

Habitats along the South Paddling Trail

The South Paddling Trail offers access to the aquatic habitats that dominate Weedon Island Preserve.

Three species of mangroves common to Florida can be found along this trail. The trees growing along the shore are red mangroves, which are often referred to as walking



trees because their prop roots give the appearance of walking. Growing behind them, on slightly higher ground, are black mangroves, which are identifiable by their numerous finger-like projections called pneumatophores. Pneumatophores protrude from

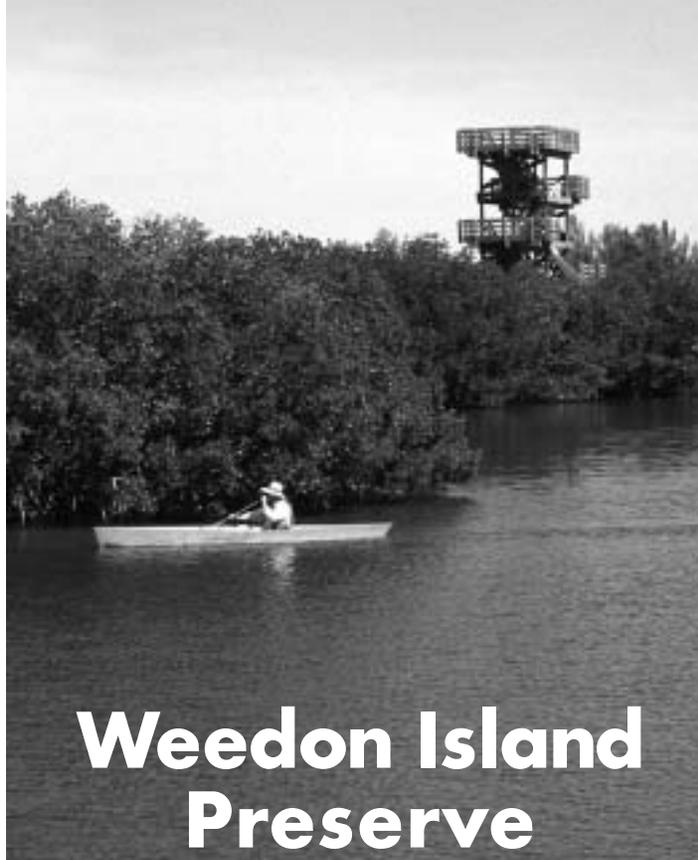
the soil and help bring oxygen to the tree's roots. A closer look into dense stands of mangroves will reveal the third type of mangrove, the white mangrove. Its light yellow-green leaves are oval with two small glands at the base of the leaf blade.

Portions of the paddling trail will take you into more open areas away from the mangroves. These shallow waters around Weedon Island Preserve contain lush seagrass beds where schools of fish, crabs and shrimp thrive. Mudflats, areas that are often exposed by tides and are devoid of vegetation, contain marine benthic organisms within the mud substrate.

The mangrove swamps, seagrass beds, and mudflats provide valuable habitats for many kinds of animals including oysters, stingrays and even small sharks. These important habitats also provide roosting and feeding areas for a variety of wading and shorebirds including the wood stork, a species listed as endangered in the State of Florida. Other State-listed species that rely on the Preserve include the bald eagle (threatened) and the West Indian Manatee (endangered).

Hours

Weedon Island Preserve is open seven days a week from dawn to dusk. Paddlers should return to the launch site and parking area before dusk. No overnight parking is allowed. The Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.



Weedon Island Preserve

For additional information, please contact us:

General Information: (727) 453-6500

Guided Outing Reservations: (727) 453-6506

Weedon Island Preserve
Cultural and Natural History Center
1800 Weedon Drive NE
St. Petersburg, FL 33702



www.pinellascounty.org/environment

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WEEDON ISLAND PRESERVE

South Paddling Trail



Situated in Old Tampa Bay, Weedon Island Preserve is approximately 3,100 acres of natural habitats including mangrove swamps, intertidal flats and pine flatwood uplands. The South Paddling Trail is just one of two paddling trails that will take you through lush mangroves and over open shallow waters and productive seagrass beds. Come experience "A Place To Remember."



South Paddling Trail

- The parking area and launch site for the South Paddling Trail are located on the end of Weedon Drive NE, about 1.5 miles from the Preserve's entrance.
- The South Paddling Trail is approximately 4 miles long and takes about 3 hours to complete.
- Numbered markers are strategically located along the trail to help paddlers orient themselves.
- Please check a tide chart before venturing out. This trail is best paddled with a mid to high tide.
- Fishing is allowed - State and Federal fishing regulations apply.
- Please properly dispose of or take your trash with you.

Paddling Safety Tips...

- Always use an approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD).
- Bring plenty of water, even on cool days.
- Protect yourself from the sun using sunscreen and a hat, even on overcast days.
- Insects go with the territory! Insect repellent and lightweight long sleeved shirts help reduce their biting opportunities.
- Consult your compass often.

About the Preserve...

Weedon Island Preserve is managed by Pinellas County Department of Environmental Management's Environmental Lands Division. The Preserve, and its various public recreation opportunities, is possible through the continued support of the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners and the citizens of Pinellas County.

Other public use opportunities...

While you are here, please visit the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center, an education facility located in the heart of the Preserve. Also, enjoy our fishing pier, elevated boardwalk with an observation tower and various hiking trails. Public restrooms are located at both the Center and pier.

