



PADDLE SPLASHES

**July
2026**

**Appalachian Mountain Club
New York-North Jersey Chapter
Canoe & Kayak Committee**

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Cover: Adirondack sunrise. Photo by Chris Bickford.

This Page: Paddlers on Russ Faller's Adirondack trip. Photo by Piotr Pawlowski.

Moving Water Instructional

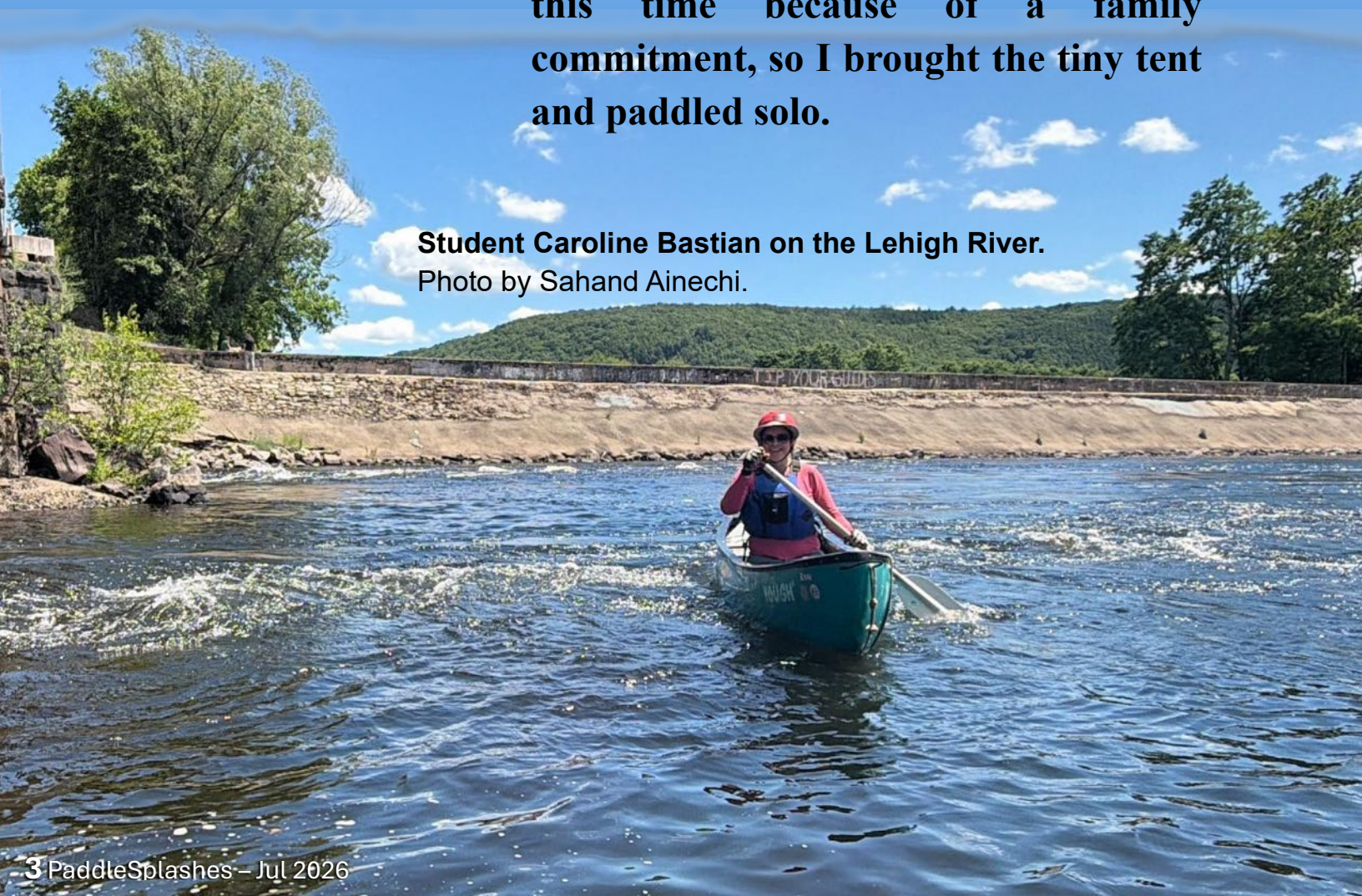
June 19–21, 2026

A tandem paddler steps into a solo canoe for the first time.

Seeing the yellow tandem Caption car-topped by someone else, a different pair in the OC2 class, brought back strong memories from two years earlier when Loren and I had paddled that nimble boat for a summer. She couldn't join this time because of a family commitment, so I brought the tiny tent and paddled solo.

Student Caroline Bastian on the Lehigh River.

Photo by Sahand Ainechi.



This year's OC1 class ended up following a similar schedule as that first time...

...Day One: morning at the dam, an imposing structure reminiscent of Minas Tirith (for all you Hobbit fans), the afternoon under the bridge at Dunbars...
...and Day 2: on the Lehigh from Glen Onoko to Dunbars.

The put-in and first major rapid felt very familiar, and as the rest of the river unfolded I recalled it a piece at a time.

My major takeaway this year was understanding how as a solo canoeist my body has to be past the eddy line before grabbing the water to either eddy in or eddy out.

I was thinking like a stern paddler in a tandem, and turning too early.

The insight that finally clicked was that in a solo, I am the bow paddler AND the stern paddler, so just like a tandem wait for the bow paddler to cross the eddy line, the solo paddler crosses the eddy line leaning forward and grabs the water with a bow draw, then naturally has to tilt into the turn while transitioning to leaning back and executing the stern steering stroke.

There was no lack of eddies to catch, and I was fully tired out but also fully energized by the time we got off the river.

I am grateful to AMC for providing the structure for me to get a little better each time we go out.

Photo by Sahand Ainechi.



Hi Canoe Students,

You guys did great this weekend!

Especially on day 1; even after the (inevitable) swims, you all self-rescued and got back in your boats and tried it again.

Remember: keep that top hand out over the water and paddle with purpose.

Tentative strokes just don't get it done in fast water.

Chris

Chris, thanks for being such an amazing teacher and for being patient with us. I learned a lot this weekend.

And Jeremy, thank you so much for the river photos.

Sean



Photo by ROB HOLBROOK



Photo by SAHAND AINECHI



Photo by CAROLINE BASTIAN

THE PADDLE BATTLE

The Setting:

Campfire, after dinner, the sky is a deep blue, Venus hangs high in the western sky.

An innocent voice asks: what's harder, kayaking or canoeing?

A respected OC1 instructor tells the story:

"Back in the '90s, I was canoeing with my kayaker friend on the Lower Yough, and for the heck of it we switched boats at the top of Cucumber Falls Rapid. I had never kayaked before, but I got down, no problem.

"He swam twice.

"So canoeing is definitely harder."

Silence.

No one dared challenge the assertion!

Shortly thereafter, someone showed up with s'mores and we all moved on.

Jeremy

Photo by MARY ANN HOAG



Photo by MARY ANN HOAG



Photo by KAREN PARKS

Adirondack Canoe Camping

LAKE KUSHAQUA TO
LITTLE CLEAR POND

JULY 24-27, 2026

We had a very capable and friendly group. One couple that were new to paddling, but they learned quickly and did very well. Everyone helped one another without being asked. People who had not met other participants soon bonded with them and became good friends.

The weather was extraordinary. We had a bright blue sky with puffy cumulus clouds nearly every day. Thunderstorms had been forecasted for Sunday, but we had only light rain after setting up our tents.

All of our campsites were clean and well maintained, with great views and good swimming. On Friday, we camped on Rainbow Pond, near the mouth of The Flow. There is a short canal there that makes the tent site an island. Legend has it that this canal was dug at the order of Legs Diamond, the prohibition-era bootlegger, murderer and all-around bad guy, so that he would have two escape routes from his camp there.

Russ Faller led us canoe camping on a scenic pond-and-lake route through the Adirondacks, teeming with loons, herons, frogs and turtles, and ending in the St. Regis Canoe Area. The nine portages were mostly short and fairly flat, varying from only 75 feet to 0.75 mile.

Chris

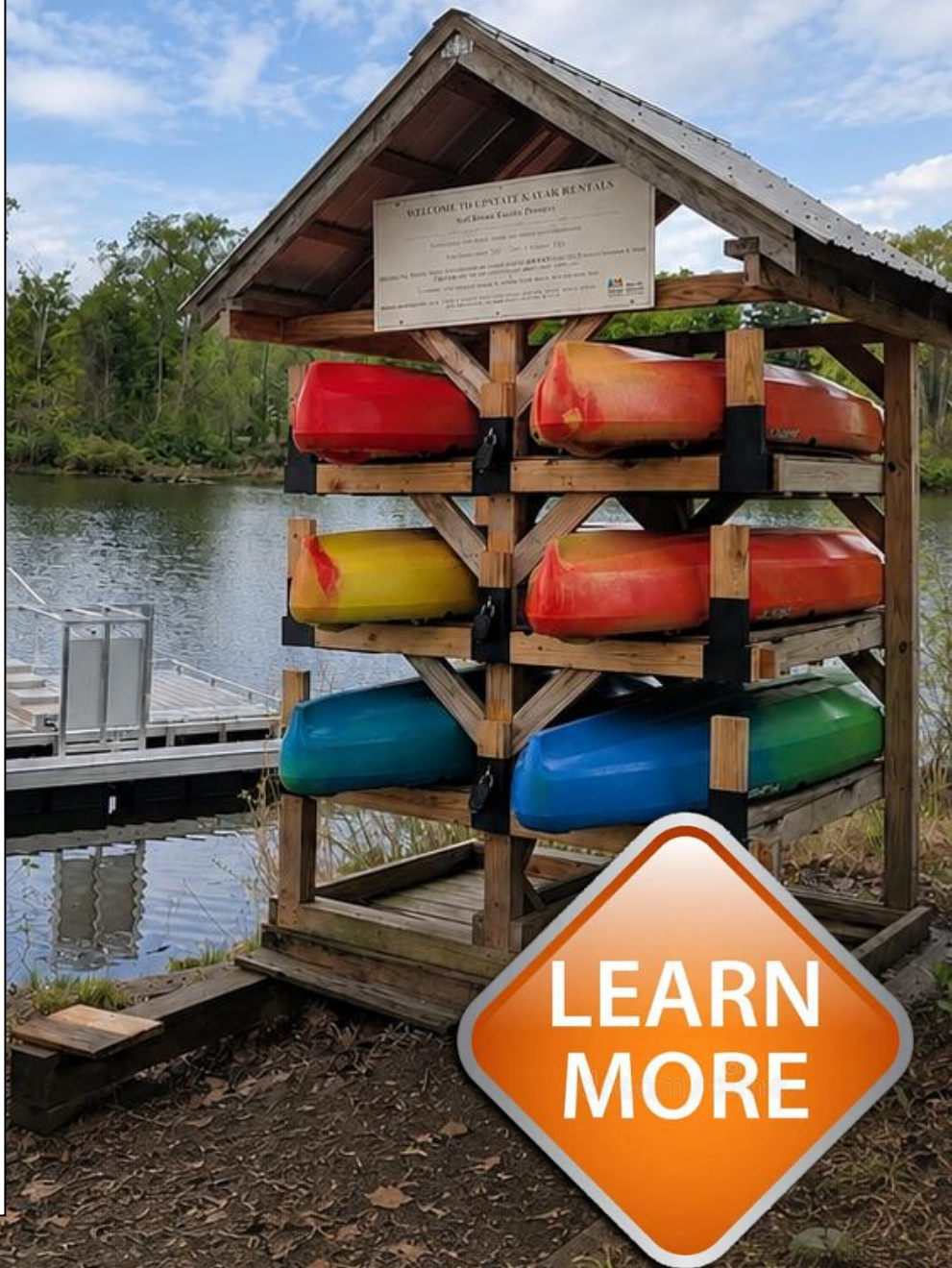


No Kayak? No Problem!

Upstate Kayak Rentals has a dozen self-serve kayak rental locations throughout east-central New York State

Their self-serve kiosks make it easy to get on the water seven days a week. Simply book online, select a location and date, receive your access code, and unlock your kayaks for a hassle-free adventure. (Sorry – no canoes).

Each rental includes a kayak, PFD and paddle. The fee varies by location and date. Discover scenic rivers, historic canals, abundant wildlife, and beautiful waterfronts. Rental locations include numerous points on the Erie Canal/ Mohawk River, Champlain Canal, and Hudson River, giving paddlers plenty to explore. No roof racks or car shuttle required—just arrive, unlock, and paddle!



LEARN
MORE

River of Dreams

Delaware River
July 25-26, 2026



Photo by Caroline Bastion.

Geoff, thank you so much for this amazing camping and canoeing experience. It opened up to me a different way of being in nature.

And to my fellow paddlers, thank you for supporting me when I needed it, especially to Shankar, who graciously provided transportation from the train station. This trip was PERFECT!!!

Anita Charjee

Sunrise on the Delaware.
Photo by Caroline Bastion.

Delaware River July 25-26, 2026

Thank you to the whole group and especially to Geoffrey, my new role model for leading beginner outdoor trips. I wish everyone many happy paddles to come!

Kate Perkins



Self-portrait by Geoff MacDougall

Geoff, thank you so much for organizing and leading such an amazing trip! It was a lot of fun, I learned so much, and at the end I wished it was longer! And thank you to the whole group! As we were saying, the vibes were great!

Shankar Tumati

THE BASHAKILL WETLANDS

Where Commerce Once Roared, Nature Now Reigns

At 2,175 acres, the Bashakill Wetlands is the largest fresh water marsh in southeastern New York State, nestled between the Shawangunk and Catskill Mountains.

This was a joint outing sponsored by the Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK) and AMC. It was a very good turnout—14 paddlers—the largest group this 40-year leader ever had. He was glad that he had Jeanette, an ADK Leader, for help.

It was a hot but beautiful day with a clear blue sky and white cotton-puff clouds. The wetlands were lush. The water vegetation had filled in so that there was only one navigable stream winding, like a snake, northeasterly. When the leader last paddled there in October 2012, the marsh was more like a lake.



We launched from South Rd. and headed to the Haven Rd. bridge. About 1 to 1.5 mile from Haven Rd, we found an opening in the aquatic vegetation where we could get to shore. There is a nice clearing with a bench, so we stopped for lunch. Some people ate in the clearing, the majority ate in their boats.

After lunch, five paddlers joined Jeanette to go back to South Rd. The majority paddled to the Haven Rd. bridge.

As peaceful and quiet a place the Bashakill is now, it once was a hub of commerce and likely very noisy. From 1829-1898, the Delaware & Hudson Canal's towpath was on the west shore, carrying coal from Honesdale, PA, to Kingston, NY, for shipment to NYC and Albany. The Ontario Western RR rattled on the east shore until the late 1950s, hauling lumber and coal to Monticello, NY. Today, both routes are hiking and XC skiing trails.

After everyone got back to South Road, four of us decided to go across South Road to the Bashakill Vineyards, for refreshments. The Vineyards offer much more than just wine. There are local beers, cola from Italy, light foods locally sourced and prepared creatively.



A Week of **ADIRONDACK RIVERS**

JULY 19-25, 2026

In a long-running tradition started by Don Getzin, Appies gathered to explore the Adirondack region's slow, meandering streams and occasionally windy lakes. We glided amidst lush expanses of aquatic grasses, water lilies, and wildflowers while spying on loons, great blue herons, and osprey (oh my!). Each day was capped off with a campfire and communally-cooked dinner back at our base, Lewey Lake Campground. Anyone still awake during the wee hours was treated to a concert by barred owls.

An expedition of this magnitude required the energy and talents of no fewer than four leaders: Chief planners and organizers Mary Ann Hoag and Eileen Yin, and on-river leaders Charles Michener and Chris Viani. Coupled with our cohesive, supportive, and skillful crew of "regular" participants it's hard to imagine having a better-run, better-fed week than this.



Charles at another beaver dam.
Photo by Mary Ann Hoag.



Chris Viani. Photo by Chris Raab.

July

sunday

Participants arrived and set up camp.

monday

Picked our way down the Kunjamuk River, explored mysterious Kunjamuk Cave, continued down to the confluence with the Sacandaga, finally grinding our way upstream against wind and current to the spot in beautiful downtown Speculator where the Sac' issues from Lake Pleasant.



Beaver dams
and dinner time.

Photos by Karen
Parks.



Kunjamuk Cave. Photo by Dave Marx.

tuesday

Shuttled a short distance for an out-and-back exploratory on the Jessup River. Just how far upriver could we go before being turned back? How many beaver dams would block our way? We carried something like six dams before reaching our limit and turning back downstream, fully satisfied!



wednesday

Starting on the West Branch of the Sacandaga near Arieta, we paddled upstream to Good Luck Lake, battled headwinds to the far end of that impoundment, hiked in river booties to the top of Good Luck Cliffs (2.5 mi, 1,015 ft elev. gain) where we lunched and enjoyed a fabulous, cliff-edge view before returning the way we came.



Photo by Sean Ainechi

thursday

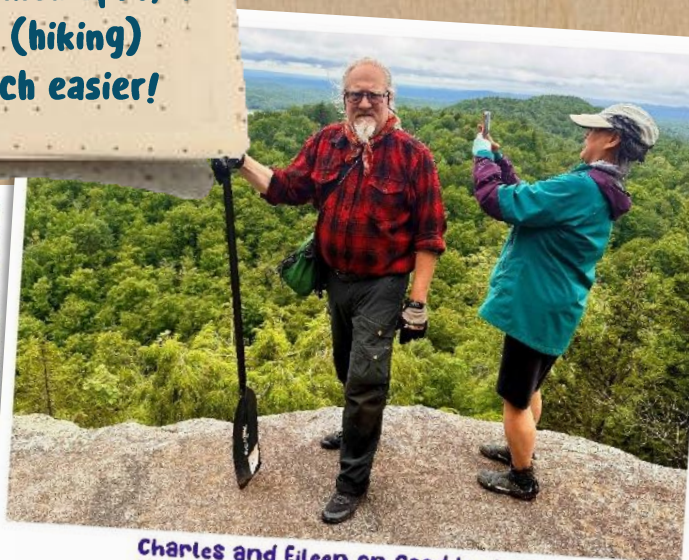
A lengthy drive took us to Cedar River Flow, a 640-acre lake well up into that river's headwaters. A long, open water paddle morphed into a maze of aquatic grasses and confusing channels. After several wrong turns we made our way upstream on a "river" that was often too narrow to pivot a boat, until we reached our lunch spot, a riverside lean-to on the Northville-Lake Placid (hiking) Trail. Finding our way back downriver was much easier!



Photo by Karen Parks



Photo by Dave Marx



Charles and Eileen on Good Luck Cliffs.
Photo by Dave Marx.

Friday

Saving the longest shuttle for last, we drove to Brown Tract Inlet, a tributary of Raquette Lake. Putting in at a campground on Lower Pond we threaded our way down the ever-meandering stream, carried a pair of too-low bridges and several beaver dams, lunched on a remote, weathered dock, and gaped at a fledgling osprey (and parent) nesting on the outskirts of the Hamlet of Raquette Lake, our journey's end.

Saturday

Time to strike our tents and elaborate group kitchen/dining area and head home!



Photo by Karen Parks



Jory Innes. Photo by Chris Raab.



Photo by Dave Marx

What's in a Name?

Atiró·taks, meaning bark-eater, was originally used by Mohawks to describe the less-than-stellar hunting skills of their Algonquin neighbors, who sometimes ate tree bark to survive. The spelling went through several mutations by European settlers, finally resulting in *Adirondacks* to describe the mountain range.

But why leave good enough alone? Today, the area is often called the *Dax* or '*Dacks* by tourists (but almost never by natives.)

These terms predates the age of text messages, where every polysyllabic word seems to have an acronym or abbreviation. I'd never heard *Dax* until the 1990s, even though I've been visiting the area annually since the '50s when I was in diapers (to be clear, I was an infant then.)

Marty Plante



Dinnertime. Photo by Sean Ainechi.



Eileen Yin. Photo by Dave Marx.

The Landing at Browns Tract Inlet.
Photo by Beth Powmesamy.



Whitewater Canoes

**FOR
SALE
BY OWNER**



MAD RIVER REVELATION: green; length 17 ft; width 39"; weight about 80 lbs; V-bottom; some rocker; skid plates; plastic gunnels. Great for whitewater canoe camping. In very good condition. \$600.

(Both boats are all river-ready and are made of super-tough and zero maintenance ABS/Royalex. It's no longer manufactured and there's no comparable material used in newer canoes.)

DAGGER CAPTION: solo/tandem; light blue; length 14'2"; width 26.0"; depth 15 1/4". Plastic gunnels. The tandem saddle is a Dagger factory installation by Frank Hubbard. Considered equivalent to the Mad River ME. In excellent condition: \$800.



Contact Rudi Markl at 914-481-8555 and rmarkl@optonline.net

PADDLE SPLASHES

Loretta Brady, Editor
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FINAL WORD

Dave's International Scale of River Difficulty

I Fast moving water with riffles and small waves. Swimming is pleasant, shore is easily reached. Almost all gear and equipment are recovered. Boat is slightly scratched.

II Straightforward rapids with wide clear channels which are evident without scouting. Swimming to eddies may require moderate effort. Climbing out of river may involve slippery rocks and shrub-induced lacerations. Paddle travels a great distance downstream, requiring a lengthy walk. Boat hits a sub-merged rock that leaves a ding on hull.

III Rapids with moderate irregular waves which may be difficult to avoid. Water is swallowed. Legs are repeatedly ground against sharp pointy rocks. Several eddies are missed while swimming. Decision to stay with boat results in moment of terror when swimmer realizes the boat is upstream of the swimmer. Paddle is recirculated in small hole way upstream. All personal possessions are removed from boat and float in different

directions. Paddling partners run along river bank shouting helpful instructions. Boat is munched against a large boulder hard enough to leave serious gouges. Sunglasses fall off.

IV Intense, powerful unpredictable rapids requiring precise swimming. Swimming may require "must make" moves above dangerous hazards. "Must make" moves are downgraded to "strongly recommended" after they are missed. Sensation of disbelief is experienced while about to swim large drops. Frantic swimming toward shore is alternated with frantic swimming away from shore to avoid strainers. Rocks are clung to with death grip. Paddle is completely forgotten. One shoe is removed. Hydraulic pressure removes car keys and credit cards from zippered paddle jacket pocket. Paddle partners run along river bank looking genuinely concerned while lofting throw ropes 20 feet behind swimmer. Boat is finally pinned by a major feature. Contact lenses are moved to rear of eyeballs.

V Not recommended for swimming.