

There is something about my kayak. Our canoe is nice, lovely in fact, but, it is not the same as my kayak.

My kayak glides silently on the still water, the only sound I hear is the dipping and dripping of the paddle as it is rhythmically immersed, pulling us through the sparkling, clear water of Lower Eau Claire.

My kayak is low. I am so near to the water that I feel the current, melding into my surroundings as though I were no longer an observer, but an actual member, participating in the neighborhood gathering of creatures both above and below my line of sight. I feel a part of the beauty, the magic that occurs by the minute that most of the time is never noticed or considered as I make my way through my busy life. In my kayak, I notice, I relish, I inhale the sweetness of my journey. I am transported to another world, far far away from the noises made by man, the distractions created by an all encompassing career in my busy, metropolitan life.

My favorite sojourn is through the narrows that lie between our cabin and Mooney Bay, past the banks of little Clearwater resort. There is a hidden place in the bay, obscured by marshy reeds that my dog Tug, and I glide into, hiding from the notice of boaters and fishermen, something I can only do in my kayak. As we sidle into the shallow hidden glade, we enter a peaceful, private world that is best taken in with a still, reverent silence. Tug knows this and sits ever so quietly with a heart rapidly beating in anticipation of all we are about to witness. A symphony is provided by the multitude of songbirds living in the marsh. A beautiful egret stands eyeing us warily on one foot. As we look lower, eyes to the surrounding pieces of driftwood that more resemble works of art than dead trees, we notice dozens of turtles, sunning themselves on the exposed branches. Every so often, the chirping and trilling of the birds is accentuated by the "plop - plopping" of a turtle deciding it is time for a swim.

Tug's attention is drawn to a V in the water. We turn in that direction and paddle gently so we may better watch the beaver swimming, dragging another stick with which to fortify his home in the marsh.

It is time to head back. More amazing sights to behold both above and below! As we look skyward we are just in time to see a bald eagle flying back to the nest with dinner for the young ones...a nice fat fish scooped up with powerful talons.

We hear the loons before we see them. We've gotten a bit too close and mommy and daddy are concerned. We skim away but not before daddy decides to distract us from baby by noisily flapping his wings, and diving out of site. I paddle away, a bit more swiftly, and as I watch my paddle dip into the water I am amazed at the site of a bird swimming under our craft. I feel so lucky to have seen the loon gliding under the water. A rare site indeed!

Alas the bell on the hill is ringing, calling me to a glass of wine and the pontoon idling by the dock, encouraging us to take in the lake and creatures from another perspective. "SIGH", it is not my kayak, but it will have to do....