmer