

Day Paddles - Shired Island

Butler Creek Paddle Information Sheet

Description: Paddle from Shired Island County Park up the coast, winding between oyster bars along the shallow coastline. Once in the creeks, the shoreline consists of Black Needlerush, Smooth Cordgrass and an occasional red mangrove, which are slowly moving northward with the milder winters. Usually there are plenty of shorebirds and ospreys, and in the winter months, you will likely see Skimmers and Oystercatchers, as well as an Eagle or two, and occasionally a Roseate Spoonbill.

Skill Level: Advanced

Distance/Time: 11.6 Miles/ 5 Hours

Launch Site: Shired Island County Park

Special Considerations: Oyster bars on low to medium tides. There are quite a few oyster bars after leaving Butler Creek at the north end of the trip, so plastic boats are recommended. GPS, compass and a good map are highly recommended, as there are a lot of side creeks to get turned around on.

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.