

Coastal, Rivers and Blueways Trails

Apalachicola River Trail - Leg 8

Sandbar to Hickory Landing Owl Creek Information Sheet

Description: Launch from the sandbar and continue downstream. This is one of the longest stretches of the Apalachicola River Trail. You'll find decreasing numbers of sandbars on the second half of this leg. Continue past the confluence of the River Styx on your left and the Chipola River on your right. The entrance to Owl Creek is just under 4 miles below the Chipola River confluence. A GPS is recommended for finding the entrance, as it is easy to miss. Continue up Owl Creek to Hickory Landing Campground on your right.

Skill Level: Advanced, due to distance

Distance/Time: 20 Miles/Approximately 7 Hours

Launch Site: Sandbar

Special Considerations: The Apalachicola River can have one of the fastest flows in the State. During extreme high water levels, most sandbars are covered. The USGS river gauge at Chattahoochee should be below 44 feet for best paddling and camping conditions. Please practice Leave No Trace principles. Paddles require shuttling.

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.