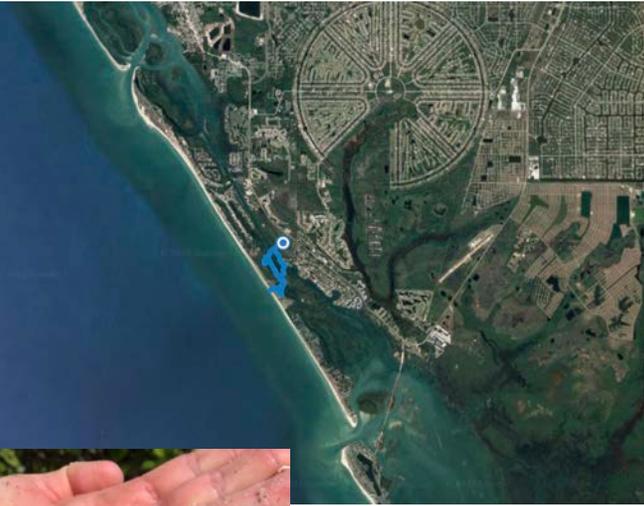


PRAS Field Trip Kayaking Lemon Bay from Don Pedro State Park Sept 17, 2022



We arrived at 8:30 and paid the \$3 Don Pedro State Park Fee then headed to the launch ramp. Beautiful weather! We paddled in the inner coastal to a dock then took a short walk to the Gulf beach. Manatees and dolphins swam ahead of us!

Along the way we learned about Fiddler Crabs (males have big claw) and about 3 Mangrove species. 3 poems or songs helped us remember them:

White - white, white, bolts on tight most salt tolerant usually inland with small propagules. Leaves have a round tip - 2 nodes at stem and 1 node at tip

Red - red, red, pointy head - lowest elevation most seaward with tear drop propagules - has prop roots that look like stilts. **Black - black, black salty back** of

leaf (underside lighter in color) has pneumatophores (snorkel roots that stick up from ground to get oxygen

Photo of Butterfly Mangrove Buckeye & host plant Red Mangrove shows flower and initial propagules that grow into long bean like seedpods. They float horizontally until they find a spot (just right) then change gravity to the brown end so it sticks in the soil to grow.

Our guides Mike Weinsensee and Leslie Brown explain the Cassiopeia, an upside down jellyfish with tiny stingers - In Greek Mythology, a vain queen Cassiopeia (mother of Andromeda) was cast to the bottom of the sea so the jellyfish is found at the bottom of shallow areas. Mike pulled it out of the water for show and tell.





Lighting Whelk - snail family with opening on left side

Starfish that we found in Mangrove tunnel



The manatees and dolphins stayed with us a long time as we approached a dock and walked to the Gulf beach. Then the fun mangrove tunnels to a secret lake that has only one access! No motors on this lake...just kayaks. We return by the same mangrove tunnel and return to Don Pedro State Park. We saw 24 bird species. Go to ebird at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S118921141>
A beautiful perfect day!

