

S10 Day Paddles - ICW

Information Sheet

Description: South Lido County Park's mangrove trails is the most popular kayaking destination in the Sarasota area. This is a 3.7 mile loop covering the Mangrove Trail and a circumnavigation of Otter Key. For the mangrove trail loop portion, a short mangrove trail can be accessed by entering the small bay just to the right of the launch area. The mangrove trail will be on the left. Once through this mangrove trail, turn right and paddle between the two small mangrove islands on the left and head southwest into the small bay and look for the mangrove trail opening just past the observation dock. This mangrove trail will take you into a small back bay called Brushy Bayou. Once in Brushy Bayou, turn right and follow the shoreline and look for the mangrove trail opening on the right about two thirds of the way around the bay. This mangrove tunnel will take you back out into Sarasota Bay. From there, head north northwest up to Otter Key, circumnavigate and return to the launch site.

Skill Level: Novice/Intermediate due to open water to Otter Key

Distance/Approximate Time: 3.7 Miles/2 Hours

Launch Site: Ted Sperling Nature Park Paddle Launch

Special Considerations: Since a number of commercial kayak outfitters launch from the park, it is best to arrive early in the morning to get a parking space near the launch area and to avoid the crowds. The park extremely busy from mid-morning through afternoon and especially on weekends.

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.