



"Beam me up Scotty, it ate my phaser..."

beachtrek

I first heard of Chincoteague Island Virginia from Marguerite Henry. Not personally: she was a well-known writer of kids' books and I was a voracious reader of them, especially the horsie variety she specialized in. Once upon a time, she became fascinated by the only wild horse roundup on the east coast, and journeyed to Chincoteague Island to capture the tale in a fiction-based-on-fact set of books: *Misty of Chincoteague*, *Sea Star Orphan of Chincoteague*, and *Stormy Misty's Foal*. Henry's "Album of Horses" was a mainstay of my childhood, and when I showed my dad the chapter on the Chincoteague ponies, he said something like, "We should go there."

Huh? Like, it's a real place?

We went for the first time the last year *Misty* (the original) was alive (early 1970s). She was snoring in her stall at the Pony Farm, so I never disturbed her by taking a picture. I drew *Stormy* (the one in the book) at the same farm several years later. After journeying there with my dad, and the 4-H club, I went on my own, at first borrowing a tent, then buying a backpack and hiking miles into the backcountry, and later, discovering the real island from my sea kayak, *Makenuk's Fin*. I often carried a sketchbook, and always a camera. Sometimes I went for Pony Penning (the last week of July), and sometimes at other times of the year. My favorite time is summer, when I live on the water as much as possible. It was friends (one who lived there for many years) who dubbed their weeklong beach party "Beachtrek".

The Beachtrek PDFs are a glimpse of the beauties that are Assateague and Chincoteague islands.