SARASOTA COUNTY

Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources

Blueways Paddling Guide

Get into the flow

Sarasota County

Reference Map

The numbered triangles identify the paddle trail areas in this guide.

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leave no trace
PACK IN/PACK OUT

To view this publication online:
scgov.net (Keyword Parks/Blueways Paddle Guide)

LONGBOAT KEY
Sarasota Bay
New Pass
Lido Key
Big Sarasota Pass
Roberts Bay
Siesta Key
Gulf of Mexico
Little Sarasota Bay
Casey Key
Tamiami Trail
University Parkway
Fruitville Road
SARASOTA
Phillippi Creek
Bee Ridge Road
Beneva Road
Proctor Road
Clark Road
Palmer Ranch Parkway
The Legacy Trail
Central Sarasota Parkway
Bay Street
OSPREY
NOKOMIS
Laurel Road
VENICE
Venice Inlet
Venice Avenue
Harbor Drive
Venice Bypass
Jacaranda Boulevard
N. River Road
Manasota Beach Road
Manasota Key
Englewood Road
Lemon Bay
S. River Rd.
ENGLEWOOD
NORTH PORT
Myakka River
Myakkahatchee Creek
Verna Road
Upper Myakka Lake
Lower Myakka Lake
Border Road
MANATEE COUNTY
SARASOTA COUNTY
SARASOTA COUNTY
CHARLOTTE COUNTY
213
210
207
205
200
195
193
191
182
301
75
41
72
681
776
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About this Guide

THE BLUEWAYS PADDLING GUIDE IS A GUIDE TO SARASOTA'S KAYAK AND CANOE TRAILS

Discover Sarasota County's natural beauty, its unique wildlife and habitat as you explore the beautiful waterways of this county.

There are 11 area waterways to explore with suggested blueways (paddling trails) highlighted in this guide. The trail systems from the northern area of Sarasota County going south are as follows: the **Sarasota Bay Trail**, the **Lido** and **South Lido Trails**, the **Phillippi Creek Trail**, the **Neville Marine Preserve Trail**, the **South Creek Trail**, the **Dona Bay/Roberts Bay Trails** the **Caspersen Trail** and the **Lemon Bay Trail**. The last two trails in this guide are systems that are located in the eastern part of the county: the **Myakka River/ Carlton Trail** and the **Myakka River/ Myakkahatchee Creek Trails**.

Sarasota County has a uniquely diverse blend of natural areas to explore while paddling the blueways. Paddle through a mangrove forest and view the wildlife of the estuaries. Paddle along the bays, bayous, lagoons and creeks and explore the natural areas of Florida's designated "Wild and Scenic" Myakka River.

It has been said that in life, the journey is more important than the destination. This is a guide for your journey . . . to explore beyond the Florida you know. So take a journey and enjoy Sarasota County and all it has to offer.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide can be used to navigate designated paddling routes through open water as well as mangrove trails. Each paddling trail has detailed directions to **Launch Points**. Each trail includes suggested **Short Trips**, **Navigational Notes** and **Paddle Tips** to help ensure a safe and enjoyable outing.

Key to icons used throughout this guide:

- Launch Points
- Boat Ramps
- Parks
- Points of Interest

Each trail includes some **Points of Interest** that can be enjoyed while on your journey**.** Site descriptions list related activities and amenities such as picnicking, birding, nature trails, fishing piers and camping, as well as sightseeing, historic and cultural sites.

Throughout this guide there are **Nature Notes** about the Gulf Coast area's habitat and wildlife that can be observed while on a paddling adventure.

Please keep this guide for future visits or share with a friend or family member. We hope you will enjoy the beautiful Blueways of Sarasota County for years to come.

1 Sarasota Bay Trail

ROUTE
This trail is located in the northwestern portion of Sarasota County and extends from the Sarasota/Manatee County line to downtown Sarasota.

NAVIGATIONAL NOTES
A majority of the Sarasota Bay Trail is on open water. The technical difficulty of the Sarasota Bay Trail varies depending on the weather, particularly on the open bay. If paddling on the bay, a slight breeze (even 2-3 mph) can make paddling very difficult. This portion of the trail should be avoided by first-time paddlers and those with little experience with waves.

SHORT TRIPS

Whitaker Bayou
The paddle north from Centennial Park Boat Ramp is approximately 1/2 mile following the shoreline into Whitaker Bayou. This bayou provides a mile or so of gentle paddling. You will pass the Ringling College of Art and Design and homes, and eventually the trail narrows into drainage canals. These canals are narrow and have high banks which limit the paddlers' view. A portion of the winding trail on the actual bayou provides a great view of native vegetation.

Island Park to Eloise Werlin Park
This urban paddling trail is a two-mile loop. Restaurants and public restrooms are available.

Ted Sperling Nature Park to Bird Key Park or Ken Thompson Park
This trail is approximately a four to six-mile loop depending on the route you take.

LAUNCH POINTS/ BOAT RAMPS
See map for additional launch points.

1 Overlook Park
101 Gulf of Mexico Drive, Longboat Key. Take the Ringling Causeway onto Lido Key. Go north on John Ringling Parkway onto Longboat Key. Immediately after crossing the New Pass Bridge take the first left. The launch is a sandy patch located on the Gulf side. Limited parking.

2 Island Park/ Bayfront Park
Bayfront Drive is a section of U.S. 41, located in downtown Sarasota on the bayfront. There is a small beach to launch from located at the south end of the park. Parking is limited to 3 hours Monday-Friday.

Centennial Park
1059 N. Tamiami Trail at 10th Street, Sarasota. There is a small section of sandy beach to the north of the boat basin, on Sarasota Bay, that provides a great launch point to avoid the motorized traffic in the boat basin and channel. Ample parking.

Ken Thompson Park
1700 Ken Thompson Parkway, Lido Key. From U.S. 41 take the John Ringling Causeway west. Go north on John Ringling Parkway, onto Longboat Key. At the stoplight before the New Pass Bridge turn right on Ken Thompson Parkway. The boat ramp is located on the right beyond Mote Marine Laboratory and Aquarium.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Powel Crosley Estate
1 Seagate Drive, N. Tamiami Trail, Bradenton. This was the home of Powel Crosley, the entrepreneur (especially known for soap operas). This 1929 historic home has towering walls of cast stone, hand carved wooden doors, a stone portico, and fireplaces that feature the graceful style and architecture of a bygone era. 941-722-3244
powelcrosleymuseum.com

Indian Beach Park
Located at the south end of Bayshore Road, Sarasota. A one-acre coastal park that is a landing site only. No motor vehicle parking available.
sarasotagov.com

John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art & Ca d´Zan Mansion
5401 Bayshore Road, Sarasota. Ca d'Zan was the home of John and Mable Ringling, the "crown jewel" of the Ringling complex with stained glass windows, whimsical carvings, marble terraces, gardens, and historical furnishings. The museum has a large collection of internationally recognized works of art by Italian and Northern European Renaissance artists, in addition to French, Dutch, Flemish, and Spanish works from the past five centuries.
941-351-1660 ringling.org

Whitaker-Gateway Park
1446 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota. Fishing pier, pavilion, playground and restrooms.
sarasotagov.com

Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall
777 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota. This landmark building was designed by the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation. It features world-class music, dance and theater. 941-953-3366
vanwezel.org

Ringling Mansion — Ca d´Zan (top image) and the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall (bottom image) are two structures you can see as you paddle along the Sarasota Bay Trail.

GENERAL EXPERIENCE
View the cultural, historic and landmark buildings from the water. As you paddle north along the Sarasota Bay Trail you will see structures that were homes to residents of Sarasota from times past, as well as buildings that are internationally recognized as landmarks for their unique designs.

PADDLE TIP

CHECK THE MARINE FORECAST
Whether your trip is on Sarasota Bay or any coastal waters, be sure to heed any small craft advisories.

KNOW CURRENT CONDITIONS WIND, TIDES AND RIVER LEVELS
Paddling against strong winds and tides can make the trip very difficult. Some trails may not be navigable at low tide. Check tide tables and plan your trip accordingly so you don't get stranded at low tide.

Sarasota Bay Trail

Refer to Manatee County Blueways Guide for more paddling trails north of Sarasota County.

LEGEND
Most sites listed offer some amenities

BLUEWAY TRAIL
Mangroves

CAUTION AREAS
High Boat Traffic or Strong Currents

\# Exit Numbers (75)

LAUNCH POINTS
1. Overlook Park
2. Island Park/Bayfront Park
3. Bird Key Park
4. Ted Sperling Nature Park

BOAT RAMPS
All boat ramps accommodate canoe and kayak launching

1. Centennial Park
2. Ken Thompson Park

LANDING POINTS
Water access

1. Indian Beach Park
2. Quick Point Nature Preserve

PARKS
1. Indian Beach Park
2. Whitaker-Gateway Park
3. Centennial Park
4. Quick Point Nature Preserve
5. Ken Thompson Park (bait shop in area)
6. Eloise Werlin Park and Tony Saprito Fishing Pier (bait shop in area)
7. Island Park/Bayfront Park
8. Bird Key Park
9. North Lido Beach
10. Otter Key
11. Lido Beach
12. Ted Sperling Park at South Lido Beach (See detailed inset on page 13)

POINTS OF INTEREST
1. Powel Crosley Estate/University of South Florida
2. New College of Florida
3. Ca d'Zan and Ringling Museum
4. Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall
5. New Pass Fishing Pier
6. Sarasota BayWalk
7. Mote Marine Laboratory and Aquarium
8. Marie Selby Botanical Gardens

Seagate Drive
MANATEE COUNTY
SARASOTA COUNTY
University Parkway
to 75 213
Sarasota International Airport
58th St.
University Parkway
301
North Shore Drive
North Tamiami Trail
SARASOTA
Washington Boulevard
41
Bayshore Road
Whitaker Bayou
17th St.
Gulf of Mexico Drive
Sarasota Bay
Intracoastal Waterway
10th St.
Fruitville Road
to 75 210
Longboat Key
Bayfront Drive
Golden Gate Point
Mound Street
Gulf of Mexico
New Pass
Lido Key
John Ringling Parkway
John Ringling Causeway
Hudson Bayou
Bahia Vista Street
St. Armands Key
Bird Key
Otter Key
Sarasota Bay
South Tamiami Trail

N W E S

0 1/2 1 mile
Approx. scale Miles

Effective date: 2017

2 Lido Trail

ROUTE
This trail is located in the downtown area of the Sarasota bayfront and includes Lido Key and the southern portion of Longboat Key.

NAVIGATIONAL NOTES
The technical difficulty of this trail varies, depending on the location. Motorized vessels are a hazard when paddling the Intracoastal Waterway. Be careful — tides and currents can be powerful as well. Paddlers should also be aware of boat traffic and strong currents when crossing Big Sarasota Pass.

SHORT TRIPS

Ted Sperling Nature Park
Kayak/canoe one of Sarasota's most popular paddling trails. Approximately 1-mile of a peaceful paddle through the mangrove tunnels that wind through Big Grassy Lagoon and Brushy Bayou. There is a detailed description of this outstanding trail on Pages 12-13.

Quick Point Nature Preserve to Ken Thompson Park
This trail is a 2-mile loop. There are nature trails to enjoy at Quick Point Nature Preserve and the Sarasota Baywalk by Ken Thompson Park. Also located here are waterfront restaurants, picnic areas and fishing piers.

LAUNCH POINTS
See map for additional launch points.

3 Bird Key Park
200 John Ringling Causeway, Bird Key. After crossing the Ringling Bridge going west, this park and launch point are located immediately on the right.

4 Ted Sperling Nature Park
190 Taft Drive, Lido Key. The launch is located to the east of the restroom facilities at the end of Taft Drive.

5 Ted Sperling Park at South Lido Beach
2201 Ben Franklin Drive, Lido Key. This launch area can be accessed by driving to the end of Ben Franklin Drive.

Siesta Key Beach Access #1
3940 N. Shell Road, Siesta Key. From U.S. 41 take Siesta Drive onto Siesta Key; continue west to Higel Drive. In approximately one quarter of a mile, turn right on North Shell Road. At the end of North Shell Road there is a small beach access with limited parking.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Island Park/Bayfront Park
Bayfront Drive, Sarasota. Enjoy spectacular bay views, fountains, indoor/outdoor restaurants and unforgettable sunsets on Sarasota Bay.

Ken Thompson Park
1700 Ken Thompson Parkway, Sarasota. An 84-acre park offering a nature trail/boardwalk, picnic area, playground, and restrooms. There are indoor/outdoor restaurants in the area to enjoy refreshments and the view, as well as a bait shop. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

Mote Marine Laboratory and Aquarium
1600 Ken Thompson Parkway, Sarasota. Get a close-up look at the creatures that inhabit nearby coastal waters. Come face-to-face with sharks, touch a horseshoe crab or enjoy watching manatees gliding through the water. Mote Marine also offers a guided tour of the bays. 941-388-4441 mote.org

Otter Key
A 30-acre island east of Lido Key, Otter Key is an undeveloped county park. It is a great place for viewing wildlife. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

Sarasota BayWalk
1700 Ken Thompson Parkway, Sarasota. This 4.5-acre wetland restoration site with boardwalks offers wildlife viewing and nature trails.

Ted Sperling Park at South Lido Beach
190 Taft Drive & 2201 Ben Franklin Drive, Lido Key, Sarasota. This 100-acre park interacts with four significant bodies of water: the Gulf of Mexico, Big Sarasota Pass, Sarasota Bay, and Brushy Bayou. There are beaches, nature trails, picnic areas, and restrooms. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

Tony Saprito Pier
Located at **Eloise Werlin Park, Sarasota**. Concession and bait shop (Hart's Landing). This is a popular spot to fish, with a beautiful view of the Sarasota skyline.

PADDLE TIP

NAVIGATION
A handheld GPS unit is recommended for trips on open water. Pack a trail map, marine map and/or nautical chart of the Sarasota area and compass at minimum.

Quick Point Nature Preserve
100 Gulf of Mexico Drive, Longboat Key. A 34-acre nature park offering trails, boardwalks, tidal pools, scenic vistas and wildlife viewing. 941-316-1988 longboatkey.org

ENVIRONMENT
Otter Key is primarily a mangrove island and is an excellent spot for bird viewing. Observe manatees and dolphins in their natural surroundings throughout the Sarasota Bay area. As with all wildlife and marine life, please keep your distance while observing them.

NATURE NOTES

Dolphins communicate mainly by means of sounds. These sounds include whistles, and also so-called pulsed sounds. They also use breaching (jumping and falling back into the water with a loud splash) and pectoral fin (or flipper) and tail (or fluke) slaps (hitting the flipper or fluke on the water's surface) for communication.

Lido Trail

Sarasota Bay

Gulf of Mexico Drive

Longboat Key

New Pass

Lido Key

Pansy Bayou

North Boulevard of the Presidents

St. Armands Key

John Ringling Causeway

Lido Beach

Benjamin Franklin Drive

South Boulevard of the Presidents

Taft Drive

Gulf of Mexico

INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY

Bird Key

Otter Key

SARASOTA

41

Fruitville Road

to 75 210

Bayfront Drive

Island Park

Hudson Bayou

Siesta Key

Siesta Drive

North Shell Road

Hansson Bayou

Higel Avenue

Roberts Bay

Big Sarasota Pass

LEGEND

Most sites listed offer some amenities

BLUEWAY TRAIL

Mangroves

CAUTION AREAS

High Boat Traffic or Strong Currents

Exit Numbers (75)

LAUNCH POINTS

1. Overlook Park
2. Island Park/Bayfront Park
3. Bird Key Park
4. Ted Sperling Nature Park
5. Ted Sperling Park at South Lido Beach
6. Siesta Key Beach Access #1

LANDING POINTS

Water access

1. Otter Key

BOAT RAMPS

All boat ramps accommodate canoe and kayak launching

1. Centennial Park
2. Ken Thompson Park

PARKS

1. Centennial Park
2. Quick Point Nature Preserve
3. Ken Thompson Park (bait shop in area)
4. Eloise Werlin Park and Tony Saprito Fishing Pier (bait shop in the area)
5. Island Park
6. Bird Key Park
7. North Lido Beach
8. Otter Key
9. Lido Beach
10. Ted Sperling Park at South Lido Beach (See detailed inset on page 13)
11. Edwards Islands

POINTS OF INTEREST

1. Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall
2. New Pass Fishing Pier
3. Sarasota BayWalk
4. Mote Marine Laboratory and Aquarium
5. Marie Selby Botanical Gardens

0 1/4 1/2 mile

Approx. scale

Miles

Effective date: 2017

N W E S

3 South Lido Trail

MANGROVE TUNNELS

This trail is located at Ted Sperling Nature Park at the southernmost tip of Lido Key.

Take a self-guided tour of this outstanding trail, considered one of the most diverse in Southwest Florida. Following the trail you will enter Sarasota Bay before turning into Little Grassy Lagoon, a shallow water body distinguished by its rich seagrass beds. Two main varieties of seagrass carpet the bottom of the lagoon: turtle grass (flat and wide blades) and widgeon grass (spaghetti-shaped). Both provide food and protection for a wide range of marine animals, including channeled whelk, hermit crab, and mullet.

At the far southern end of the lagoon, the trail continues east down a tunnel that was originally constructed as a mosquito ditch. Mosquito ditches are a remnant of efforts made during the 1950s to control mosquitoes by introducing tidal flow to the mosquito breeding pools. Because of its detrimental environmental impact and limited effectiveness, this method of mosquito control was discontinued. By paddling down the narrow passage, kayakers can better view the complex root system of the red mangrove and the dynamics of mangrove ecosystems.

As one emerges from the tunnel into Sarasota Bay, two mangrove islands appear directly ahead. These islands provide habitat for large nesting water birds (especially during the winter). Brown pelicans, great blue herons, and great egrets rest in the dense foliage of the mangrove islands. From the mangrove islands, paddle along the northern bank of Big Grassy Lagoon. Along the mangrove-fringed shore are a series of oyster beds.

Passing the observation deck of the northern nature trail, you will enter another tunnel connector which will take you into the focal point of the park's natural system—Brushy Bayou. As you drift quietly in the bayou you may have the opportunity to view a broad range of wildlife that travel between land and water.

To exit Brushy Bayou, paddle down the tunnel immediately to the north of the bayou inlet. Buttonwood and white mangroves grow along this tunnel in greater density than other areas of the Brushy Bayou system.

After leaving the final tunnel, you can return to the canoe launch by crossing Big Grassy Lagoon, passing the mangrove islands, to emerge in the small clearing on the other side that faces Sarasota Bay.

PADDLE TIP

NECESSARY EQUIPMENT

Bow and stern lines (about 15 feet long is best).

Anchoring device with rope (length of rope should be five to seven times depth of water).

Extra paddle per boat.

ENVIRONMENT

Habitat

Mangroves and wetland areas are an important natural resource to all of Florida. As beautiful as they are biologically essential, they are an integral component of the estuarine ecosystem. These habitats provide a number of essential benefits to bay life — food and shelter for marine life and wildlife, protection for the shorelines from erosion, and as a filter for the pollutants.

Green buttonwood *(Conocarpus erectus)*, which is not a true mangrove, grows along the South Lido Trail in the Brushy Bayou tunnel area. Green buttonwood generally has small, elongated leaves and bears round "buttons" or fruits that turn brown.

There are three types of mangroves found along Florida's coast, all of which can be found on the South Lido Trail — red mangrove, black mangrove, and white mangrove.

Red mangrove *(Rhizophora mangle)*, which is the dominant plant of South Lido Park's shoreline, has distinctive arching prop roots and green bean-like seed pods or propagules.

Black mangroves *(Avicennia germinans)* are found growing among red mangroves. Black mangroves "sweat" salt from their leaves and send up twiggy projections from their roots called pneumatophores, which provide oxygen to the tree's roots.

White mangroves *(Laguncularia racemosa)* usually grow above the high tide line. The white mangroves have thick, leathery leaves at the base of which lie two small nodes which excrete excess salt.

4 Phillippi Creek Trail

ROUTE
The Phillippi Creek Trail extends from Roberts Bay to north of Bahia Vista Street.

NAVIGATIONAL NOTES
This is a great trail for novice paddlers. The technical difficulty can be intermediate depending on the weather conditions and presence of motorized vessels on the open bay and near the Intracoastal Waterway. There is light boat traffic on the creek. From the mouth of the creek to U.S. 41 is a slow speed zone; after that it is an idle speed zone/no wake.

SHORT TRIPS

Phillippi Estate Park to Pinecraft Park
Approximately three miles upstream from the launch at Phillippi Estate Park, this urban paddle trail takes you through residential neighborhoods. This route can also be taken by launching from Pinecraft Park and paddling downstream to the bay.

Phillippi Estate Park to Roberts Bay
Approximately a four-mile loop heading north from the mouth of Phillippi Creek. Paddle this trail to explore the Big Edwards and Little Edwards Islands.

Christopher Wheeler Park to Phillippi Estate Park
Approximately a one-mile paddle to the mouth of the Phillippi Creek.

LAUNCH POINTS
See map for additional launch points.

3 Pinecraft Park
1420 Gilbert Ave., Sarasota.
From U.S. 41 (Tamiami Trail) take Bahia Vista Street going east; then turn south on Gilbert Avenue.

6 Phillippi Estate Park
5500 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota.
Travel approximately four miles south on U.S. 41 from downtown Sarasota. Phillippi Estate Park is located on the west side of U.S. 41 (Tamiami Trail). Follow the road to the back parking area, by the restrooms. The launch is located by the west fishing pier.

7 Christopher Wheeler Park
1300 Old Stickney Point Road, Siesta Key. From U.S. 41 take Stickney Point Road onto Siesta Key. Turn left on Midnight Pass Road. Take the first left on Old Stickney Point Road. The park is at the end of the road. Limited parking.

PADDLE TIP

DON'T FORGET
Hat and sunglasses, sunscreen, insect repellent, and a waterproof storage bag. A first aid kit is always recommended.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens
811 S. Palm Ave., Sarasota.
Selby Gardens has multiple distinct garden areas that showcase plant species from all over the world. There is a butterfly garden, the bamboo pavilion, koi pond, banyan grove, palm grove, shoreline restoration, and the baywalk. Selby Gardens also offers a collection of more than 6,000 orchids and a museum showing more than 20,000 plants. 941-366-5731 selby.org

Phillippi Estate Park
5500 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota.
A 60-acre park located on Phillippi Creek. The Edson Keith Mansion is the center piece of the park, it was built in 1916 in the classic Italian renaissance style, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Enjoy a stroll on the nature trail that winds along the shoreline. This park has picnic areas, playground, gazebo, fishing piers, and restrooms. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

Pinecraft Park
1420 Gilbert Ave., Sarasota.
A 15-acre park with a beautiful view of Phillippi Creek winding north. It offers picnic areas, playground, pavilion, nature trail, shuffle board courts, basketball courts, volleyball court, and restrooms. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

Siesta Beach
948 Beach Road, Siesta Key.
This beach is world-renowned and recognized as one of the most beautiful beaches found anywhere with the whitest and finest sand in the world (99 percent pure quartz) Siesta Beach has concessions, picnic areas, playground, tennis courts, beach volleyball, pavilion, and restrooms. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

ENVIRONMENT

Estuaries
Estuaries are where fresh water from rivers and creeks mixes with salt water from the sea.

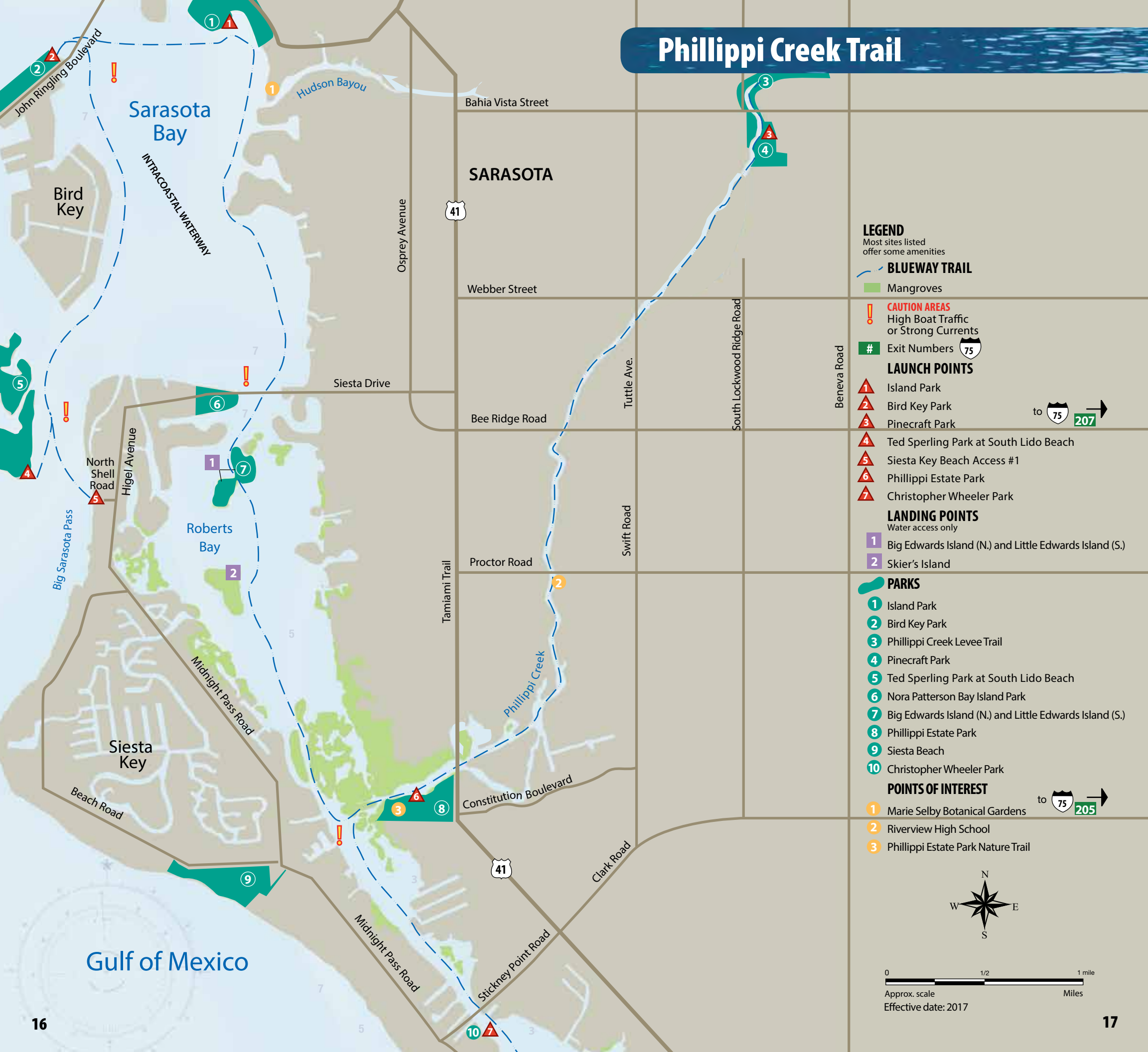
Estuaries are considered "cradles of the sea" because they provide important spawning grounds and nurseries for at least two-thirds of the nation's fisheries and are among the most biologically productive areas in the world. While paddling you have a chance to view a wide variety of wildlife up close. Remember that many species are incubating or rearing young and are vulnerable to disturbance. Some may be very rare or even endangered so please keep your distance. The Phillippi Creek Trail offers unlimited opportunities to view estuarine habitats.

Two locally important bay habitats are seagrasses and mangroves. The seagrass beds are important to estuarine productivity in many ways. The grass beds provide a protective nursery area for juvenile fish, shrimp, and crabs. Mangrove trees serve as a home to birds, and the prop roots of the red mangrove offer shelter to small fish and shellfish.

NATURE NOTES

The most widespread and familiar heron across much of the country, the Great Blue is also the largest heron in North America. It is a solitary bird, and single birds are often seen flying slowly overhead – although they tend to nest in colonies that can contain hundreds of birds. The nest is an untidy-looking platform of sticks, either in trees or brush. The eggs are incubated for about 28 days, by both adult birds. The chicks leave the nest about 8 eight weeks after they hatch.

Phillippi Creek Trail



LEGEND

Most sites listed offer some amenities

BLUEWAY TRAIL

Mangroves

CAUTION AREAS
High Boat Traffic or Strong Currents

Exit Numbers (75)

LAUNCH POINTS

1. Island Park
2. Bird Key Park
3. Pinecraft Park
4. Ted Sperling Park at South Lido Beach
5. Siesta Key Beach Access #1
6. Phillippi Estate Park
7. Christopher Wheeler Park

to 75 207

LANDING POINTS
Water access only

1. Big Edwards Island (N.) and Little Edwards Island (S.)
2. Skier's Island

PARKS

1. Island Park
2. Bird Key Park
3. Phillippi Creek Levee Trail
4. Pinecraft Park
5. Ted Sperling Park at South Lido Beach
6. Nora Patterson Bay Island Park
7. Big Edwards Island (N.) and Little Edwards Island (S.)
8. Phillippi Estate Park
9. Siesta Beach
10. Christopher Wheeler Park

POINTS OF INTEREST

1. Marie Selby Botanical Gardens
2. Riverview High School
3. Phillippi Estate Park Nature Trail

to 75 205

N W E S

0 1/2 1 mile

Approx. scale Miles

Effective date: 2017

5 Neville Marine Preserve Trail

Dick Pfaff

ROUTE
The Neville Marine Preserve Trail is located in Little Sarasota Bay. The route meanders around the 35-acre Jim Neville Marine Preserve, which is located between Siesta Key and Casey Key.

NAVIGATIONAL NOTES
Novice paddlers will enjoy this trail. It is important to watch for motor boats when crossing the Intracoastal Waterway, especially when approaching the Blackburn Point historic bridge. Also, use caution when emerging from Catfish Creek and North Creek.

SHORT TRIPS

Turtle Beach around Jim Neville Marine Preserve
From the Turtle Beach launch, paddle out to Little Sarasota Bay. The preserve can be seen as soon as you enter the bay. It is approximately a 1-mile loop around the preserve.

Wharf Road or Vamo Drive to Blackburn Point Park
This blueway is a good inner bay paddle. You can journey south without crossing much open water or motorized boating channels. Follow the shoreline along Osprey or Casey Key to Blackburn Point Park. This trail provides opportunities for a picnic lunch or checking out the local waterfront restaurants.

Turtle Beach to Osprey Fishing Pier
This blueway trail is an easy paddle and you can also fish at the pier or take a break for lunch.

LAUNCH POINTS
See map for additional launch points.

1 Turtle Beach
8918 Midnight Pass Road, Siesta Key.
From U.S. 41 (Tamiami Trail) take Stickney Point Road onto Siesta Key. Turn left at Midnight Pass Road and travel south approximately 2.5 miles to the entrance of Turtle Beach Park.

2 Wharf Road
Going south on U.S. 41 (Tamiami Trail) at the Westfield Sarasota Square Mall, turn right onto Vamo Road. Then turn right at Wharf Road and go to the end. Limited parking.

Vamo Drive
Going south on U.S. 41 (Tamiami Trail) at the Westfield Sarasota Square Mall turn right onto Vamo Road. Before the curve in the road, turn right on Vamo Drive to the end. Limited parking.

Blackburn Point Park
800 Blackburn Point Road, Osprey.
At the intersection of U.S. 41 (Tamiami Trail) and Blackburn Point Road, turn west onto Blackburn Point Road toward Casey Key. The park is located on both sides of the historic swing bridge.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Historic Spanish Point
337 U.S. 41 (N. Tamiami Trail), Osprey. A 30-acre National Register site featuring archaeological shell middens, a pioneer era homestead, formal gardens, and nature trails. In "A Window To The Past," walk inside a 15-foot high shell midden, dating back to 1250 BC. (No launching or landing at this location.) 941-966-5214 historicspanishpoint.org

Jim Neville Marine Preserve
This 35-acre preserve is essentially two main islands. The islands have a fringe of mangroves. This trail has a maze of waterways to explore while observing a large variety of birds and other wildlife.

Turtle Beach
8918 Midnight Pass Road, Sarasota. Beach park with a tidal lagoon connecting to Little Sarasota Bay. This 17-acre Gulf-to-Bay park offers a large picnic shelter, playground, restrooms, boat ramp, and also has the Turtle Beach Campground. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

Fl. Dept. of State

Aerial of Jim Neville Marine Preserve.

ENVIRONMENT

Bird Watcher's Paradise
Some of the common birds in the Sarasota Bay area include: great blue heron, cattle egret, great egret, white ibis, brown pelican, roseate spoonbill, kingfisher, osprey, wood stork, yellow-crowned night heron, bald eagle, anhinga, and cormorant.

Enjoy viewing bird rookeries from at least 100 yards away. These rookeries, such as the Jim Neville Marine Preserve, harbor nesting colonies and flocks of feeding birds.

Be a friend to nature and pick up trash and marine debris such as fishing line and plastic six-pack can holders, which can be lethal to seabirds and other marine life.

While viewing wildlife remember the best opportunity to see them is by being quiet and moving slowly.

Rose Gayro

Pelican Man

Top to bottom: roseate spoonbill, great blue heron, brown pelican, and brown and white pelicans taking flight.

Neville Marine Preserve Trail

LEGEND
Most sites listed offer some amenities

BLUEWAY TRAIL
Mangroves
CAUTION AREAS
High Boat Traffic or Strong Currents

LAUNCH POINTS
1. Turtle Beach
2. Wharf Road
3. Vamo Drive
4. Blackburn Point Park
5. Oscar Scherer State Park

LANDING POINTS
Water access only
1. Palmer Point Park
2. Osprey Fishing Pier (no parking)

BOAT RAMPS
All boat ramps accommodate canoe and kayak launch
1. Turtle Beach
2. Blackburn Point Park

PARKS
1. Turtle Beach and Turtle Beach Campground
2. Jim Neville Marine Preserve
3. Palmer Point Park
4. Blackburn Point Park (bait shop in area)
5. Shoreland Park
6. Oscar Scherer State Park

POINTS OF INTEREST
1. Historic Spanish Point
2. Osprey Fishing Pier
3. Blackburn Point Historic Bridge
4. Oscar Scherer State Park Nature Trail

Camping (permit required)

The Legacy Trail
Trail Access to the Legacy Trail

N W E S

0 1/4 1/2 mile
Approx. scale Miles

Effective date: 2017

Siesta Key
Midnight Pass Road
Stickney Point Road
Little Sarasota Bay
INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY
Turtle Beach
Gulf of Mexico
Casey Key
North Casey Key Road
Beneva Road
Vamo Road
South Tamiami Trail
McIntosh Road
Westfield Sarasota Square Mall
SARASOTA
Palmer Ranch Parkway
Central Sarasota Parkway
The Legacy Trail
Wharf Road
Vamo Drive
Vamo Way
Catfish Creek
North Creek
Navigation difficult — Trails are not marked
Main Street
East Bay Street
Bayview Drive
OSPREY
Blackburn Point Road
Dryman Bay
Oscar Scherer State Park
South Creek
41

6 South Creek Trail

ROUTE
This trail follows the coast along the barrier island of Casey Key. Paddling up South Creek will take you into the lush vegetation of Oscar Scherer State Park.

NAVIGATIONAL NOTES
When launching at Blackburn Point Park be aware that this area can have heavy boat traffic. As you paddle into the bay from South Creek also beware of the boat traffic.

SHORT TRIPS
Blackburn Point Park to South Creek
This is a 4-mile loop. As you leave the launch at Blackburn Point Park, paddle south under the swing bridge. Approximately one mile into the route you will see the opening to South Creek on the east side of the bay. Take a trip down this quiet trail that winds its way into Oscar Scherer State Park.

Blackburn Point Park to Osprey Fishing Pier
This is a perfect route to include a stop for refreshments. At both ends of the loop you can enjoy a waterfront restaurant. It is a 2-mile loop within Little Sarasota Bay. Use caution when crossing the Intracoastal Waterway.

LAUNCH POINTS
1 Blackburn Point Park
At the intersection of U.S. 41 (Tamiami Trail) and Blackburn Point Road, turn west toward Casey Key. The park is located on both sides of the historic swing bridge.

2 Shoreland Park
Traveling south on U.S. 41 to Osprey, continue south approximately two miles, turn right onto Shoreland Drive. The park is on the left as you take the curve in the road. Limited parking.

3 Oscar Scherer State Park
From Osprey continue south on U.S. 41 approximately two miles. The entrance to the park is on the left. (Note: There is an entry fee per vehicle per day.) Drive approximately 1/2 mile and take the first right after entering the park to reach the launch point.

Threatened Florida scrub-jay. Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

POINTS OF INTEREST
Blackburn Point Park
800 Blackburn Point Road, Osprey.
This park has a launch point, boat ramp, restrooms and offers fishing, picnicking, and nearby restaurants. Bait shop in the area. 941-861-5000
scgov.net

Oscar Scherer State Park
1843 S. Tamiami Trail, Osprey.
A 1,384-acre park that has a brackish water tidal creek running through it. The park offers bicycle trails, camping, nature trails, fishing, picnic areas, a swimming area, and an ADA-accessible canoe/kayak launch in the South Creek picnic area. The park is pet friendly, and has phones, and restrooms.

Canoe and kayak rentals
are available, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. daily. There is a ranger-led paddle program (entrance fee and rental fee apply). Inquire at the ranger's office at the entrance. There is an entry fee per vehicle, per day. For camping reservations call: 1-800-326-3521. For more information call: 941-483-5956 or www.floridastateparks.org/park/oscar-scherer

ENVIRONMENT
FISH AND CRUSTACEANS
Sarasota Bay offers some of the finest shallow-water fishing in the world.

Among the fish and crustaceans that can be found here are flounder, red drum, sheepshead, snook, spotted seatrout, mullet, pompano, shrimp, stone crabs, and blue crabs.

The paddle trails highlighted in this guide will take you through tidal flats, along mangrove shorelines, large expanses of seagrasses, oyster bars, and sand bars, all of which provide access to some of the best fishing found in the region.

A fishing license is required, except for Florida residents over 65 or those under 16 years of age. To purchase a fishing license go to the county tax collector's office or visit: myfwc.com/license

Palmer Point Park
Located between Siesta Key and Casey Key. A secluded bay to beach park that is not accessible by car. Excellent for fishing and observing nature.

Paddling on South Creek, Oscar Scherer State Park.

Diane Peebles-Florida Fish & Wildlife

South Creek Trail

LEGEND

Most sites listed offer some amenities

BLUEWAY TRAIL

Mangroves

CAUTION AREAS
High Boat Traffic or Strong Currents

Exit Numbers (75)

LAUNCH POINTS

1. Blackburn Point Park
2. Shoreland Park
3. Oscar Scherer State Park

LANDING POINTS

Water access only

1. Palmer Point Park
2. Osprey Fishing Pier

PARKS

1. Palmer Point Park
2. Blackburn Point Park (bait shop in area)
3. Shoreland Park
4. Oscar Scherer State Park

POINTS OF INTEREST

1. Historic Spanish Point
2. Osprey Fishing Pier
3. Blackburn Point Historic Bridge
4. Oscar Scherer State Park Nature Trail

Campground (permit required)

The Legacy Trail

Trail Access to the Legacy Trail

Little Sarasota Bay

INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY

Main Street

OSPREY

East Bay Street

Bayview Drive

North Casey Key Road

South Tamiami Trail

The Legacy Trail

Oscar Scherer State Park

Blackburn Point Road

Dryman Bay

Casey Key Road

Gulf of Mexico

Casey Key

North Lane

Shoreland Drive

South Creek

Oscar Scherer State Park Road

to 75

200

41

681

N W E S

0 1/8 1/4 1/2 mile

Approx. scale Miles

Effective date: 2017

7 Dona Bay / Roberts Bay Trails

ROUTE
Located between Nokomis and the City of Venice these trails offer a variety of opportunities to experience. While winding your way through creeks and bays you will see intertidal habitat throughout.

NAVIGATIONAL NOTES
These trails are easy to maneuver. However, be aware of boat traffic at all times, especially at the western side of this trail system, where the Venice Inlet and the Intracoastal Waterway are located.
In Dona Bay, be aware of currents beneath the U.S. 41 bridge during tidal changes. The currents also can be strong in the Venice Inlet and surrounding areas. In Roberts Bay, beware of the water sport area. When paddling into Curry Creek you may come upon shallow areas.

SHORT TRIPS

Shakett Creek Route
After passing under Laurel Road, the trail extends through residential areas for approximately 1.5 miles. An exploration of the black tip needle rush marshes on the north and the south sides of Laurel Road is recommended.

Lyons Bay
Lyons Bay is less than one mile long. Much of the bay is too shallow for motorized vessels, but there are established boating channels on either side of the bay.

Dona Bay
The length of Dona Bay is approximately 1.5 miles. There is an established boating channel for motorized vessels. The presence of mangrove islands offers the benefit of a pleasant nature tour.

North Jetty Park to Roberts Bay
This trip's technical difficulty is novice to intermediate, depending on weather conditions and tidal currents in exposed areas. It is approximately a 2-mile loop.

LAUNCH POINTS
See map for additional launch points.

Nokomis Beach
901 Casey Key Road, Casey Key, Nokomis. From U.S. 41 take Albee Road onto Casey Key. The launch is located on the bayside at the south end of the park.

North Jetty Park
1000 Casey Key Road, Casey Key, Nokomis. Follow the same direction for getting to the Nokomis Beach Park, and continue south to the end of Casey Key Road.

Curry Creek Preserve
From U.S. 41 going south from Sarasota take Laurel Road east, then take a right, going south, onto Albee Road. Go about 1.5 miles, cross Curry Creek Bridge and entrance is on the left.

Higel Marine Park
1330 Tarpon Center Drive, Venice. Take Venice Ave. west from U.S. 41 until you come to Venice Beach. Take the road that follows the coastline going north (The Esplanade North turns into Tarpon Center Drive). The park is located on the right. Limited parking.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Nokomis Beach
901 Casey Key Road, Nokomis.
Sarasota County's oldest public beach. A 23-acre park with a boat ramp, historic pavilion, picnic areas, boardwalk, and restrooms.
941-861-5000 scgov.net

North Jetty Park
100 Casey Key Road, Nokomis.
It is popular for fishing; a bait shop is in the area. Includes picnic shelters, volleyball courts, a concession stand, and restrooms. A great location to watch beautiful Florida sunsets!
941-861-5000 scgov.net

The Legacy Trail
A multi-use recreational trail that extends over 10 miles from Sarasota to Venice via the former Seaboard Air Line Railroad. Portions of the Dona Bay and Roberts Bay Trails pass beneath the trestle bridges of The Legacy Trail. Nokomis Community Center, located along this blueway trail, also offers access to The Legacy Trail. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

PADDLE TIP

BRIDGES
Use extreme caution when traveling under bridges as currents can be very swift. Also, watch for fishing lines.

MOTORBOATS AND PERSONAL WATERCRAFT
Watch for motorboats and personal watercraft, stay to the right and turn the bow (front) into the wake.

Venice Beach
100 The Esplanade, Venice.
This beach is best known for collecting sharks' teeth. Included in this 7.5-acre park is a pavilion, concession, picnic tables, volleyball court, and restrooms.
941-861-5000 scgov.net

ENVIRONMENT

TIDAL MARSHES
Tidal marshes are the boundary or "interface" between the ocean and the adjacent land. They receive fresh water, sediment, and nutrients from the land and are also exposed to salty marine waters that add additional nutrients. The abundance of food and shelter along this marsh edge results in a concentration of animals, from tiny invertebrates to game fish and shorebirds. The stems of individual grasses, bathed daily by salty water, are coated with a dense layer of microscopic animals.

At all levels the interactions between land and water contribute to the high productivity and value of salt marshes.

Zebra longwing butterfly

Egrets nesting in marsh area.

Dona Bay / Roberts Bay Trails

LEGEND
Most sites listed offer some amenities

- BLUEWAY TRAIL
- Mangroves
- CAUTION AREAS — High Boat Traffic or Strong Currents
- # Exit Numbers

LAUNCH POINTS
1. Nokomis Beach
2. North Jetty Park
3. Curry Creek Preserve
4. Nokomis Riverview Park
5. Legacy Park

LANDING POINTS
Water access only
1. Rattlesnake Island
2. Snake Island

BOAT RAMPS
All boat ramps accommodate canoe and kayak launch
1. Nokomis Island
2. Loreto Court Bay Access
3. Higel Marine Park
4. Venice Marina Park

PARKS
1. Nokomis Beach
2. Bay Point Park - (no parking)
3. Rattlesnake Island - Access by water only
4. North Jetty Park
5. Lyons Bay Park - (no parking)
6. Snake Island - Access by water only
7. Pocono Trail Preserve
8. Nokomis Community Park
9. Curry Creek Preserve
10. Pinebrook and Wellfield Parks
11. South Jetty Park
12. Higel Marine Park
13. Marina Park Boat Ramp, Venice Train Depot and Legacy Park
14. Venice Beach

POINTS OF INTEREST
1. North Jetty Park Fishing Area
2. South Jetty Park Fishing Area

- The Legacy Trail
- Trail Access to the Legacy Trail

0 1/4 1/2 mile
Approx. scale Miles

Effective date: 2017

N W E S

Casey Key
INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY
Blackburn Bay
Casey Key Road
41
Laurel Road West
Tamiami Trail
The Legacy Trail
Laurel Road East
75
Fox Creek
Salt Creek
NOKOMIS
Bayshore Drive
Albee Road West
Nokomis Beach
Lyons Bay
Lyons Bay Road
Shakett Creek
Dona Way
Lucille Ave.
Loreto Court
Portia Street
Pinebrook Road
Florence Street
Edmondson Road
River Blvd.
East Colonia Lane
Dona Bay
Curry Creek
Connects with Myakka River
Blackburn Canal
Strong currents beneath bridges
Albee Farm Road
Venice Inlet
Roberts Bay
Hatchett Creek
The Esplanade
VENICE
Venice Beach
Venice Avenue
Harbor Drive
Obstructions may impede navigation.
Gulf of Mexico
INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY
South Tamiami Trail (Business U.S. 41)
U.S. 41 BYPASS

8 Caspersen Trail

ROUTE
The launch point is located at Caspersen Beach Park. This trail loops through the park traveling south along the Intracoastal Waterway. There are two creeks to explore along this trail — Alligator Creek and Forked Creek.

NAVIGATIONAL NOTES
There are some areas along the trail that are very shallow at low tide. Use caution when paddling along the Intracoastal Waterway.

SHORT TRIPS
Mangrove Loop on the Bay Side of Caspersen Beach Park
This mangrove trail can be paddled in one hour or less. In this protected mangrove habitat area you'll find excellent birding and fishing opportunities.

PADDLE TIP
USE CAUTION IN OPEN WATER Coastal areas in and around the bays can be subject to fast approaching thunderstorms and lightning in summer months, and high winds and waves in winter months.

Stay close to shore.

LAUNCH POINTS
See map for additional launch points.

1 Caspersen Beach Park
4100 Harbor Drive S., Venice. From downtown Venice, take Harbor Drive south to the park. At the end of Harbor Drive turn left to the bayside of the park. The launch is located on the east side of the park.

Blind Pass Beach Park
6725 Manasota Key Road, Manasota Key. Go south on U.S. 41 to Route 776 going south. Turn right on Manasota Beach Road toward Manasota Key. Once on the key, go approximately four miles south until you come to the park. The launch is on the bayside of the park at the south end.

Manasota Beach Park
8570 Manasota Key Road, Manasota Key. Go south on U.S. 41 to Route 776 going south. Turn right on Manasota Beach Road toward Manasota Key. Once on the key, take the first left into the parking area on the bay side.

POINTS OF INTEREST
Blind Pass Beach
6725 Manasota Key Road, Manasota Key. Blind Pass Beach (also known as "Middle Beach") is a bay to beach park offering a nature trail, a picnic shelter, playground, and restrooms. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

Caspersen Beach Park
4100 Harbor Drive S., Venice. This beautiful bay to beach park has nature trails, wildlife viewing, and restrooms. It is recognized as one of the most enjoyable shelling beaches and a great place to view dolphins and shore birds. An excellent spot to find prehistoric shark teeth. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

Shamrock Park and Nature Center
3900 Shamrock Drive, Venice. Explore nature trails and have a picnic at this 82-acre park. Visit the popular environmental center. This park also has picnic areas, a playground, and restrooms. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

NATURE NOTES

Common Pelican Myth:

Pelicans do not carry fish in their pouch. The pouch is used to catch the fish, which is then swallowed before the pelican takes off again.

Venetian Waterway Park
257 N. Tamiami Trail, Venice. A 10-mile long, 8-foot wide linear park with a paved trail that weaves its way through Venice along the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) to Caspersen Beach on the west side of the ICW and to Shamrock Park on the east side of the ICW. There are picnic areas along the trail and opportunities to view wildlife. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

ENVIRONMENT
SEA TURTLES
Florida's Gulf beaches support nesting activities for sea turtles from the months of May through October. Female turtles come ashore during the summer months to dig a nest in the sand and lay their eggs. The turtle eggs will hatch in about 60 days. Hatchlings dig their way out of the nest and crawl to the Gulf. Sea turtles, both adult and hatchlings move away from shadows and toward the brighter horizon of the Gulf of Mexico. Lights on shore can disorient turtles, preventing them from reaching the Gulf. Shorefront property owners should turn off or shield lights that can be seen from the beach during the nesting season.

Loggerhead sea turtle

Loggerhead sea turtle hatchling

Help protect Florida's sea turtles and their coastal habitats. Never approach a sea turtle coming ashore or disturb a nesting sea turtle or hatchlings. Do not climb over the dunes or disturb vegetation, use designated walkways.

If you see an injured or dead sea turtle call the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) at 1-888-404-3922 or contact the Mote Marine Laboratory Stranding Program pager at 941-988-0212.

Caspersen Trail

CITY OF VENICE

SOUTH VENICE

INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY

Harbor Drive South

Caspersen Beach

Alligator Creek

Alliga or Drive

Jacaranda Boulevard

Venice E. Boulevard

South Tamiami Trail

41

776

Manasota Beach Road

Manasota Beach

Englewood Road

Manasota Key Road

Forked Creek

Manasota Key

Gulf of Mexico

Old Englewood Road

Brengle Avenue

Curtis Boulevard

Stewart Street

Blind Pass Beach

Lemon Bay

River Road

Dearborn Street

ENGLEWOOD

N

W E

S

0 1/2 1 mile

Approx. scale Miles

Effective date: 2017

LEGEND

Most sites listed offer some amenities

BLUEWAY TRAIL

Mangroves

CAUTION AREAS

High Boat Traffic or Strong Currents

LAUNCH POINTS

1. Caspersen Beach Park
2. Lemon Bay Park
3. Blind Pass Beach Park

LANDING POINTS

Water access only

1. South Venice Lemon Bay Preserve
2. Lemon Bay Park

BOAT RAMPS

All boat ramps accommodate canoe and kayak launch

1. Manasota Beach

PARKS

1. Caspersen Beach Park
2. Shamrock Park and Nature Center
3. Woodmere Park
4. South Venice Lemon Bay Preserve
5. Manasota Beach Park
6. Lemon Bay Park and Environmental Center
7. Blind Pass Beach Park

POINTS OF INTEREST

1. Venetian Waterway Park
2. Blind Pass Beach Nature Trail

9 Lemon Bay Trail

ROUTE
This trail begins at Manasota Beach and goes south into Charlotte County offering over 20 miles of paddling opportunities.

NAVIGATIONAL NOTES
This trail is suited for novice to intermediate paddlers depending on weather conditions and tidal currents. Use caution when paddling in the Intracoastal Waterway.

SHORT TRIPS
Indian Mound Park to Tom Adams Bridge
This three-mile loop offers a perfect opportunity to bring a fishing pole along as there is a bait shop at the pier located on the east side of Tom Adams Bridge.

Indian Mound Park to Stump Pass State Park
An approximately five-mile loop. Paddling south along the mangrove coast you will have an easy paddle through mangrove islands that offer wonderful bird viewing.

PADDLE TIP
NECESSARY EQUIPMENT -
Hand bilge pump and large sponge to remove water from boat.
Inflatable bladders in open spaces of kayak or canoe for flotation of craft if taking on water.

LAUNCH POINTS
See map for additional launch points.

1 Lemon Bay Park and Environmental Center
570 Bay Park Blvd., Englewood.
Going south on U.S. 41 take Route 776 (Englewood Road) to Old Englewood Road. Take a right, going west, at Stewart Street, turn right on Curtis Boulevard and left on Brengle Avenue.

3 Indian Mound Park
210 Winson Ave., Englewood.
Going south on U.S. 41 take Route 776 (Englewood Road) and continue south on Old Englewood Road until you come to West Dearborn Street and turn left, then turn right on North Green Street and then an immediate right onto Winson Avenue. The park is at the end of the road.

4 Cedar Point Environmental Park
2300 Placida Road, Englewood, Charlotte County. Going south on U.S. 41 take Route 776 to Placida Road. Take a right, going south, and turn left onto South Pine Street to the end of the road. The launch point is located on Oyster Creek.

POINTS OF INTEREST
Lemon Bay Park and Environmental Center
570 Bay Park Blvd., Englewood.
A great destination when planning a paddle route. While exploring this 212-acre park you can enjoy nature trails, pavilion, environmental classes, a butterfly garden, environmental center, and restrooms. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

Cedar Point Environmental Park
2300 Placida Road, Englewood, Charlotte County.
A 115-acre park that features an environmental center, a picnic pavilion, fishing pier, playground, and marked nature trails. Environmental classes and wading trips are offered. Inquire at the visitor's center. 941-475-0769 checflorida.org

Stump Pass Beach State Park
This 245-acre park in Charlotte County consists of three islands and the protected channels between them. A great landing point! The park is located at the southern end of Manasota Key and is accessible by land via the Tom Adams Bridge.
floridastateparks.org

NATURE NOTES
West Indian Manatees are gentle, slow-moving mammals and are a federally protected species. They mate and give birth to a single calf every two to three years.

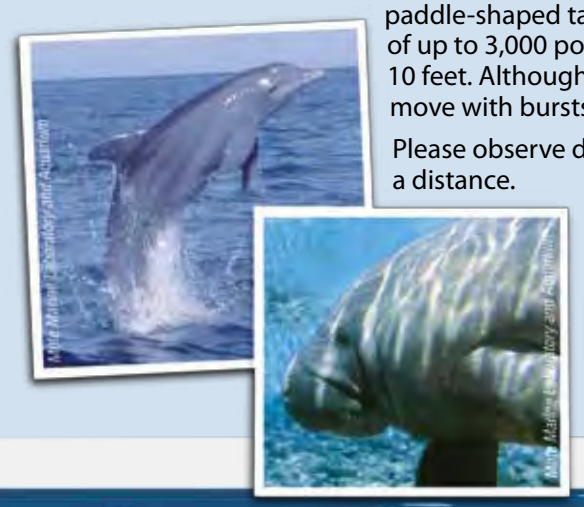
Manatees must come up to the surface to breathe air. Collisions with watercraft cause most human-related manatee fatalities.

ENVIRONMENT
DOLPHINS AND MANATEES
Dolphins can be spotted year-round. Mothers and their calves can be found in the shallow waters of the bays where they enjoy a plentiful meal of pinfish, ladyfish, and mullet. In the fall and winter, dolphins are more frequently found in the passes and along the Gulf shorelines.

Dolphins are marine mammals and can be susceptible to the effects of red tide. They are also endangered by marine debris such as fishing line which can entangle them and cause injury or death.

Manatees, sometimes called sea cows, are also marine mammals that periodically surface to breathe. They are gray in color with a seal-like body that tapers to a flat, paddle-shaped tail. Manatees can reach weights of up to 3,000 pounds and lengths of more than 10 feet. Although generally slow moving, they can move with bursts of speed up to 35 mph.

Please observe dolphins and manatees from a distance.



If a manatee or dolphin appears injured or threatened in any way, contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) at: 1-888-404-3922

Lemon Bay Trail

LEGEND
Most sites listed offer some amenities

BLUEWAY TRAIL

Mangroves

CAUTION AREAS
High Boat Traffic or Strong Currents

LAUNCH POINTS

1. Lemon Bay Park
2. Blind Pass Beach
3. Indian Mound Park
4. Cedar Point Environmental Park

BOAT RAMPS
All boat ramps accommodate canoe and kayak launch

1. Manasota Beach
2. Indian Mound Park

LANDING POINTS
Water access only

1. Stump Pass Beach State Park (Charlotte County)

PARKS

1. Manasota Beach
2. Lemon Bay Park and Environmental Center
3. Blind Pass Beach
4. Indian Mound Park
5. Cedar Point Environmental Park
6. Stump Pass Beach State Park

POINTS OF INTEREST

1. Tom Adams Bridge (bait shop in area)

N W E S

0 1/2 1 mile
Approx. scale Miles

Effective date: 2017

Manasota Beach

Manasota Beach Road

Englewood Road

Forked Creek

776

INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY

Manasota Beach Road

Brengle Ave.

Curtis Boulevard

Stewart Street

Blind Pass Beach

Gulf of Mexico

Manasota Key

Lemon Bay

Winson Avenue

West Dearborn Street

West Green Street

North Indiana Avenue

South River Road

Pine Street

Gottfried Creek

ENGLEWOOD

SARASOTA COUNTY
CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Ainger Creek

McCall Road

North Beach Road

Beach Road

Tom Adams Bridge

Englewood Beach

776

South Pine Street

Oyster Creek

San Casa Road

GROVE CITY

Placida Road

775

Refer to Charlotte County Blueways Guide for more paddling trails south of Sarasota County.

10 Myakka River/ Carlton Trail

ROUTE

On this trail you will travel through the Myakka River State park which is one of Florida's largest and most diverse natural areas. The Sarasota County portion of the Myakka River was designated a "Florida Wild and Scenic River" by the state legislature in 1985. The Myakka River flows through 58 square miles of wetlands, prairies, hammocks, and pinelands.

NAVIGATIONAL NOTES

The technical difficulty on this river is for intermediate to advanced canoeists and kayakers. Some areas are protected and easy to paddle but other areas are open to the wind, currents, flooding, and subject to weather changes.

During high water periods this river can be dangerous and difficult to navigate. There is a minimum speed, no-wake regulation for powerboats, and airboats are not permitted.

SHORT TRIPS

Myakka River State Park north entrance launch point to Visitor Center

Paddle south from the park's northern launch point to the main entrance of the park, just before reaching Route 72. This is an approximately 5-mile loop. (Note: There is a entry fee per vehicle, per day.)

LAUNCH POINTS

2 Myakka River State Park

13207 State Road 72, Sarasota. From I-75 take exit 205 (Route 72) west approximately 10 miles until you reach the park's main entrance. There is a launch point just past the first picnic area after you enter the park. Follow Park Drive to reach the second launch point located on the Upper Myakka Lake. There is a fee to enter the park.

3 T. Mabry Carlton, Jr. Memorial Reserve

1800 Mabry Carlton Parkway, Venice. From I-75 take exit 193 (Jacaranda Boulevard) north to Border Road turn right, the launch is located approximately three miles east and is on the left when you cross the river.

4 Snook Haven

5000 E. Venice Ave., Venice. From I-75 take exit 191 onto North River Road. You will see the Snook Haven sign in about one mile on the left. Follow the dirt road to the end.

PADDLE TIP

TRIP LENGTH

Allow a minimum of two miles per hour paddling time under normal conditions.

PLANNING

Let someone know your plans, where you are going, who's with you, and when you plan to be back.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Myakka River State Park

13207 State Road 72, Sarasota. You'll find many opportunities to discover the beauty of Myakka River State Park. Brochures and information about what the park has to offer are available at the park entrance. Stop by the Visitor's Center to view videos and exhibits of wildlife and their habitats. Explore the treetops on Myakka's Canopy Walkway and Tower. At the Ranger's Station, ask about wildlife boat or tram tour schedules, park programs, camping, canoe/kayak rentals, and bicycle rentals. The park has a concession and gift shop, restrooms, picnic areas and pavilions, and a fishing pier. Bait and tackle, photo and camping supplies are available. There is an entrance fee collected at the park entrance. Park office 941-361-6511 floridastateparks.org/park/Myakka-River

Snook Haven

5000 E. Venice Ave., Venice. This county park is a great place to relax and enjoy a piece of "Old Florida." The Snook Haven concession includes a restaurant on the river, canoe and kayak rentals, and a river boat tour. Outdoor concerts held every weekend, check website for schedule. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

ENVIRONMENT

FLORIDA NATIVE TREES

Native trees have been part of Florida's landscape for eons, adapting to scorching sunlight, intermittent freezes, torrential rains, long droughts, insects and fire. Once established, the right tree in the right place will thrive on natural rainfall, without fertilizers or pesticides. It will also attract and provide shelter and food for birds, butterflies, and other indigenous wildlife.

NATURE NOTES

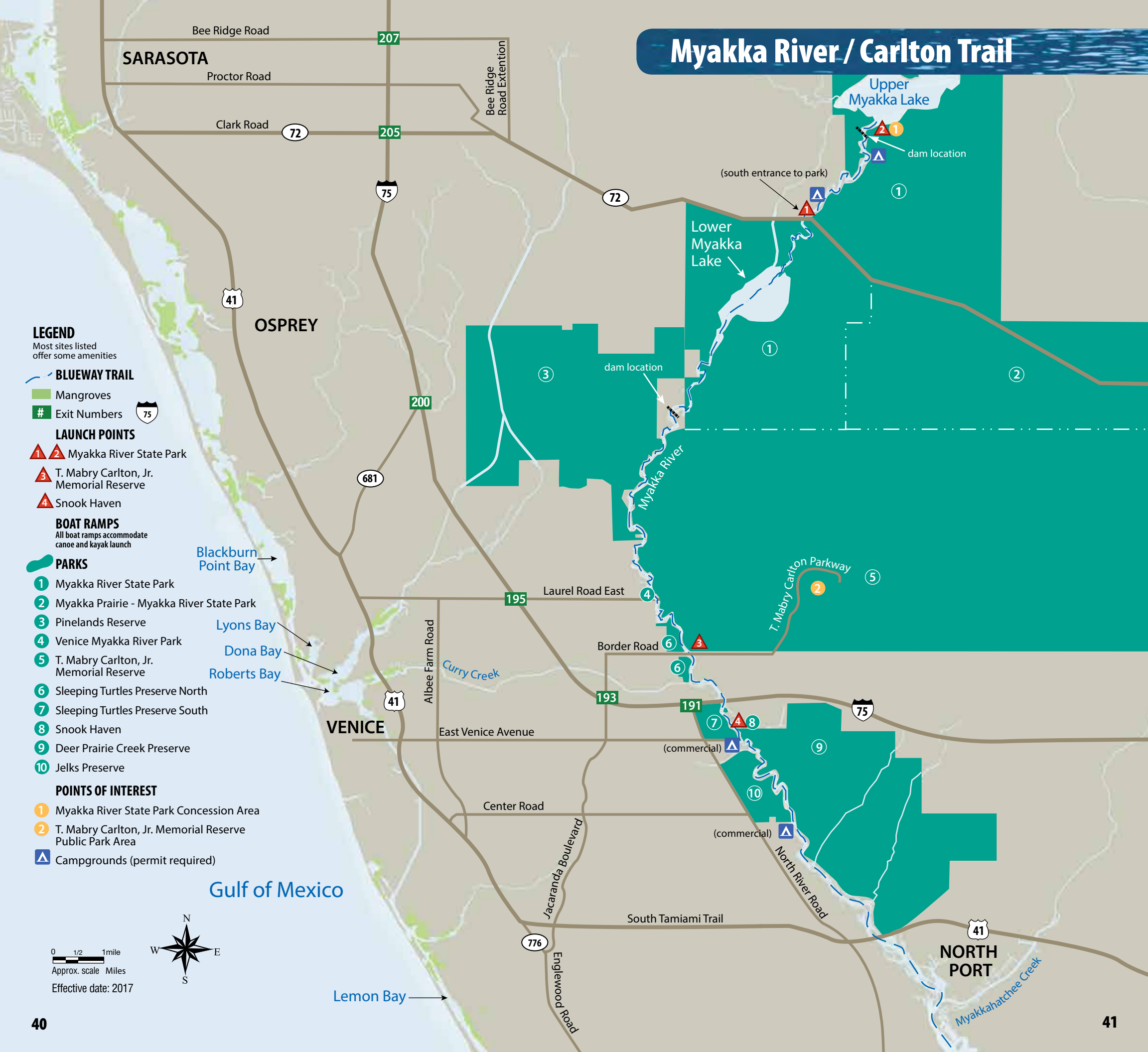
Bass is a name shared by many different species of popular game fish. The term encompasses both freshwater and marine species, many of which are native to North America and surrounding waters.

T. Mabry Carlton, Jr. Memorial Reserve

1800 Mabry Carlton Parkway, Venice. This reserve is approximately 25,000 acres and offers picnic areas, a pavilion, nature trails, restrooms, and a historic log cabin/visitor center. There are more than 80 miles of primitive hiking trails that run through large expanses of pine flatwoods, dry prairie, oak-palm hammocks and wetlands. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

Pine flatwoods at Jelks Preserve.

Myakka River / Carlton Trail



LEGEND

Most sites listed offer some amenities

- BLUEWAY TRAIL
- Mangroves
- # Exit Numbers

LAUNCH POINTS

- 1 2 Myakka River State Park
- 3 T. Mabry Carlton, Jr. Memorial Reserve
- 4 Snook Haven

BOAT RAMPS

All boat ramps accommodate canoe and kayak launch

PARKS

1. Myakka River State Park
2. Myakka Prairie - Myakka River State Park
3. Pinelands Reserve
4. Venice Myakka River Park
5. T. Mabry Carlton, Jr. Memorial Reserve
6. Sleeping Turtles Preserve North
7. Sleeping Turtles Preserve South
8. Snook Haven
9. Deer Prairie Creek Preserve
10. Jelks Preserve

POINTS OF INTEREST

1. Myakka River State Park Concession Area
2. T. Mabry Carlton, Jr. Memorial Reserve Public Park Area
- Campgrounds (permit required)

11 Myakka River / Myakkahatchee Creek Trails

ROUTE

The river and creek are located between Venice and North Port and flow into Charlotte Harbor. It is believed that the name "Myakkahatchee" is derived from the Seminole language meaning "big water" or "big river." Approximately 10,000 years ago this creek, with its surrounding forest hammock, was a prime hunting spot for Paleo Indians, according to archaeological evidence. Today it represents an important part of the local water supply system.

NAVIGATIONAL NOTES

When paddling the Myakkahatchee Creek be aware that north of Price Boulevard the creek is constricted with varying water levels. There are also numerous portages that may be required depending on the water levels. Under the I-75 over-pass you may encounter rocky areas. Traveling south of Price Boulevard on Myakkahatchee Creek is suitable for novice paddlers.

SHORT TRIPS

Butler Park to Myakka State Forest

This trail provides a 6-mile loop to reach the section of the state forest that is northeast of the Myakka River. Approximately one mile into the journey you will have a portage around a dam.

LAUNCH POINTS

See map for additional launch points.

2 Butler Park

6205 West Price Blvd., North Port. From U.S. 41, take Sumter Boulevard north to Price Boulevard. Turn left on Price Boulevard until you come to the park's entrance on the left.

3 Myakka State Forest

2555 S. River Road, North Port. From U.S. 41, take South River Road left to River Road. Turn left, and the entrance is on the right. Follow Slash Pine Trail until you reach the river.

PADDLE TIP

DRINKING WATER
Bring at least 1 gallon per person/per day.

FOOD
Bring food and gear in watertight containers tied to your boat.

HYPOTHERMIA
Warning signs include uncontrolled shivering, slurred speech, lack of coordination, and poor concentration. Get the victim into a shelter and remove wet clothes. Give fluids and food until warmed. Hypothermia can even occur in summer with wind and rain.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Butler Park

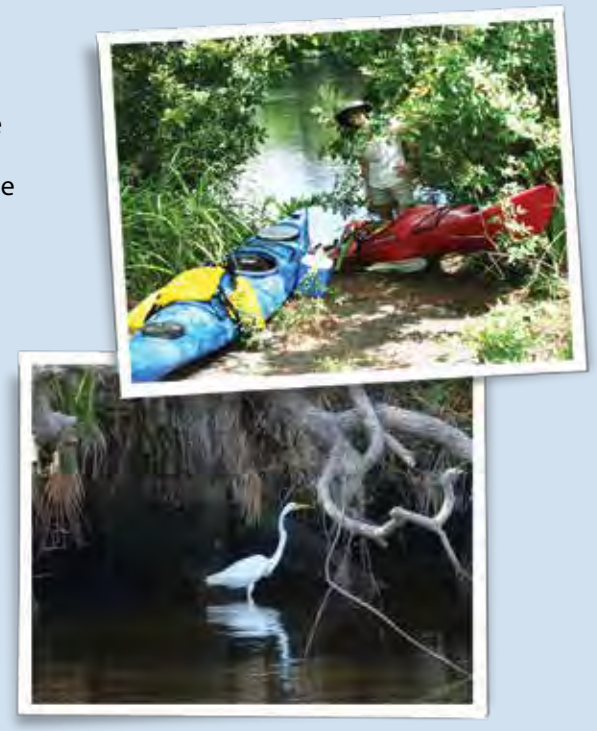
6205 West Price Blvd., North Port. Butler Park amenities include: a canoe launch, concession area, a large pavilion and picnic area. There are little league fields, a playground, restrooms, and two soccer fields. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

Jelks Preserve

2300 N. River Road, Venice. Jelks Preserve has a 3.3-mile loop nature trail that will take you through a mosaic of native habitats from scrubby flatwoods to oak hammocks and pine flatwoods and seasonal marshes. Look for gopher tortoise burrows, wildflowers, and pileated woodpeckers. The hiking trails are limited to foot traffic only. 941-861-5000 scgov.net

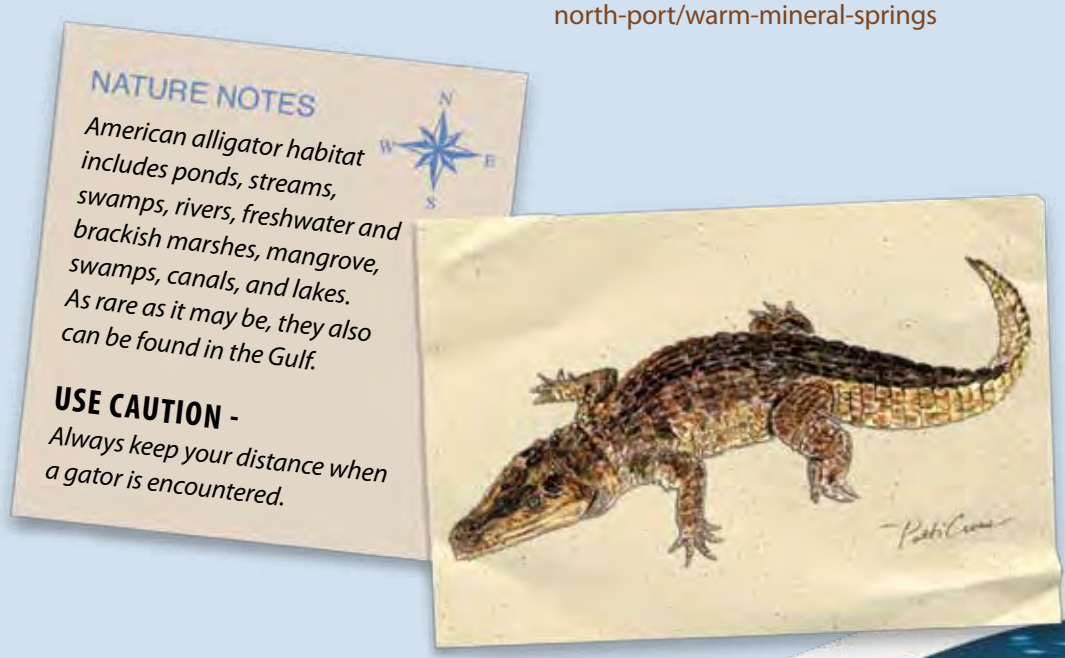
Myakkahatchee Creek Environmental Park

6968 Reistertown Road, North Port. The Myakkahatchee Creek Environmental Park consists of 206-acres of mostly shady oak hammock on both sides of the creek. This park offers a rare opportunity to enjoy an "Old Florida" experience of a blackwater creek. It features birding, canoeing, hiking, picnicking, and bicycling. There is also a nature trail and restroom facilities. 941-861-5000 scgov.net



1 Warm Mineral Springs

12200 San Servando Ave., North Port. In 1977, Warm Mineral Springs was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Visitors come from around the world to soak in the mineral-rich waters which maintain a temperature of 85 degrees year-round. 941-426-1692 cityofnorthport.com/visitors/visit-north-port/warm-mineral-springs



MYAKKA RIVER / MYAKKAHATCHEE CREEK TRAILS

LEGEND
Most sites listed offer some amenities

- BLUEWAY TRAIL
- Mangroves
- CAUTION AREAS — High Boat Traffic or Strong Currents
- # Exit Numbers (75)

LAUNCH POINTS
1. Snook Haven
2. Butler Park
3. Myakka State Forest

BOAT RAMPS
All boat ramps accommodate canoe and kayak launch

1. Marina Park

PARKS
1. Myakkahatchee Creek Environmental Park
2. Sleeping Turtles Preserve South
3. Snook Haven
4. Deer Prairie Creek Preserve
5. Jelks Preserve
6. Oaks Park
7. Butler Park
8. Myakka State Forest

POINTS OF INTEREST
1. Warm Mineral Springs
- Campground (permit required)

0 1/2 1 mile
Approx. scale Miles

Effective date: 2017

N W E S

Venice Avenue
(commercial)
(commercial)
(primitive)
North River Road
South River Road
East River Road
Deer Prairie Creek
Myakka River
Warm Mineral Springs Creek
Tamiami Trail
Price Boulevard
Price Boulevard
Estate Drive
Reistertown Road
Tropicaire Boulevard
Sumter Boulevard
Myakkahatchee Creek
Portage around dam
Kenwood Drive
Northport Boulevard
Chancellor Boulevard
Slash Pine Trail
Charlotte Harbor
NORTH PORT
SARASOTA COUNTY
CHARLOTTE COUNTY
75
41
182

CAUTION AREAS
Very difficult navigation

Refer to Charlotte County Blueways Guide for more paddling trails south of Sarasota County.

PADDLE TIP

REQUIRED BY LAW

- Flotation gear. Florida law requires a United States Coast Guard (USCG) approved, readily accessible and wearable personal flotation device (PFD) for each occupant. PFD's must be worn by all occupants under six years of age.
- Marine whistle, bell, or horn (USCG approved).
- Orange smoke signals, or red flares (only required at night). Flashlight and extra batteries are recommended.
- A Florida fishing license is required for persons 16 years of age and older.
- All canoes with motors must be registered.
- All canoes longer than 16 feet must be titled.

Enjoy Sarasota's beautiful blueways, play it safe and know the water.

Monofilament Recovery and Recycling Program

The Monofilament Recovery and Recycling Program (MRRP) is a statewide effort to educate the public about the problems caused by monofilament fishing line left in the environment as it can cause injuries to wildlife. This program encourages the use of recycling bins and drop-off locations, and conducts volunteer monofilament cleanup events.

Outdoor recycling bins are mounted at many piers, boat ramps and marinas throughout the state. Indoor recycling bins are hosted by tackle shops and department stores. To learn more about the program and the effects that monofilament line has on our wildlife, visit: mrrp.myfwc.com

Top to bottom: Monofilament fishing line recycling bin, Great blue herons building a nest, Bottlenose dolphins, manatee.

RESOURCE DIRECTORY

ASSISTANCE

Sarasota County Contact Center 941-861-5000
scgov.net

Sheriff's Office
Emergency 911
Non-emergency. Report crime or incident 941-316-1201

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Wildlife Alert Hotline ..... 1-888-404-3922 (FWCC)
Text option for reporting a violation ..... Tip@MyFWC.com
Manatee and marine turtle collision; rescue and recovery.
Also for reporting fishing violations, boating accidents, and marine mammal injuries or strandings.

U.S. Coast Guard Rescue ..... 941-794-1261 or 941-794-1607

For search and rescue assistance ..... VHF Channel 16; Emergency Cell *CG.

PROGRAMS (marine resource info)

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Office of Greenways & Trails 850-245-2052
(FL Circumnavigational Paddling Trail) ..... dep.state.fl.us

Florida Sea Grant 352-392-5870
flseagrant.org

Florida Sportswater Fishing 1-888-347-4356

Fishing License ..... myfwc.com/license

Mote Marine Laboratory and Aquarium 941-388-4441
For assistance with injured marine mammals or sea turtles ..... mote.org

NOAA Weather Service Broadcast 813-645-2506
24 hour weather and marine forecast 162.55Kz/VH

Sarasota Bay Estuary Program 941-955-8085
sarasotabay.org

West Coast Inland Navigation District 941-485-9402
For information on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway

OUTFITTERS & ECOTOUR OPERATORS

Please search online for "Canoes" and "Kayaks" for local canoe and kayak outfitters and eco-tour operators.

PADDLING CLUBS

Please search online for local paddling clubs.

Sarasota County

Sarasota County Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources

IT STARTS IN PARKS