

# Paddle Paw Paw



*Maple Lake (south end, downtown Paw Paw)*

Few communities are blessed with a lake and rivers in the heart of their community. Paw Paw is one of those few. Maple Lake lies in the heart of town. The downtown connects with the lake on the south end. At this end is the confluence of the East Branch and the West Branch of the Paw Paw River. The Paw Paw River runs all the way to St. Joseph/Benton Harbor where it joins the St. Joseph River before flowing into Lake Michigan.

For paddlers, the Maple Lake and the Paw Paw River both offer great opportunities for hours of enjoyment. Paddling Maple Lake has always been easy. Now, thanks to the Paw Paw Area Rotary, paddling the Paw Paw River is now possible.

Bathroom facilities are available downtown, on the island and at Sunset Park.

**Paddle Maple Lake:** Putting on Maple Lake is easy from downtown or from the launch at (what we call) Sunset Park, which offers a dock and a ramp, or from Maple Island. Sunset Park is located on the southeast end of Maple Lake. Maple Island is accessible from M-40/N. Kalamazoo Street on the east side of Maple Lake.



*Pictures – Left: Maple Island entrance; Above Middle: view from Sunset Park; and Right: Dock and launch ramp (just past the dock).*

**Paw Paw River Paddle!** Thanks to the Paw Paw Area Rotary Club and Eagle Scout Thomas Gooding, paddlers can enjoy a 11.5 mile paddle on the Paw Paw River south of Maple Lake. There are four (4) road crossings so you can select a paddle that fits you best.

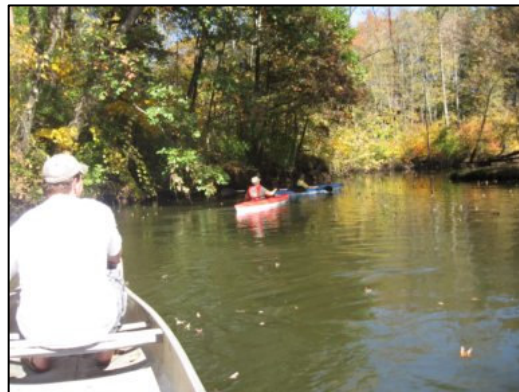
- A 2.6 mile trip takes paddlers to County Road (CR) 665 road crossing
- A 5.6 paddle goes to 40<sup>th</sup> Street road crossing
- A 9.1 paddle winds its way to 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue road crossing
- A 11.5 paddle will take you to the 45<sup>th</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> Street road crossing



**The Paw Paw River Paddle starts** in the Village of Paw Paw on the north side of Power Point Drive near the hydro-electric dam. This is approximately 1/10<sup>th</sup> of mile east of M-4 (N. Kalamazoo Street in the Village limits). From M-40 turn west and look for the launch sign on your right (north side). Parking is on your left (south side).

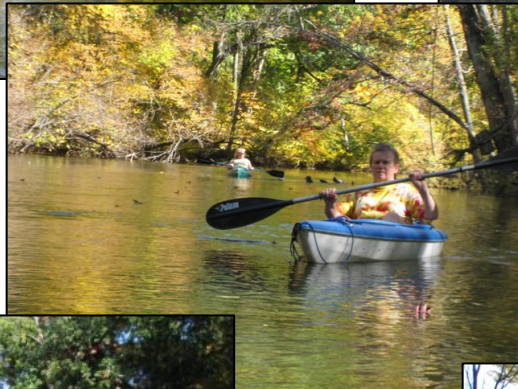
There are steps and a staging point at the start of the route but there are no formal take-out structures at the road crossings. However, the banks are easy to scale

*Pictures on this page and the next page are from an October 11, 2008 paddle taken by four people on a beautiful Fall day. As you can see, it was a great 1.5 hour paddle!*



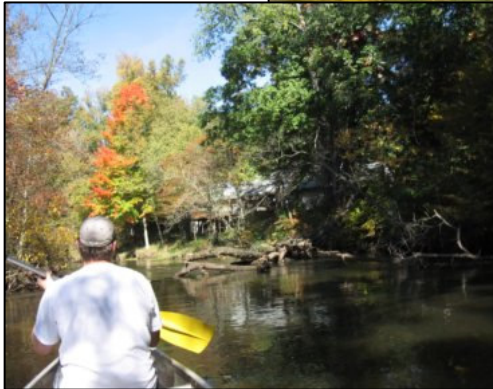


*A beautiful day for a paddle.*

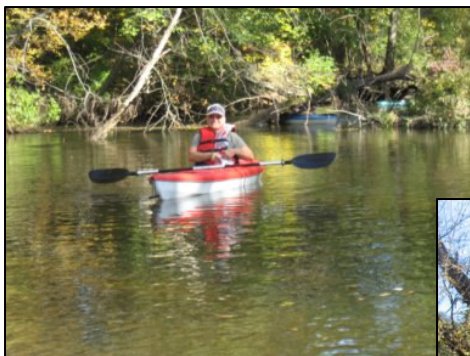


*Above: Near*

*the Bellware subdivision.*



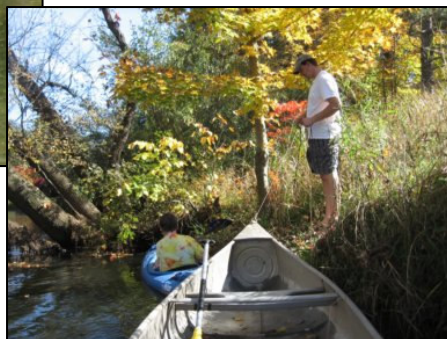
*L & R: A couple of obstacles prove easy to paddle around and through!*



*Left: Wrapping up a terrific 1.5 hour paddle*

*Below: Easy to get out at CR 665.*

**More information on the Paw Paw River and Maple Lake online at [www.pawpaw.net](http://www.pawpaw.net)**



*Back on the road again!*

