

## Day Paddles - Waccasassa River/

### Upper Waccasassa River/Wekiva River Trail Information Sheet

**Description:** This up-and-back paddle explores upstream on the Waccasassa and its tributary, the Wekiva during normal water levels, which are rain-dependent. Giant bald cypress trees dot the shoreline which includes towering cabbage palms, red cedar, oaks, and loblolly bay trees, just to name a few. And if you look closely you can spot numerous fiddler crabs on the muddy banks waving their big claws. Launching from the Waccasassa boat ramp and heading upstream for about 3/4 mile, you will come to the junction with the Wekiva River on the right which you can explore on the way back. The left channel takes you up the Waccasassa where in about 1/4 mile you paddle under the Hwy 326 bridge. Another 1 1/4 miles upstream brings you to the turn-around point for this trip. Returning downstream, take a left at the junction to head upstream on the Wekiva. There are a few fishing/hunting camps scattered along the shore whose privacy should be respected; there are plenty of other remote spots to take a break.

**Skill Level:** Intermediate/Advanced

**Distance/Time:** 9.5 Miles/4.5 Hours

**Launch Site:** Waccasassa River Ramp. Turn west off HWY 19 on to CR 326. Proceed down to the boat ramp at the end of the road.

**Special Considerations:** The turnaround point on the Waccasassa is a big multiple-log jam that is only passable during very high water. The turnaround point on the Wekiva River is about 2 1/2 miles from the junction, where the river becomes shallow with numerous deadfall.

#### 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.