

S15LK Day Paddles - Lower Keys

Howe Key Paddle Information Sheet

Description: Uninhabited Howe and Annette Keys are part of the Great White Heron National Wildlife Refuge. The water is very shallow and full of life – sharks, rays and plenty of fish and birds. For an adventure, paddle thru Howe Key Channel at the base of the narrow peninsula on the north east side of the key. It connects two lagoons.

Skill Level: Advanced

Distance/Approximate Time: 13.7/6.5 Hours

Launch Site: Big Pine Key - Koehn Ave Paddle Launch

Special Considerations: This trip is not recommended at low tide. Some of the shallow areas will have grass flats exposed. You will notice many prop scars in the area due to power boats dredging up the sea grass.

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.