

S32 Day Paddles - Lake Kissimmee

Buster Island Paddle Information Sheet

Description: Lake Kissimmee (35,000 acres) is large, remote and unspoiled, offering endless reflecting waters, stunning stars in dark skies, and excellent fishing. The trail is a loop, however the endpoints of the trail are a short distance apart due to a water structure. Paddlers encircle Buster Island, a hiker and equestrian's delight with miles of trails winding between moss-draped live oak. The paddling loop meanders through the Zipperer Canal, Lake Rosalie, Rosalie Creek, Tiger Lake, Tiger Creek, and Lake Kissimmee before returning to the boat marina. The Marina Cantina offers common camping sundries, snacks and drinks, and recreation equipment rentals. Pine flatwoods, oak hammocks and freshwater marsh burst forth in the fall and spring with an abundance of wildflowers that dominate the landscape. The diverse habitat, a part of the headwaters of the Everglades, offers excellent wildlife viewing opportunities for the quiet and observant paddler.

Skill Level: Intermediate/Advanced

Distance/Approximate Time: 10.9 Miles/4.5 Hours

Launch Site: Lake Kissimmee State Park - West Zipperer Canal Paddle Launch

Takeout Site: Lake Kissimmee State Park - East Zipperer Canal Paddle Launch

Special Considerations: During dry spells the trail may not have enough water for pleasant paddling. Call the Park office at 863-696-1112 to inquire.

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.