

S13TT Day Paddles and Overnight Camping Trips - 10,000 Islands

Panther Key Primitive Camp Trip Information Sheet

Description: Panther Key is located in the Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge, so permits are not required for camping. The route to Panther Key presented here, launches from Goodland Boating Park Ramp, out Coon Key Pass then winding among the mangrove islands, through Shell Key Bay, passing Turtle Key to the south, crossing Dismal Key Pass, passing Hog Key to the south before arriving at the northern side of Panther Key is a very scenic and beautiful paddle. The main camping beaches on Panther Key are located on the southeast side of the Island, and there are many. However, if the wind is coming from that direction, there's a couple of nice beaches on the west side as well. Camping is not allowed May through September due to nesting birds and sea turtles.

Skill Level: Intermediate/Advanced

Distance/Time: 9.5 Miles each way/Approximately 4.5 Hours each way

Launch Site: Goodland Boating Park Ramp

Special Considerations: This is a long but mostly protected paddle once you round the southern point of Tripod Key. If you get disoriented, you can always go out a pass and hug the coastline. GPS, map and compass are highly recommended. Overnight parking and launch fee.

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.