

S13TTCT—Coastal, Rivers and Blueways Trails

10,000 Islands Coastal Camping Trail

Leg 5 - Camp Lulu to Whitehorse Information Sheet

Description: There are a lot of interesting routes to get from Camp Lulu Key to Whitehorse Key but, if you've been following all the legs of this series of trips so far, we figure you're either burned out on exploring mangrove islands or are good enough with your GPS and charts to make up your own explorative route. So, we're just going to take you back to Whitehorse, the direct way, on the Gulf of Mexico. This route has it's own highlights. You might see dolphin playing or cruising along; a manatee or two rising up for a breath leaving a telltale swirl in the water; a large spotted eagle ray leaping out of the water for a huge splashdown, sea turtles (many species in these waters), or a school of mullet passing by, as well as seeing numerous sea birds. So it probably won't be boring. Obviously, you won't want to go this way if it's too windy. From the south shore of Camp Lulu Key make a wide swing west around the end of the island to avoid the shallows, then head west/northwest passing Round Key to your right. Be aware that Round Key has a very large, long sandbar to it's northeast that dries out at low tide, so it's best to stay outside. You should also give Gomez Point, off of Panther Key, a wide berth as you pass it because it can be very shallow; same with the south end of Whitehorse as you approach it. Then you're back to the camping beach on the southwest side of Whitehorse Key. See the trip description for Whitehorse Key Camping Trip for details about this camping location.

Skill Level: Intermediate /Advanced

Distance/Time: 5 Miles/ Approximately 2.5 Hours

Launch Site: Camp Lulu Key

Takeout Site: Whitehorse Key

Special Considerations: Open water paddling. GPS, map and compass 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.