

FISH! SOUTHEAST FLORIDA CANALS

ANGLER'S GUIDE TO CUTLER DRAIN CANAL (C-100 SERIES)

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY



Exotic Fisheries Office
10216 Lee Road
Boynton Beach, Florida 33473

January 2015

DESCRIPTION – The Cutler Drain Canal (C-100 series) is made up of four sections (C-100, C-100A, C-100B, and C-100C), and includes 13.5 miles of navigable waters in southern Miami-Dade County between the cities of Kendall and Cutler Ridge. These canals were constructed in the mid-1900s by cutting into the coral rock substrate with large machines. The canals have near vertical edges, range in width from 30 to more than 80 feet, and average about 12 feet deep (except for C-100B which averages about five feet deep). The C-100A has two five-acre, sand-bottomed lakes that are 10 feet deep. This canal system has many forks, bends, and is lined with beautiful homes and parks making it an attractive and relaxing place to fish.

Cutler Drain Canal typically has clearer water than most south Florida canals which gives anglers the rare opportunity to do some freshwater sight-fishing (i.e., see and cast to a targeted fish in 6 to 10 feet of water). Like other area canals, this one contains many fish; what makes it different is that sometimes these fishes can be seen swimming about as if they were in a large aquarium. One of the ‘What’s that?’ fishes is the bright orange Midas Cichlid.

From the boat ramp, C-100C runs to Coral Reef Regional Park where it intersects with C-100A. The C-100A canal is 5.7 miles long, the C-100B is 2.2 miles long, the C-100C is 1.7 miles long, and the C-100 is 2.7 miles long.

BOAT RAMP DIRECTIONS – The boat ramp on this system is a steep, single-lane, gravel/sand ramp in fair to poor condition. This ramp is accessible from the Turnpike Extension by exiting on Coral Reef Drive (SW 152nd Street), go east about two miles to US-1, turn north (left) to SW 136th Street, turn west (left) to SW 92nd Avenue, go south (left) then east (left) onto a dirt road immediately after crossing the canal. Drive about 1/4 mile to the flood control structure; the ramp is behind and just south of ‘The Falls’ shopping mall. This guide is for the boat ramp and area east of the water control structure (S-119). There is adequate parking, but no facilities. Care should be taken when launching boats because the ramp is in poor condition.

BOAT RAMP GPS COORDINATES: (25.64262, -80.33793).

GENERAL FISHING INFORMATION – Cutler Drain Canal provides excellent fishing for a variety of sportfishes. In addition to Butterfly Peacock and Largemouth Bass, the presence of a few Snook moving

inland from Biscayne Bay gives anglers an opportunity to complete a canal ‘trifecta’ or ‘grand slam’. The Butterfly Peacock is a world renowned gamefish from South America that was successfully introduced by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in 1984 to eat undesirable exotic fishes, and to provide more sportfishing opportunities for anglers in the metropolitan Miami-Ft. Lauderdale area.

Fallen trees, canal intersections, sharp bends, and dead ends are generally productive areas for catching most species of fish. Shoreline vegetation, rip-rap areas, residential seawalls, and shady areas associated with bridges and culverts also provide excellent places to fish. If there is a strong current in the main canal, spend more time fishing lateral canals and other areas that offer refuge from the current (e.g., cut-outs, bridge pilings, and the downstream side of spillways).

Fishing for Butterfly Peacock is best from March through May, but they are caught consistently throughout the year. Butterfly Peacock feed only during daylight and normally close to shore, although schooling Peacock sometimes feed aggressively in open water. Butterfly Peacock are abundant, average 13.4 inches (1.5 pounds), 35% of the harvestable fish are greater than 14 inches, and biologists have measured and released Peacocks larger than 20 inches in this system. The bag limit for Butterfly Peacock is two fish per day, only one of which can be greater than 17 inches.

Most Butterfly Peacock are caught on live bait or fast moving artificial lures and flies that imitate small fish. Butterfly Peacock are much more likely to be caught using live fish such as small Golden Shiners for bait than are Largemouth Bass which makes them an excellent fish for younger anglers, as well as those just learning to Bass fish. It is illegal to use Goldfish or any other non-native fish for bait.

The abundance of Largemouth Bass in Cutler Drain Canal is similar to area canals. They average 13.6 inches (1.4 pounds) and fish greater than 20 inches have been sampled in this canal. Fishing for Largemouth Bass tends to be best during the winter when the water temperatures cool and in the evening, night, and morning during the summer. Plastic worms work well for Largemouth Bass, but they rarely catch Butterfly Peacock. The bag limit for Largemouth Bass is five fish per day, only one of which can be greater than 16 inches.

The number and quality of panfish over six inches 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. Shoreline anglers can access these fisheries along roads paralleling and crossing the canal. Some exploring is necessary to find the best locations for shoreline fishing, and always be sure to park cars safely on public right of ways.

Cutler Drain Canal anglers can also catch several exotic species including Oscar from South America, Spotted Tilapia from Africa, and Midas Cichlid from Central America. These exotic fishes were illegally released and pose a threat to native species. Oscar, Spotted Tilapia, and Midas Cichlid are all bream-shaped fishes. Oscar have a red or orange circle at the base of its tail, and they 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. Midas Cichlid vary greatly in color from a bluegill-like pattern to solid orange or red, and everything in between. These exotic fishes are good to eat and you can keep every one you catch.

Cutler Drain Canal and other area canals receive a great deal of fishing pressure so we encourage anglers to release most, if not all of the Butterfly Peacock, Largemouth Bass, and Snook they catch. If anglers don’t release a majority of the sportfish they catch, these high quality fisheries will deteriorate rapidly.

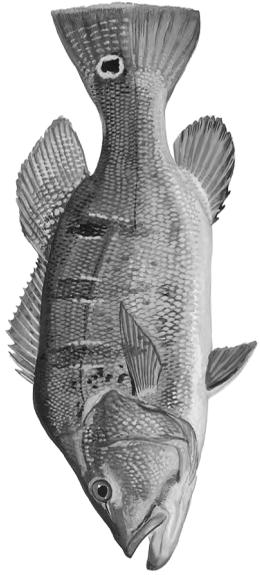
Anglers, particularly those from outside the metropolitan Miami - West Palm Beach area, should be aware that vandalism occurs at some boat ramps. Therefore, care should be taken to secure your vehicle and keep valuables out of sight or take them with you when you leave the ramp.

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

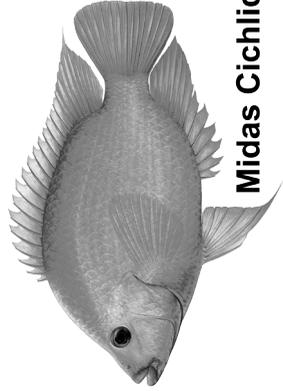
This series of southeast Florida angler guides are available at www.bit.ly/AnglerGuide.



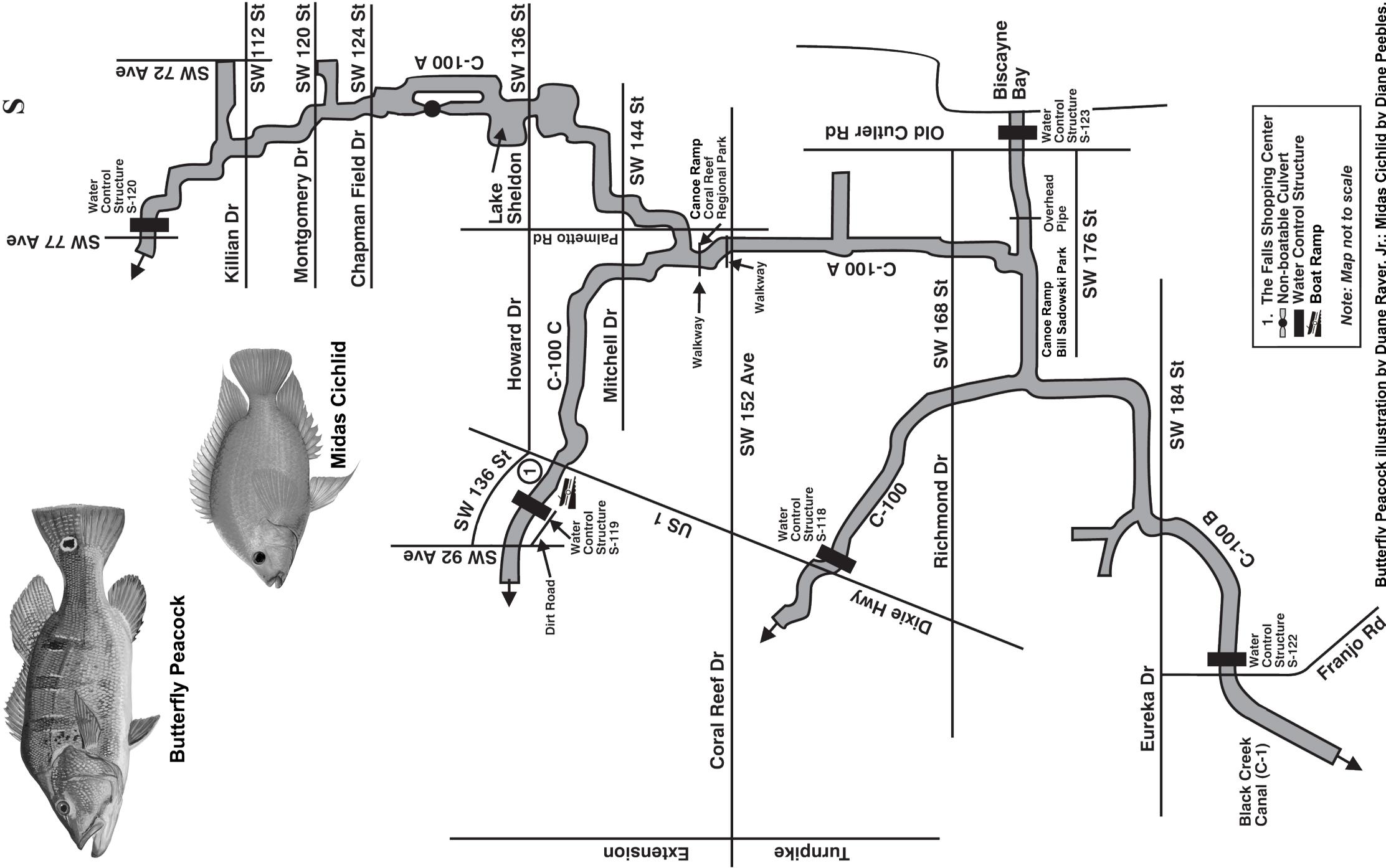
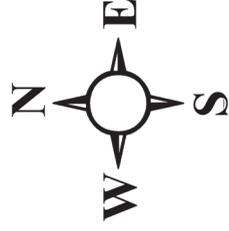
CUTLER DRAIN CANAL (C-100 SERIES)



Butterfly Peacock



Midas Cichlid



1. The Falls Shopping Center
- Water Control Structure
 - Non-boatable Culvert
 - Water Control Structure
 - Boat Ramp

Note: Map not to scale

Butterfly Peacock illustration by Duane Raver, Jr.; Midas Cichlid by Diane Peebles.