

S32 Day Paddles - Lake Kissimmee

Rabbit Island/Bird Island Paddle Information Sheet

Description: Lake Kissimmee is a 35,000 acre shallow lake known for its excellent fishing. There are five islands in the lake. The largest is Brahma Island in the south. It is followed in size by Sturm Island in the north, which is separated from the mainland only by a narrow waterway. The other islands are Bird Island, Rabbit Island and Ox Island in the eastern part of the lake. Also Ox Island is separated from the mainland only by a very narrow waterway. This lake is known for its birdwatching with sandhill cranes, introduced whooping cranes, bald eagles, osprey, black vultures, and shorebirds prominent. In the winter months it is home to several species of migratory waterfowl.

Skill Level: Advanced

Distance/Approximate Time: 13 Miles/5.5 Hours

Launch Site: Overstreet Landing Public Ramp

Special Considerations: Not recommended on windy days. Lake Kissimmee is a large shallow lake, and on windy days waves can reach 2-3 feet in height. Be mindful of airboats, as they are common out on the lake.

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.