

Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers

September, 2017 - Volume 25, Issue 9



www.tbsk.club
www.facebook.com/TampaBaySeaKayakers



SEPTEMBER 2017 CALENDAR from the web site as of the end of August.

27	28	29	30	31	Sep 1	2	8:30 AM Impromptu - Gulf Paddle and Skills - Level II 8:45 AM GEORGETOWN AND THE SOUTH SHORE - LEVEL 0
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8:30 AM Caladesi Island Circumnavigation - Level II
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	7:00 PM TBSK Monthly Meeting - Non-Members Invited 7:30 AM Bishop Harbor, Terra Ceia Preserve - Level I+
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	8:30 AM Philippe Park - Vamos a Palar en Kayak - Level 0+
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	8:30 AM Chassahowitzka River Springs Loop - Level II 8:30 AM TBSK Picnic - Fred Howard Park, Tarpon Springs

Newsletter - Trip Calendar Only

With our new web site up and running effectively thanks to great efforts by Bill Biles & Hank Brooks plus all of the trip coordination work from Bob Morris, club members are getting up-to-the-minute trip info via the web and email. So the board decided to remove detailed trip info from the newsletter. You can find it on the web site: <http://www.tbsk.club>.

Note that this means that non-club events will no longer be shown on this calendar.



TBSK Skills Self-Assessment

TBSK guidelines for both trip participants and trip leaders can be found in the Paddling Guide on our web site under "Trip Planning". It is loaded with information for all TBSK members. One of the features of the Paddling Guide is the Skills Self Assessment Chart. It has been updated to include the Level 0 paddles.

The Skill Self Assessment Chart is meant to be used by a paddler to let them know the skills they should expect to perform and conditions they should expect to handle when going on a TBSK paddle. A paddler who wants to go on a paddle where they might not have all the skills listed (e.g. a roll for a Level III paddle) should contact the trip leader, because they may have excellent bracing skills to be able to make the trip. As always, the trip leader has the final decision on whether a paddler has the proper skills and boat to go on a paddle.

Skills Self Assessment Chart			Paddle Levels			
			Level 0	Level I	Level II	Level III
Essential Requirements						
Be Able To Swim			•	•	•	•
Physically fit to paddle			•	•	•	•
Entry/ Exit Boat						
Without Assistance From Shore			•	•	•	•
From Low Dock					•	•
Surf Launches & Landings < 2 ft					•	•
Surf Launches & Landings > 2 ft						•
Paddling Skills						
Forward Stroke			•	•	•	•
Sweep Strokes For Turning				•	•	•
Reverse Stroke				•	•	•
Edging & Low Brace Turns					•	•
Sculling Draw Strokes					•	•
Bow Rudder & Bow Draw						•
Brace Strokes In Rough Water						•
Rolling						•
Distance Up To		Cruising Speed				
3 Miles		1- 2 mph	•	•	•	•
5 Miles		2 - 3 mph		•	•	•
10 Miles		3 - 4 mph			•	•
18 Miles		> 4 mph				•
	Wave	Current	Wind			
	Calm	< 1 mph	< 4 mph	•	•	•
	< 1 foot	< 1 mph	< 6 mph		•	•
	< 2 feet	< 2 mph	< 12 mph			•
	< 3 feet	< 4 mph	< 15 mph			•
Rescues						
Wet Exit			•	•	•	•
Assisted Rescue				•	•	•
Self Rescue After Wet Exit					•	•
Towing					•	•
Wet Re-entry in Rough Water Assisted by Partner						•
Roll						•



Events

Training from Outfitters

Bill Jackson's Pinellas Park	727-576-4169 adventure@billjacksons.com	http://www.billjacksons.com/classes/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Kayaking - \$78 8/12 & 9/9 • Intro to Stand-up Paddleboards
Economy Tackle & Dolphin Paddlesports Sarasota	941-922-9671 kayaktoday@gmail.com	http://www.floridakayak.com/kayaks/kayak-classes/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intro to Kayaking: \$60 (Saturdays, Turtle Beach—Siesta Key, RSVP Required) • Intermediate Kayaking—\$75 (Call for date)
Sweetwater Kayaks St Petersburg	727-570-4844 TheS-hop@SweetwaterKayaks.com	http://sweetwaterkayaks.wordpress.com/skills/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation Skills Kayak Class—\$75 (Call) • Directional Control—\$75 (Call) • Rolling Clinic (\$50) (Call) • Greenland Kayaking—\$50-\$85 depending on skills covered (call).

Kayak Camping for TBSK Members

Many of our TBSK members are interested in camping, especially from a kayak. If you are interested in camping, please make sure to let Gary Bernier gwbarnier@gmail.com know. Contact him you need to get in touch with all of the TBSK members interested in camping .

Also, Andy Bartley launched a Facebook Page for TBSK Camping: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1780031405551417/>



Member Requested Trips

Anyone can request a paddle to a location they want to go and we will see if we can find a trip leader to lead the trip for you. Just submit a Trip Request by the 10th of the month prior to your trip so the next newsletter can advertise it with the trip leaders' name.

You Can Do This By Emailing tbsk@tbsk.club with "Trip Request" in the subject line.

1. Put-in and take-out locations
2. Destination and total distance
3. Preferred Date(s) and time
4. Skill level required ([see Trip Planning/Paddling guide on TBSK.club](#))
5. Phone number (should trip leader have questions)

Trip Coordinator will:

- Post this trip request with the monthly “request for trips” which is sent out to trip leaders.
- Notify the person requesting the trip if we can find a trip leader and if the trip can be led exactly as requested, or if some modification to the trip is necessary.

New Places To Paddle

Comments from our member survey observed we always paddle the "same old places". We need to get out of our rut! With that in mind, we are encouraging our trip leaders to expand their paddling horizons. All members should note that we have a "Paddle Places" section on our web site which lists places to paddle in the greater Tampa Bay area (see menu on bottom of the home page).

In "Paddle Places" one of the things you will find is the Pinellas County Paddling Guide, which lists about 100 different places to paddle in Pinellas County - where most of our members live. The link to the guide, which TBSK helped create, is found below:

<http://www.pinellascounty.org/blueways/pdf/BluewaysGuide.pdf>

If you have a favorite place to paddle, and it is not listed in "Paddle Places", please contact Hank Brooks at jbrook5@tampabay.rr.com

Visit our Sponsors for the Best Kayaking Equipment and Advice!

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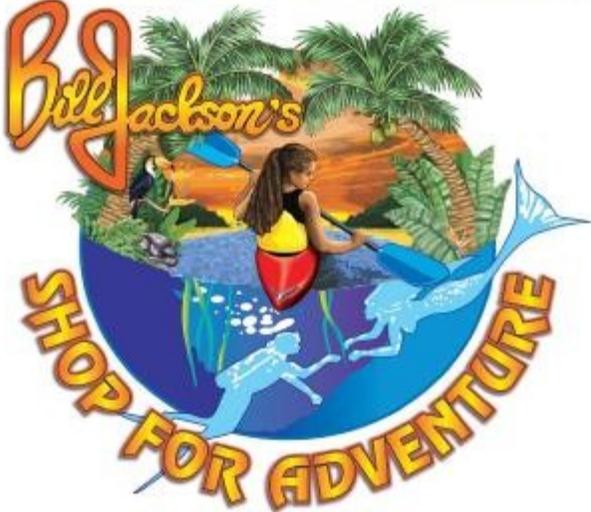

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www.sweetwaterkayaks.com

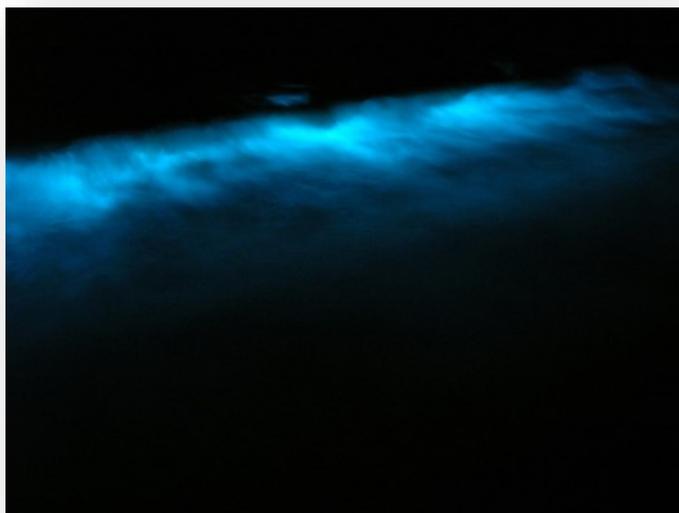
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Summer and early fall is the best time to see Bioluminescence, and across the state at Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge is the place to go.



CANOECOUNTRYFL.COM
6493 54th Ave N
St. Pete, FL 33709 (727) 545-4554
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"A KAYAK FOR EVERY NEED"



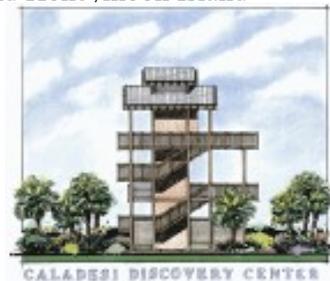



News & Events Around the State

(updated info in red)

Friends of the Island Parks (<http://www.islandparks.org>) supports Caladesi Island State Park and Honeymoon Island

- Osprey Trail Walks every Wed, Sat, Sun at 11
- Beach Walks every Friday at 11
- Monthly Shell Show. 3rd Saturday each month at Nature Center, 1pm
- Wildlife Status:
 - Osprey: 15 Active Nests in March, and first chicks spotted March 28th
 - Eagles: 2 Eaglets fully grown and ready to Fledge in March
 - Great horned owls: Owls are not anticipated to nest in the parks this season
 - **Sea Turtle: We are now at 114 nests, a new record for Egmont Key!**
- Visit caladesidiscoverycenter.com to learn about the forthcoming interpretive facility.



For an update on this year's Sea Turtle Baby Boom, see this article: <http://www.tampabay.com/news/environment/wildlife/baby-boom-sea-turtles-set-new-record-for-nesting-on-pinellas-beaches/2307517>

Florida Paddling Trails Association (FPTA). We are the steward of all of Florida's water trails. Our mission is to develop water trails, protect the environment along the trails, and be a resource and voice for paddlers. Jill Lingard is the FPTA President, and Hank Brooks is this Region's Director for FPTA. (Our region is Hillsborough, Pinellas, & Manatee)



The Adventurous Woman. Fishing, Camping, Kayaking, Hikes for women of all skill levels. Meets the 3rd Wednesday at Bill Jackson's. 6:30pm, February-November.

Society for Ethical Ecotourism: Florida SEE is looking for volunteers to help vendors become certified. See info about SEE on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FloridaSEE.org>. Info on the volunteer position can be seen here:

- http://www.floridasee.org/docs/Florida_SEE_Assessor_Position_Description_2015.pdf



Paddle Florida <http://www.paddleflorida.org/>

- To register for trips: <http://www.paddleflorida.org/services/preview-and-register-for-trips-5165.html>

Paddle Florida 2017-18 season of paddling adventures:

- October 20-25, 2017: [Suwannee River Wilderness Trail](#)
- December 1-5, 2017: [Ocklawaha Odyssey](#)
- January 18-23, 2018: [Wild, Wonderful Withlacochee](#)
- February 10-16, 2018: [The Great Calusa Blueway](#)
- March 10-16, 2018: [Choctawhatchee Challenge](#)
- April 6-8, 2018: [Suwannee River Paddling Festival](#)



Tampa Bay Watch

- There are opportunities to support the health of our local waters just about every week.
- Please check the web site for details: <http://www.tampabaywatch.org/event-calendar.html>



Keep Pinellas Beautiful strives to keep our community clean and beautiful. We have many volunteers and adoption programs available in which you can participate. <http://www.mykpb.com/>

Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful: <http://keeptampabaybeautiful.org>



Our mission is to promote a culture of environmental stewardship through volunteer and educational opportunities.

Egmont Key Alliance (<http://www.egmontkey.info/>)

- **The regular workday is the 16th this month (September)**



Florida Water Environmental Association: Over 70 years after its creation, FWEA continues to make historic differences in the advancement of the water environment, science and technology, making it a leading professional water organization in Florida. Our history says a lot about the leadership, dedication and hard work. <http://www.fwea.org>





Algae Bloom and Fish Kill Confirmed in Old Tampa Bay

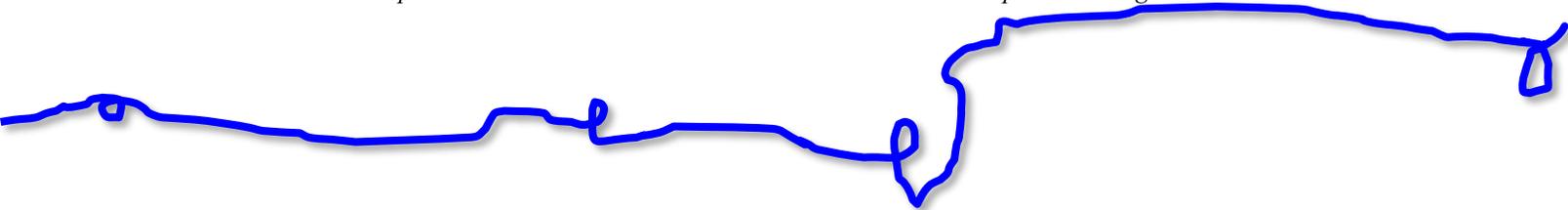
By Tampa Bay Times, 8/18

An algae bloom and fish kill have been confirmed in Old Tampa Bay from Safety Harbor to the south end of the Bayside Bridge. The bloom was sighted last week and was confirmed with lab testing, according to Pinellas County Environmental Management.

During nighttime and cloudy weather, low sunlight causes algae to consume oxygen needed by fish. During severe events, fish can suffocate from the low oxygen levels. The growth of the algae species identified in Old Tampa Bay, *Pyrodinium bahamense*, can also be fueled by nutrients from fertilizers, sediment, and yard and animal waste carried into waterways through stormwater runoff.

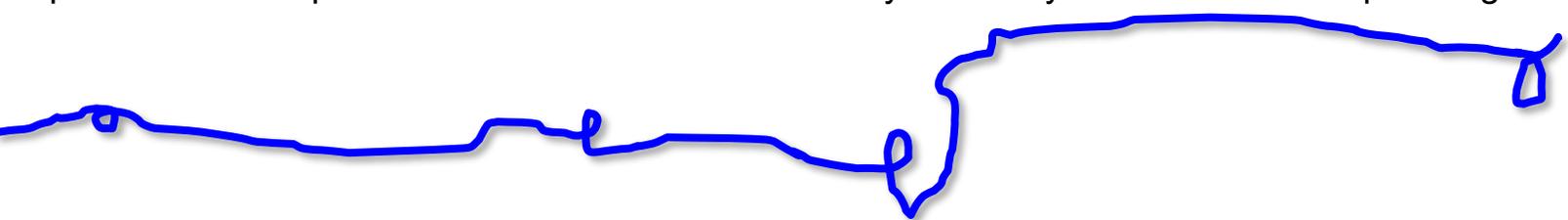
Pinellas County enforces a fertilizer ban from June through September. Residents are encouraged to properly dispose of grass clippings and other yard and pet waste, according to a news release.

Ed note: This article was reprinted here since it was the reason that TBSK moved it's picnic tin August



Don Thompson's Passing

It is with great sadness that we report that Don Thompson has passed after unsuccessful emergency heart surgery at the Cleveland Clinic. Don was a friend to many of us and a kayak instructor/ guide for some of us. He is remembered as being a big friendly guy with a warm handshake and a great sense of humor. Never taking himself too seriously. He was a past officer in TBSK and greatly enjoyed his time on the water. As a paddle guide he is remembered for keeping his trips fun, doing such things as splitting a cold watermelon with a paddle after a trip on the water. He will be missed by his family and the extended paddling



This was a conversation overheard between two ladies sitting on the beach on Dunedin Causeway.

- First Lady: That kayaker out there doesn't seem to be very good.
- Second Lady: Why do you say that?
- First Lady: Because every time he gets the boat upright, he falls back into the water.
- Second Lady: I think he is practicing his rescue skills.
- First Lady: Well, if he is practicing how to capsize the boat, I think that he has that part down very well.



Kayak Storage Ideas

By Hank Brooks

Club members often get asked about how apartment-renters can store a kayak. So I took the time and effort to answer the question. It's not possible to come up with a single answer. The best tip is to do an Internet Search for marinas and Boat Storage facilities in communities near where they will live, and then they need to contact the places they find to get all the details.

As an example, here is a list of the five places I contacted in February, 2016

Name	Phone	Cost
RV & Boat Storage Address: 3251 62nd Ave N, St. Petersburg, FL 33702	(727) 522-5723	Must be on trailer
Bay Pines Marina Address: 5000 92nd St N, St. Petersburg, FL 33708	727) 392-4922	No kayak storage
Cove Cay Marina Address: 1300 Cove Cay Dr, Clearwater, FL 33760	497-7493	\$20/ mo under cover
Mariner's Cove Marina Address: 5018 31st Ave S, Gulfport, FL 33707	(727) 321-5792	No kayak storage
Gulfport Municipal Marina Address: 4630 29th Ave S, Gulfport, FL 33711	(727) 893-1071	Do store kayaks – are currently full Charge \$15/ mo

Store it in your living room!



In your Bed room!



Store it in your car!



In your Kitchen!



Ed. Note: Hank didn't come up with these photos. Google did.



Picnic Island

By Al Tillson with photos from Emil

Eight paddlers met on Sunday August 13th to explore the area around Picnic Island at the southwest corner of South Tampa. This area (known as Port Tampa) was the center of Tampa's shipping trade in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with Henry Plant's railroad delivering phosphate to ocean going freighters and passengers to steamers bound for Key West, Havana, and elsewhere. Al Tillson talked about this for a few minutes before we launched and shared some historic photos of the docks and phosphate-loading machinery as well as the small hotels that Plant built over the water beside the rail lines. The railroad itself was extended about a mile out into Tampa Bay beyond what was the shoreline at that time. (Ed note: Al provided the participants with links where they could explore more background on the long history of this site.)

Because of a rain storm across the Bay, we elected to first paddle south and then east along the Picnic Island shoreline where exit from the water would be easy. Al paddled in the lead, and Therese Eby graciously agreed to sweep. As the weather cleared, we turned north into the inlet behind Picnic Island and saw some of the facilities that handle the petroleum that today's freighters offload here as well as an assortment of water birds in the mangroves. After returning around Picnic Island, we turned north to see the shipping facilities. We had hoped to continue a bit further up the coast for lunch on a spoil island off Rattlesnake Point, but we decided to return to the put-in when the weather began to look threatening. Along the way we got a close-up view of a tugboat pulling two barges carrying dredging equipment down the bay.



Rainbow!



Rain!

The port in 1902





McKay Bay Discovered

By Hank Brooks with photos by Bill Biles & Tom Komar

One of my goals has been to explore all the areas of Tampa Bay. When I looked at a map and saw McKay Bay, in the upper north east part of the bay, I realized that it had not been visited by many TBSK paddlers. That was our challenge.

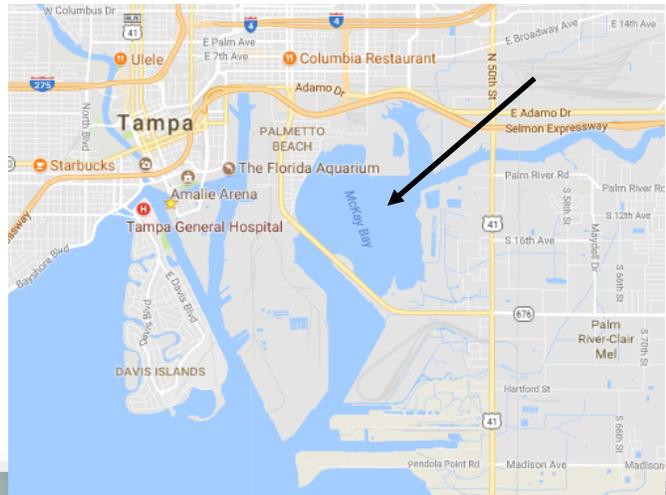
There were seven on this journey – John Marek, Tom Kolmar, Bev Hand, Steven Loeven, Bill Biles, Tom Sobocinski and myself. We met early in the morning (7:30 a.m. to try and beat the heat) to launch at the south end of Davis Island. The plan was to paddle up the East Bay Channel and into McKay Bay to a sandy spot next to the U.S. 41 bridge – a distance of 5 miles. We realized that some areas along the channel are designated as a security zone by the Coast Guard. So I checked the internet for security zones and called the Coast Guard. They said that as long as we stayed in the middle of the channel, we should be OK.

Bill Biles has been my navigator on my last several expeditions and has done an excellent job piloting us thru areas we have not traveled before. Besides a navigation chart, he had his GPS. The weather was clear and muggy, with a light chop on the water as we paddled the mile from Davis Island to the entrance of the East Bay Channel. The sun was shining brightly, reminding us that it was about to get hot. As you enter the channel, the first thing you notice is the size of the ships and equipment lining the docks on both sides of the channel. Besides large ships, there were drilling rigs and large cranes to load ships. The channel itself is at over 1/2 mile wide in some places and is quite industrial, which is obvious by both the sights and the smell.

Paddling up the channel, our next objective was the S. 22nd Street Bridge, about two miles from the channel entrance. When we passed under the bridge, McKay Bay opened up to us. It's over a mile wide and we still had over 1.5 miles to reach the U.S. 41 bridge. Several dolphins welcomed us to the bay by doing acrobatic jumps. As we prepared to paddle onward, we could see storm clouds brewing behind us toward the south west. I pull up the "My Radar" app on my smart phone and most of the storms seemed to be missing the Tampa Bay area, headed toward Crystal Springs. However the sky was getting quite dark, so it was decided that our group had at least "re-discovered" McKay Bay, even if we did not explore it on this trip.

We tried to take out under the S. 22nd Street Bridge for a brief rest stop, but the area was too rocky. So we were heading back to the take out. As we paddled under the bridge, a large storm cloud passed overhead. It was like someone pulled a shade over the sun. The temperature dropped at least 15 degrees, making paddling much more pleasant. John Marek had his lightening detector, which could tell if there were lightening strikes and how far away they were. We were fortunate that we heard no thunder as we padded. As we prepared to exit the East Channel, a light rain started to fall. For the trip back to Davis Island, the wind had whipped up the water so that we had waves from 1.5 to 2 feet. All paddlers in the group handled the conditions very well and we were soon back at our take out. At which time the storm passed and the sun came back out.

We were on the water by 8 a.m. and off the water by 10:15 a.m. – traveled a total of about 7.3 miles. We were not in McKay Bay long enough to lay any TBSK claims to the land or find a suitable place for a TBSK colony. So we will have to go back – preferably on a cooler, less stormy day.





Lettuce Lake

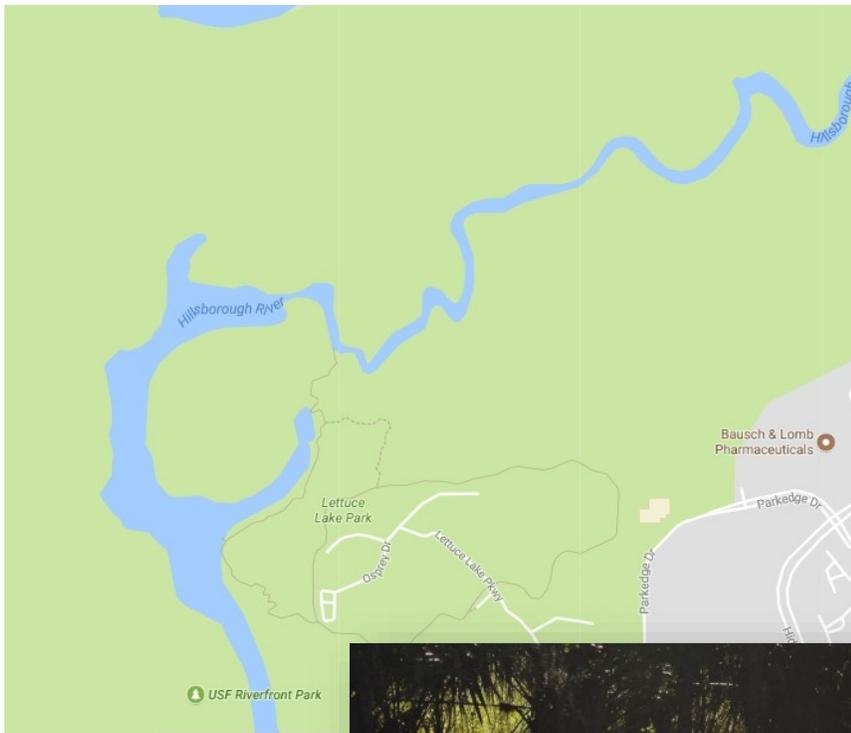
By Hank Brooks with photos by Bill Biles

Lettuce Lake is not really a lake. It is a bend in the Hillsborough River filled with water plants, sometimes to the point of choking off the river. There were seven of us on this trip: Lora & Bruce Cooper (in their tandem sit-on-top), Bill Biles, Mayra Rodriguez, Ken and Maria Spiegel and Emil Assily.

Because of the mid August heat, we were scheduled to meet at 8 a.m. at Lettuce Lake Park, off Fletcher Ave. I forgot to check when the park opened (8 a.m.), so we waited in the line of cars to get into the park. The launch point was some distance from the park entrance, and then we had to put our kayaks on wheels for a 100 yard trip to the launch point on the river. The start of our adventure.

At the launch point, the river is fairly wide and the current slow, so we headed downstream first. The river is lined with gorgeous houses, and there are plenty of trees to provide shade for the paddle and beauty to the river. We moved at a slow but steady pace, enjoying each other's company as well as the scenery. We asked each other which house they would buy when they hit the lottery. After paddling about 1.5 miles we turned around and headed back upstream to our take-out. Once there, two paddlers decided that they would take out and the remaining five continued to explore upstream until the river narrowed and the current became much stiffer. So after about a mile, we headed back to the take-out.

Everyone seemed to enjoy the paddle because they were able to paddle to their abilities. Our club has evolved over the years and last year we added Level O paddles for people who want a very leisurely paddle where it is not necessary to have a certain type of boat or level of paddle skills. This paddle proved to me that Level O paddles help us be a more rounded club, offering trips for just about everyone.



The forecast for Wednesday, August 16 was only a 40% chance of rain – the best odds all week. I hadn't chosen the paddling day for the rainfall odds but for the fact that school had already started. Instead of the usual bank-to-bank tubers, I was looking forward to cool clear water, relatively empty of other boaters. And I got my wish.

Four paddlers joined me that day to launch on the Withlacoochee River in Dunnellon and paddle upstream to the head of the Rainbow River: John Marek, Tom Komar, Richard Wood and Steven Loeven. The roundtrip is a punishing 13 miles with the first 6 ½ miles upstream against a current of about 1 mph; nevertheless, the scenery, clarity and coolness of the water make it a worthwhile trip.

The Rainbow River is one of Florida's first magnitude springs. Nearly 500 million gallons of water flow downstream daily to meet the tannin waters of the Withlacoochee River. The meeting point of the two rivers lies ½ mile above the boat ramp where we launch. The dark and clear waters collide rather than mix, and the temperature differential is obvious when you dunk your hand in.

The river runs north to south from the headspring, which is located in the state park. The left or west bank is all private property – a mix of cabins and pricey year-round homes with grass lawns extending to the water. The right or east bank is a mix of woods, private clubs and state-owned land. Unlike the Weeki Wachee, which is narrow and twisting, the Rainbow flows wide and straight. Initially the riverbed is shallow. As you approach the headsprings you begin to see deep clear holes, which are spring vents and are favored scuba diving sites, especially in the winter.

We made our way upstream at a steady pace, stopping to hydrate or dip ourselves in the cool water. Despite the refreshing water temperature, the Rainbow doesn't have a lot of shade for paddlers, so rest breaks are welcome. As we approached KP Hole, the county park that launches many tubers, the skies started to darken. In less than ½ mile we were in full storm-approach mode with a stiff wind blowing downstream and rumbles of thunder.

By this time, we had reached the state park camping access to the river and took shelter there, huddling first in the water and then on the wooden launch ramp. Torrential rain poured down on us. At first it was a relief from the heat; then it became borderline chilling. This wasn't a quickly departing storm. The radar on my phone showed a line of clouds plodding across the screen. Finally the rain slowed, and the thunder rumbles moved off into the distance. We continued upstream as the sky dripped on us during the last mile to the headspring.

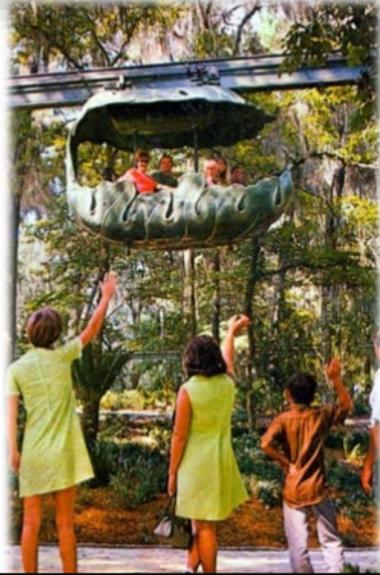


At the headspring we docked our boats at the canoe launch and munched our lunches. Still the rain dripped down on us. Finally, as we were ready to head back downstream, the sun returned. We took advantage of the current push and clear sky to admire the fish, the turtles, and the bright green grasses on the river bottom and to explore some side channels. Many thanks to our paddling photographer Tom Komar for capturing all the moods of the day.

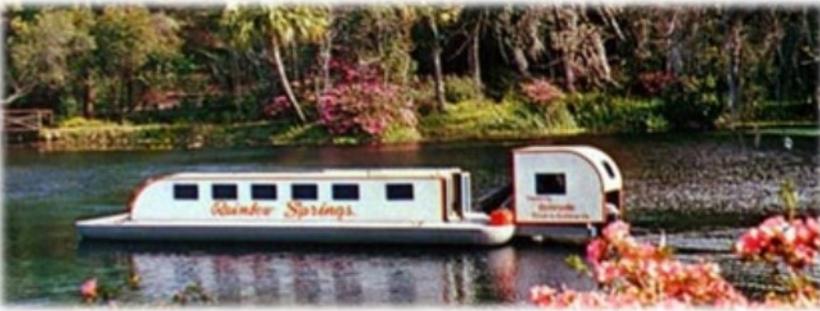




Renamed Rainbow Springs from the less colorful "Blue Springs" in the 30's, Rainbow Springs was a premier tourist attraction. A major draw were boats with seats along glass windows below the water line.



The attraction was upgraded in the 60's, including a unique monorail that traveled through the park.



Rainbow Springs

florida's most beautiful attraction

Rainbow Springs is a place of such incredible beauty that it is the subject of repeated recognition, including a coveted national award for contributing to the beautification of America. The emphasis on conservation and natural beauty is exemplified by the more than 500,000 plants and flowers (50,000 azaleas and 200,000 day lilies alone). Rainbow Springs, where ecology is more than a fashionable pastime... it's a dedicated way of life.

Rainbow Springs accepts most major credit cards. Excellent food at moderate prices is served on the Dining Terrace. Snack and refreshment areas are scattered throughout the park.

Special rates to school and tour groups. For information, write: Group Sales Dept., P. O. Box 98, Dunnellon, Florida 32630.

KEY TO RAINBOW SPRINGS MAP AT LEFT

1 Entrance	20 Viewing Terrace
2 Parking Area	21 Refreshments
3 Passenger Loading	22 Forest Rite Station #2
4 Bus Loading	23 Animal Park
5 Picnic Area	24 Quarter Horse Complex
6 Entrance Walk	25 Balsa Show
7 Gift Shop	26 Refreshments
8 Dining Terrace and Refreshments	27 Bubbling Springs Trail
9 Forest Rite Station #1	28 Underwater Cruise Dock
10 Water Bird Lagoon	29 Underwater Cruise Boat
11 Azalea Walk	30 Refreshments
12 Seminole Falls	31 Rainbow Queen Dock
13 Swamp Garden	32 Rainbow Raft Adventure Dock
14 Rainbow Raft Adventure Dock	33 Landing Village
15 Bird Park	34 Refreshments
16 Rainbow Falls	35 Rainbow Queen Paddleboat
	36 Rainbow Raft Adventure

Rainbow Springs Florida
Open From 9AM to 6PM Daily

The park closed in 1973 and ultimately was bought by the state of Florida in 1990 to be preserved as a natural park.

Enticed by superlative published reviews of the Juniper Springs run in Ocala National Forest, three of us decided to give it go one Wednesday in July. I paddled a 15'9" NDK Pilgrim, Steve Loeven a 14' Prijon Cruiser, and Steve Henkind a whitewater boat. As advertised, the spring-fed river was refreshingly cool and clear, narrow and twisty, and shaded by the old-growth semi-tropical forest of the Juniper Prairie Wilderness. It was shallower than expected (the depth gauge read 0.7 ft at the launch dock) and the current was moderate, with a brief few seconds of whitewater along the route.



I camped the night before, and met my two day trippers at the takeout at Juniper Wayside Park at 8:15am, where we left their cars after transferring boats to my trailer. We drove 10 minutes to the Juniper Springs Recreation Area, where my campsite pass allowed my passengers free access. A long boardwalk led to the launch just below the Juniper headsprings. A clunky cart (provided free) accommodated my skinny boat once I added my foam cradles. The men opted to carry their boats the few hundred feet, while I was still packing mine. A ranger at the launch verified that we harbored no disposable containers. We launched by 9:30am, and spent 3 hours floating the 7.6 miles.

Although floating might not be the right word - steering may be better. This wasn't a lazy ride. Minimal wood removal occurs in wilderness areas, where no chainsaws are allowed. The serpentine river required attentiveness to maintain a course through the deepest channel as the current propelled us toward overhanging trees and submerged logs. Steve Loeven discovered taking pictures with a handheld camera was a risky endeavor. An unplanned trip under some overhanging branches left him swatting off crawling ants. Steve Henkind was scraping bottom in his whitewater boat the first mile or so until the inlet from Fern Hammock Springs added much appreciated inches. He was the only one who could spin his boat around in the river, now and then paddling in reverse for fun. In the upper section, the river was narrower than my boat was long.

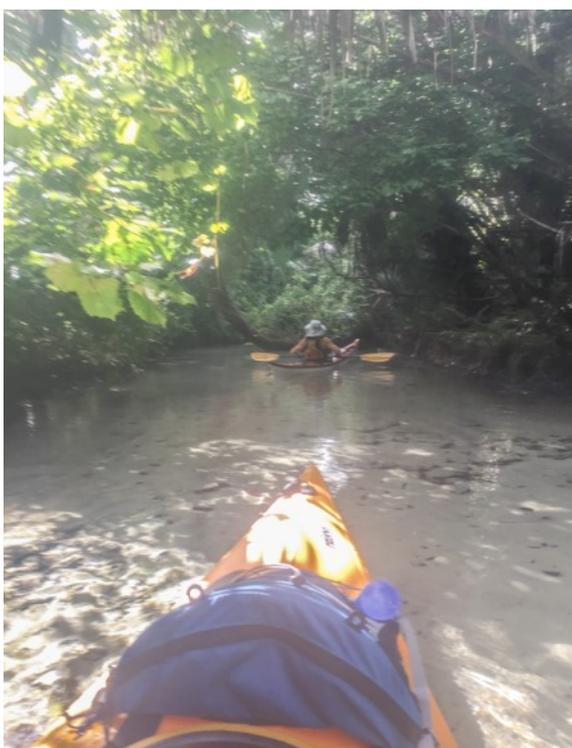


We found no good spot to stop along the run; a small bank midway was taken up by an earlier launch party, so we continued on without a break. We passed a young couple helping an unsteady elderly lady back into the middle seat of the canoe they had tipped out of. The river was so shallow they barely got wet, but sheesh, it looked like an osteoporotic fracture waiting to happen. I lingered until I saw her safely seated. Further on we met a red-faced young woman on a sit-on-top swearing her way down the river as she clonked her head on yet another branch. 99% of the time, however, we were peacefully alone, paddling through a wilderness on the invisible water that cut through the roots of the semitropical jungle. It was a great place to be on a hot summer day.



Just over five miles into the trip I noticed some karst outcroppings, and soon we heard the delightful sound of whitewater. We rode through the short set of riffles in seconds, then paused at the base to practice ferrying across the current. There was a small spot to land a couple boats there.

The river widened, and soon the banks had more marsh plants than trees, while the air carried calls of red-winged blackbirds rather than Carolina wrens. I nervously passed within an inch of the tough-scaled tail of a five foot gator. Indifferent to us, the reptile was submerged except for eyes and nostrils near the river bank, acting like a log while waiting for prey. Less worrisome were the sun-bathing turtles we passed, and schools of fish swimming upstream in the clear water.



Approaching the seventh mile, pilings from an old bridge crossed the creek. The river was deeper here. We soon passed under SR-19 to the take-out on river right at Juniper Wayside. As we were strapping our boats on the car, the concession van and trailer arrived to pick up the group of rental boats and paddlers who had trickled in around us. We hustled out of their way and were on the road again by 1pm. Steve Henkind took off for an appointment in Tampa, while Steve Loeven and I took a dip in the 72°F Juniper Springs pool, which felt like ice on this 90°F day.

I am glad I arrived the day before to explore more of the park. No reservations are needed this time of the year - the campground was nearly empty. Juniper Springs was artfully developed into a swimming pool by the CCC, who encompassed it with thick limestone walls and steps and powered the park with a waterwheel generator on the outflow. The picturesque historic waterwheel still spins, but the generator is long gone from the historic building.

Several boardwalks on the trails were being renovated, but I was still able to walk to pretty Fern Hammock Springs. There I watched an alligator in a pool near a sandy bank raking the bottom with its head, muddying the clear water, perhaps hunting for snails, while bluegills and turtles swam nearby above the boiling sand.



If I ever return, it will be for a two night stay to do more exploring. The Florida Trail passes through the park, offering longer hikes through pine scrub.

The 2.5 hour drive from Pinellas County (one way) was more than I would invest for the short paddle with a shuttle in a day, but if you are in the area, or staying for a day or two, the Juniper Springs run is worth a visit!

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TBSK MEMBER CLASSIFIED ADS

No classifieds submitted this month.

Classified Ads Policy: Any TBSK member may place a classified ad. The ad is free for the first six months. After six months ad expires. May be maintained for \$5 per month. Please notify the editor when item is sold.

Treasurer's Report

June 2017

Beginning BALANCE	\$4691
INCOME	
Dues	\$25
EXPENSES	
Picnic	\$93
Ending Balance	\$4623

Welcome New Members!

Camille Raciopio
Sharon Uhri
Steve Jensen
John Welter

Thanks to Renewing Members!

Beverly Hand
David Olivieri
Julie Arens
Jill Mosteller
Bryan Katz



TBSK "Across The Bay"

Many members who live south of Tampa and St. Petersburg have to drive over an hour to get to many of our events. These members make up about 20% of our membership. So we're starting an "Across The Bay" program to help meet these members needs. The program is intended to:

- Make sure that these members know about fellow TBSK members who live close by (paddle buddies).
- Help ensure that we have sufficient TBSK events which are close to our "Across the Bay" members.

Finding a Paddle Buddy

In order to help our members find paddle buddies, we made some changes to the TBSK website Member Directory (Menu Button at bottom of web site page).

In addition to each member's name and contact information, we have put the city in which each member lives. The intent is to help you find paddle buddies who live close to you. Let us know if you find this helpful.

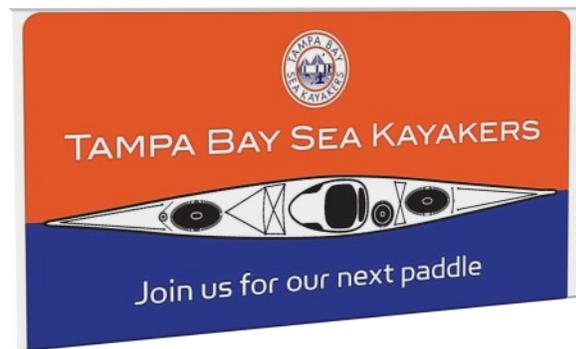


Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers Become A Member

You may join TBSK online using your web browser. Just go to the link <http://www.tbsk.club> and click "Join Us" at the top of the page. You can pay club dues at the end of the process.

To join the Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers by mail, click on "Join Us" at the top of the TBSK web site. Click on the Liability / Waiver Form. Print the form and send it to the address listed at the bottom of this page. The application and waiver form are also available at TBSK meetings held at Bill Jacksons Store on the second Monday of each month at 7:00pm.

We hope to see you at our next TBSK event!



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