



# The Great Calusa Blueway - Estero Bay

## Highlights & Access Points



### THE GREAT CALUSA BLUEWAY



Estimated mile marks



Advanced paddlers No trail markers



Trail marker GPS coordinates



Channels Major boating channels



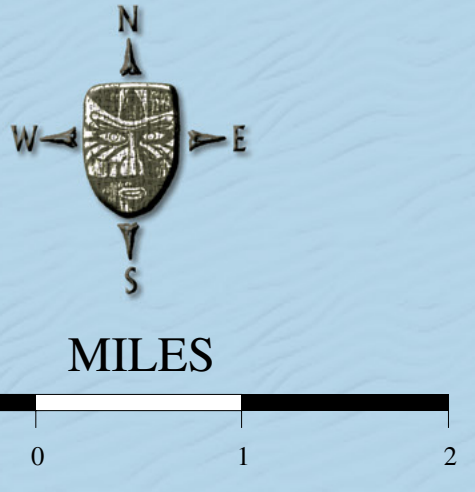
Trail markers Selected markers shown

**Accessible Public Land**  
County sites  
State sites

**Wading Bird Feeding & Loafing Areas**  
At low and medium tides, these areas are the main formations of oyster beds in Estero Bay, providing habitat for all species of shellfish feeders, probers and fish foragers.

**TRAIL MARKER NOTE**  
Please note that trail markers are not numbered sequentially due to forks in the trail

**NOT FOR NAVIGATIONAL USE**  
For local navigation charts, see those listed below:  
**NOAA Charts:**  
#11426 Charlotte Harbor - Estero Bay  
#11427 ICW from Estero to Boca Grande  
**Waterproof Charts:**  
#15F Fish Dive Sites- Marco to Tampa  
#20 ICW Fort Myers to Stewart  
#21 ICW Fort Myers to Tampa  
#25 Cape Romano to Boca Grande  
#121F Sanibel To Venice



- 1 SAN CARLOS BAY - BUNCHE BEACH PRESERVE**  
GPS: N26 28 34 W81 58 02  
This Lee County property offers varied ecosystems including sandy beaches, salt flats and mangroves. The 730-acre site offers excellent opportunities for observation of shorebirds. Kayak / SUP rentals and guided trips available through concessionaire Kayak Excursions, 239-297-7011. 239-533-7444.
- 2 BOWDITCH POINT REGIONAL PRESERVE**  
GPS: N26 27 48 W81 57 58  
An unspoiled 17-acre Lee County recreation area with sandy beaches on both the bay and the gulf, and a boardwalk to the beach. Grills, changing facilities and outdoor showers are available. Named for the famous navigator, Nathaniel Bowditch. 239-533-7444.
- 3 HOLIDAY ADVENTURE TOURS & BOAT RENTAL AT PINK SHELL RESORT & MARINA**  
GPS: N26 27 38 W81 57 51  
Kayak / SUP rentals, boat rentals, fishing charters, parking (fee) and beachside restaurants. Second location at Best Western Plus Beach Resort. 239-463-8661.
- 4 SAN CARLOS RV PARK & ISLAND RESORT**  
GPS: N26 28 05 W81 56 54  
Camp or stay in rentals in family-owned and operated resort surrounded by the bay. Tenters welcome. Stay along the water's edge and for paddling, fishing and birding. Launch sites for guests of campground only. 239-466-3133 or 800-525-7275.
- 5 SALTY SAM'S MARINA**  
GPS: N26 27 28 W81 56 36  
In addition to kayak rentals, this marina offers boat/paddle craft launching (fee), parking (fee), food, restaurant, and powerboat rentals. 239-463-7333.
- 6 MATANZAS PASS PRESERVE**  
GPS: N26 27 05 W81 56 11  
A 60-acre preserve where visitors can explore a maritime oak hammock and mangrove forest via two miles of boardwalk, which includes paddle craft landing. Historic cottage on site. 239-533-7444.
- 7 MOUND HOUSE**  
GPS: N26 26 46 W81 55 39  
Explore the culture and natural environment of Fort Myers Beach through hands-on experiences atop a 2,000 year old Calusa Indian Shell Mound. This unique archaeological and historical site located directly off Estero Bay, offers guided kayak tours, boat tours, beach walks and museum programs. Grounds open daily, sunrise to sunset for launching. www.moundhouse.org 239-765-0865.
- 8 LOVERS KEY STATE PARK**  
GPS: N26 23 29 W81 50 23  
Gulf to bay state park offers a variety of amenities. Three launch sites within park, which has three entrances; admission fee. 239-463-4588. Kayak, canoe and SUP rentals and guided tours available through Nature Recreation Management of Lee County. 239-765-7788.
- 9 DOG BEACH**  
GPS: N26 22 49 W81 51 44  
Dogs run free in this beach setting on protected water. Launch bayside across from Dog Beach. 239-533-7444.
- 10 BIG HICKORY ISLAND AREA LAUNCHES**  
GPS: N26 22 00 W81 51 24  
Squaw Creek  
GPS: N26 22 34 W81 51 37  
Big Hickory Island West  
GPS: N26 22 49 W81 51 42  
Kayak Beach  
Primitive launches with free parking and access to barrier island beach of Big Hickory. Landmark is the Bonita Springs water tower. 239-533-7444.
- 11 BOW TIE ISLAND**  
GPS: N26 22 35 W81 51 13  
Blueway Marker 8 is near this primitive site for tent camping, picnicking and landing. Practice Leave No Trace principles. 239-533-7444.
- 12 MOUND KEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL STATE PARK**  
GPS: N26 25 12 W81 51 43  
This man-made island, consisting of large shell middens rising as high as 31 feet, is one of the foremost preserved sites within the Calusa domain. Mound Key is believed to be the capital of the Calusa when the Spanish arrived in Florida and the location of the first Jesuit mission in the Spanish New World. Accessible only by boat; canoe and kayak landings are located at trail heads on the northwest and southeast portions of the island. 239-992-0311.
- 13 ESTERO RIVER SCRUB**  
GPS: N26 26 21 W81 50 24  
Part of Estero Bay Preserve State Park, this site features six miles of hiking, mountain biking and running trails through 1,260 acres of scrub habitat. These scrub ridges are historic dune systems providing habitat for gopher tortoises and other plants and animals that tolerate dry conditions. Paddlecraft landing only. 239-992-0311.
- 14 KORESHAN STATE HISTORIC SITE**  
GPS: N26 26 11 W81 49 10  
One of Florida's most unusual riverside parks features the remains of a utopian pioneer settlement founded in 1894 by Dr. Cyrus Teed. The group was based on a religious illumination that led the Koreskans to believe that the earth was a hollow sphere with life existing on the interior surface. Canoe / kayak rentals and tours are available through concessionaire College of Life Foundation, 239-992-2184. Entrance fee. 239-992-0311.
- 15 ESTERO RIVER CANOE & TACKLE OUTFITTERS**  
GPS: N26 26 06 W81 48 38  
Canoe, kayak and SUP rentals / sale. Fully stocked fishing tackle shop. 239-992-4050.
- 16 MULLOCK CREEK MARINA**  
GPS: N26 28 25 W81 51 6  
Small "Old Florida" paddle friendly marina with backwater access to eastern Estero Bay. Canoe and Kayak rentals, live bait, cold beverages and snacks. 239-992-3945.
- 17 FISH TRAP MARINA**  
GPS: N26 19 21 W81 49 55  
Paddlecraft launching allowed. Parking limited. Fully stocked bait and tackle shop. 239-992-6055.
- 18 RIVER PARK**  
GPS: N26 20 14 W81 48 29  
This site has green space, boardwalks through mangroves and floating docks. Within walking distance of places to purchase lunch, provisions. 239-992-2556.
- 19 IMPERIAL RIVER BOAT RAMP**  
GPS: N26 20 19 W81 48 17  
A Lee County Parks & Recreation facility. Canoe and kayak launch separate from boat ramp. 239-533-7275.
- 20 RIVERSIDE PARK**  
GPS: N26 20 30 W81 46 46  
Spacious riverfront park with frequent art shows and festivals. Grounds showcase historic Life's Hotel and Imperial River Cottages. Kayak / SUP rentals and tours available through concessionaire Calusa Ghost Tours at Riverside Park, 239-938-5342. Full paddle outfitter shop across the street, 239-221-8218. 239-992-2556.
- 21 CULLUM'S BONITA TRAIL**  
GPS: N26 20 13 W81 44 40  
Paddle craft launch with access to eastern Imperial River. Park connected to Bonita Nature Place via hiking trails. Bonita Nature Place includes gopher tortoise preserve, bat house, bee house, butterfly garden and picnic area. 239-992-2556.

- Boat Launch
- Paddle Craft Launch
- Parking (not always free)
- Restaurant or Concession
- Phone
- Picnic Facilities
- Restrooms
- Lodging
- Hiking
- Biking
- Camping
- Historic Site

A COMPLETE LIST OF GUIDES AND OUTFITTERS CAN BE FOUND AT [WWW.CALUSABLUEWAY.COM](http://WWW.CALUSABLUEWAY.COM)

Great Florida Birding Trail  
[www.floridabirdingtrail.com](http://www.floridabirdingtrail.com)

Florida Greenways & Trails  
[www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/guide/](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/guide/)



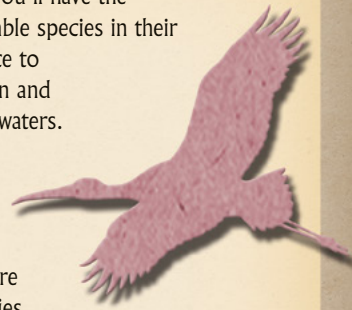




Lee County Paddling Trail  
Estero Bay

### Observing Wildlife

Along the Great Calusa Blueway, you'll have the opportunity to observe many remarkable species in their natural habitats. You'll have the chance to spy dolphins racing across the horizon and manatees lumbering through the backwaters. Bird watching is big here, and best of all, birds can be spotted just about anytime and anywhere. Bald eagles, herons, egrets, ospreys, pelicans, roseate spoonbills and wood storks are just a few of the more than 300 species you may discover here.



### Unspoiled, Undisturbed, Uninterrupted

During your visit, we hope you will find time to enjoy many of the wonderful experiences there are to be found in our diverse ecosystem. It is an environment that is as beautiful as it is fragile. It is up to all of us – residents and guests alike – to protect it, and leave the same wonders we enjoy today preserved for generations to come.

### Help Our Wildlife

- Please dispose of trash and food items properly.
- Observe all wildlife from a safe distance. When on board a vessel, stay at a distance of at least 50 yards (150 feet or 45 meters) and use binoculars or a telephoto lens to improve your view.
- Feeding wildlife is illegal, causes animals to lose their natural fear of humans and increases their vulnerability to injuries and death.
- Seagrasses are a valuable part of Florida's marine environment. Please use caution at low tide, so as not to impact the fragile sea grass beds and marine life nurseries.
- Pick up fishing line and debris – leave the scene cleaner than you found it.

### Recommended Safety Gear

- Flotation gear - Florida law requires a Coast Guard approved, readily accessible and wearable personal flotation device (PFD) for each occupant. PFDs must be worn by all occupants under age 6.
- Potable water – Be careful of dehydration
- Extra paddle
- Bow and stern line
- First aid kit
- Flashlight and whistle
- Insect repellent
- Sunglasses, sunscreen, covering and hats
- Binoculars, GPS unit or Compass
- Cell phone
- Water shoes, dry bag
- Map or chart
- Smartphone app

### Play It Safe

- Use caution at passes; strong currents exist.
- Watch for powerboats; stay to the right and turn your bow into the wake.
- Secure your car and take keys with you.
- Paddle in a group or with a buddy.
- Let someone know your plans – where you are going and when you plan to be back.
- Be careful with campfires; use cook stoves whenever possible.
- Access to private land should be by invitation only.
- Make mental notes as you pass trail markers – knowing the number of the closest marker will help emergency personnel should you need assistance.
- Watch the sky for changing weather.

### Navigation

The enlarged map of Estero Bay shows suggested routes for canoes and kayaks as well as random Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates along the trail. For a complete list of marker numbers with GPS coordinates, visit [www.GreatCalusaBlueway.com](http://www.GreatCalusaBlueway.com).

Markers are intermittent and sometimes not always within your line of sight. Marker numbers do not necessarily run in consecutive order because of forks in the trail. Portions of the trail may be inaccessible during periods of extreme low tide.

Tick marks on the map indicate an approximate mile wherever possible. Note that the trail crosses busy boating channels used by recreational and commercial powerboats. Please paddle safely.

The Calusa Blueway is among the first water trails in the country to have a state-of-the-art smart-phone application users can download for free to more easily navigate Southwest Florida waters. It provides real-time GPS coordinates and navigation, an interactive trail map with places of interest identified, tips and regulations, historical and cultural information, and launches and highlights of the entire 190-mile trail. Visit Google Play or the iTunes store.

A Boater's Guide with additional navigation information is also available for smart phones at Google Play or the iTunes store. <http://goo.gl/244Zp>

As you explore the Great Calusa Blueway, we remind you to preserve this paddling paradise by leaving nothing behind and taking only photos.

## THE GREAT CALUSA BLUEWAY



# Lee County Paddling Trails

## Estero Bay - Pine Island Sound - Matlacha Pass

For paddling opportunities in Charlotte County visit:  
<http://charlottecountyfl.com/communityservices/blueway.asp>



### Eco Parks Guide

Parks with an emphasis on the ecology of Southwest Florida are identified by the numbers below. For detailed information on each of them, and a complete list of parks, visit [www.FortMyers-Sanibel.com](http://www.FortMyers-Sanibel.com).

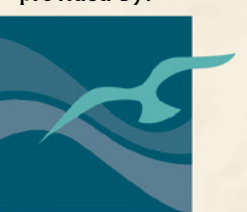
- 1 Audubon Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary
- 2 Bowditch Point Regional Park
- 3 Caloosahatchee Regional Park
- 4 Cayo Costa State Park
- 5 Four Mile Cove Ecological Preserve
- 6 Hickey's Creek Mitigation Park
- 7 J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge
- 8 Koreshan State Historic Site
- 9 Lakes Regional Park
- 10 Lovers Key State Park
- 11 Manatee Park
- 12 Matanzas Pass Preserve
- 13 Rotary Park
- 14 Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve & Interpretive Center
- 15 Mound House
- 16 Randell Research Center
- 17 Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation

### The Great Calusa Blueway

<b>Phase 1 &amp; 2:</b>	
Miles of marked trail.....	97
<b>Phase 3:</b>	
Miles of tributaries.....	52
Miles of river.....	38

For more information, visit [www.CalusaBlueway.com](http://www.CalusaBlueway.com)

For paddling opportunities in Collier County visit:  
[www.paradisecoastblueway.com](http://www.paradisecoastblueway.com)



WCIND



Lee County invites paddlers from around the world to explore the fabled bays, rivers, backwaters and shorelines of Southwest Florida. The Great Calusa Blueway paddling trail has been developed by Lee County Parks & Recreation and funded with tourist development tax dollars specifically dedicated to beach and shoreline enhancement projects.

Inspired by the indigenous Calusas, the Great Calusa Blueway encompasses three distinct regions of the Gulf of Mexico coast. The first portion of the trail meanders through Estero Bay, while the second segment centers on Pine Island Sound and Matlacha (pronounced Mat-lashay) Pass. A third leg of the trail takes paddlers inland to the Caloosahatchee and its tributaries.

This map shows all three regions, but covers only Estero Bay in detail. We hope it will serve as your guide to the natural and historic highlights of these protected waterways, while also helping you locate amenities along the trail.



3410 Palm Beach Blvd., Fort Myers, FL 33916

239-533-7275

For More Information:

Paddling Trail - [www.CalusaBlueway.com](http://www.CalusaBlueway.com)

Area Information - [www.FortMyers-Sanibel.com](http://www.FortMyers-Sanibel.com)

Lee County Parks & Recreation - [www.LeeParks.org](http://www.LeeParks.org)

Volunteer Opportunities - Call 239-533-7422



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