

Rendezvous at Lake Pepin

A thousand dark water birds rose from the lake, wings beating in unison and flying low above the water until the line disappeared entirely into the misty veil. OK, so there weren't one thousand birds, but there were about sixty migratory cormorants that our seven kayaks stirred up from a sand bar in Lake Pepin. And they did indeed rise noisily from the water and disappear into a wall of fog.

It was one of Those Moments to be enveloped in mist and situated between the bluffs rising from Minnesota and the Wisconsin sides of Lake Pepin watching the edges of the land masses moving in and out of view. It was hard to believe we were a mere two hours from home. It looked and felt like being at some exotic destination.

Kayaks, eagles and cormorants ruled the lake! We started north from our group camp at HOK-SE-LA and crossed to the Wisconsin side of the lake about six miles upstream. We touched the Rush River on the east side and moved back south towards camp only to cross over early so wouldn't overshoot our destination in the foggy conditions. The whole world was white, misty, and silent punctuated with the sounds of birds and the rhythms of an occasional freight train. A fireworks display exploding over the bluff line was the perfect grand finale to a memorable day of paddling in the mist.