



*Friends of the*  
**Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves**  
*From Lemon Bay to Tarpon Bay*

**Explore Matlacha Pass Aquatic Preserve, one of our most intriguing estuaries, with the Friends of the Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves.** *Estuaries... beautiful, dynamic, and biologically productive bays, harbors, and lagoons where freshwater rivers and creeks empty to the sea and mingle with salty ocean tides. The shallow waters support salt marsh, mangroves, seagrass beds, mud flats, and oyster bars, which provide habitat and foraging areas for fish, crabs, shrimp, mollusks, dolphins, wading birds, sea turtles, and other wildlife. More than 95% of Florida's recreationally and commercially important fish, shellfish, and crustaceans spend a part of their life cycles in estuaries, the "nurseries of the sea". Paddle the tidal creeks and shoreline of Matlacha Pass Aquatic Preserve and become acquainted with estuaries, your "extended backyard". Explore the ecology of a southwest Florida estuary. Learn about "the land and sea connection", estuary food webs, and the importance of the estuary to fisheries and birds.*

***Sign up now for the....***

## **Lee County Boys & Girls Clubs Summer 2006 Matlacha Pass Paddle**

Sponsored by  
Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park  
the Friends of the Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves,  
the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program, Gulf Coast Kayak, and Island Kayak

**Date:** July 9, 2006 (*Alternate date in the event of bad weather is Sunday July 30.*)

**Time:** The paddle begins on Sunday morning between 8:30 am and 9:00 am returning by noon. Plan to arrive by 8:15 am in preparation for a 9:00 am launch.

**Location:** Gulf Coast Kayak is located at 4530 Pine Island Road NW (State Road 78), Matlacha between Cape Coral and Little Pine Island in Lee County. **Directions are on the back of this flyer.**

**Registration Procedure: Advance registration is required.** Blue paddle registration forms must be completed and returned to the Unit Directors or Program Coordinators of the participating club chapters. This event is being sponsored FREE of charge. If you will not be able to attend or have to cancel for any reason, please inform your club Unit Director as soon as possible, as there may be other members who would like to participate.

**THE BIG SUMMER PADDLE:** Join the Friends of the Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves, Inc. (FCHAP) on a summer kayak paddle for members of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Lee County. Paddlers will head north up Matlacha Pass, follow the Calusa Blueway Trail, and explore the hidden, meandering tidal creeks and mangrove-forested shoreline of Matlacha Pass Aquatic Preserve. Paddlers may glimpse a ray gliding by their kayak, dolphins emerging above the waves, and mullet jumping. Osprey, cormorants, and pelicans may be sighted. Ibis, herons, egrets, and roseate spoonbills may be observed quietly feeding in secluded areas.

***For more information, please call 941-575-5861 Ext. 105.***

## Directions

**To Matlacha:** Those coming from the greater Ft. Myers / North Ft. Myers / Cape Coral area may take the most direct route to Pine Island Road (State Road 78). From downtown or East Ft. Myers, go north and cross either the Caloosahatchee River Bridge or the Edison Bridge into North Ft. Myers. If crossing the Caloosahatchee Bridge, drivers may take either Hancock Bridge Parkway or Pondella Road and drive westbound to Pine Island Road. If crossing Edison Bridge, turn west on to Pondella and continue to the intersection of Pine Island Road. Turn west and continue on Pine Island Road to Matlacha.

**To Gulf Coast Kayak (4530 Pine Island Road NW):** When driving west into Matlacha, cross the big bridge (the fishingest bridge in the world), go a short distance, and turn north (right) into the entrance of Gulf Coast Kayak on the north side of Pine Island Road. There is a Seafood Market and another smaller bridge just ahead of the entrance. Drive back beyond the buildings to the waterfront area and park there. **Plan to arrive by 8:15 am in preparation for a 9:00 am launch. Please carpool or make arrangements for group travel through the Lee County Boys & Girls Clubs Unit Directors and Program Coordinators.**

**FLORIDA**  
**State Parks**  
*...the Real Florida*



Division of Recreation and Parks  
Department of Environmental Protection

The Mission of the Florida Park Service is *"To provide resource-based recreation while preserving, interpreting and restoring natural and cultural resources."* The Friends Summer Matlacha Pass Aquatic Preserve Paddle for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Lee County is a Florida State Parks Get REAL! (Recreational and Environmental Adventures in Learning) program. Get REAL builds on the parks' broad multi-cultural, educational, and recreational programs to enrich learning and integrate the use of state parks with local community programs. Get REAL seeks to increase participation in outdoor recreation and provide opportunities for everyone from school-aged children to seniors. The Boys & Girls Clubs are cordially invited to schedule special group hikes and other park programs with park staff. For more information, please call the Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park office at 941-575-5861 Ext. 105.

