

Day Paddles and Overnight Camping Trips - Suwannee Area

Shired Creek Paddle Information Sheet

Description: Launch at the County Park Beach and paddle upstream from the wide creek mouth, leaving behind the salt water of the Gulf of Mexico. As the creek narrows, the elevation of the land gradually rises, and the transition from salt to freshwater and from salt marsh to island hammocks is encountered. Turnaround is at the Dixie Mainline bridge. This paddle is one of the best ways to see the effects of rising sea levels on the area's different tidal habitats.

Skill Level: Intermediate

Distance/Time: 7.2 Miles/3.5 Hours

Launch Site: Shired Island County Park-From the Suwannee Community Center: Head East on CR 349 2.1 Miles and take a left on the Dixie Mainline. Continue on the Dixie Mainline until you get to the first paved road (CR 357) and take a left. Continue 3.3 miles and the County Park is on your right just before the end of the road, and just past the County Boat Ramp.

Special Considerations: For an easier paddle, try to time it so you can paddle up with the incoming tide and down the creek with the out going tide.

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.