

S22 Day Paddles - St John's River

Blue Cypress Lake Circumnavigation Information Sheet

Description: Blue Cypress Lake has one of the highest concentrations of nesting Ospreys in the State. The lake is surrounded by majestic cypress trees and picturesque knees. The St. Johns River Water Management District owns most of the shoreline because the lake is the headwater of the St. Johns River, which flows north 300 miles to Jacksonville and the Atlantic Ocean. The lake is surrounded by 29,000 acres of marshes, swamps, and cypress forests. Wildlife includes gators, snakes, and a multitude of birds including Ospreys, Spoonbills, Ibises, Limpkins, Great Blue Herons, owls, ducks, and cranes. Middleton's Fish Camp is next to the ramp.

Skill Level: Advanced

Distance/Approximate Time: 12.3 Miles/5.5 Hours

Launch Site: Blue Cypress Lake Park Ramp.

Special Considerations: This lake is large and it can get quite rough on windy days. There is very little high ground around the lake with little opportunity to get out and stretch your legs.

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.