

## S9 Day Paddles - Alafia River

## Upper Alafia River Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** This river offers something for everyone, but beware, danger can lurk here. This is one of the few south Florida rivers which has ripples - small rapids with from 1 to 2 foot drop each. There are about five on this part of the river. There are steep banks along this section.

**Skill Level:** Intermediate /Advanced

**Distance/Approximate Time:** 9.8 Miles/4 Hours

**Launch Site:** Aldermans Ford Park Paddle Launch

**Takeout Site:** Lithia Springs Park Paddle Launch

**Special Considerations:** For experienced paddlers only. Plastic boats are almost a must due to rapids. This paddle requires shuttling vehicles. Not many places to stop and rest. The Alderman Ford launch is from a low dock. Lithia Springs has a very high awkward dock - river bank has sharp drop off, so that makes it difficult.

### 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.