

FISH! SOUTHEAST FLORIDA CANALS

ANGLER'S GUIDE TO NORTH E-4 CANAL (LAKE OSBORNE TO C-51 CANAL) PALM BEACH COUNTY



Exotic Fisheries Office
10216 Lee Road
Boynton Beach, Florida 33473

January 2015

DESCRIPTION – The E-4 Canal is located in eastern Palm Beach County and flows south through a series of naturally occurring, but highly modified freshwater lakes. The E-4 Canal 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 and 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 northern section of the E-4 Canal system from Lake Osborne to the West Palm Beach Canal.

The northern section of the E-4 Canal (locally referred to as the Keller Canal) flows through the cities of West Palm Beach, Lake Clarke Shores, and Lake Worth. The canal in this area has sloping sides with a sandy bottom; ranges in width from 60 to 100 feet, and averages about seven feet deep. The lakes in this section include 35-acre Lake Pine, 60-acre Lake Clarke, and 380-acre Lake Osborne.

From the boat ramp on Lake Osborne, it is 1.9 miles to the south end of Lake Clarke and 3.1 miles to the West Palm Beach Canal (C-51). From the boat ramp on Lake Pine, it is 1.3 miles to the West Palm Beach Canal. From this intersection heading southeast, it is 2.6 miles to the water control structure (S-155) near Dixie Highway. Traveling west from this intersection, it is 1.4 miles to Congress Avenue, 6.4 miles to the Florida Turnpike, and 10.8 miles to the water control structure at Blue Trace Road.

The West Palm Beach Canal (C-51) ranges in width from 80 to 225 feet and averages about 12 feet deep on the west end and 23 feet deep southeast of Summit Boulevard. This canal has high, steep banks with overhanging vegetation on the north and east shorelines.

BOAT RAMP DIRECTIONS – There are two public boat ramps on this system. One is located on Lake Osborne in John Prince County Park, the other on Lake Pine. These ramps are paved and well maintained. The ramp at John Prince Park has plenty of parking, picnic tables, grills, playgrounds, and restrooms and is open from dawn to dusk.

To reach the ramp in John Prince Park, exit I-95 at 10th Avenue North and go west to Congress Avenue, then turn left (south) to Lake Worth Road. Turn left (east), then right (south) at the second entrance to park,

and follow the signs to the ramp. To access the ramp on Lake Pine, exit I-95 at Belvedere Road and go west about 200 yards. Immediately after crossing the railroad tracks turn left (south) and go to Oglethorpe Road. Turn right (west) and proceed to the ramp. **GPS COORDINATES:** (Ramp 1. 26.6855, -80.0730; 2. 26.6149, -80.0781).

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 – Good shoreline access for anglers is available around nearly the entire perimeter of the north lobe of Lake Osborne between Lake Worth Road and 6th Avenue South. A fishing pier is located east of the boat ramp on Lake Osborne.

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 Osborne and Clarke.

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 Osborne, Clarke, and Pine are also good fishing spots.

The north E-4 and the West Palm Beach canals have more Largemouth Bass than most other southeast Florida canals, and fish longer than 20 inches are regularly sampled. Overall, the average size of Largemouth Bass is 13.3 inches (1.3 pounds), but 30% are larger than 14 inches. Fishing for Largemouth Bass tends to be best during the winter when the water temperatures cool, 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 longer than 16 inches.

The number and quality of panfish in these systems is higher than 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.

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, Mayan Cichlid from Central America, and Clown Knifefish from Southeast Asia. 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.

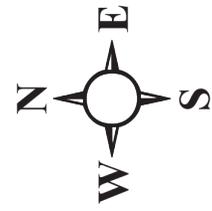
The northern E-4 and associated lakes and canals receive a great deal of fishing pressure so we encourage anglers to release most, if not all of the largemouth bass they catch. If anglers don't release most of the bass they catch, this high quality fishery will deteriorate rapidly.

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.

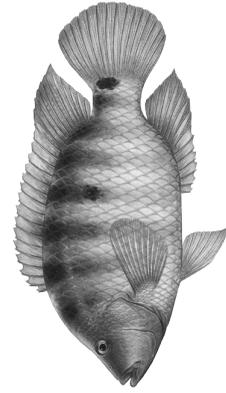
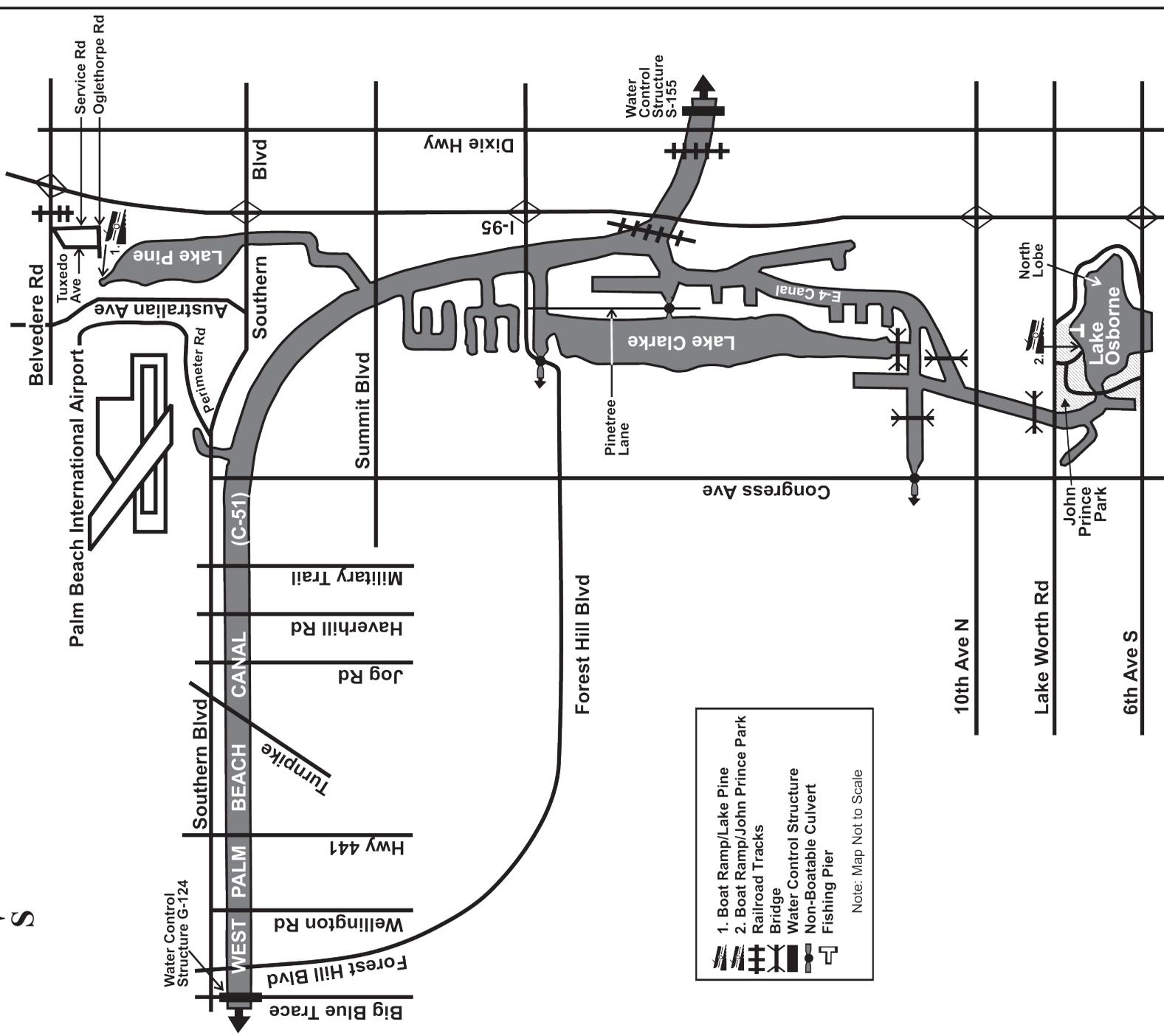
For more Florida fishing information, please visit Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's web site at www.MyFWC.com/fishing.

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

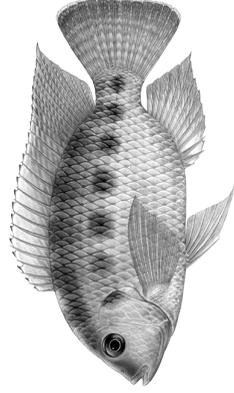




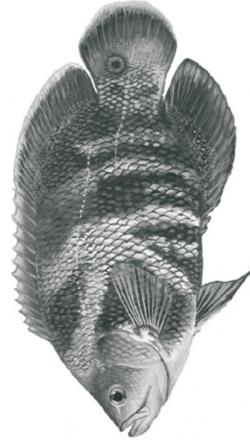
NORTH E-4 CANAL



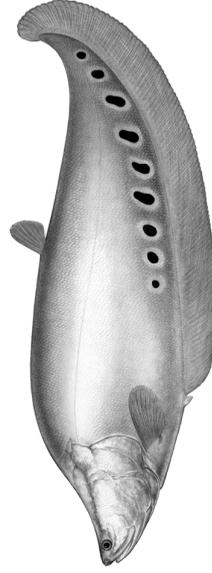
Mayan Cichlid



Spotted Tilapia



Oscar



Clown Knifefish

Mayan Cichlid, Spotted Tilapia and Clown Knifefish illustrations by Diane Peebles; Oscar by Duane Raver, Jr.