



## Program Information Package

# Playing in Rock Gardens East Sooke

## Program Description

Congratulations on registering to participate in our Rock Garden Paddling program. Rock garden paddling is one of the most challenging and rewarding aspects of sea kayaking. As the popularity of rough water paddling increases in the sea kayak community, as does the need for safety and training.



For this program, the instructors will assume that you have extensive previous experience including overnight trips in Class 3 waters, rolling training, assisted and self-rescue practice and experience towing. If you are unsure of your ability to take this course, please call us to discuss your concerns prior to registering.

The following document has been written in order to aid you in preparing for the Rock Garden program. Please be sure to review all the pages and don't hesitate to contact us with any questions.

## Paperwork Checklist

Please use the following checklist to ensure you have received and reviewed all the required documentation prior to the program start date:

- Rock Garden Course Information Package – please review
- SKILS Waiver – please sign with your instructor at the beginning of the program
- SKILS Medical Form – please bring a completed copy to your program
- Policy and Procedures Document – please review

# Program Objectives and Expectations

## Objective

Whether you are new to playing near the rocks or an experienced paddler, our courses will challenge your experience and training. Focusing on risk management, boat control, reading water and rescues, our courses aim to give you the skills to play safely and confidently in Rock Gardens.

## Expectations

Candidates for this course must demonstrate strong technical, tactical, mental, and physical skills in Class 3-4 waters.

### Technical

- Handle their boat and recover from a capsize in currents, surf, moderate seas and strong winds.

### Tactical

- Route plan on the open coast.
- Demonstrate situational awareness in a variety of challenging sea conditions.
- Make decisions in moderate and high consequence scenarios.

### Mental

- Show resilience in the face of physical and psychological challenges.
- Show focus and attention in moderate and rough waters.
- Lead and follow within a peer group in Class 4 waters.
- Integrate technical and tactical skills.

### Physical

- Demonstrate power and acceleration in moderate seas and strong currents.
- Demonstrate endurance appropriate to open coastal touring.
- Show balance and recovery in moderate and rough waters.
- Coordinate technical skills in complex paddling conditions.



# Program Logistics



## Program Prerequisites

For this program, the instructors will assume that you have extensive previous experience including overnight trips in Class 3 waters, rolling training, assisted and self-rescue practice and experience towing. If you are unsure of your ability to take this course, please call us to discuss your concerns prior to registering.

## Class Size

A minimum of 3 candidates is required to run this program while the maximum group size we adhere to is 6. The limited class size helps to ensure a rich learning environment with lots of opportunity for one-on-one coaching and feedback.

## Meals

Students are responsible for their own meals and snacks for the duration of this program.

## Our Classroom

The necessary environment we are looking for is open coast with infrequent and sometimes difficult or impossible landing options. The coastline of East Sooke offers us this with a rugged outer coast of reefs and small islands interspersed with a few beaches; this is ideal for learning to play in rock gardens.

## What You Are Responsible For

You are responsible for all travel, accommodation and paddling gear. You are also responsible for accommodation before and after the course. White water helmets are mandatory for this course, and dry suits are strongly recommended. The weather along this coast is variable; over the course we can expect sun, rain, and wind in varying amounts. You will spend time in the water during rescue practice and scenarios. The water temperature varies from 6°Celsius to 15°Celsius. Please come prepared with plenty of clothing and immersion gear.

## Required Gear List

If you need to rent equipment, contact our office at [info@skils.ca](mailto:info@skils.ca).

- Touring kayak appropriate to rock garden. Plastic kayaks are recommended.
- PFD with whistle and knife
- Paddle and spare
- Skirt
- Pump
- Helmet
- Tow line and other safety gear
- 15 m buoyant heaving line
- Immersion clothing
- VHF Radio
- Snacks and water bottle
- Program paperwork
- Repair kit for kayak

## Your Instructors

SKILS staff members are industry leaders and professionals with extensive guiding and instructional experience and certification. For profiles on each of our staff members, please visit our website at [www.skils.ca](http://www.skils.ca).



## Course Outline

Given the skills and experience the candidates, the requirements of the course, and the elements we will be playing in, your instructors will strive to take advantage of any and all learning opportunities as they arise. We will alter the course to provide candidates with as rich, unique, and rewarding experience as possible.

## Course Materials & Background Reading

In our experience, a little preparation goes a long way in this course. No prior reading is required; however, some time put into making sure your roll is reliable, your equipment is in good working order, and that this session is not your first session on the water this season, will go a long way to ensuring a successful day.



Thank you for enrolling in our skills training program. If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact us at [info@skils.ca](mailto:info@skils.ca). We look forward to playing on the water with you!