

S32 Day Paddles - Arbuckle Creek

Lower Arbuckle Creek Paddle Information Sheet

Description: Arbuckle Creek flows for 25 miles from Lake Arbuckle to Lake Istokpoga. The diverse habitat includes cypress swamp, grass prairie, ranchlands, and oak hammock. The upper creek runs along the western border of the Avon Park Air Force Bombing Range, which helps keep the creek more natural. Wildlife along the creek include deer, wild turkeys, wild hogs, black bear, alligators, bald eagle, and wading birds. You also may see cows. This is a remote undeveloped creek through Cypress swamp, prairie, ranchlands and hardwood forest the entire way. The lower creek is less natural including a manmade channel close to the southern end.

Skill Level: Advanced, due to distance

Distance/Approximate Time: 12.6 Miles/5.5 Hours

Launch Site: Arbuckle Creek Road Public Ramp

Takeout Site: Istokpoga Park Public North Ramp

Special Considerations/ Safety Issues: The water is drawn down on Lake Istokpoga in the spring, causing low water levels on the creek. August to March are the best times for paddling. Use caution during hunting season.

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.