

FISH! SOUTHEAST FLORIDA CANALS

ANGLER'S GUIDE TO SNAKE CREEK CANAL (C-9)

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY



Exotic Fisheries Office
10216 Lee Road
Boynton Beach, Florida 33473

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DESCRIPTION – The 26.7 miles of navigable Snake Creek Canal (C-9) are mostly located in northern Miami-Dade County, but portions run through southern Broward County. It flows eastward from Water Conservation Area III to a salinity control structure near Dixie Highway. From US-27 to I-75 this canal has a rural atmosphere with tree-lined shorelines; east of I-75 it flows past a variety of residential complexes and Dolphin Stadium (home of the Miami Dolphins and Florida Marlins).

The 17.8 mile long main Snake Creek canal is one of the longest, widest, and straightest sections of canals in southeast Florida; it ranges from 45 to more than 150 feet in width, and averages about 13 feet in depth. The small lakes in this canal include 60 acre Little Sky Lake, and 133 acre Sky Lake which is up to 30 feet deep. Little Sky Lake is accessible through a culvert big enough for most freshwater boats. Lateral canals and portions of the lakes sometimes contain large amounts of vegetation.

From the boat ramp heading east, it is 1.8 miles to Sky Lake and 3.9 miles to the structure at Dixie Highway. Heading west it is 1.5 miles to the Turnpike, 2.3 miles to the main southern lateral system, 7.4 miles to the Turnpike Extension, 9.0 miles to I-75, and 13.9 miles to the spillway at US-27.

BOAT RAMP DIRECTIONS – From the Turnpike exit east on County Line Rd (NW 215th St), turn south (right) on Hwy 441 (NW 2nd Ave), turn east (left) after NW 202nd Terrace just before crossing the canal or reaching NW 199th Street. The ramp is located at the northeast corner of where Hwy 441 crosses the canal. From I-95 exit west on Ives Dairy Road, turn north (right) on Hwy 441. Cross over the canal and turn right to reach the ramp. Note: Manatees are quite common, so be careful boating and watch for posted regulations. **GPS COORDINATES** (25.9599, -80.2049).

The boat ramp is paved and in good condition with plenty of parking. There are no restrooms or other facilities, but there is a McDonald's immediately across the canal from the ramp. Snake Creek has many low bridges and care should be taken when going under them.

GENERAL FISHING INFORMATION – The consistency of canal habitats (box-cut shorelines

and flat bottoms) makes locating fish difficult, and few canals are more challenging in this regard than Snake Creek. Nonetheless, this canal has excellent populations of Butterfly Peacock, Largemouth Bass, and even some Snook and Tarpon which gives anglers a chance to catch a canal 'trifecta' or 'grand slam'. The Butterfly Peacock is a world renowned gamefish that was successfully introduced by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in the mid-1980s 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. Sportfishes also congregate in the shade of bridges, culverts, and other structures. Shoreline vegetation, rip-rap, and even residential seawalls (particularly in lateral canals) also provide good fishing opportunities. If there is a strong current in the main canal, spend more time fishing lateral canals, small lakes, and other areas that offer refuge from the current (e.g., cut-outs, bridge pilings, and the downstream side of spillways).

Snake Creek Butterfly Peacock and Largemouth Bass average 14.4 inches (2 pounds) and 59% of the harvestable Butterfly Peacock and 49% of the Largemouth Bass are bigger than this. Trophy Peacock (those greater than five pounds) have also been caught from this and other area canals, and we expect the current 9.08 pound state record to ultimately exceed 11-12 pounds. The bag limit for Butterfly Peacock is two fish per day, only one of which can be greater than 17 inches; up to five Largemouth Bass can be kept, but only one of these can be greater than 16 inches.

Fishing for Butterfly Peacock is usually 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 peacocks will sometimes feed aggressively in open water. Peacock are more likely to be caught using live fish for bait than are Largemouth Bass, which make them an excellent fish for younger anglers, and those just learning to bass fish. It is illegal to use goldfish or any other non-native fish for bait.

The number and quality of panfish over six inches in Snake Creek is about average for area canals. Live worms and crickets are the choice baits for many panfish anglers, although fresh bread or bread dough works well. Shoreline anglers have plenty of access to

these fisheries along roads paralleling and crossing the canal, and at the boat ramp. 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.

Snake Creek Canal anglers might also catch Jaguar Guapote, Mayan Cichlid, Oscar, and Spotted Tilapia. These exotic fishes were illegally released, and pose a threat to native species. Jaguar Guapote resemble a Black Crappie (Speckled Perch) with many small, sharp teeth. Oscar are a bream-shaped fish with a red or orange circle at the base of its tail, and they have a thick coat of protective mucus on their bodies. Mayan Cichlid appear similar to Mangrove Snapper with a turquoise ring around a black spot at the base of their tail. Spotted Tilapia are bream-shaped, golden in color with black spots or bars, and some adults have red on them. These exotic fishes are good to eat, and you can keep every one you catch.

Snake Creek 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, Snook, and Tarpon they catch. If anglers don't release a majority of the sportfish they catch, these high quality fisheries will deteriorate rapidly.

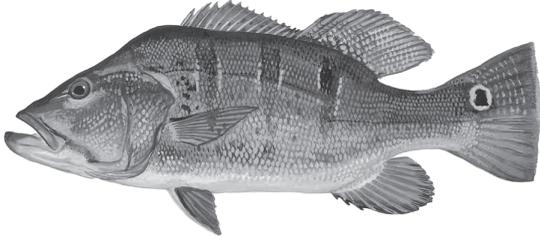
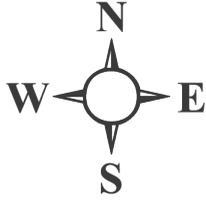
Anglers, particularly those from outside the metropolitan Miami - West Palm Beach area, should be aware that vandalism occurs at some boat ramps. Therefore, care should be taken to secure your vehicle and keep valuables out of sight or take them with you when you leave the ramp.

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

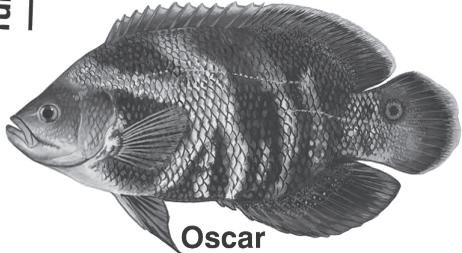
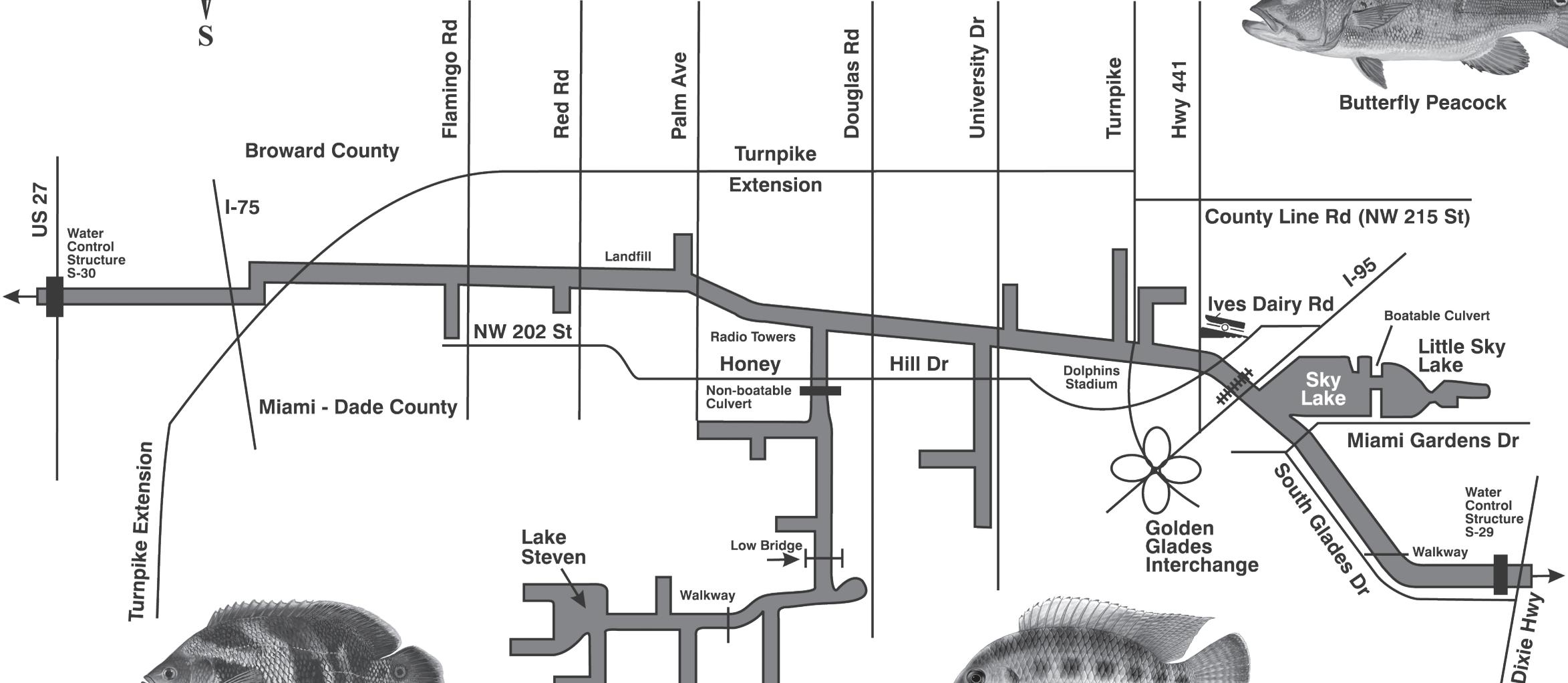
This series of southeast Florida angler guides are available at www.bit.ly/AnglerGuide.



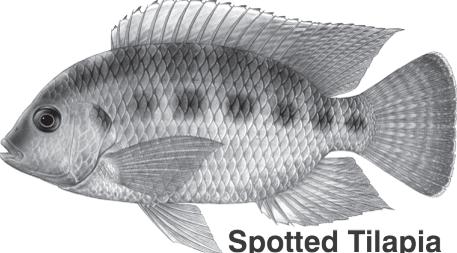
SNAKE CREEK CANAL (C-9)



Butterfly Peacock



Oscar



Spotted Tilapia

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| | Boat Ramp |
| | Water Control Structure |
| | Railroad Tracks |
| | Non-Boatable Barrier |

Note: Map not to scale

Butterfly Peacock and Oscar illustrations by Duane Raver, Jr.; Spotted Tilapia by Diane Peebles.