

Day Paddles and Overnight Camping Trips - Panacea/ St Marks Area

Gander Spring Run Information Sheet

Description: From Wakulla Beach, paddle west along the shore in Goose Creek Bay for about ¼ mile. Turn right (north) into the West Goose Creek estuary. At the large T-junction in the estuary, stay to the right channel. Continue in this winding channel all the way to when cypress trees begin to grow along the channel. You may see signs to keep out due to Eagles nesting. Dates are posted during nesting season. The water at the end is crystal clear.

Skill Level: Intermediate

Distance/Time: 7 Miles/Approximately 5 hours

Launch Site: Wakulla Beach

Special Considerations: It is best to time entry to the West Goose Creek Estuary in the last 90 minutes before high tide so that one can ride the tide in and then out on the way back to counter the tidal flow. Some snags and deadfall near the end may require portaging. Some open water paddling from the beach to the creek. NOT recommended on low tide.

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.