

S23 Day Paddles - ICW

Hunter Creek Paddle Information Sheet

Description: If you're looking to only paddle in the backwaters, this route is for you. As you paddle through the mangrove forest, the quiet, peaceful setting is perfect for spotting great blue, little blue and tri-color heron along with snowy and great egrets. At low tide, a lot of sand bars emerge for an opportunity to explore the marine life including conch, fish eggs, stingrays, and more. After launching, paddle to the left and continue around the property line. Paddle west into a large creek on the right. At the end, make a right turn. You will notice a large bay opening on the right, but continue to go through a small opening along the bank. You will see the opening to Hunter Creek on the right (29.043497 80.932304). Continue until you see a small mangrove island. Go around it and enter the opposite creek. You will exit at the Inlet Shores neighborhood. Paddle to the right and enter Smyrna Creek. Paddle southeast to return to the launch area at the Marine Discovery Center.

Skill Level: Novice

Distance/Approximate Time: 5.7 Miles/3.5 Hours

Launch Site: Marine Discovery Center Paddle Launch

Special Considerations: Good map, GPS and compass recommended. This route has very little powerboat traffic except a few boats at high tide. Paddling is great on low tide but watch out for sandbars.

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.