



# THE NEWT

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2024



**We hope you had a wonderful holiday season with family and friends!**

We're thrilled to share some exciting news in this new year – we're paddling into the world of podcasts! Our inaugural episode is set to air in February, and we can't wait for you to join us on this new adventure. We'll be releasing a fresh and exciting interview every other month that goes hand in hand with this newsletter. Get ready for insightful conversations, inspiring stories, and a deep dive into all things water trails!

Keep an eye on our social channels for sneak peeks, behind-the-scenes moments, and updates. We're excited to share this journey with you! The Newt Podcast is coming your way very soon!



## IN THIS ISSUE



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### WINTER WISDOM

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**Pedal**



**Paddle**



**Play**

**July 20, 2024**

**Promenade Park, Downtown Fort Wayne**

**Registration begins April 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Details and sponsorship information on next page**

**PADDLE SOCIALS**

Join us for a fun day of paddling together every month! Check our social media accounts, newsletters, and podcasts for details and updates!

- APR** Elkhart River
- MAY** Wabash River
- JUNE** Cedar Creek
- JULY** St. Joseph River
- AUG** Pigeon River
- SEPT** Maumee River
- OCT** Cedarville Reservoir Spooky Paddle



As the paddles get closer, we will announce dates, times, meeting locations, and how long each trip will be. No registration required, just show up and have fun with us!

COMING SOON



PODCAST

Look for our podcast "The Newt" starting in February!  
New episodes will air on the first Wednesday of every other month, opposite the newsletters.

2/7    4/3    6/5    8/7    10/2    12/4



**A day of river recreation, education, and community!**  
**July 20, 2024 in Downtown Fort Wayne**  
**Part of the Allen County Bicentennial Celebration**

We are delighted to announce the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Pedal, Paddle, Play event, and invite you to be a part of this spectacular day by becoming a sponsor. Over the past eight years, Pedal, Paddle, Play has inspired nearly 1400 paddlers to discover the scenic water trails of Fort Wayne. This year's event holds special significance as we join hands with the Allen County Bicentennial celebration, adding an extra layer of excitement to our festivities!

This event has been instrumental in driving the mission of NEI Water Trails, improving access to the 566 miles of flowing waters available for paddling across the beautiful 10-county region of Northeast Indiana. Participants will enjoy an exciting scavenger hunt by bike or boat while learning about paddling in northeast Indiana. The adventure concludes with a celebration at Promenade Park, where everyone can enjoy live music, games, information booths, demos, and incredible prize giveaways!

Your sponsorship of Pedal, Paddle, Play will underwrite the cost of this fundraising and community event and supports the NEI Water Trails partnership's mission to make water recreation accessible to all in Northeast Indiana. So, mark your calendars and be part of this special day, celebrating history, community, and the natural beauty of our region as we paddle forward into the Allen County Bicentennial year!

**SCAVENGER HUNT BY LAND OR WATER TRAILS**

**PRIZES AND GIVEAWAYS**

**LIVE MUSIC**

**EXHIBITS AND DEMOS**

**FAMILY FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES**



# Thank you for your sponsorship! There are two ways to submit this form:

Mail this form with check to Northeast Indiana Water Trails, PO Box 327, Huntertown, IN 46748

OR pay at [neiwatertails.com/donate](http://neiwatertails.com/donate) and submit form to [neiwatertails@gmail.com](mailto:neiwatertails@gmail.com).

If you would like us to use your logo, submit a high resolution .jpg or .png via email.

[CLICK HERE FOR FILLABLE PDF FORM](#)

Check one →




Donation	\$1000	\$500	\$250
<b>Sponsorship Level</b>	<i>St. Marys</i>	<i>St. Joseph</i>	<i>Supporter</i>
	<i>4 available</i>	<i>6 available</i>	<i>Unlimited</i>
<b>Logo Placement</b>			
Website	✓	✓	✓
Social Media	✓	✓	✓
Newsletter	✓	✓	✓
Posters	✓	✓	
Programs	✓	✓	
Shirts	✓		
<b>Advertising</b>			
TV PSA	✓		
Radio PSA	✓		
<b>Swag</b>			
Supporter Sticker	✓	✓	✓
<b>Day of Event</b>			
Booth Space	✓	✓	✓
Banner	✓		
Event Passes	4	2	1

I would like to donate a different amount: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to reserve booth space for promotional materials.

Business name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_



### Winter Care 101: Keeping Your Paddling Gear Shipshape

As winter casts its frosty spell, paddling enthusiasts know it's time to shift gears in caring for their beloved equipment. Proper maintenance during the colder months ensures your paddling gear stays in prime condition, ready for the thaw and the adventures that follow. Here's a quick guide on what you need to know about caring for your paddling gear in the winter.

**1. Dry Before You Stow:** Before bidding adieu to your gear for the season, make sure it's bone dry. Lingering moisture can lead to mold and mildew, and no one wants to unwrap their kayak or canoe to find an unwelcome surprise in the spring. Wipe down, air out, and ensure everything is thoroughly dry before storing.

**2. Inspect for Damage:** Winter hibernation is an excellent time for a thorough inspection. Check for any signs of wear, tear, or damage. Pay special attention to seams, zippers, and buckles. Addressing issues now can save you headaches when the paddling season revs up again.

**3. Storage Matters:** Choose your storage space wisely. If possible, keep your gear indoors where temperature fluctuations are minimal. If outdoor storage is the only option, invest in quality covers to shield your gear from the elements. A shed, garage, or basement are ideal choices.

**4. Mind Your PFD:** Your Personal Flotation Device (PFD) deserves some love too. Ensure it's clean and completely dry before storage. Check for any signs of

wear, and if you've used it heavily during the season, consider giving it a gentle wash following the manufacturer's instructions.

**5. Paddle TLC:** Don't forget about your paddle! Inspect the blades for any damage, and if you've been navigating rocky waters, a quick rinse can prevent salt or debris buildup. Store your paddle in a dry place away from direct sunlight to maintain its integrity.

**6. Kayak/Canoe Care:** Give your boat a good cleaning before hibernation. Remove any dirt, debris, or salt residue. For inflatable kayaks, ensure they are fully deflated and stored in a cool, dry place. Hard-shell boats can be stored upside down to prevent warping.

**7. Clothing and Footwear:** Your paddling attire deserves attention too. Make sure it's clean, dry, and free from any odors. Consider using a fabric spray to keep things fresh during storage. Inspect neoprene gear for any signs of damage and repair as needed.

**8. Prepare for Spring:** Finally, make a checklist for your gear's spring awakening. Note any repairs or replacements needed, so you're ready to hit the water as soon as the ice thaws.

Winter may mean a temporary hiatus from paddling (unless you're hardcore enough to brave the elements – read on for tips on doing so safely if that's you!), but with the right care, your gear will be itching to hit the water again come spring. Happy paddling!





# Winter Paddling Safety Tips



## **Wear appropriate clothing:**

- Dress in layers to stay warm and dry.
- Use a dry suit or wetsuit to protect against cold water.
- Wear a waterproof and windproof outer layer.

## **Use proper gear:**

- Ensure your kayak is in good condition.
- Use a spray skirt to prevent water from entering the cockpit.
- Equip your kayak with flotation devices and a paddle leash.

## **Check weather and water conditions:**

- Monitor weather forecasts before heading out.
- Avoid kayaking in extreme conditions such as high winds or storms.
- Be aware of water temperature, as cold water can be dangerous.

## **Tell someone your plans:**

- Inform a friend or family member about your kayaking plans.
- Provide details about your route, expected return time, and emergency contacts.

## **Stay close to shore:**

- Stick to sheltered areas and avoid open water when possible.
- Stay close to the shoreline to reduce exposure to wind and waves.

## **Practice self-rescue techniques:**

- Learn and practice self-rescue skills, including re-entry into your kayak.
- Carry necessary tools for self-rescue, such as a bilge pump or paddle float.

## **Stay hydrated and fueled:**

- Cold weather can lead to dehydration, so drink plenty of water.
- Bring energy-rich snacks to maintain your energy levels.

## **Be mindful of hypothermia:**

- Learn the signs of hypothermia and be vigilant.
- Dress appropriately to prevent heat loss, especially in wet conditions.

## **Have a communication device:**

- Carry a waterproof communication device, such as a VHF radio or a waterproof phone case.
- Ensure your device is fully charged before setting out.

## **Know your limits:**

- Understand your skill level and the limitations of your equipment.
- Avoid taking unnecessary risks and be prepared to turn back if conditions worsen.

Remember that winter kayaking requires additional precautions due to the cold temperatures. Always prioritize safety and be prepared for unexpected situations.





### Where Do Aquatic Turtles Go in the Winter?

**Hibernation vs. Brumation:** As winter blankets Indiana with its chilly embrace, many of its inhabitants find ways to endure the harsh conditions. Among these resilient creatures are turtles, fascinating reptiles that employ a unique survival strategy during the winter months – brumation (the reptilian version of hibernation). When warm-blooded animals get ready to hibernate, they greatly increase their caloric intake to pack on fat reserves. During hibernation, they will reduce their metabolism, lower their body temperature, and stay holed up without waking, eating, or drinking for up to several months until their food sources return. Cold-blooded animals like turtles will occasionally eat and drink when warm spells happen during the winter, so the process they go through is slightly different (and a little strange).

**Choosing Brumation Sites:** Turtles are meticulous in selecting their brumation sites. They often burrow into the mud at the bottom of bodies of water, taking advantage of the insulating properties of the substrate. Alternatively, some species may find shelter under logs, rocks, or vegetation along the water's edge. The chosen site must provide protection from freezing temperatures while allowing the turtle to access the necessary oxygen to survive the winter months.

**Slowing Down Metabolism:** One of the key adaptations that allow turtles to survive brumation is their ability to slow down their metabolism dramatically. During this period, turtles enter a state of torpor, where their metabolic processes, including heart rate and breathing, decrease significantly. This lowered metabolic rate helps conserve energy, allowing turtles to survive without the need for regular feeding.

**Respiration and Oxygen Exchange:** While turtles are excellent breath-holders, brumating turtles still require a minimal amount of oxygen. To address this need, they utilize a fascinating adaptation called cloacal respiration. Turtles absorb oxygen through the cloaca, a multipurpose opening used for reproduction, excretion, and respiration. This allows them to extract oxygen from the surrounding water or air even when buried in mud or nestled in a sheltered spot.

**Emerging in Spring:** As temperatures begin to rise with the arrival of spring, turtles gradually emerge from their winter retreats. The warmth stimulates their metabolism, bringing them back to an active state. Emerging from brumation is a critical period for turtles, as they need to find suitable basking spots to raise their body temperature and resume normal activities.



## Frozen Frogs

Some frogs possess an extraordinary adaptation known as freeze tolerance. As temperatures drop, these cold-hardy amphibians allow their bodies to freeze partially. Their organs enter a state of suspended animation, protecting them from ice damage. Remarkably, the heart may even stop beating until the frog thaws out in the spring.

Other species of frogs are masters of the polar plunge, spending the winter under water. Beneath the ice-covered surface, frogs enter a state of dormancy. While their metabolism slows down significantly, they can still extract oxygen from the water, surviving on minimal energy until the ice melts away.

Some frogs produce specialized proteins and sugars that act as natural antifreeze agents. These compounds prevent ice crystals from forming within their cells, safeguarding delicate tissues from damage. This biological antifreeze is a key adaptation for frogs inhabiting regions with severe winter conditions.

In urban areas, frogs may find refuge in man-made structures, such as storm drains or basements, where temperatures remain more stable than the frigid exterior. This unintentional collaboration with human habitats allows them to eke out a survival niche in unexpected places.

### Who skips town?

- Sandhill Cranes
- Canada Geese
- Warblers
- Swallows
- Monarch butterflies



### Who hunkers down?

- Box turtles
- Snakes
- Woodchucks
- Bats



Some birds and insects flock together and fly off to warmer climates for the winter, and others just shift south to find more food when there is none at the north end of their range. Terrestrial reptiles go underground below the frost line to brumate, when they drastically slow down but don't go into a deep sleep like hibernating mammals. Turtles dig their own burrows, but snakes use abandoned tunnels and dens that were dug by mammals. Sometimes hundreds of snakes will share the same burrow. Some bats will stay in their home area and hibernate in barns or tree bark, and others will both migrate and hibernate, finding caves outside of their home area in which to sleep for the winter.







## OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS



COMING SOON

**THE  
NEWT**

PODCAST

Our first episode of The Newt podcast will feature an interview with NEIWT founding board member, Kyle Quandt! Kyle will be sharing details about the organization, revealing her personal favorite water trails, and telling her best paddling stories. Be sure to tune in, you won't want to miss it!



**Want to make a difference in your local paddling community? Click the logo to become a supporter! Show your support with a sticker on your car or bottle!**

We are now offering NEIWT Supporter stickers for donors who contribute at least \$250 to our organization. Of course, it will be fun to show off your expensive new sticker, but being a supporter is so much more! It provides fuel for the organization to continue its mission of increasing access for paddle sports on 566 miles of flowing water in NE Indiana by underwriting our costs for computer services, keeping our website going, and providing support for our staff. This is just one small way that we can say "THANK YOU!"