



Anglers for Conservation (AFC) connects youth to fishing in the Indian River Lagoon

About Us

Anglers for Conservation was founded in 2004, as a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering the next generation of marine stewards through **fishing, habitat restoration and science.**

“Hook Kids On Fishing” is our fishing clinic for kids put on by conservation-minded anglers.



Thank you!



Sponsors

- CCA Florida
- Fish Florida
- HUK Gear
- Reel Life Bait & Tackle

Host Venue

- Marine Discovery Center

Partners in Conservation

- Save the Manatee Club
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Paddling Paradise

Volunteers

- We could not do this without you!

Background

Human history in the Indian River Lagoon dates back nearly 15,000 years ago when the first hunters and gatherers made their way through the area.



Indian relics found on the Merritt Island launch area by the William Andrews family of Indian River City.



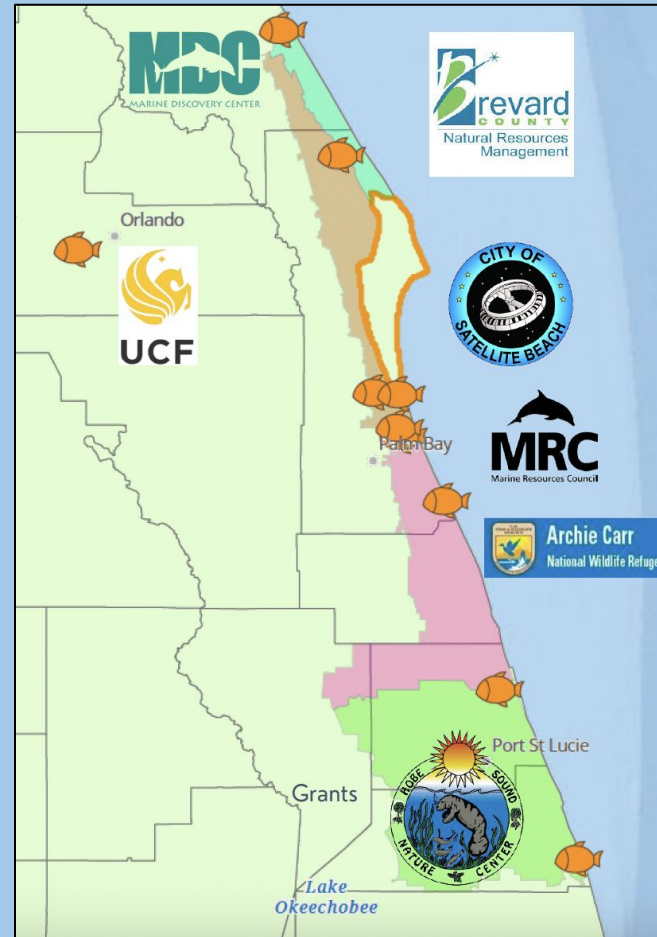
AFC's Impactful Initiatives

Area of Responsibility

The Indian River Lagoon (IRL) extends 256 km across the East Coast of Central Florida

Partnerships Established

Each event relies on the support of sponsors, host venues and partners in conservation.





“To protect and restore Florida’s coastal and Indian River Lagoon ecosystems through education, research and community stewardship.”



HOOK KIDS ON FISHING

SAFETY & ROD HANDLING



HOOKS & RIGGING



CASTING



BAIT & TACKLE



BOATING



CONSERVATION



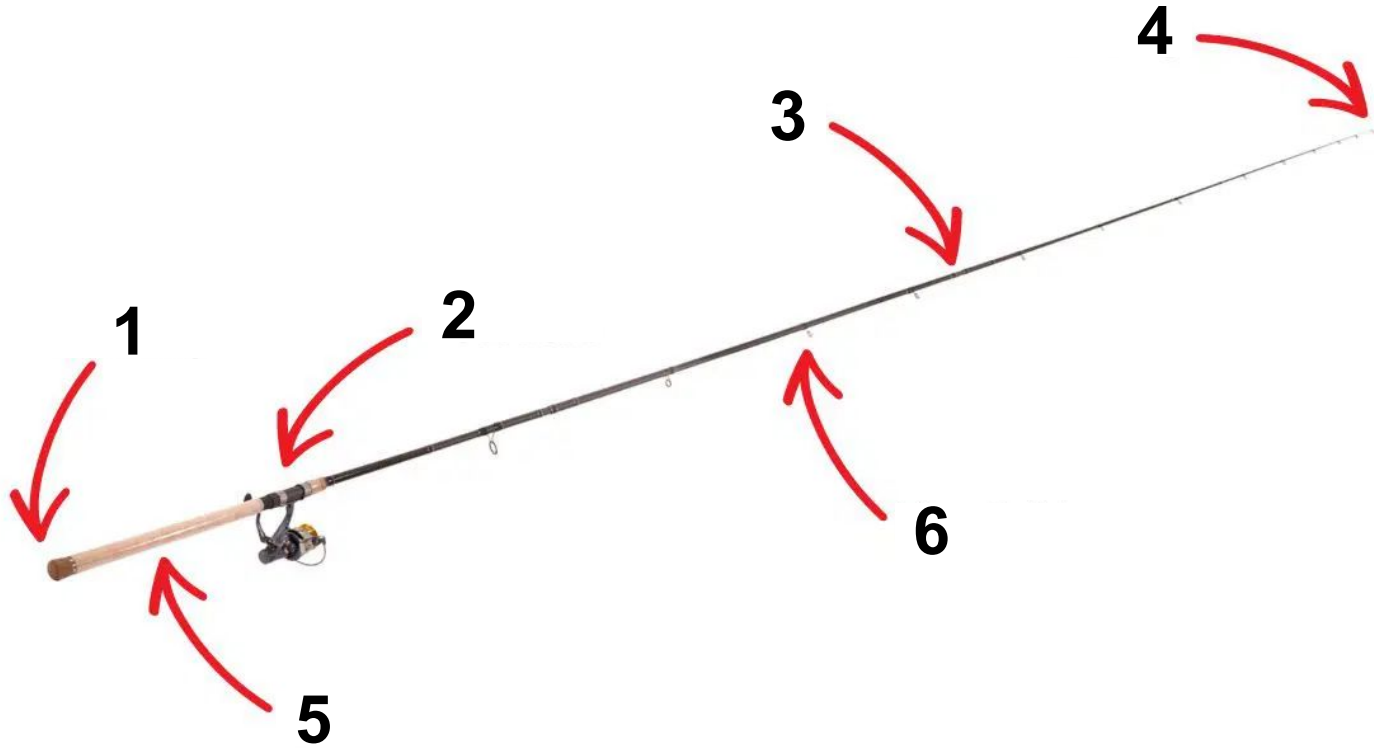
Safety & Rod Handling

Safety and Rod Handling

- ❑ Walk with your rod pointing in front of you. That way it won't get stuck in the trees.
- ❑ Hook Storage- store your hook in the designated spot on the rod and always be aware of where your hook is.
- ❑ Lightning! - make sure to go inside when there is lightning nearby because when lightning is around, your fishing rod could act as a lightning rod.



Parts of a Fishing Rod



Parts of the Fishing Rod



Hooks & Rigging

The Improved Clinch Knot

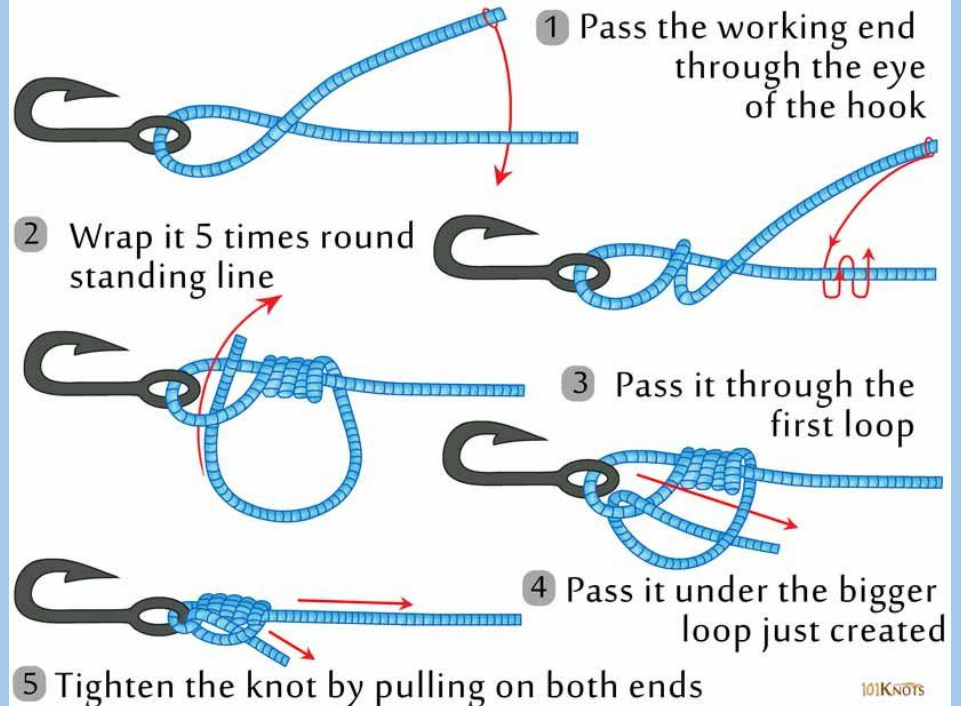
Team Captains will teach you how to master this knot

Hint: Wetting the knot before fully tightening makes a significant difference in the strength and reliability of the knot.

- Reduces friction
- Tightens evenly

Attach the hook safely to the rod!

Improved Clinch Knot Instructions



Hooks & Rigging

- ❑ Fishing can generate marine debris, such as when cutting the tag end.

How can I help?

1. Recycle fishing line in bin locations across the state.
2. Bring a container with a lid to store plastic bags or used fishing line (e.g., tennis ball canister or coffee can).
3. Collect any plastic items or fishing line you see.

Scan QR code to find recycling bins



Bait & Tackle

What's In Your Tackle Box?

Bobbers

Circle hooks

Tape Measure

Feather Jigs

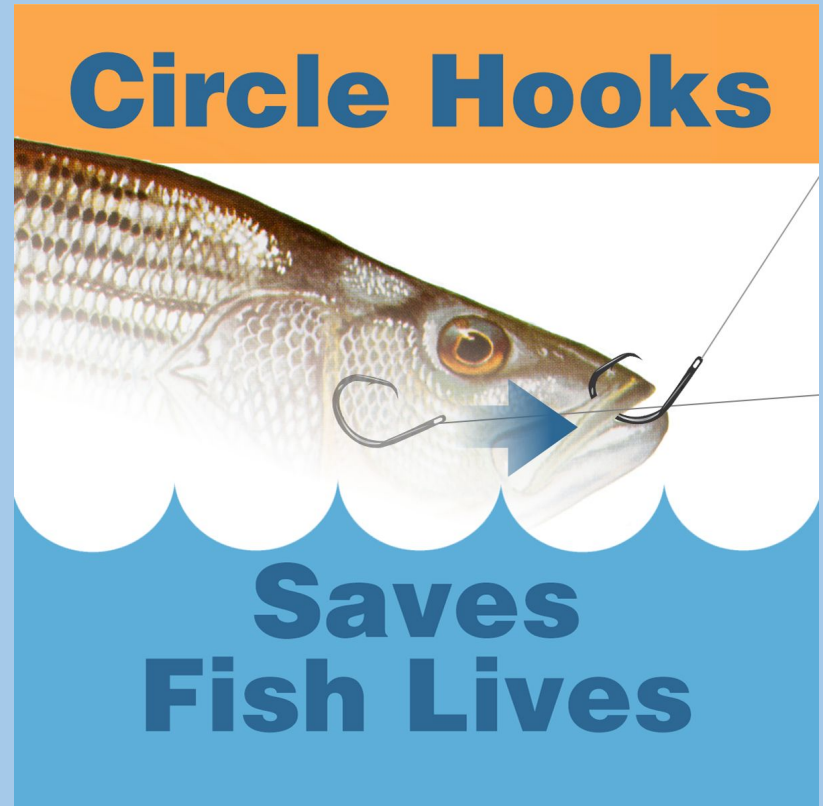
Jigheads

Grub Tails



Bait & Tackle

- ❑ **Circle hooks minimize harm to fish, thus supporting healthier fish populations and contributing to the sustainability of fishing activities.**
- ❑ **Circle Hooks:** these hooks are used with live or dead bait and the shape of the hook ensures that the fish will be hooked in the corner of its mouth
- ❑ **J-Hooks:** these hooks look like the letter “J” and are used with lures.



A close-up photograph of a person's hands using silver pliers to crush the sharp barb of a fishing hook. The person is wearing a light blue shirt. The background is a bright, out-of-focus sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

What is the importance of crushing the barb down on hooks?

Barbless hooks cause less damage to the fish's mouth, reducing the risk of injury and increasing the chances of survival after being caught and released.

In some fishing regulations or areas designated for catch-and-release fishing, the use of barbless hooks may be required by law or encouraged as a conservation measure.

What is a plug or lure?

Paddletails: Soft plastic lure with a tail that looks like a paddle. When you use the lure the paddle creates a lifelike representation of a baitfish.



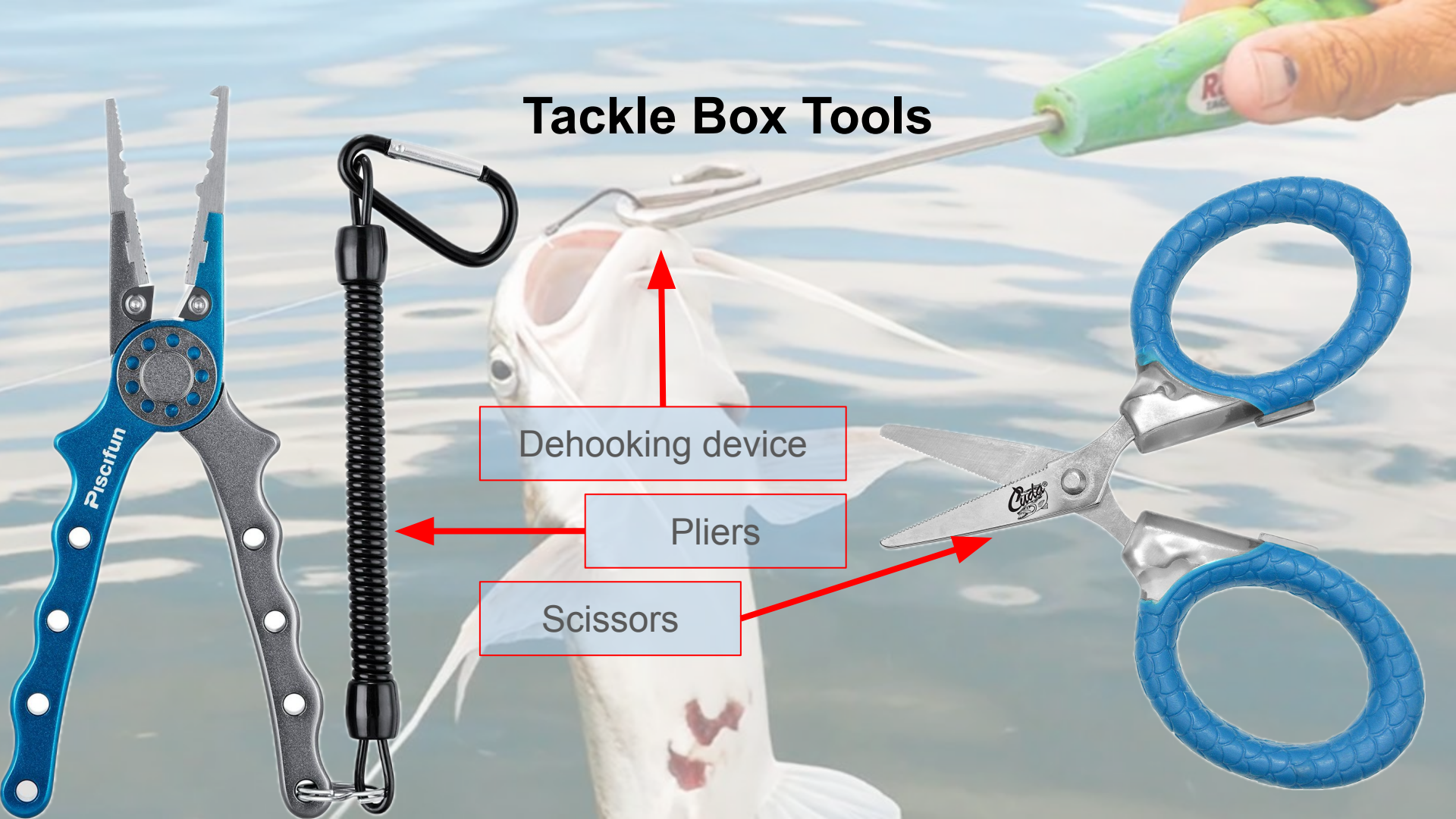
Shrimp imitation: A shrimp imitation is a soft plastic material that is made to look exactly like a shrimp.



Hard baits: Hard baits are made out of hard plastic and usually have a rattling noise to them that attracts fish.



Tackle Box Tools



Dehooking device

Pliers

Scissors

Casting

Casting

A person wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and a black bucket hat is standing in shallow water, holding a fishing rod. The person is seen in profile, facing left. The background shows a body of water with gentle ripples under a clear blue sky with some light clouds. The fishing rod is held diagonally across the frame, extending from the person's hands towards the top left corner.

Before you go to the casting station, remember these safety tips!

- Watch where you are pointing your rod.
- Look behind you when you cast.
- Be aware of your surroundings.

Boating

Boating

- ❑ “Underway” is defined as anytime except when the vessel is anchored, moored, made fast to the shore, or aground.



Navigate with Care Manatees are There



Boat Safely!



Save the Manatee Club

www.savethemanatee.org

1-800-432-JOIN (5646)

Photo © David R. Schlichter

Manatees and Boats

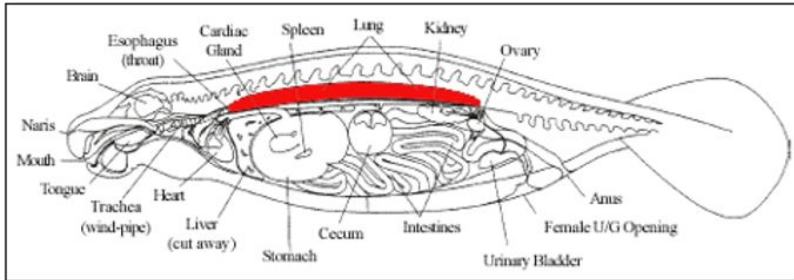


- Largest known human-related cause of manatee deaths.
- Characteristics of manatees make them vulnerable to collisions and injuries by boats.
- Propellers and blunt force trauma (more deadly).
- Propeller guards would be no substitution for slow and idle speed zones.
- Preventable with increased awareness, education, regulations, and enforcement.



Boat Strikes

- Largest known human-related cause of manatee deaths
- ~25% of yearly manatee mortality caused by boat strikes
- 96% of manatees have propeller scars
- 1 in 4 adult manatees have been hit at least 10 times over their lifetime
- Strikes from hull of vessel most deadly – broken ribs, punctured lungs, future buoyancy issues





Boating Tips



- Wear polarized sunglasses and learn how to spot manatees in the water.
- Obey posted speed zones and avoid designated manatee sanctuaries. **Go slow!**
- Do not attract a manatee to your boat with food, water, or ropes to chew on.
- When paddling in a kayak or paddleboard, do not paddle over manatees, keep a distance, and observe passively.



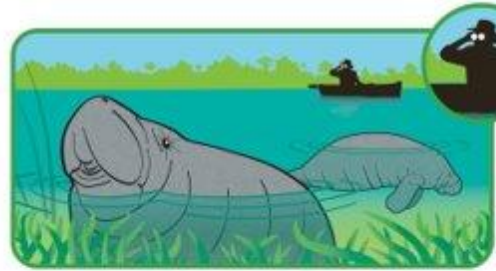
Respect Florida Manatee



Feeding & watering manatees is illegal.

Respect Florida Manatees

Disturbance can harm them



DO:
Observe from a
distance.
Go slow,
look out
below.



DON'T:
Touch Manatees
Chase Manatees
Feed Manatees
Give water to Manatees

It is against the law to harass manatees. You could be cited or fined.

Call the **FWC Wildlife Alert Hotline, 888-404-FWCC (3922)**, to report wildlife violations including dead, injured or distressed manatees.

Visit MyFWC.com/Manatee

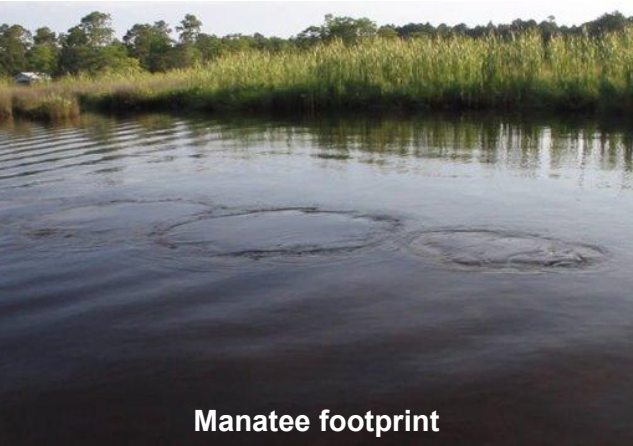
Sign printed and
paid for by the
**Save the Manatee
Club**



How You Can Be a Manatee Safe Boater



©Save the Manatee Club



Manatee footprint



Sarasota County Police Department

Mating herd



Without Polarized Glasses



With Polarized Glasses



Mote Marine Lab



Manatee Protection

- Marine Mammal Protection Act – 1972
 - Protects marine mammals in the U.S.
- Endangered Species Act – 1973
 - Species listed as endangered or threatened are protected.
- Florida Manatee Sanctuary Act of 1978
- As of January/February 2019, there is a minimum population count of 5,733 manatees.



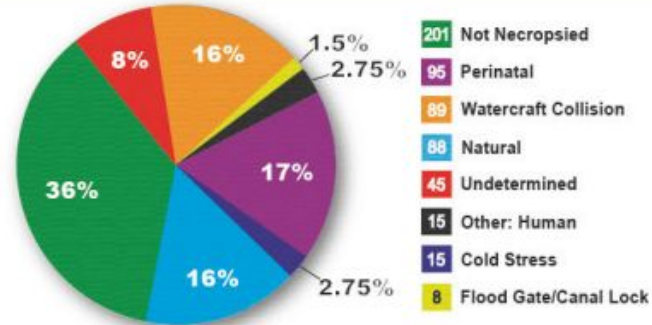


Mortalities

2023 Manatee Mortality Statistics

556 Confirmed Deaths

2019 Minimum Estimated Number of Manatees in Florida: 5,733*



Mortality and Population Data Courtesy of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Overview

Manatee mortality has fallen for the second year in a row on Florida's east coast and in the state overall. In 2023, the total number of manatee deaths in Florida (556) was lower than the 5-year average (741) and half of the record number documented just two years ago in 2021 (1,100). On Florida's east coast, 81% of carcasses were fully necropsied to continue investigating the Unusual Mortality Event (UME). Only 3% of manatee deaths on the east coast were attributable to starvation. Watercraft injuries and red tide poisoning returned as the leading causes of manatee mortality state-wide (16% and 20%, respectively).

The above data is collected and released publicly by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).





Be Their Voice

- If you see an injured, dead, tagged, or orphaned manatee, or if you see a manatee being harassed:
 - Call **1-888-404-3922 (FWCC)**
 - Email or text **Tip@myfwc.com**
 - Use **VHF Channel 16** on your marine radio
- You can also report a speed zone violation.
- Store this number in your phone or post it on your boat.
- Model good behavior when on the water.



Know Your Zones

- Before hitting the water, read over navigational charts and know your zones!
- Boating zones in FL waters protect humans, manatees, and important habitats alike.
- Boating zones include:
 - Boating speed zones
 - Critical wildlife areas
 - Seagrass protection zones
 - Manatee zones and sanctuaries.
- Zones indicate reduced speed or no access.



Idle Speed. Lowest speed needed to maintain steerage and forward motion. (Speed ~2-3 mph/3-5 km/h*)



Little or no wake. Vessel must be completely settled in the water. (Speed ~5-7 mph/8-11 km/h*)



No Entry. People, vessels and pets prohibited within these areas. This includes no fishing within the boundaries.

Watch for markers!

- Waterway markers also indicate shallow areas to avoid – seagrass beds
- Seagrass beds are very sensitive – propellers can easily cut up the grass, leaving long scars
- Seagrasses are the main food source for manatees, turtles and other herbivores
- In some parts of FL, it is illegal to damage seagrass beds
- Lift your engine in shallow areas; you can also use a pole to maneuver





Observe, Don't Disturb



- Do NOT do these things to manatees:
 - Feed or give water
 - Touch or pet
 - Surround, chase, ride
 - Separate a mother and calf
- Habituates wild animals to humans.
- Manatees may move to colder waters or areas where there's more boat traffic.
- It is illegal – you could be fined or go to jail.
- Speak quietly when encountering manatees.
- Responsible photography and social media posts.





Stash Your Trash



Take only pictures, leave only footprints.

Please use trash receptacles!

- Always be mindful of what you leave behind when you visit an outdoor space.
- Reduce the use of single use plastics.
- Use reusable items.
- Recycle monofilament fishing line.

©Save the Manatee Club



Trash



- Entangled by monofilament fishing line, crab traps, and other debris.
- Ingesting debris that is hidden in seagrass beds. They feel “full” and stop eating.
- Pollution can also kill the plants that manatees eat.





Tracking

- USFWS deems rehabbed manatees ready for release. Non-releasable may serve as “ambassadors” for their species at zoos or aquariums.
- Satellite tracking devices – do not touch. Does not harm the manatee or inhibit its movement.
- Report manatees with tracking devices to FWC.

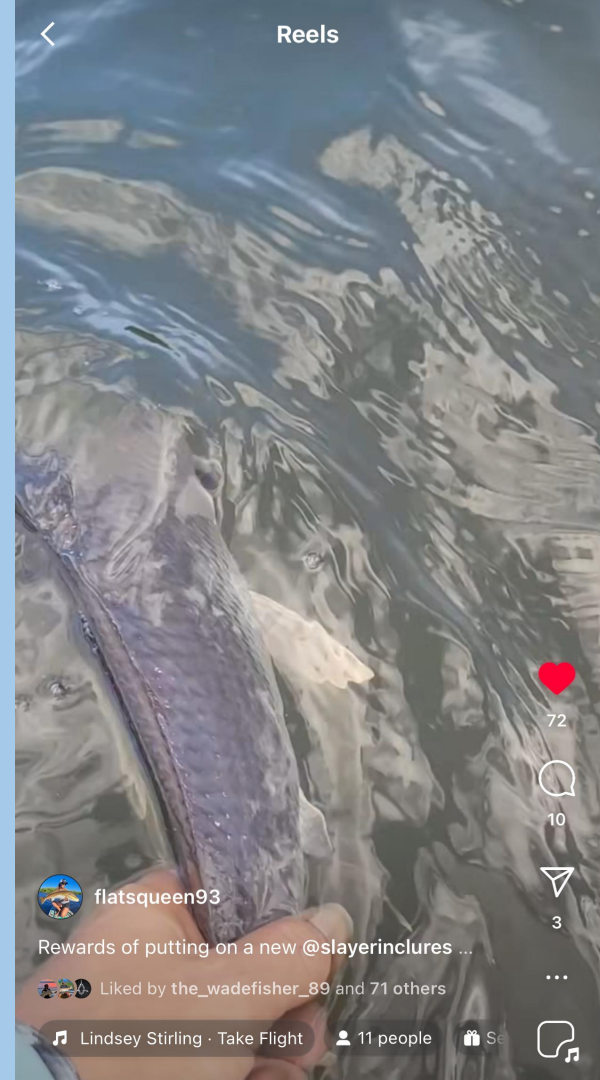


Conservation



HOW TO CATCH & RELEASE

- ❑ Wet your hands before grabbing the fish. This protects the fishes outer layer of slime.
- ❑ Use pliers to quickly remove the hook.
- ❑ And finally hold larger fish in the water and sway them side to side to help them “revive”. They'll swim away when they are ready.



Fishing Regulations

Fish Rules app

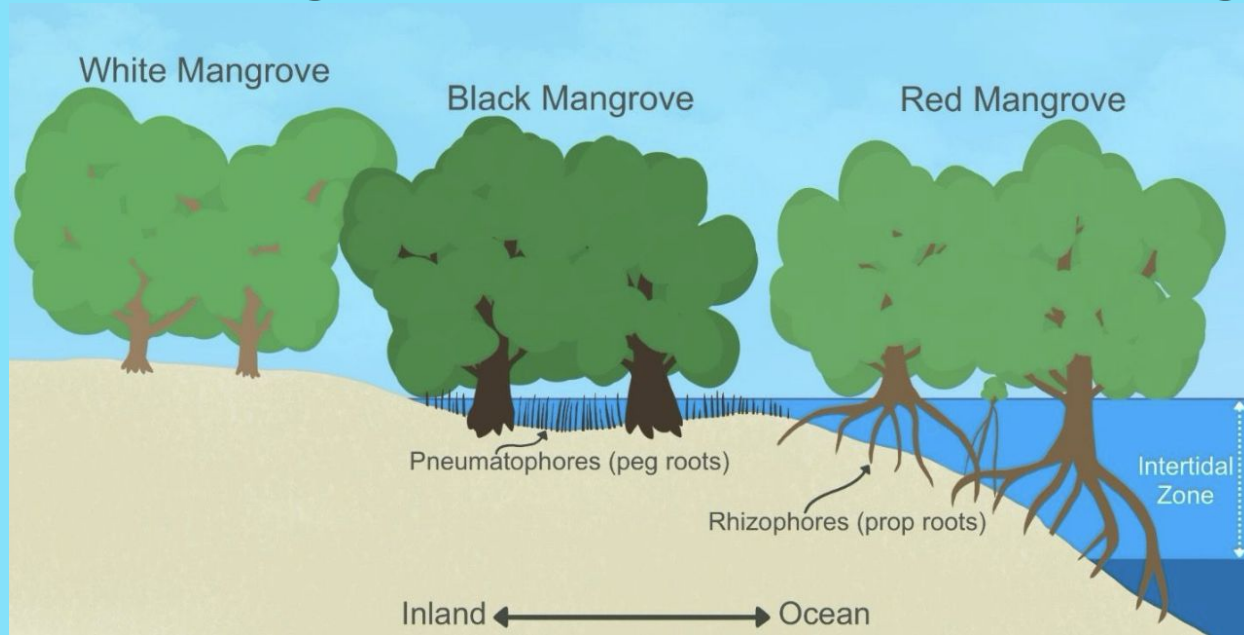


Living Shoreline Stabilization

Planting mangroves, salt marsh, seagrass and restoring oysters improves water quality, reduces shoreline erosion, sequesters carbon and enhances fish habitats.



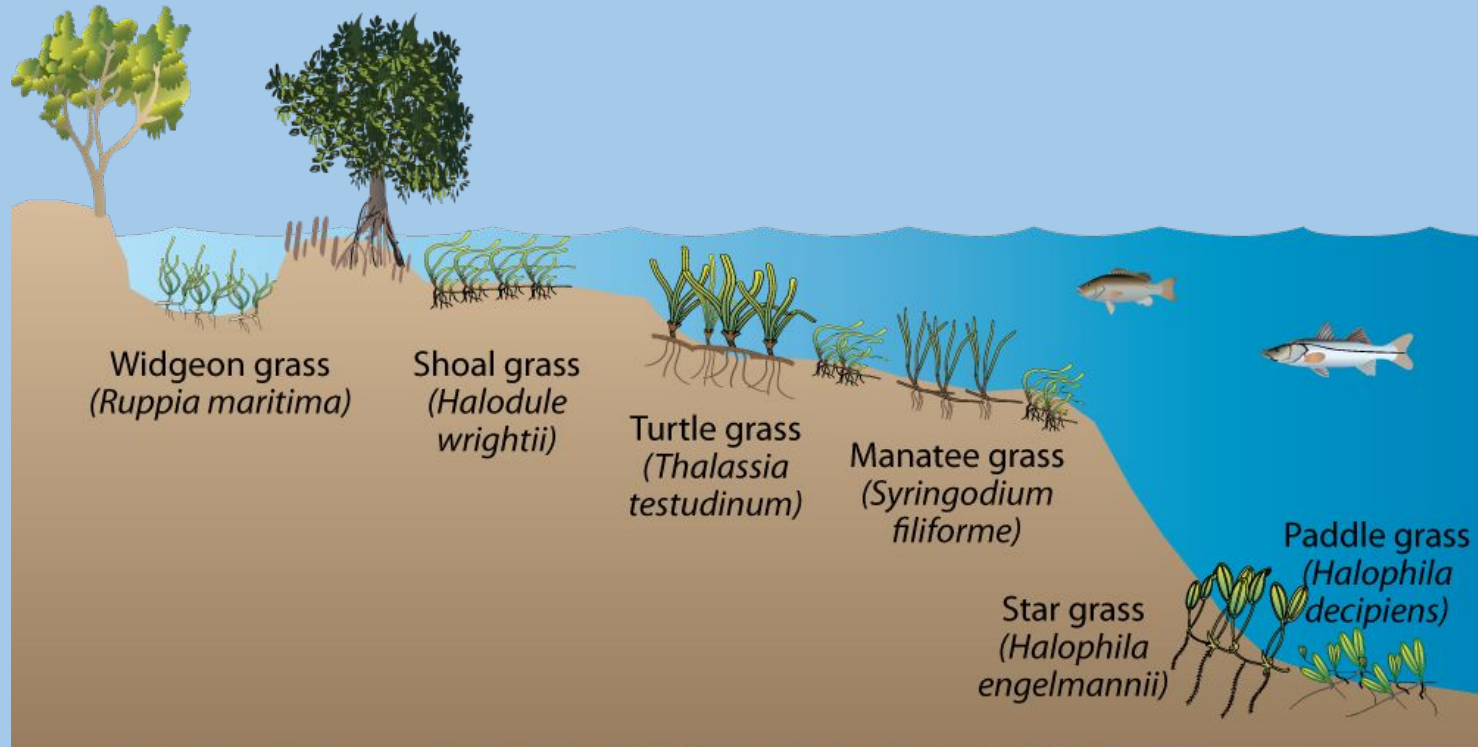
Types of mangroves in the Indian River Lagoon



What benefits do coastal communities receive from mangroves?

- Nursery for marine life: juvenile fish like red drum, snook, and spotted seatrout
- Water filtration: serving as natural filters, trapping pollutants and sediments
- Storm protection: their roots stabilize shorelines and prevent erosion
- Carbon sequestration: storing carbon at a rate ten times greater than tropical forests

In the Indian River Lagoon, 7 types of seagrass provide shelter and nursery grounds for fish, improve water quality, and prevent erosion.



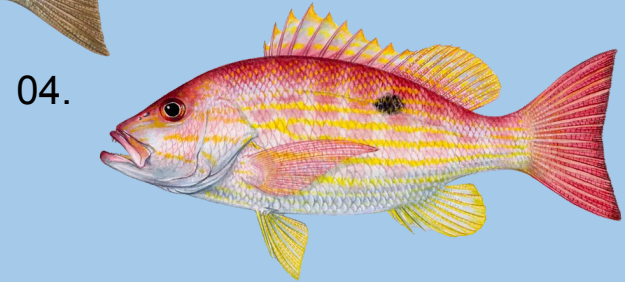
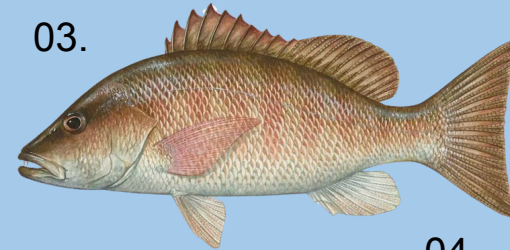
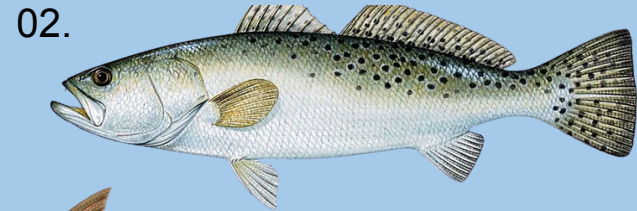
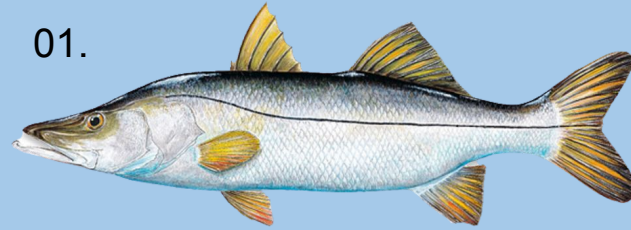
**Species of juvenile
sportfish reeled in by
habitat restoration:**

01. Common snook

02. Spotted seatrout

03. Mangrove/grey snapper

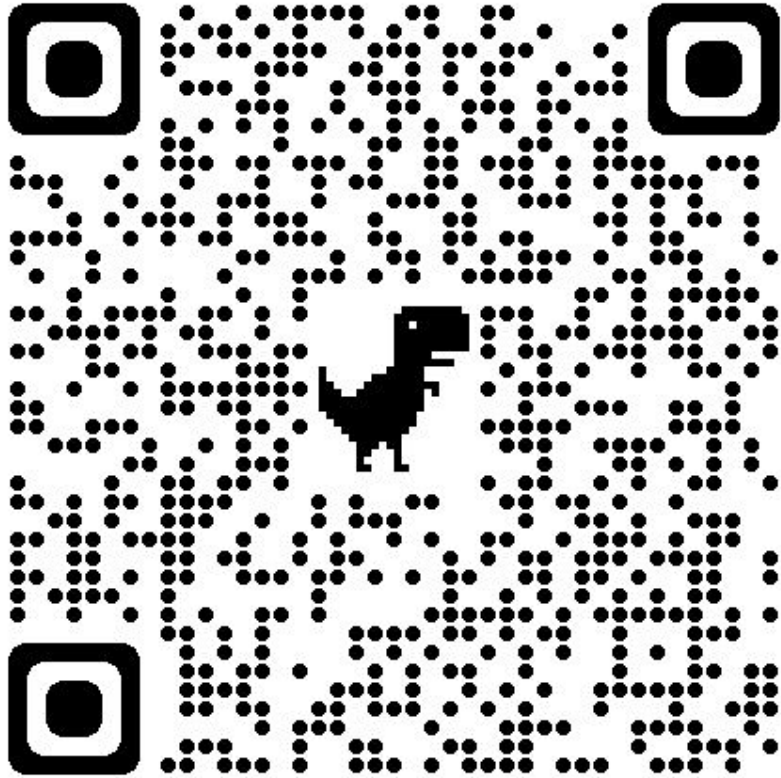
04. Lane snapper



Questions

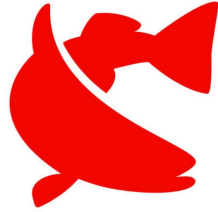
- ❑ What was something you learned?
- ❑ Do you know how to properly release a fish?
- ❑ Are you ready to go fishing?
- ❑ QUESTIONS?





Scan the QR code to access
Hook Kids on Fishing

THANK YOU!



COASTAL
CONSERVATION
ASSOCIATION
FLORIDA

CONSERVATION | HABITAT | RESTOCKING | ADVOCACY



HUK
Performance Fishing

FISH FLORIDA

fishfloridatag.org

conservation through education

