

S13TT Day Paddles and Overnight Trips - Ten Thousand Islands

Marsh Hiking Trail Circumnavigation Information Sheet

Description: This trail can only be used after heavy rains or during the rainy season. Water generally sits shallow (about 2 feet) through the area and a little deeper (4 feet) in the lakes, but the lakes have muck bottoms. This is an unmarked trail, and not part of the official Refuge trail system. You'll travel in and out of flooded marshes, tunnels, channels, lakes and areas of small mangrove islands. Remember that US 41 is within a 1.3 miles to the northeast and you're paralleling the Marsh Trail. You will need to portage over the Marsh Trail just north of the observation tower. At the far end you can land at the pad (bug spray needed) at the north end of the Marsh Trail.

Skill Level: Novice/Intermediate, due to navigation issues and difficult paddling

Distance/Time: 3.3 Miles/3 Hours

Launch Site: The Marsh Trail parking lot is a little less than 3 miles east of SR 92 and about the same distance west of Port of the Islands Canal. The launch is easy from within the parking lot into a grass marsh. If it's too shallow then the trail will be impassable.

Special Considerations: Although the paddling trail parallels the Marsh Trail closely, everything looks the same and the Marsh Hiking Trail is seldom visible. Map, compass, and a GPS are a must.

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.