

## S12EB Day Paddles - Estero Bay

### Mound House Upper Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** An easy paddle much of which is across open water. Head WNW out of the Mound House ramp about half a mile. Cross the channel to the north shore when it's convenient. The channel can get rough when it's windy. Turn north into the wide cut at the half mile point and make the first right. The channel tightens quickly and opens at Calusa Blueway Marker 40. Head generally west, then north, then west through a series of bays and channels to Markers 40A, 41, 42, 42A, and 43, where you'll turn south into Hurricane Bay and then generally southeast in the boat channel back to the launch point.

**Skill Level:** Novice/Intermediate

**Distance/Time:** 4.3 Miles/2.5 Hours

**Launch Site:** The Mound House is an archaeological and historic site at 451 Connecticut Street, Ft Myers Beach, owned and maintained by the Town of Ft. Myers Beach. The main gate opens around sunrise. You can drive up to the launch to unload, but parking for only about 8 cars is near the entrance. The launch area is indoor/outdoor carpet, smooth, and protected from waves. Additional parking a block west on Connecticut.

**Special Considerations:** The trail is well-marked, but it is possible to make wrong turns between Markers 40 and 40A. One of the small bays is shallow, but passable. Compass and maps recommended, and GPS if you're not used to mangrove tunnels.

#### 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.