

Cedar Key Airport Paddle

Information:

The waters just off the end of the Cedar Key Airport runway offer anglers an excellent opportunity for a successful day of fishing. At this location, paddlers must be willing to move frequently from one spot to the next because the fish are constantly moving around the numerous oyster bars in this area and therefore, anglers may need to check a few spots before locating the fish.

Top Baits:

Mirro Lure Lil Jon, Golden Bream color
Heddon Super Spook
Live / fresh dead Shrimp
Live / cut mullet
DOA C.A.L. 3' Shad Tail, Alewife color
Rapala X-Rap SubWalk, Silver color
Shrimp Imitations such as the Savage Shrimp

Length:

About 2.5 miles

Resources:

Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge
16450 NW 31st Place
Chiefland, FL 32626
Phone: (352) 493 – 0238

Weather, Tides, Wind, Lunar:

https://www.windfinder.com/forecast/cedar_key
<http://www.tides4fishing.com/us/florida-gulf-coast/cedar-key>

Warnings:

Storms can push in quickly from the Gulf, paddlers should maintain a keen awareness of the weather around them and utilize weather tracking software such as MyRadar and Windfinder to properly plan their outing on the water. This area is riddled with oyster reefs and closed toe shoes are a must for protection against the oyster covered bottom.

Information:

Follow Airport Road in from Cedar Key and take the road all the way to the cul-de-sac at the southwest end of the airport runway. From here, you can drag your kayak to the water and then park your vehicle (Do not park it in the cul-de-sac)! This paddle should take approximately 1.5 hours and additional time should be allocated for fishing purposes. Changing tides, wind and weather may add additional time to the paddle. This paddle is best completed on a rising tide and arriving at the launch spot 3 hours before high tide will allow anglers ample time for fishing. This paddle should not be attempted in winds greater than 18 MPH. Winds out of the east or west are ideal and this paddle is best with winds less than 10 MPH.

Peak Fishing Times and Areas:

For anglers who wish to catch their own bait, a good place to start the hunt for bait is on the Airport Bridge, which lies along Airport Road and is situated before the launch point. The best time to catch bait at this location is during a period of high or rising water. After launching from the beach off the southwest end of the runway, begin paddling north towards the oyster bars.

Spot 1: This spot is best to fish on a rising tide. A good indicator that you will find gamefish here is if you see baitfish being disturbed near the surface. Try casting top water plugs, plastic baits below popping corks or cut bait into the horseshoe area where the gamefish are likely to be congregating.

Spot 2: This location lies along the edge of a channel leading from the backcountry out into the larger bay area. This is a great location to soak cut bait on the bottom or try throwing a reaction bait here such as a Rapala Slash bait. Fish will be using this channel as a transportation corridor so expect to find fish in this area whenever the tide is moving. Paddlers are also encouraged to paddle east / northeast from spot 2 and explore some of the backcountry that this tidal creek winds through. Redfish and black drum are liable to be anywhere along the grassy edges of the channel during high tide and look for fish on the bar that is marked as spot 3.

Spot 3: Features a bar located within a tidal creek, fish this spot with plastic baits or shrimp beneath a popping cork.

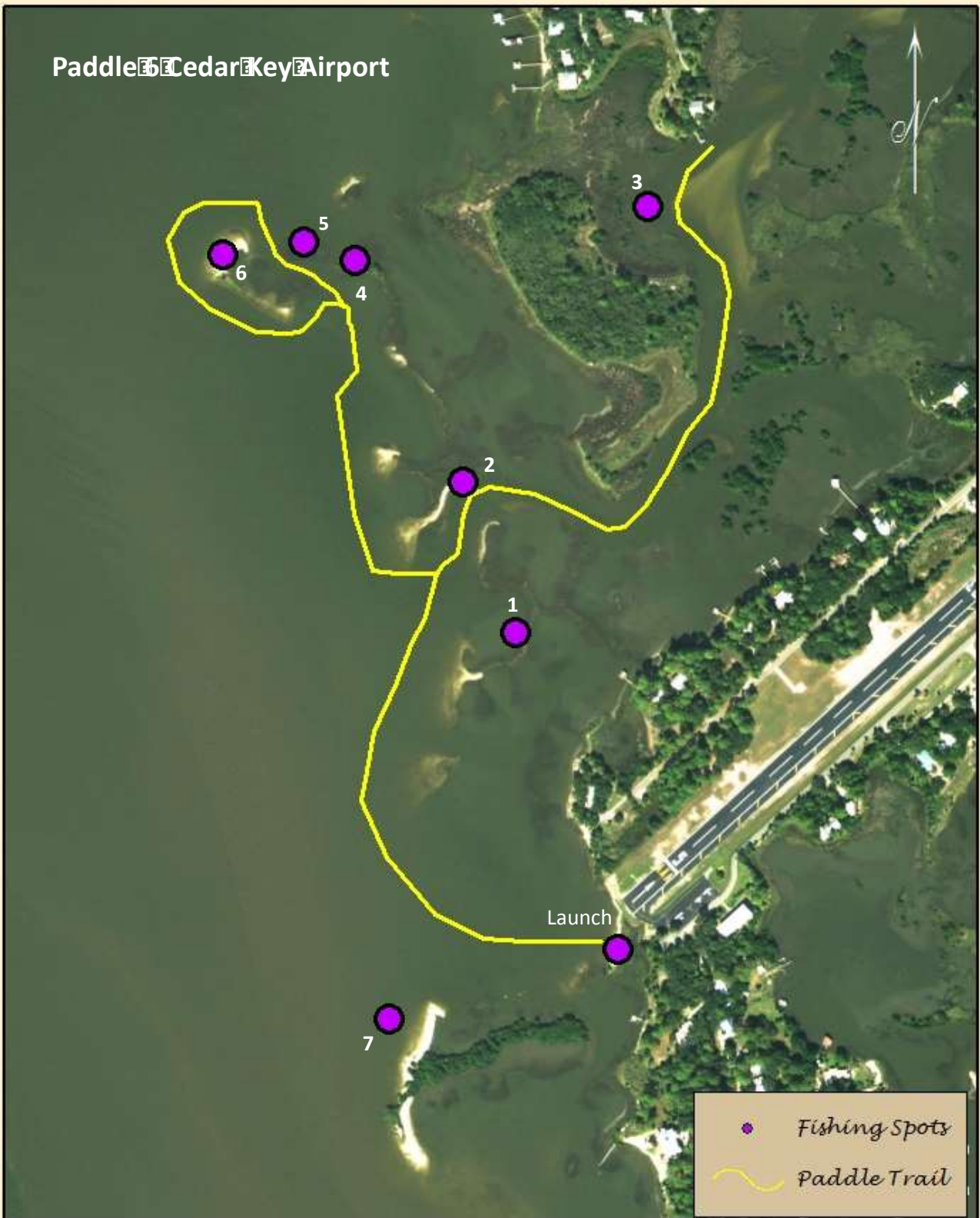
Spot 4: This area marks an oyster bar and a small grass island. Fish around the grass island and oyster bar on high tide. Utilizing cut bait, cast against the small grass island to quickly determine if fish are in the area. On a falling tide, fish the north side of the grass island. On a rising tide, try fishing the west side of the oyster bar that is positioned just south of the grassy island.

Spot 5: Spot 5 is an oyster reef which is positioned a mere 30 yards west of spot 4. This reef will hold sheepshead, redfish and black drum. Due to the presence of sheepshead in this area, utilizing a shrimp rigged beneath a popping cork is a wise bait selection for this location.

Spot 6: This spot is marked by a sandy shoal and is a great place to beach your kayak and stretch your legs for a few minutes. Bait can be caught from the sandy beach at this location. This spot is surrounded by oyster bars, aside from the deep hole that sits on the south side of the shoal.

Spot 7: This spot is all the way back to the south towards the launch point and is a great spot to explore when the tide is falling out and you are returning to the launch point. This island is positioned off the western tip of the airport runway. Along the sandy beach on the island's western edge, look for schools of redfish and black drum in the lighter colored water during both tides.

Paddle Cedar Key Airport



● Fishing Spots
Paddle Trail

*Lower Suwannee
National Wildlife Refuge*

975 Feet

The block contains a scale bar labeled '975 Feet'. Below the scale bar are two logos: the official logo of the National Wildlife Refuge System, which features a stylized bird and a fish, and the logo of the Florida Department of Natural Resources, which depicts a blue bird in flight.