

## S8 Day Paddles - Tampa Bay

## Double Branch Bay Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** The first part of this trail is marked. The signs are somewhat different from the trail from State Street to the north. The trail twists and turns down Double Branch Creek for several miles until it dumps into Old Tampa Bay. For the most adventurous, the return loop is unmarked. The alternative is to return by the same marked route you took to the creek mouth.

**Skill Level:** Novice/Intermediate due to navigation issues on unmarked trails.

**Distance/Approximate Time:** 3.3 Miles/2.5 Hours

**Launch Site:** Upper Tampa Bay Regional Park Paddle Launch

**Special Considerations:** Mangroves, mangroves, mangroves - which means it is easy to get lost, especially if you get off the marked trail. It is very easy to get lost in this area, so a good map and GPS are highly recommended. This area is extremely tide sensitive. Few places to take out and rest. There are a lot of oyster beds in this area.

### 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.