

## S15LK Day Paddles - Lower Keys

### Bahia Honda Circumnavigation Information Sheet

**Description:** This is a nice paddle around the island, all of which is Bahia Honda State Park. If you go under the railroad bridge first, the first opportunity to stop is on Little Bahia Honda Key, a rocky island just oceanside of the bridge. It's a tiny island but fun for snorkeling and swimming. As you paddle along the beaches heading north (really east) make sure you don't come ashore where people are swimming or snorkeling. When you reach Ohio-Bahia Honda Channel, there is Rachel Carson Key where you can also land and have a picnic or swim. On the gulfside of the island there is a nice sandy cove to take another break along the shoreline (right after the wide part of the island becomes the narrow part). It is just a short paddle past the bayside campsites back to the launch site.

**Skill Level:** Novice/Intermediate

**Distance/Approximate Time:** 5.6 Miles/3 Hours

**Launch Site:** Bahia Honda SP Paddle Launch

**Special Considerations:** Be aware of the tides. It is best to paddle this counter clockwise when the tide is going out. If the tide is coming in when you launch, do the trip in a clockwise direction and time it so when you finish, the tide is slack or still coming in. Regarding the wind, on a circumnavigation you will be paddling against it at some point.

#### 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.