

S13 Day Paddles - Peace River

Paynes Creek State Park Paddle to Zolfo Springs Ramp Paddle Information Sheet

Description: The Peace River winds through moss-draped cypress swamps, shady hammocks and hardwood forests. The area below Wauchula is known for its abundance of fossils and artifacts. The most outstanding feature of the Peace River is its intriguing geology. Large limestone formations frequently emerge from the banks and river bottom, creating shoals and gentle rapids (depending on water levels). The river is also a renowned destination for fossil hunting and people flock to the river searching for ancient relics in the river's depths. It is allowed to collect fossilized shark teeth, fossilized plants and shells, but to collect fossilized animals you must obtain a permit for a small fee.

Skill Level: Advanced

Distance/Approximate Time: 10.8 Miles/4.5 Hours

Launch Site: Paynes Creek State Park Ramp

Takeout Site: Zolfo Springs Ramp

Special Considerations: This paddle requires shuttling. State Park entry fee. Contact a local outfitter to check on safe water levels before paddling. Collecting human artifacts is not allowed by state law. Expect to occasionally pull your boat over shallows during periods of low water.

Skill Level Definitions

Beginner: New to paddling and may need tips and or instructions about paddling strokes, safety procedures, and entering/exiting kayaks. Comfortable on short trips of 1 to 3 miles on protected waters, when wind does not exceed 5 mph.

Novice: Paddlers acquainted with basic paddle strokes and can manage kayak handling independently in winds not exceeding 10 mph on protected waters. Comfortable on trips up to 6 miles.

Intermediate: Paddlers with experience in basic strokes and some experience on different venues, including some open water. Comfortable on trip distances of 6 to 10 miles, winds not exceeding 15 mph.

Advanced: Seasoned paddlers who possess skills and experience to paddle all venues and conditions. Experienced in self-rescues. Should be comfortable paddling more than 10 miles in a day.

NOTE: Great care has been taken to ensure this guides accuracy, but weather, tides, and water conditions can change rapidly and create hazardous conditions. These maps are for visual reference only, please consult NOAA Charts for navigation. Paddlers should have all proper safety equipment and check conditions before departure. All paddlers should always wear PFDs while on the water, and leave a float plan. There are inherent dangers in any paddle sport. There are special hazards along the Florida coast due to shifting tides, changing wind and weather, shallow waters, and treacherous bottoms with soft mud, rocks, and oyster bars. It is up to each paddler to be aware of these dangers, to accept and be prepared for the risks involved, and to be certain they have the skills to safely paddle in these conditions.