

## S8 Day Paddles - Tampa Bay

## Weedon Island Preserve Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** This is the premier mangrove paddling trail in the Tampa Bay area. It has just about everything, many mangrove tunnels, launch either off a dock or a mud flat, rest rooms and water at launch site, well marked trail, and kayak rentals. This is an excellent place to paddle if the winds are blowing because the trail protects you most of the way.

**Skill Level:** Novice

**Distance/Approximate Time:** 4 Miles/2.5 Hours

**Launch Site:** Weedon Island Preserve Paddle Launch

**Special Considerations:** Extremely tide sensitive - to make sure you have enough water, it's best to launch between 2 hours before high tide to within 1 hour after high tide. Few places to take out to rest. The trail is only 4 mile long, but you can easily get lost if you get off the trail. The Preserve is open 7 days a week from dawn to dusk.

### 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.