

## S15MK Day Paddles - Middle Keys

## Deer Key Information Sheet

**Description:** On a windy day, it is easy to paddle around Little Crawl Key by following the shoreline around from the launch site and going under the bridge. There are numerous cassiopea jellies (upside down jelly fish) in the shallow lagoon as well as a chance to see nurse sharks or mangrove snakes. A circumnavigation of Deer Key and also a trip north along the shoreline can extend this paddle. There is also a sandbar not far from shore a bit to the north, that is nice to hang out and swim.

**Skill Level:** Novice/Intermediate due to open water

**Distance/Approximate Time:** 4.4Miles/2 Hours

**Launch Site:** Little Crawl Key - Curry Hammock SP Paddle Launch

**Special Considerations:** The lagoon part of the Little Crawl Key circumnavigation can be shallow at low tide so time the trip for a rising tide. There is a fee to enter the park. The park Friends group has kayaks and paddleboards to rent.

### 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.