

# Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers

April, 2016 - Volume 24, Issue 4

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## Calendar for April, 2016

Sun	Monday	Tues.	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
						Weedon Island, St. Pete 9am Level I
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
						Tarpon Springs 9am Level I
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Club Meeting Bill Jackson's Pinellas Park 7pm					Club Picnic Fort DeSoto 9:30 & 9am Level I, II, III
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
			Anclote Key 9am Level III			Maximo Park, St.Pete 9:30 Level II
24	25	26	27	38	29	30
		Clearwater Beach 9:30am Level II				Caladesi Island 9:30am Level I

Trips & events indicated by this symbol are led by TBSK members.

**Wet Exit Skills Training at the 4/16 Paddle Picnic! Details on next page.**

Join us for the club meeting on April 11th to learn about Manatee Rehabilitation at Lowry Park Zoo's Manatee Hospital

May 9: Sharks!!! Brent Winner, fisheries scientist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission will speak at our meeting

June 13: Busting myths about hurricanes and becoming storm savvy

We are always looking for speakers for our meetings. Send suggestions to Therese Eby ([thereseby@gmail.com](mailto:thereseby@gmail.com).)





# Trip & Event Schedule

## Club Trips



Date	Paddle Difficulty	Description
<b>Sat April 2</b>  <b>9am</b>	Level I  <b>Distance</b> Under 7 miles	<b>Back Side of Weedon Island - St. Pete</b>  Meet Al Tillson at the Pinellas side of Gandy Bridge at 9:00AM to launch at 9:30AM on for a paddle south toward Weedon Island and into some of the mangrove area. We'll be close to shore most but not all of the time. We'll paddle about 2 - 3 hours at a leisurely pace with a stop midway for lunch. Location may change if required by weather conditions.  <b>Contact:</b> Al Tillson <a href="mailto:altillson@yahoo.com">altillson@yahoo.com</a> or 813-832-3961
<b>Sat April 9</b>  <b>9am</b>	Level I  <b>Distance</b> Under 7 miles	<b>Sunset Beach - Tarpon Springs</b>  Meet at 9 a.m. for a local paddle – either north to Anclote River Park or south to Wall Springs Park. A nice paddle at a leisurely pace. Bring lunch or a snack.  <b>Contact:</b> Hank Brooks <a href="mailto:jbrook5@tampabay.rr.com">jbrook5@tampabay.rr.com</a> 727-724-8983
<b>Monday April 11</b> <b>7pm</b>		Speaker Lisa Smith, zookeeper in the Animal Care Department at Lowry Park Zoo will discuss the zoo's program for the rehabilitation and release of rescued Florida manatees. She has worked at the zoo since May 2012 and has assisted with the recovery of more than 80 West Indian manatees. Tampa Zoo's David A. Straz, Jr. Manatee Hospital, is the only non-profit, acute care facility of its kind specifically dedicated to critical care for injured, sick and orphaned wild manatees, and one of just three contracted federally permitted manatee rehabilitation facilities in the state of Florida.  Florida's state marine mammal is a species protected by state and federal law, however, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently recommended the mammal's protection status be lowered from endangered to threatened. The agency reported manatees are no longer in danger of becoming extinct.
<b>Sat April 16</b>  <b>9:30am &amp; 9am</b>	Level I, II/III  <b>Distance:</b> LI: ~5 mi  LII/III: ~11 mi	<b>TBSK Paddle Picnic - Fort DeSoto</b>  WE WILL MEET AND PICNIC NEAR SHELTER NO. 10 <b>NOT AT THE NORTH END OF THE PARKING LOT.</b> The main courses will be provided by the club, and members should bring a side dish to share. All paddlers bring water, hat, sunscreen, and wear pdf at all times. If the weather looks iffy, check our web site ( <a href="http://www.tbsk.club">www.tbsk.club</a> ) to see whether the picnic will be cancelled. (We'll send an email too, but we know sometimes emails can get delayed.) <b>Activities coordinators:</b> Keith & Paula Fowler <a href="mailto:red68tr250@gmail.com">red68tr250@gmail.com</a> . Contact Trip Leader in advance to let them know you're coming.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Skills Training Followed by Level I Paddle:</b> Meet at 9:30am. Continuing skills training focusing on wet exits and how to get back into the kayak after an exit (includes heel hook and stirrup re-entries). This training session is important to all kayakers. If you can't exit a kayak when it goes over the results could be fatal. Also, knowing how to reenter a kayak after a wet exit is vital for every kayaker. <b>This could be the most important training session we hold this year</b> TBSKers, regardless of your skill level, should consider this review. Training: Tom Sobocinski: <a href="mailto:tomsobocinski@msn.com">tomsobocinski@msn.com</a> or Trip Leader: Hank Brooks <a href="mailto:jbrook5@tampabay.rr.com">jbrook5@tampabay.rr.com</a></li> <li>• <b>Level II</b> - Intermediate Paddle - tbd. Meet at 9am</li> <li>• <b>Level III</b> - Advanced Paddle – tbd. Meet at 9am</li> </ul>
<b>Wed April 20</b>  <b>9am</b>	Level III  <b>Distance</b> Over 12 miles on open water	<b>Anclote Key Circumnavigation</b>  Meet at Fred Howard Park (Tarpon Springs) at the end of the causeway at 9:00 for a 9:30 launch to circumnavigate Anclote Key. Bring lunch/snack to eat on the beach and money for parking. We'll plan to return by 1:30 or 2:00. Kayaks must be at least 14 ft and have water-tight bulkheads and spray decks are required. Non-inflatable PDFs must be worn. Please reply so you can be notified of change in plans due to weather on the 20th.  <b>Contact:</b> Phil Sheesley <a href="mailto:philsheesley@hotmail.com">philsheesley@hotmail.com</a> or 813-695-7395



# Trip & Event Schedule Club Trips



Paddle Difficulty		Description
Sat April 23  9:30am	Level II  Distance: Approx 8 miles	<b>Maximo Park to Gulfport</b>  We will meet at 9:30 a.m. for a 10:00 a.m. launch and will paddle to Gulfport for either lunch on the beach or at O'Maddy's, your choice. This paddle is limited to kayaks 16 ft. or longer. Please RSVP, preferably by email. Directions to the launch site will be provided upon request. Bring Money for lunch or bring your own lunch if you prefer to eat on the beach.  <b>Contact:</b> Carl Boettger <a href="mailto:paddle123@verizon.net">paddle123@verizon.net</a> (941) 730-9063 or Terry Proeger <a href="mailto:terryproeger@gmail.com">terryproeger@gmail.com</a> (941) 356-0854
Tue April 26  9:30am	Level II  Distance: Approx 10 miles 2-3 mph	<b>Circumnavigation of Clearwater Beach</b>  Meet at 9:30 am, on the water at 10:00 am across the street from Sand Key Park, on the intracoastal city beach just north of the Clearwater Community Sailing Center (1001 Gulf Blvd). There will be a short portage at our lunch destination. Bring lunch, min 15' kayak with sealed bulkheads or flotation and spray skirt; wear pfd. RSVP via registration link. Low tide 8:04 am 1.13 ft  <b>Contact:</b> Therese Eby <a href="mailto:thereseby@gmail.com">thereseby@gmail.com</a> 425-802-2281
Sat April 30  9:30 am	Level I  Distance About 6 miles	<b>Caladesi Island Mangroves</b>  Meet time 9:30 am, launch 10:00 am from Dunedin Causeway next to kayak rentals. We will paddle to Caladesi marina, through mangroves and back on the channel side. Sit in kayaks must have water tight bulkheads. Sit on kayaks are optional. Bring plenty of water, snacks, sunscreen and bug spray just in case mangroves are challenging. RSVP required. Paddle should be 1.5 leisurely hours each way – about 6 miles. Tide should provide a push out.  <b>Contact:</b> Harry Tobin at <a href="mailto:htobin001@gmail.com">htobin001@gmail.com</a> or <a href="tel:908-313-3250">908-313-3250</a>

## New! Member Requested Trips

### Trip Requests

To add a little “jazz” to TBSK, we thought we would try something new – we call them Trip Requests.

**How Will It Work:** 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](mailto:tbsk@tbsk.club) with "Trip Request" in the subject line. Include the following details:

1. Put in location
2. Destination and total distance
3. Take out location
4. Preferred Date(s) and time
5. Skill level required (see Trip Planning/Paddling guide on TBSK.club)
6. 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.



# Events

## Kayak Camping for TBSK Members

We have noted that many of our TBSK members are interested in camping, especially from a kayak. Those that are interested should be aware of these opportunities:

**Connecting With Fellow TBSK Campers:** . If you are interested in camping, please make sure to let Keith ([red68tr250@gmail.com](mailto:red68tr250@gmail.com)) or Hank ([jbrook5@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:jbrook5@tampabay.rr.com)) know. Contact either of them if you need to get in touch with all of the TBSK members interested in camping .



## Training from Outfitters

<b>Bill Jackson's Pinellas Park</b>	727-576-4169 <a href="mailto:adventure@billjacksons.com">adventure@billjacksons.com</a>	<a href="http://www.billjacksons.com/classes/">http://www.billjacksons.com/classes/</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Kayaking—\$78— (call for dates)</li> </ul>
<b>Economy Tackle &amp; Dolphin Paddlesports Sarasota</b>	941-922-9671 <a href="mailto:kayaktoday@gmail.com">kayaktoday@gmail.com</a>	<a href="http://www.floridakayak.com/kayaks/kayak-classes/">http://www.floridakayak.com/kayaks/kayak-classes/</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro to Kayaking: \$60 (Saturdays, Turtle Beach—Siesta Key)</li> <li>• Intermediate Kayaking—\$75 (Call for date)</li> </ul>
<b>Sweetwater Kayaks St Petersburg</b>	727-570-4844 TheS-hop@SweetwaterKayaks.com	<a href="http://sweetwaterkayaks.wordpress.com/skills/">http://sweetwaterkayaks.wordpress.com/skills/</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Foundation Skills Kayak Class—\$75</a> (Each Saturday)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Directional Control—\$75</a> (Call)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Rolling Clinic</a> (\$50) (Call)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Greenland Kayaking—\$50 to \$85 depending on skills covered</a> (3rd &amp; 4th Saturdays).</li> </ul>



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**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: [http://www.islandparks.org/weather/wildlife\\_updates.htm](http://www.islandparks.org/weather/wildlife_updates.htm)



**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. Hank Brooks is this Region's Director for FPTA. (Our region is primarily Hillsborough, Pinellas, & Manatee)

- **Best Paddle Places:** The FPTA is compiling a top 10 list of places to paddle in each region. We're all looking forward to seeing this.



**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](http://www.floridasee.org/docs/Florida_SEE_Assessor_Position_Description_2015.pdf)



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

**Paddle Florida** <http://www.paddleflorida.org/>:  
Dates for 2015-16 season

- [March 12-18, 2016: Dam to the Bay on the Ochlockonee](#)
- [April 1-3, 2016: Suwannee River Paddling Festival](#)



**Tampa Bay Watch:** <http://www.tampabaywatch.org>

- Oyster Dome Construction often. Check website. Tampa Bay Watch builds oyster domes onsite at the Marine Center in Tierra Verde from September through April. Ten to 20 volunteers are recruited on weekday mornings.



**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/>



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

- **Workdays on the Island are the 3rd Saturday:** 3/19, 4/16, 5/21, 6/18, 7/16, 8/20, 9/17, 10/15, 11/19, 12/17
- **Discover the Island 2016:** 11/12 & 13



**Traditional Qajaqers of the South (TRAQS):** Do you want to learn how to efficiently paddle using a traditional "Skinny Stick"? Always wanted to throw a harpoon or to paddle a skin-on-frame qajaq? TRAQS is your event! March 18-20 at Lake Placid Camp in Central Florida. <http://traditionalqajaqingfest.org/>

**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>

**Florida Paddlers Roundsvous:** December 2-4 2016, Flamingo Campground, Everglades National Park: <http://www.bushpaddlers.org/Rendezvous.html>

**Florida National Parks Challenge:** Can you Paddle 100 miles in a Florida National Park during 2016? Click here for Info: <http://www.nps.gov/bisc/paddlechallenge.htm>





## Speaker's Corner: Nautical Charts

Steven J. Henkind, M.D., Ph.D.

This is an excerpt from the full file just posted on our website: tbsk.club.

### Reading a Chart

1. Date (Want current charts – especially for tricky areas, and at night. Shoals move, islands appear and disappear, buoys are changed, variation changes, etc.)
2. Latitude and Longitude (in minutes/degrees/decimal, or minutes/degrees/seconds?; if are not aware of this could get up to about ½ mile error)
3. Distance (use distance scale or latitude scale)
4. Depth (feet, meters or fathoms?)
5. North/Variation (where is north on the chart?, what is the variation?)
6. Key ATONS and Landmarks
7. Sufficient Coverage

### Preparing a Chart

- The small deck space of a kayak means that you either have to fold the chart, or copy a small section of it. In either case, you will lose information.
- You may need to add this information back, as well as add additional useful information.
- Important Items which may need to add:
  - Lat/Lon
  - Distance Scale
  - Compass Rose
  - Track Lines (course/distance)
  - Key Distances and angles
  - Tides/Currents
  - Objects which may not be on the chart due to scale (e.g., ATONs, hazards, etc.)
  - Weather
  - Etc.
- Laminate - with a machine

### Using a Chart

- The chart gives you a birds eye view. You need to mentally convert this to a water level view.
- Perspective - the angle which you see things from changes appearance
- Distance – enormous impact: may only see the top, go below the horizon entirely, get smaller, lose color discrimination
- Other factors impacting appearance: state of the tides, time of day, visual acuity, alertness level, wishful thinking, etc.
- You may see things that are NOT on the chart
- You may not always see what's on the chart
- Using the wrong chart (e.g., small scale instead of large scale for a specific area) can lead to catastrophic consequences
- Use the correct instruments (e.g., fingers vs. dividers)
- Chart holders +/- ... make darn sure are waterproof if the chart is not-laminated
- Check off (with grease pencil) or, even better, note time as pass objects
- Look at the big picture - e.g., channel doesn't show ships ... but sure suggests they will be there
- Use the chart to anticipate hazards (e.g., headlands, lee shores), and helpers (e.g., safe landing sites, countercurrents).

**Do NOT rely on just electronics**

**Practice correlating chart vs. actual appearance**

### References

How to Read a Nautical Chart (Nigel Calder)

Fundamentals of Kayak Navigation (David Burch)

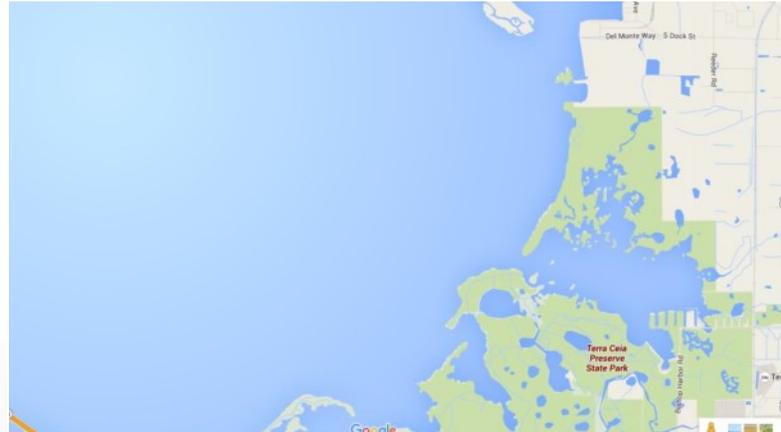
\*\*\*Special thanks to Gil Hildago for assistance with some of the photography\*\*\*.



# Bishop Harbor - Wed, February 17

Story Terry Proeger. Photo by John Carter  
Trip Leaders Carl Boettger and Terry Proeger

More photos from the Feb 17th Bishop Harbor trip that was published in last month's newsletter.





## Myakka River, Gator Country - Saturday, March 5

Story Hank Brooks. Photos by Hank Brooks & Robin Newcomer

The Myakka River, in Sarasota County, is one of the last truly wild, truly Floridian rivers. Civilization, along with the developers, is slowly paving Florida. So visiting one of the rare places where the descendants of dinosaurs live is a special privilege.

Terry Proeger was having one of his annual treks to the Myakka River Preserve, which he usually does early in the year. This avoids both the severe summer heat and the pesky mosquitoes. In early March, the sun was shining and the air was crisp – perfect paddling weather. There were seven of us who showed up for the paddle. Because we were going deep into the preserve, we had to get special permits from the rangers. Besides Terry & Charlene Proeger there was Mike Lawson, Robin Newcomer, Steve Loeven (who brought his newly purchased Current Design GTS), Karl Koenig and myself.

The objective for this paddle was to go to an area of a lake, created by the river, call “Deep Hole”. It was about 4 miles downstream. Many years ago I remember going there and I saw about 40 gators lying on the bank, all piled on top of one another. If you are old enough, you remember those old “Tarzan” movies where he dives into the river and all the crocodiles dive in and swim after him. There were that many gators.

After launching, we had not paddled more than a half mile before we started seeing gators sunning themselves on the banks, trying to get warm. Then about every 50 to 100 yards we say another gator. They ranged in size from the small 3 foot gators to the larger 10 foot gators. The river also started to get more narrow – from about 70 feet wide down to 20 feet wide. This, of course, increased the flow of the river to about 3 mph around the river curves. As we quickly whisked down the river, we realized we would have to “pay the price” to get back to our take-out spot out of the cockpit”.

When we finally reached the lake, about 3 miles downriver, it had taken us only about ½ hour. We were paddling about 3 mph and had a 3 mph current for much of the way – so that made sense. The “Deep Hole” was about a mile away. Upon reaching it we did see a number of gators, but not enough to put in a Tarzan movie. Along with the gators were a number of buzzards and a few herons, standing hazardously close to the gators. I guess they felt that they could move faster than the gators.



Paddling another ¼ mile downriver, we pulled over for a much needed lunch & bathroom break. This gave me the opportunity to tell my favorite Ed Styron gator story. As he told it, when gators are startled, they immediately go to a place they feel safe - into the water. He was paddling close to the river bank, trying to avoid the fast current when he came upon a gator sunning himself. The gator immediately headed to the water right over the front of Ed's boat. Later, when asked if there was any damage to his boat, Ed exclaimed, "Only problem was that I had trouble getting the brown spot out of the cockpit".

I was not looking forward to the paddle back upriver. We started to follow Charlene and saw that she was making a game out of it. The challenge was to paddle close to the inside bank of each river bend, to avoid the strong current as much as possible – at the same time making enough noise to try to avoid coming upon a gator sunning themselves. Once you got the hang of this, paddling upriver was not fast, but it was not strenuous either. Terry & Charlene delivered all paddling souls safe and sound back to the take-out. Another gator river adventure.





# Fort DeSoto to Egmont - March 12

Trip Leader and story: Therese Eby. Photos by Tom Komar

During my drive to Fort Desoto, I had the feeling I had forgotten something. It turned out to be my paddles. Phil Sheesley graciously offered his spare, and we still had a few spares in the well-prepared group. We waited a few minutes for another forgetful participant who had doubled back home for a spray skirt. Lesson learned: always review your checklist before leaving home.

The winds were expected to be a manageable 10kn, SSE changing to S, the air temp in the 70's, waters 68, and no rain. We crossed the Egmont channel on smooth water at the end of the ebb. One participant preferred a slower pace, so we broke into two groups - a pod of three, and a pod of seven, and headed counterclockwise around the island.

We paddled into the breeze on the Gulf side. Swells beat the shoreline in sinusoidal crashes. A white sailboat anchored offshore cradle-rocked in the waves. Long rows of dead palm trees and a few sea-ruined remnants of Fort Dade lined the shrinking western shore.

Lively seabird chatter competed with the surf sounds in the Egmont Key National Wildlife Refuge, where clouds of raucous terns and gulls and a few brown pelicans filled the air above the island scrub. Laughing Gulls occupied the mostly submerged gun battery ruins. A black mass of cormorants stood silent at the southernmost sand spit as our ten boats danced by in the tide rip.

The bay side was quieter, calmer, and the water clear. Gentle wind waves helped us on our trip back to the north tip of the island for a lunch break. We landed on a flat water beach just north of the dock at the lighthouse, skirting a few sport fishing boats and their lines - one hooked a fish as I passed.

The concrete remnants of an old dock served as beach benches with big views of blue green waters, Fort Desoto State Park, the Sunshine Bridge, and the cloud rimmed sky. A hulking black, red and white steel ship powered past into the Gulf. A glistening sheephead fish flopped about at the end of a shore fisherman's line.

While here, half of us checked out the National Historical Park with Phil (who had memorized the interpretive signs) as our guide. The first stop was the 1858 lighthouse, where a gopher tortoise captured our attention as it mowed the front lawn. Then we followed a concrete pathway through an over story of palms

to relics of Fort Dade from the Spanish-American war era. An osprey sat in a nest atop a tall concrete column, reclaiming the remnant of a command tower for its own purpose. The path next led to a ghost town grid of red brick streets. We chose one that headed back to the lighthouse, past a restored concrete guardhouse and another tortoise nibbling weeds near some rusting railway tracks.

It was very warm on the path, so the cooling breeze at the shore felt good. The SE flood and an opposing south wind promised (and delivered) bumpy water, a fun change from the morning crossing. We crossed the channel as a loose herd, ferrying back at an 80 degree angle over moderate chop. Someone on the beach told me he mistook us for a flock of pelicans until we got close. Phil reported he caught a wave - or a wave caught him? - that gave him a kick of adrenaline. Bill McCormick paused on the crossing to release his spray skirt and remove a hotter-than-the-sun cell phone from his pants pocket - a different adrenaline rush. The phone left a red burn on his thigh.

Our sweep, Roy Hoglebe, practiced rolls in the calmer water near the Gulf Pier takeout, and then our trip was over. A trip to Egmont Key and it's dynamic waters and disappearing sands is a reminder of impermanence. Get the skills to go out and enjoy it while you still can - and be sure to bring your paddles!





## Alafia River - South Florida Rapids - March 12

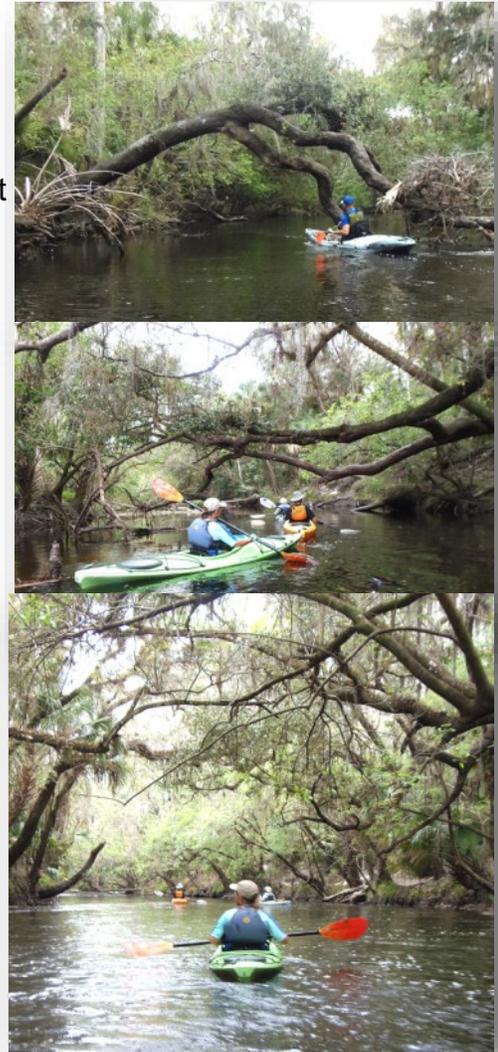
Story by Hank Brooks

The great thing about the Tampa Bay area is the variety of paddling available. Besides open water and the many keys off shore, we have a wide variety of rivers, each with it's special signature.

Now you are probably wondering, "South Florida Rapids" – what's that all about? Because south Florida is only a few feet above sea level, to find true rapids on a river, you must go to northern Florida or Georgia. However, the Alafia River, which flows into Tampa Bay in the Gibsonton area of Hillsborough County, does have it's "riplets". I call them "riplets" because the decent is two to three feet on a very gradual slope. Of course there are limestone rocks in the river to provide some obstacles on which you can get hung up. But it is all very gentle, tame compared to true rapids. Your kayak often scraps the rocks as you "run the rapids, so plastic boats are best. It should be noted that in high water, these "riplets" disappear under water.

There were five of us on this warm Saturday morning in March 2016. The plan was to set up a shuttle and paddle from Alderman Ford Park down to Lithia Springs Park – a paddle of about 7 miles. The character of this part of the Alafia is a small river, ranging in width from 15 feet to 30 feet, which is fairly shallow and has a number of downed trees (none caused us to get out of our boats) as it slowly winds it's way down towards Tampa Bay. One of the characteristics of the upper Alafia are the steep banks of the river. As a result of this, the number of places to take-out are fairly limited. Also, when there is a lot of rain, the steep banks hold the water in the river, resulting in a very swift and sometimes dangerous river.

The Alafia River, besides the "riplets", offers the charm of a South Florida river. The twisting river, the trees hanging over the river, the turtles which line the tree stubs in the river. Come and see for yourself!





## Chassahowitzka River - March 16

By Phil Sheesley Photos by Tom Komar

Mid-way between Weeki Wachee and Homosassa (yes, you are truly in “the real Florida”) the little “Chaz” flows often, and regretfully, ignored by most paddlers. It’s just a short little river – about six miles from source to the Gulf – but it’s largely unspoiled, and its upper portion is crystal clear. That’s why 12 TBSK paddlers elected to explore the upper portion of the river in a club paddle in mid March. We had a good time on our three hour relaxing paddle on the upper river.

The Chaz is best accessed from “Miss Maggie Marina” (\$5 parking/launch fee), oddly enough at the terminus of Miss Maggie Drive (turn left off of US 19 north at its intersection with US 98 and proceed a mile or two). TBSK boats assembled and about to set off from the Marina:



Start upstream (to the right) after leaving the launch to arrive in just under 200 yards at the second magnitude headspring. You paddle directly over the spring and can see the entrance and exit that attracts adventurous divers every year. It’s a short swim for those who know the way, but dangerous for those who don’t (please don’t try it!). Our group then proceeded downstream enjoying the unspoiled river banks and clear water (the whole river flows through the Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge). Our intention had been to begin by going up “the crack” spring located about a quarter mile downstream from the launch, but were advised that fallen logs and obstacles had made the spring less accessible than normal for a group our size (hopefully remedied by the time you read this). Taking the “first right” downstream, we paddled up to the second feeder spring, this one guarded by a great blue heron that was reluctant to give up his position (not this is the only area on this portion of the river with some homes right on the river):

Leaving this spring we paddled on down the main channel, where we encountered a group of manatees, much to the delight of some of our newer members, then on up each of the two main streams feeding the river; about four miles in all). This is an easy paddle for all skill levels. If you are so inclined, you can make this into a more substantial paddle by continuing downstream past a number of “rustic” fishing cabins to a public dock and picnic area. (Caution! if you are getting out of your kayak at the dock, be aware that the bottom is about thigh deep in muck. To avoid losing you shoes, or at least to avoid a real mess, find a way to proceed directly from boat to dock (it’s fairly high, intended for power boats) without stepping on the (apparently solid) shore.)



On the way, you’ll pass the “Opossum Trader”, the quintessential Florida retreat often pictured in past editions of our newsletter:

If you’re in for an all day paddle, you can proceed on to the Gulf, and up the coast to Homosassa, but wouldn’t advise doing this advanced paddle without a guide or experienced kayaker familiar with the route. The water is shallow and the route is not easily followed.

Here’s a link to a map of the upper portion of the river (it’s a good idea to print the map and take it with you if you’re unfamiliar with the river as the map the marina provides is of little navigational value): <https://www.google.com/maps/@28.7166041,-82.60055,15z>





# Chassahowitzka River - March 16

By Phil Sheesley Photos by Gary Bernier & Bryan Katz





# The Everglades Challenge

Mary Mangiopia wasn't able to train for the EC this year. But she did act as support for several folks. This "article" is just a copy of her Facebook Account as she tracked the race.

March 4: (Andy) It's finally time. Packing the car to head to inspection for the Everglades Challenge 2016 that starts tomorrow. Whew! Talk about butterflies! This 300 mile race for kayaks and small sailboats is regarded as the longest, toughest expedition style race in the world. I am honored to be able to participate with some of the best kayakers and sailors in the world. Mary will be posting updates here as I progress.

March 5: Andy Bartley, Kirsten Corcoran, Kurt Fisher and Keith Fowler left together and as of 2pm are safely through Tampa and Sarasota bay. They will be in mostly protected water for the rest of the day. They are headed for CP1 and I am planning to meet them when they come through. The wind was up a bit when they left and they will encounter some unfavorable tides as they travel down the coast but overall it seems like they are doing great! By the way, those kayaks are stinking heavy when they are fully loaded!

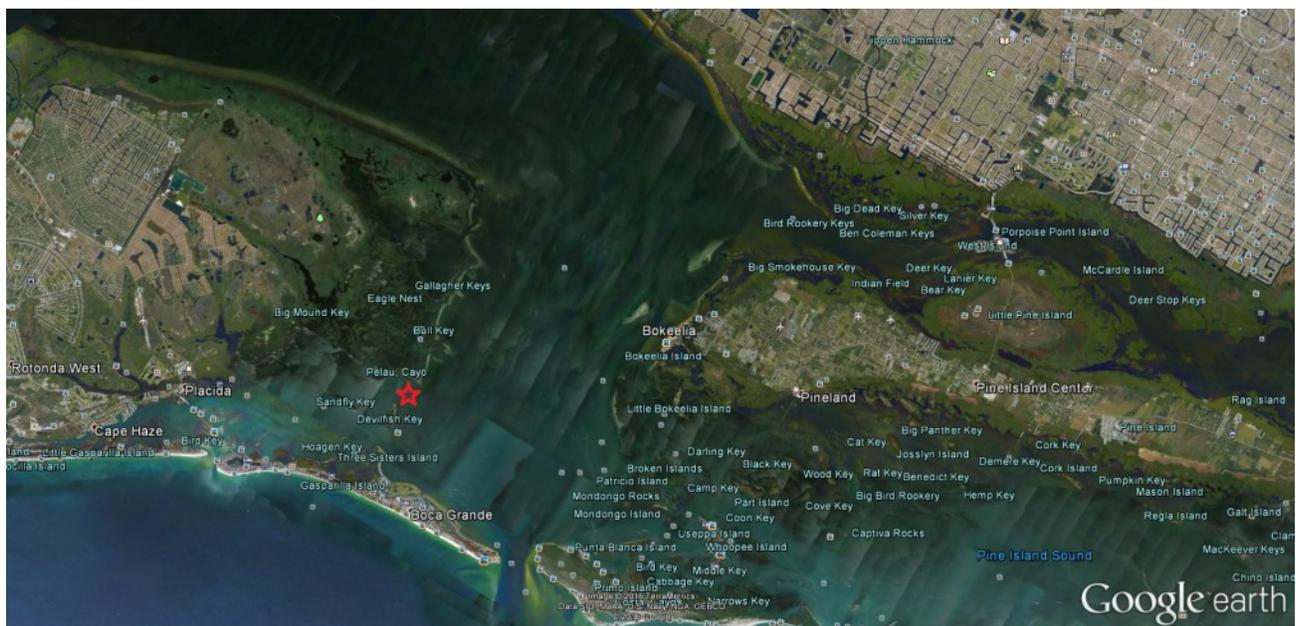
March 5, 8pm: Looks like Andy, Kirsten, Keith, and Kurt are stopped at the North Jetty park in Venice. I'm guessing they are stopping for a quick dinner and changing into night paddling gear. They are doing well and are planning to head to Dog Island tonight!

March 6, 4am: Andy, Kirsten, Keith, Kurt, Pete, Marilyn Ward, John Write and Richard Moran all pulled into CP1 just before 2AM. They were in good spirits even though they had a very challenging day. They have been paddling for 19 hours straight and have covered roughly 60 miles. My core group of paddlers headed out from the checkpoint to camp further down the ICW. They have to cross Boca Grande Pass in the morning. Unfortunately, Beast is out due to a damaged boat. I will take him back to Fort Desoto tomorrow. I got to chat with Chief and the checkpoint crew (Joe Spooner) who were braving the chilly weather to welcome racers. Wishing them all the best and hope they can get a little rest tonight. Thanks to my dad (Joe Mangiopia) for driving out to the checkpoint with me. I've been up for 23 hours so I am headed to bed. Goodnight!

March 6, 1pm: As of about noon, Andy, Keith, Kurt and Kirsten were at Cayo Pelau. I think they are planning to head down the East side of Pine Island Sound, around Bookelia and then South down toward Matlacha and Sanibel which is a smart move with the high winds. Crossing Charlotte Harbor can be a difficult endeavor and the area is well known for its strong currents and abundance of sharks. I know these guys are exhausted from yesterday but this is one tough group. I am thrilled that they are traveling together.



From Left to Right BeastOarMan, One-Eyed-Jake, FishMan, Kata-mount, Dusk2Dawn, SaltySack





## The Everglades Challenge (page 2)

March 6, 11pm: My class 2 crew is stopped on Picnic to camp. I hope they can get some good rest tonight and head out strong tomorrow.

March 7, 8am: Andy: Morning day three. Still alive and kicking.

March 7, 7pm: I was a little surprised to see Andy, Keith, and Kirsten out in the middle of Estero Bay at about 5:15pm. Kurt's SPOT still shows him sitting at Bowditch point park on the North end of Estero Island. Not sure what it is going on but I am hoping this is a technical issue and he is still actually with the group. Looks like the group may be trying to hug the Eastern shore of Estero Bay since the winds are steady out of the East now. I'm guessing they are headed for a twisty back route through Fishtrap Bay and Little Hickory Bay (red arrow) and back out into the Gulf at Wiggins pass. I had actually just put this route in Andy's GPS the night before the launch since we were seeing the forecast for strong winds. Andy texted me this morning and told me they had a very tough crossing over to Estero Island this morning but that they were okay. They have only covered about 14 miles since this morning which has me a little concerned. They still have roughly another 35+ miles to go to reach where we camped in 2014 on the third night of the race, 45+ miles if they are trying to reach the North end of the 10,000 islands. I'll be watching their track all night. UPDATE: Kurt is with the group. The tracker must have just been delayed. As of about 7pm, they are stopped at a boat ramp on the East side of the bay.

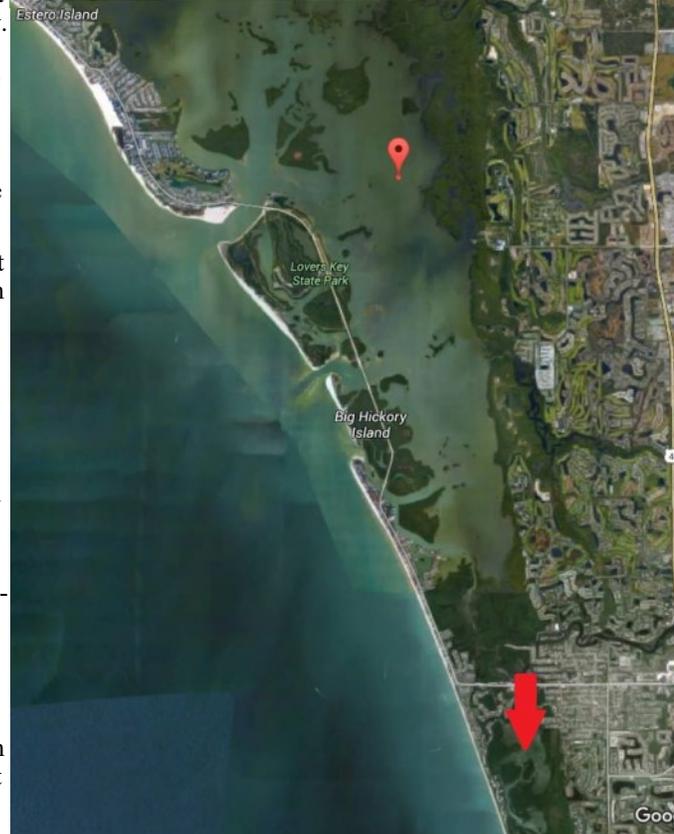
March 7, 11pm: Just spoke with Andy. The class 2 crew is going to take a rest break at Wiggins and then get up early and head South. They have had a rough day with strong winds but they are hanging in there. I hope that some rest and food will recharge them for the trip down to Chokoloskee.

March 8, 9am: The rest break must have done them good because the class 2 crew has left Wiggins and is booking it down the coast towards Gordon Pass. From there, they will probably head behind Goodland. They will have to decide which route they want to take through the 10,000 islands to get permits in Everglades City and hit the checkpoint in Chokoloskee.

March 8, 1pm: Looks like our group is slowing way down or is stopped behind Keewaydin at the North end of Halloway island. Hearing reports of several tribers ending their race due to the high winds. Keeping my fingers crossed for my group. I know they are in fairly protected waters now but the wind can funnel through those back channels making paddling difficult.

March 8, 1pm: Brad Lockhart showed an update and Andy and Keith are the ones down behind Keewaydin but that Kurt and Kirsten have not gone through Gordon pass yet. I am pretty suspicious of the watertribe tracking page since it showed Kurt being several hours behind the group yesterday when he was in fact with them the whole time. I don't have Kurt and Kirsten's personal tracking links so I don't know exactly where they are now. I'd be sort of surprised if they split up at this point but it could happen for any number of reasons. Hoping they are all doing alright. (Kurt and Kirsten safely dropped from the race just before reaching Gordon's Pass. )

March 8, 8pm: Pete was able to catch up with Andy and Keith at Marco Island! They look pretty good! They have a tough slog ahead of them to get around/through the ten thousand islands to the next checkpoint. They have all their rough weather gear. I'm rooting for them! Thanks so much to Pete for checking on them and sending me pics.





## The Everglades Challenge (page 3)

March 9, 10am:

Andy texted me and said that they are at CP2 in Chokoloskee. He and Keith Fowler battled through strong winds all night. They said it was very dark (no starlight, moonlight, or city light) and kind of cloudy and hazy which made navigation difficult. They ended up camping on Jackfish which is where we stayed after the 2015 EC was cancelled. Not the greatest campsite but at least it is dry at high tide. I think Andy forgot to turn his SPOT on since his tracker still shows him there. I don't know if they have their waterway permits yet. A lot of people will be running the waterway since the winds are up so hopefully they can get the permits they need. I hope they get plenty of sleep and some food from the Cuban place in Chokoloskee. Many of you followed Andy and Keith's trip down the 100 mile waterway earlier this year. They did it in a week. For the race, they will need to knock out in about 2 days. The two green check marks in the picture are checkpoints 2 and 3 which pretty much mark the start and finish of the waterway. The red X is the finish in Key Largo.

UPDATE: They aren't actually at the checkpoint yet. They are just getting ready to leave Jackfish. I misunderstood his text. They won't be at CP2 until this afternoon.

March 9, 5pm: They are about 6 miles out from Everglades City and about 9 miles from the checkpoint. They are taking a back route that should keep them out of the worst of the wind but is tricky in terms of navigation. They aren't going to get there in time to get permits tonight so I'm not sure what will happen now.

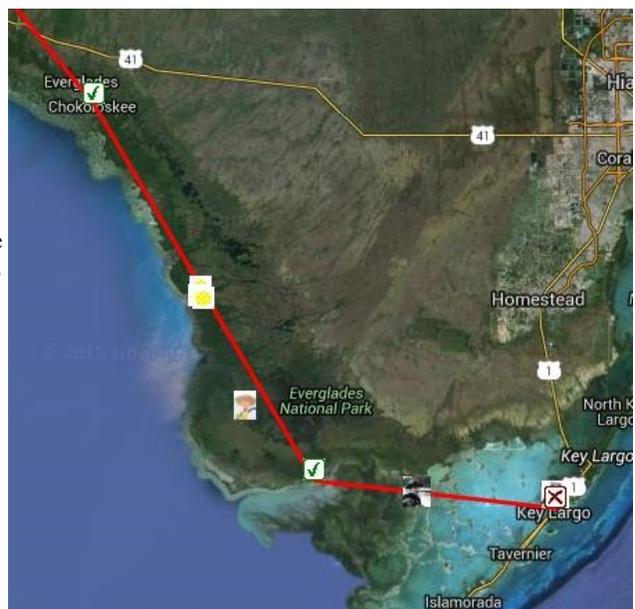
March 9, 10pm: Andy and Keith are safely at the checkpoint in Chokoloskee after battling into non-stop howling winds all day. I talked to Andy on the phone and they are okay and setting up camp for the night. He is going to get in contact with the race manager. I'll post more later tonight.

March 10, 1am: Andy and Keith will not be able to make it to Flamingo before the deadline so they are officially dropping from the race. The Everglades Challenge has lived up to its reputation of being one of the toughest boat races in the world and at this point more than thirty boats have dropped before reaching the finish. I am so proud of all the racers who braved the brutal conditions this year. Andy will be coming home tomorrow and he and I will be in Key Largo this weekend for the awards ceremony. I can't wait to hear all the incredible stories.

Keith: It was a wonderful experience. Had a great time and was glad to meet so many other Watertriber's. Now I want to experience completing the race. I'm already looking forward to EC 2017.

Andy: "This is Keith and I the morning of day four after a 22 hour paddle. We were hoping to make the 15 mile dash into Chokoloskee in four or five hours by going the back way through the 10,000 Islands. Instead, it turned into a 10 hour upwind slog. The stage after the Chokoloskee checkpoint is 100 miles through the Wilderness Waterway. Since we had arrived too late to get permits at the Ranger station, we camped by the road at the checkpoint. In the morning we decided not to continue, a really heart breaking decision, and called Keith's wife, Paula for a ride home. I really have to thank Mary, for posting updates here. It was fantastic to see how many people were following our adventure! Thanks so much for the 'likes' and comments! We did notice! Really, really disappointed that we couldn't finish but it just makes us more determined to finish next year. Now begins the review of lessons learned for next year. Thanks so much!"

**This was a tough year for the challenge. Just 33 boats finished the Everglades Challenge out of the 87 boats that left the launch beach.**



# TBSK Club Info

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## TBSK MEMBER CLASSIFIED ADS

**For sale.** Contact Sharan 727 868 6470.  
Sunrazz@aol.com (exp 5/31)

- **Perception Carolina** 14.5 ft., 24" wide, 39.5x21.5 cockpit 300lb.cap. grad.blue color \$375
- **Necky** 17ft, 25 w cockpit 36x17 Kevlar double rudder pedals, yellow/white \$650

**For Sale:** 17' 2", Valley Pintail kayak, fiberglass, turquoise top white bottom. Skeg works. \$950 negotiable, contact Marilyn at [gor-do148@yahoo.com](mailto:gor-do148@yahoo.com) or 727-612-1713, (exp 6/30)

**For Sale:** Medium Camaro dry top. In good condition. Bought new for \$260. Yours for \$40. Firm. Outgrew it. May fit small frame depending on what you wear under it.  
Jennis4@tampabay.rr.com. (exp 7/31)

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## Treasurer's Report

<b>1/31 BALANCE</b>	\$5694
<b>INCOME</b>	
Memberships Dues	\$486
Newsletter Ads	\$150
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Insurance	\$595
Picnics, Holiday Party	\$64
Postage & supplies	\$45
Programs	\$150
Website	\$170
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$5306</b>

## Welcome, New Members!

Andre Bergeron and Family  
Michael Lawson  
Sue MacDonald  
Bill McCormick  
Covin Nguyen Family  
Omar Rodriguez  
Deb Schroeder  
Jackie Simpson

## Thanks, Renewing Members!

Richard Arenella  
Gerald Allen  
Gary Bernier  
Bill Biles  
Denise Bissonnette  
Carl Boettger  
Hank Brooks  
Eileen Burns  
John Carter  
Robert Chierico  
Therese Eby  
Keith Fowler

Linda Karl  
Kevin Kenney  
Linda Koenig & Family  
Mary Mangiapia  
John Marek  
Robert Minthorn  
Kathleen Nagel  
Brian Page  
Terry and Charlene Proeger  
Phil Sheelsley  
Tom Sobocinski  
Leslie Taylor  
Al Tillson  
Jean Totz



[www.facebook.com/TampaBaySeaKayakers](http://www.facebook.com/TampaBaySeaKayakers)





## **Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers Become A Member**

You may join TBSK online using your web browser. Just go to the link <http://www.clubkayak.com/tbsk> and click Register at the top of the page. Pay club dues at the end of the registration process.

To join the Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers by mail; use the TBSK brochure found at kayak shops in the Tampa Bay area, contact the membership coordinator (contact information is on the preceding page), or write to the address below and request a membership application and waiver of liability form.  
Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers, P.O. Box 8682, Seminole, FL 33775

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.



**Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers  
P.O. Box 8682  
Seminole FL 33775-8682**