

S2 Day Paddles - Choctawhatchee Bay

Alaqua Creek Paddle Information Sheet

Description: This dark-water creek begins on the Eglin Reservation (recreation permit required for most of the upper section) and flows into Alaqua Bayou on [Choctawhatchee Bay](#). As such, the creek is tidally influenced, particularly on the lower sections. The Hwy 20 bridge has scores of swallows nesting beneath it. Upstream you may encounter a gator or two, or even a few fisherman, but it is usually a quiet paddle, except at the Hwy 20 bridge. Takeout is the ramp at Nick's Restaurant, who doesn't usually charge kayakers, especially if you eat there.

Skill Level: Intermediate

Distance/Approximate Time: 8.3 Miles/4 Hours

Launch Site: Alaqua Creek CR 20 Bridge Ramp

Takeout Site: Nicks Seafood Ramp/Paddle Launch

Special Considerations: This paddle requires shuttling vehicles. There are several side creeks that connect to Alaqua and it's possible to get side-tracked. The final leg on the bay can get rough, especially when winds are out of the south.

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.