

## S23 Day Paddles - Inland Lakes

### West Lake Jesup Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** The North Lake Jesup, Marl Bed Flats and East Lake Jessup Conservation Tracts protect thousands of acres of shallow marsh habitat that are a haven for migratory birds. Birders flock here, particularly in May at the Marl Bed Flats tract, to view large flocks of shorebirds that stop over every year on their spring migration. It's also a good place to see large flocks of American White Pelicans, wintering ducks and sparrows. There are many eagles, ospreys, hawks and alligators around the shores of Lake Jesup, as well as numerous egrets, ibis and great blue herons. The restoration of natural systems is improving the habitat and feeding areas for a wide variety of waterfowl. The lake has one of the largest concentrations of gators in the state.

**Skill Level:** Advanced

**Distance/Approximate Time:** 12.7 Miles/4 Hours

**Launch Site:** Black Hammock Fish Camp And Marina Ramp

**Special Considerations:** This lake is large and can get quite rough on windy days. One of the highest concentration of gators in the State. This lake is used by seaplanes. Launch fee.

#### 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.