

Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers

October 2019 - Volume 27, Issue 10

www.tbsk.club

www.facebook.com/TampaBaySeaKayakers



Wildlife Barb Uzenoff



Landscape Luciana Calascione

Winners of the Photo Contest
For the Month of
August 2019
CONGRATULATIONS!

Monthly Speaker Hank Brooks

Kayaking In British Columbia

Spectacular British Columbia pictures from a recent kayak trip to Blackfish Sound - located in the Johnstone Strait - are the backbone of this "Bucket List" presentation by Hank Brooks at the October 14 TBSK meeting at Bill Jacksons. Besides the wonderful scenery, and great paddling we had wildlife experiences with orcas, whales, bears, sea lions and dolphins.





TAMPABAY SEA KAYAKERS CALENDAR OF EVENTS For October 2019



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	Oct 1	2	3	4	5 9:00 AM Withlacoochee River - Level II
6	7	8	9 9:00 AM Anclote River - Level 0	10	11	12 9:00 AM Treasure Island circumnavigation - Level II+
13	14 7:00 PM TBSK Monthly Meeting - Non- Members Invited	15 9:30 AM Circumnavigate Shell Key - Level II	16	17	18	19 8:30 AM TBSK Picnic - Philippe Park
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	Nov 1	2

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

[Click here to go to Event Page on tbsk.club](https://tbsk.club)

A "Bucket List" Trip

By Hank Brooks with Photos From Many People



For a number of years I had been dreaming about paddling in British Columbia, Canada with the whales, orcas, sea lions and many other unique Northwest animals. I would watch You Tube videos and just dream. Early in 2019 I talked to my paddle buddy, Tom McLaulin, and asked him if he was interested in paddle Northwest Canada. He said, "I'm in! Let's go!" So that was the start of or adventure.



Preparation for the trip required some planning, some cash (about \$3K per person) and required me to get in better paddling shape. I researched the possible kayak outfitters on line and settled on "The Spirit of the West".

Their paddle season last from June thru September ~ with July and August being the prime months because they are the warmest. We settled on a date in late August. We wanted to stay at one base camp and paddle out of it each day. They offered many different kayak trip options, but since I am not a great camper, we chose the one called "Glamping". It is so called because you get a tent on a wood platform, with a bed with linens and a comforter, electricity in the tent 24/7 days provided via solar power and batteries, a gourmet chef with wine served with appetizers and dinner, hot tub, hot showers, hot water bottle at bed time. It cost more, but it was worth it.



The trip out to British Columbia took about twelve hours and we went via three planes, a taxi, a ferry boat and finally a water taxi to get us to our camp. The night before we were to take our water taxi to our base camp, we met our fellow paddling companions ~ seven Canadians, all who had some kayaking experience. Natasha, from Germany and our only kayak newbie, joined us on the water taxi. I was pleased that most all had kayaking experience because I dreaded the thought of paddling at 1.5 mph because that was the speed of the slowest paddler.



The trip to our base camp took about 2.5 hours via water taxi. The camp was set up so that there were two people per tent ~ I was lucky and got a tent to myself because of a late cancellation. The tents were set into the side of a hill with a lot of privacy between tents. The path between tents was hilly, rocky and full of twists and turns ~ fit for a hobbit, but challenging for a man 77 years old. So I wisely found a staff to help me navigate the trails.

Of course they gave me the nickname "Gandor". All camp paths led to the mess hall and our lounge, close to the mess hall. The lounge was located on a bluff which overlooked Blackfish Sound. In the evening we would sit in conversation and often hear the whales blowing water when they came up for air. Sometimes we heard them singing. Our gourmet chef prepared breakfast, appetizers and dinner since we often had lunch during break on a paddle.

Destinations Traveled



The weather for our four days was a “home run” as one of the locals told us. No rain, little wind, with sunshine every day. The evenings were a cool 45 degrees (good sleeping weather) with mornings about 55 degrees warming to 60 degrees at launch time (9:30 a.m.) and warming to the high 60’s depending on the amount of sunshine we got. Most of the time I started with a long sleeve shirt and light windbreaker and took off the windbreaker off at break time. PFD’s and life jacket were mandatory. So it was like paddling in air conditioning most of the time – almost no humidity. Cool, really cool!!!

First Day Paddle – Two Hour “Test” Paddle

Upon our arrival at camp we first had a camp tour, followed by a late lunch and then our first paddle together. This was all of our opportunity to try out the boats and view each other’s paddling skills. On this trip I went in the tandem with Natasha, our sole newbie, who had never been in a kayak. After the guides helped us into our kayak, my first job was to get Natasha, or “Nat” as her friends call her, relaxed. We talked about keeping her weight centered over the boat and I had her move her hips so that she would get used to the boat swaying a bit. We were blessed with calm waters. After a few simple forward stroke instructions, we were off and “Nat” was doing fine.



The group paddled southward among a small group of beautiful, rocky islands, with the boat occasionally being pushed one way or another by the strong tides. We viewed a whale about 200 meters away. The air was crisp and the sky was clear – what a great day to be alive and on the water.

Our Second Day Paddle – Around Swanson Island

Our first full day of paddling and we all had our breakfast and were at the boat launch about half hour before requested – ready to go. The plan was to paddle around the island on which we were camped – about 8.5 mile paddle. The pace was casual, about 2.5 mph, which allowed time to take pictures and enjoy the spectacular scenery. We later learned that the usually pace was closer to 1.5 mph because of the newbies in each group.



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This area was made up of countless numbers of small islands, each with sheer granite shoreline and topped with evergreens and pines. The air was crisp and the paddling was easy since it seemed like air conditioning in August to this Florida boy. Alongside one of the islands we passed a small black bear on shore – we were looking for his mama. As we paddled around the island we came across a fish farm. This simply looks like several houses on pontoons with many rings of nets around the houses. The whole affair is tucked close to an island to give it good harbor when the winds blow.



They feed the fish with food pellets, the fish grow like crazy and are harvested. Unfortunately, the concentration of fish in one place does produce a lot of waste, which is not good for the environment. The local native tribes have asked them to stop the fish farms – the matter is in the courts.



After paddling a more than half way around the island, we pulled into a cove for a rest and lunch stop. While the paddlers stretched and took a nature break, our guides pulled out good goodies from the hatches of the tandem and prepared our buffet lunch of bread, meat, cheeses, orange slices and cookies. Mmmmm good!

Our Third Day Paddle & Whale Watching Power Boat Morning Paddle:

After breakfast, we were on the water by 9:30 a.m. for a local paddle of about 7 miles. We headed south staying between the many small islands in the area. Our guide would occasionally stop the group to explain the local plants and animals. For those of us not used to this area, the scenery was spectacular – the many small islands created from solid rock, each with evergreen trees growing on them. Most had shores of sheer cliffs with a few landing area here and there. We spotted some bald eagles and often could hear and see whales in the sound.



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The rules are that you cannot get closer than 200 yards when watching the whales. If that is so, the pictures which are sometimes taken by kayakers which are right next to whales or orcas is a rare event where the animals somehow decide to travel close to the kayakers – not the norm. As a result of this, I was pleased that we were on a whale watching power boat where the prime objective was to look for sea creatures. The short wave radio was very active as the many whale watching boats communicated with



each other on what which animals they saw and the direction they were traveling. We were able to come with reasonable distance of some hump back whales and then a family of orcas. The pod of orcas were gracefully and slowing moving up one side of Blackfish Sound. After watching the orchas for about 45 minutes we motored past a large rock with about 20

very large sea lions lounging on it. Our captain said they looked well fed and very satisfied soaking up the sun. We later viewed one of these sea lions who had caught an octopus and was having it for dinner. Not a pretty sight, but that's their world in Blackfish Sound.

We had the option to paddle early on the morning of the fourth day, but opted to sleep in before taking the water taxi back to civilization. At breakfast I learned that a grizzly bear and her two cubs had wandered thru our camp early in the morning when I was sleeping. That was probably best for me.

Assessment of the Trip:

Both Tom and I agreed that the trip exceeded our expectations. However, we also agreed that when you take a trip like this you “roll the dice” on several unknown factors:

- *The weather – we had no rain, light wind and some sunshine*
- *Your paddling companions – of our ten companions, nine had kayaking experience with only one newbie*
- *The animals cooperation – you are only allowed to get within 200 yards of the animals UNLESS they come to you.*

Other factors were much in our favor:

- *The kayak equipment was good and no one capsized*
- *The cook and support personnel with excellent*
- *All of our flights and travel were on time*

We made some good friends and great memories!!!



Weedon Island Mangrove Trail Update

By Al Tillson Photos by Barb Uzenoff



After a delay of slightly more than a year, the trail markers for the mangrove trail at Weedon Island Preserve have been completely restored. The trail was closed last year when the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission declared that the existing signs were not in compliance with Florida statutory requirements and that a required permit had



not been issued for the trail. According to the FWC, the Coast Guard's guide to navigation, the Florida Administrative Code (Ch68D), and Florida Statute 327 mandated that such signs must be 3 feet square, reflective white in color with an international orange border, black block lettering, and a



crossed paddle icon. Pinellas County Parks and others pointed out that such requirements would be impractical: a 3 by 3 foot sign would completely block the trail in many places. After application from the Pinellas parks department and review by the FWC, the Army Corps of Engineers, and others, the Preserve was authorized to re-



install signs that do not follow the initially stated legal requirements. The new signs are in essentially the same locations as the earlier ones and follow the same numbering scheme. This should make the trail much more enjoyable for both beginning and experienced paddlers.





Dodging Showers At Simmons Park

By Hank Brooks with Photos By Bill Biles



When the weatherman said there was 35% chance of rain, this meant there was a 65% chance that we would not get rained upon. So for this Saturday picnic at Simmons Park, we went for it. We could often see small shower cells in the distance, but none came close, until we sat down to eat.



Simmons Park, located close to Ruskin, has become one of my favorite places to have a TBSK picnic because it offers something for all level of paddlers. They have protected mangrove trails for those that do not like

open water and easy access to the Gulf for those who do. There were eight TBSKers who showed up for the picnic. With half the paddlers being trip leaders, we quickly determined that we could paddle wherever we wanted. Before we launched, Barb Uzenoff declared that the best way to start a paddle on a warm, muggy day was to get wet. I followed her lead and



got completely wet ~ which was extremely satisfying and cooling.



Hank, Barb, Bill Biles and Steven Loeven paddled the inside mangrove trails while Al Tillson, Bob Morris, Tom Sobocinski and Jennifer Call decided to paddle the Gulf. It was great to get on the water and feel the

boat respond to your paddle strokes. After about an hour and a half, Bill and I took out early to set up the food, since Clay was still in Germany on vacation. My wife had purchased croissants and ham, turkey



and salami with lots of fixings so we could make our own sandwiches. No sooner had we sat down to eat than we were hit by a tremendous shower.

However, one of the great things about Florida is that if you don't like the weather, just wait fifteen minutes. And sure enough, after raining extremely hard for fifteen minutes, the sky cleared and the sun came back out.





I Once Was Lost, Then I Was Found

By Hank Brooks



When you go paddling with Hank, you should be prepared to get lost at least once. That we might get lost was my promise to Jean Tutz before we launched at Picnic Island to explore the local mangrove trails. In this case I was able to keep my promise.

Most of us love mangrove trails because of their uniqueness and all the twists and turns thru the maze of tunnels. I have been thru the Weedon Island mangroves tunnels many times and know them fairly well. The Picnic Island trails were different because, although I had been there before, we had to reverse course because we got lost in the unmarked maze. These trails are located between Picnic Island Park and the McDill Air Force Base. One of the unique things is that the entrance and exit to the trails is only about 50 yards apart.

On this trip we were hampered because we did not have Carl "The Mangrove Fox" Boettger with us. I fondly gave Carl this nickname because of his unique ability to sniff out the correct path thru a maze of mangroves.

The last time we were on this trail, before we turned around, Carl thought he had found a way thru, but as Trip Leader in charge of a bunch of Level 0 paddlers, I elected the safer route of reversing course. This time the challenge was to find our way thru without the "Mangrove Fox".



As Jean and I arrived early Saturday morning, the gnats were there to greet us and "aid" in our preparation for the trip. The mangrove trail entrance is only about a half mile from the kayak launch on Picnic Island. Relying on my poor memory, we found the entrance to the trail as I remember it. As we entered the trail we spied a beautiful Roseate Spoonbill which lit in a tree right above us. I quickly grabbed my camera and pointed it toward the bird. However, it was playing coy and hid among the leaves and branches at the top of the tree. Seeing my plight, Jean started making cooing bird noises as she waved her arms in a floating motion with the intent of getting the bird to open his wings so that I could get a great picture of the bird. The bird was having none of this and promptly flew away ~ so much for nature photography. I should have gotten a picture of Jean doing her bird imitation. *~Continued next page~*



Once Was Lost, Then I Was Found

~Continued~



As we continued thru the tunnel, some of the trees and twists and turns were somewhat familiar, so I felt like we were on the correct path. We then came to some openings which also looked familiar and we were able to negotiate thru these. When we reached my last remembered point on the trail, I asked myself, "OK which way now?". We tried veering off to the left – I remembered the big white fuel tanks. But then I started to recall that this was not the correct way. So

we veered to the right and also ran into a dead end. Just as I had promised Jean, "We were lost".

Those who have paddled with me before are probably saying, "What, Hank lost again? Not a surprise!" I considered reversing course again, but that would be admitting defeat. So we tried the middle path. It didn't look too promising at first, but then we were out of options – other than reversing course. This pathway twisted and turned in countless ways. At least three times I thought that this path was going to be a dead end – but then it would open up again and we were off paddling.

This went on for at least fifteen minutes. The trail would look like a dead end. Wait a minute, here is another path. And would you believe it we found our way thru – so now "We were found" as we broke into the open in full view of Tampa Bay. And just 50 yards from where we entered



this tunnel maze. A piece of cake!! I knew we could do it, even without the "Mangrove Fox".



The small "Dead Tree" beach was close by, just as I remembered it, and it called to us to take a break, stretch our legs and have bite to eat. A nice adventure on a Saturday morning.



Why We Like to Paddle on Wednesday?

By Phil Sheesely w/Pictures by Tom Komar and Emil Assily



We had a couple very different paddles last month. Both were Level II trips, one in the Gulf to “North Anclote Key” and the other up to the beautiful Chassahowitzka river (hereinafter the “Chaz” to reduce fatigue to my fingers typing this short story).

The small (very small, maybe 50 by 100 yards at high tide) sandbar about a mile north of Anclote Key is known in some quarters as North Anclote Key. On a quiet, calm, day it’s very much like being in the Carribean – with sparkling clear waters and lots of sea life on the Eastern side. On a previous visit the sandbar was deserted and we enjoyed seeing a leopard ray, a small hammerhead, and sea turtle there. So on this trip I was sure to bring along snorkeling gear to better enjoy our time on the beach. No such luck on Saturday.

Note the boats – over 40 of them! Our TBSK group was lucky to be able to navigate our way between the anchored hoards to find a landing spot. There we were entertained by various competing stereo systems providing conflicting versions of country western hits. What fun.



Anyway, the weather was nice and we enjoyed the roughly 3 miles from Anclote Gulf Park over to the sandbar, had some time to watch “the show” and then head back across St Joseph Sound to the Park. Nice group, enjoyable paddle, crowded sandbar.



Here’s a shot of our managing to find an exit route back out to the Gulf.



Why We Like to Paddle on Wednesday?

~Continued~



What a difference on our Wednesday paddle from Miss Maggie's Campground to explore the Chaz.

Here's our TBSK group getting started on the upper river just outside Seven Sister's Spring. Water was high, day was mild and sunny, and we largely had the river to ourselves.



This river is still pristine and is a good place for any level of paddler. We made this trip a Level II because of our distance of a little over six miles since we wanted to paddle downstream to Potter's Creek and then up the creek as far as it goes. There were paddlers in our group who paddle the river regularly and others who were first timers (one who declared "I've just got a new favorite river"). We saw the "usual" wildlife – a couple alligators, great blue herons, little blue herons and white herons, yellow crested night herons, turtles, etc. and enjoyed watching a family of river otters.



Of course we made our way up Baird Creek to "The Crack" to enjoy lunch there – and again we had that beautiful spring to ourselves. All in all another enjoyable day in the real Florida. A tip though (for any of you who don't know already – like so many of our clear, spring rivers, don't do it on a weekend if you value solitude.



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.



2 whitewater boats 1) Pyranha Mountain Bat 2) Wavesport "Z" both good condition \$250 EACH.
2 sea kayaks 1) Necky 17"3" glass , feathercraft rudder, double foot pegs. \$675 2) Perception Vizcaya plastic 16', new soft inner covers, bungee ex. large cockpit.
\$600
All good condition.

Contact Sharan Nickels sunrazz@aol.com





ALL PHOTO SUBMISSIONS
FOR THE MONTHLY PHOTO CONTEST
MUST BE SUBMITTED BY THE
LAST DAY OF THE MONTH
SEND SUBMISSIONS TO
tbskphoto@gmail.com





Events

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 Andy Bartley email: sailonbear@hotmail.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



News & Events Around the State

(updated info in red)

Click on items logo to go to there general website



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: Season runs from May through October. 43 nests were spotted last season.
- Visit caladesidiscoverycenter.com to learn about the forthcoming interpretive facility.



CALADESI DISCOVERY CENTER

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>

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)

<http://www.floridapaddlingtrails.com>



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 Paddle Florida is a non-profit corporation that promotes water conservation, wildlife preservation, prings restoration, and waterways protection via fun and educational multi-day paddling trips in Florida's most spectacular river and coastal environments. For trip details and registration, visit <http://www.paddleflorida.org/> To register for trips: <http://www.paddleflorida.org/services/preview-and-register-for-trips-5165.html>



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



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/>)

- **Regular Work Day Oct.19, 2019** [more info](#)



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>



Visit our Sponsors for the Best Kayaking Equipment and Advice!

How did new participants find out about the club?

Since early April we have been tracking how new members found out about TBSK. The results so far are:

- Outfitters 3
- Internet Search 3
- A Friend 3
- Other 3
- Facebook 3
- Brochures 3

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Photo by Bill Biles

Info for TBSK.club

Board Members

.....

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Bill Biles 727 204 5511
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Welcome New Members!

- ◆ *Joyce Alspach*
- ◆ *Mark Suiters*
- ◆ *Cathy Kolinski*
- ◆ *Marsia Didregorio*

Members that renewed this month:

- ◆ *Sharan Nickles*
- ◆ *Kenneth Hiller*
- ◆ *Tom Komar*
- ◆ *Bryan Katz*
- ◆ *Jill Mosteller*
- ◆ *David Monahan*

Links to Info on Website

Determining your Skills Level
[Skill Assessment chart](#)

Paddle Signals To Use on a Trip
[Paddle Signals](#)

[Safety Tips](#)

[Hypothermia and Heat Stress](#)

Treasurer's Report

August 2018

Beginning BALANCE	\$4,453
INCOME	
Dues	\$140
EXPENSES	
AffiniPay Trans.	\$9
June & July Picnic	\$104
Ending Balance	\$4480

Water Quality Information

Find out if it is safe to paddle in a area

Florida Healthy Beaches Program ~ Florida Department of Health; [Website Here](#)

City of St. Petersburg; [Water Quality web-site](#)

Tampa Bay Waterkeeper – [Swim Guide](#);

FWC Red Tide Current Status [Red Tide Guide](#)



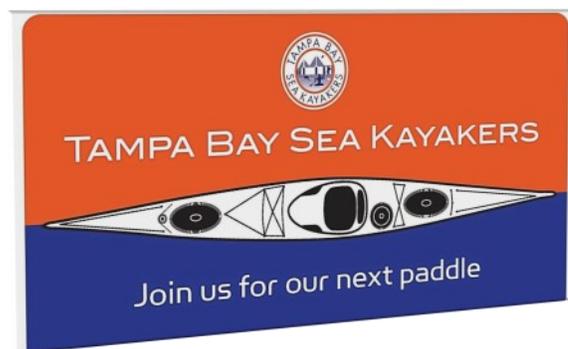


Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers Become A Member

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!



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



Photo by Cynthia McGreg-