

## S23 Day Paddles - St Johns River

## Hontoon Island State Park Ramp to Bluffton Ramp Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** This is a long paddle and a beautiful wooded stretch of the St Johns, with no major lake crossings. Once you leave the SR 44 Bridge, about 3.6 miles into your paddle, there is no development until you get to your take out site at Bluffton. The entrance to Lake Dexter is on your right, about a mile from Bluffton.

**Skill Level:** Advanced

**Distance/Approximate Time:** 17.5 Miles/7 Hours

**Launch Site:** Hontoon Island State Park Paddle Launch

**Takeout Site:** Lake George State Forest Bluffton Recreation Area Paddle Launch

**Special Considerations:** Stay out of the channel and paddle along the shoreline when possible. Lake Dexter is a large lake and can get quit rough on windy days. This paddle requires shuttling vehicles.

### 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.