

FISH!
SOUTHEAST FLORIDA
CANALS

ANGLER'S GUIDE TO

SOUTH E-4 CANAL
(LAKE IDA TO C-51 CANAL)

PALM BEACH COUNTY



Non-Native Fish Laboratory

801 NW 40th Street
Boca Raton, Florida 33431

DESCRIPTION—The E-4 Canal is located in eastern Palm Beach County. This canal flows south through a series of naturally occurring but highly modified freshwater lakes, and connects the West Palm Beach Canal (C-51) near Palm Beach International Airport with the Hillsboro Canal (G-08) in Boca Raton. The E-4 Canal offers anglers nearly 17 miles of fishable waters as it flows through the Ida-Osborne chain of lakes to a non-boatable culvert 0.6 miles south of the Delray Canal (C-15). The E-4 Canal also provides anglers access to 670 acres of lakes and 23 additional miles of boatable canals. This map (1 of 3 in the E-4 series) highlights the southern end of the E-4 Canal system from Lake Ida to the Delray Canal.

The south end of the E-4 Canal and associated lakes flows through the city of Delray Beach. The short section of canal south of the C-15 Canal is also referred to as the El Rio Canal. The canal in this area is characterized by sloping sides and a sandy bottom; ranging in width from 50 to 250 feet, and averaging about six feet deep. The lakes in this section include the 50-acre Lake Eden and 120-acre Lake Ida.

The L-30 Canal (also known as Hunter's Run and West Canal), on the north end of Lake Ida County Park, runs west 2.9 miles to a water control structure near El Clair Ranch Road. It ranges in width from 50 to 120 feet and averages about six feet deep.

From the boat ramp at Lake Ida, it is 4.6 miles south to the Delray Canal (C-15). The Delray Canal ranges in width from 80 to 175 feet and averages about eight feet deep. Traveling west on the Delray Canal from the E-4 intersection, it is 1.9 miles to the water control structure, traveling east it is 0.9 miles to the entrance of a lateral canal that provides access to a small lake (about 8 acres), and 1.7 miles to the salinity structure (S-40) near Federal Highway.

BOAT RAMP DIRECTIONS—There are two public boat ramps on this system. In Lake Ida County Park, there are two concrete ramps in excellent condition. There is also a one-lane, sand/gravel ramp in fair condition on the east side of Lake Ida. Both ramps are in county/city parks which are open from dawn to dusk. The parks have picnic tables, grills, playgrounds, restrooms, and plenty of paved parking.

These boat ramps are accessed from I-95 by exiting west on Atlantic Avenue to Congress Avenue (0.3 miles). Turn right (north) and go 0.8 miles to Lake Ida Road. Turn right (east) on Lake Ida Road and go 0.2 miles, then turn left (north) into the park just east of the I-95 overpass, or, continue east and turn left (north) on North Swinton Avenue, then left

(west) on Northwest 11th Street to the sand/gravel ramp. **GPS COORDINATES** (Ramp 1. 26.4794, -80.0841; 2. 26.4765, -80.0812).

The entire length of the E-4 Canal is posted as "No Wake Zone" so boaters should plan their trip accordingly. The E-4 Canal has many low bridges and overhead pipes and care should be taken when going under them.

GENERAL FISHING INFORMATION—There is good access for shoreline anglers on the west and east banks of Lake Ida that lie within the county park. A fishing pier is located north of the county boat ramp. There is also shore access south of Lake Ida Road along the east side of the canal to the I-95 overpass.

The E-4 Canal and associated lakes and lateral canals provide excellent fishing for Largemouth Bass, Bluegill and Redear Sunfish. Sunshine Bass are also stocked in Lakes Ida and Eden.

Canal intersections and culverts are generally productive areas for catching most species of fish. Shoreline vegetation, rip-rap areas, and shady areas associated with bridges and culverts also provide excellent places to fish. If there is a strong current in the main canal, look for any protected areas that offer refuge from the current (e.g., cut-outs, bridge pilings, and the downstream side of non-flowing spillways of lateral canals). The downstream side of culverts and spillways with flowing water are sometimes especially good places to fish. Fish attractors, identified by bright yellow buoys in lakes Ida and Eden are also good fishing spots.

There are more Largemouth Bass in the south E-4 and Delray (C-15) Canals than most other southeast Florida canals. Harvestable Largemouth Bass in this system average 13.1 inches (1.3 pounds), and 24% are larger than 14 inches. Fishing for Largemouth Bass tends to be best during the winter when the water temperatures are cooler and in the evening, night, and early morning during the summer. The bag limit for Largemouth Bass is five fish per day, only one of which can be larger than 14 inches.

The number and quality of panfish in these systems is similar to other area canals. Live worms and crickets are the choice baits for many panfish anglers, although fresh bread or bread dough works well, is readily available, and it costs less.

After a series of warmer than average winters, a few Butterfly Peacock have also found their way into these canals and lakes. The Butterfly Peacock is a world renowned gamefish that was successfully introduced by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in the mid-1980's to eat undesirable exotic fishes, and to provide more sportfishing opportunities for anglers in southeast Florida canals. The bag limit for Butterfly

Peacock is two fish per day, only one of which can be greater than 17 inches. Butterfly Peacock are sensitive to water temperatures below 60°F which makes them susceptible to periodic winterkills in the E-4 Canal system.

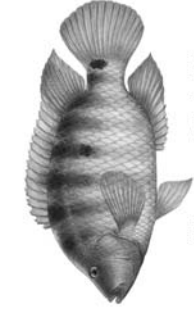
In addition to Largemouth Bass, Bluegill, and Redear Sunfish, E-4 Canal anglers can also catch several exotic fishes including Oscar from South America, Spotted Tilapia from Africa, and Mayan Cichlid from Central America. These exotic species were illegally released and pose a threat to native species. Oscar, Spotted Tilapia, and Mayan Cichlid are all bream-shaped fishes. Oscar have a red or orange circle at the base of the tail, and have a thick layer of protective mucus on their bodies. Spotted Tilapia are golden with black vertical bars or spots, and some have red on them. Mayan Cichlid are colorful and snapper-like in appearance with a turquoise ring around a black spot at the base of their tail. Clown Knifefish are elongated in the shape of a knife blade with prominent black spots circled in white on a silvery body. These exotic fishes taste good and you can keep every one you catch.

The southern E-4 and associated lakes and canals receive a great deal of fishing pressure so we encourage anglers to release most, if not all of the largemouth bass and butterfly peacock they catch. If anglers don't release most of the sportfish they catch, these high quality fisheries will deteriorate rapidly.

Anglers, particularly those from outside the metropolitan Miami - West Palm Beach area, should be aware that vandalism occurs at some boat ramps. Therefore, care should be taken to secure your vehicle and keep valuables out of sight or take them with you when you leave the ramp.

For more Florida fishing information, visit the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's web site at MyFWC.com/fishing.

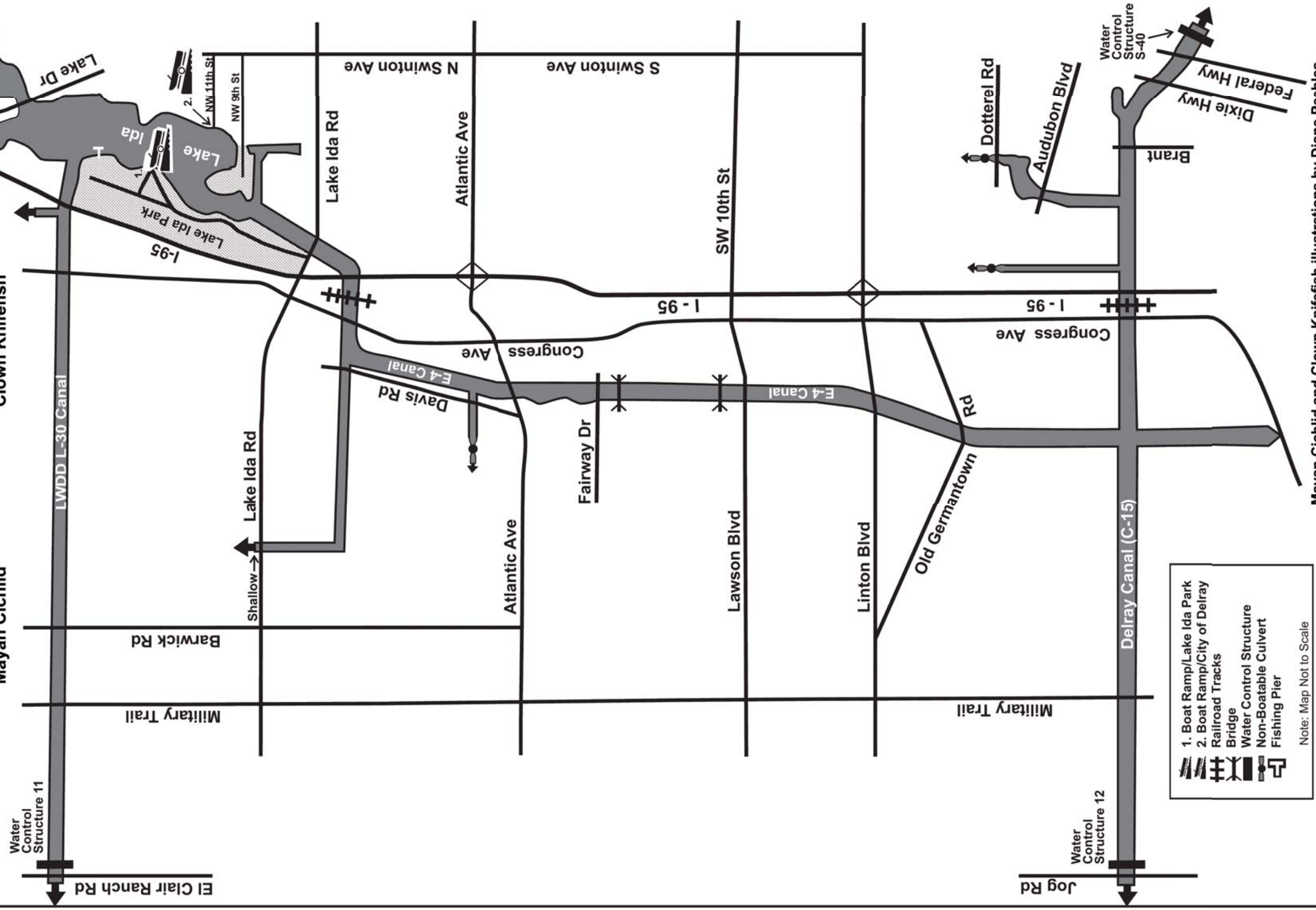
SOUTH E-4 CANAL



Mayan Cichlid



Clown Knifefish



	1. Boat Ramp/Lake Ida Park
	2. Boat Ramp/City of Delray
	Railroad Tracks
	Bridge
	Water Control Structure
	Non-Boatable Culvert
	Fishing Pier

Note: Map Not to Scale

Mayan Cichlid and Clown Knifefish illustrations by Diane Peables.