

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The Manatee County Boater's Guide contains maps and information specific to the waterways of Manatee County, emphasizing newly-posted manatee protection and boating speed zones. Many features of interest to boaters and anglers are displayed: locations of boat ramps, marinas, piers, parks and preserves accessible by water, aquatic preserves, watersport recreational areas, artificial reefs, navigational channels, and speed zones. A Resource Directory along with information on marine life and native habitats, boating and angling safety, and ways in which boaters can help protect our local waterways, are also included. This guide should not be used for navigational purposes. Instead, use nautical charts #11400 and #11420, which are available through NOAA.

BOATER'S GUIDE TO

Manatee County



Manatee County Government
Conservation Lands Management Department
415 10th Street West
Bradenton, Florida 34205
941-745-3723

www.mymanatee.org/conservation.html

Welcome to Manatee County



Manatee County is located along the west coast of Florida, south of Tampa Bay, with over 150 miles of coastline and 27 miles of white sand beaches. Mangrove forests, seagrass beds, salt marshes and mud flats are among a few of the important coastal habitats which serve the abundant bird and marine animal populations of the County. Manatee County waters provide excellent recreational boating, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

Fishing has been a major industry in Manatee County for centuries. Today, both commercial and recreational fishing are important economic elements of the region.

Whether visiting or living in Manatee County, you too can make a difference by doing your part in protecting our waterways, through safe and responsible boating and enhanced awareness of the region's precious natural resources.

Birds of the Bay Area

Some common birds to this region that you might see include the Great Blue Heron, Snowy Egret, Great Egret, White Ibis, Brown Pelican, Osprey, Wood Stork, Roseate Spoonbill, and the endangered Florida Scrub Jay. The maps included in this guide highlight bird viewing opportunities such as bird hot spots, bird rookeries, and bird sanctuaries.

Loss and fragmentation of habitat is a threat to all birds and to all species of animals that inhabit the Gulf Coast Region.

Birding Tips

- Enjoy viewing bird rookeries from at least 100 yards away. These rookeries harbor nesting colonies and flocks of feeding birds. Boaters and operators of personal watercraft should slow down in order to reduce wakes in these birding areas. Large wakes resulting from higher speeds are responsible for the erosion of bird islands and mangrove areas, and the noise generated from higher speeds are disruptive to wildlife.
- Report injured seabirds that need assistance. Consult the Resource Directory of this guide for contact information.
- Pick up marine debris if you find it and don't discard any fishing line or other trash, which can be lethal to seabirds and other marine life, into the water.
- Remain quiet and move slowly to maximize bird viewing opportunities.



RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Audubon Coastal Islands Sanctuaries	813-623-6826
FDEP Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve	941-721-2068
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	888-404-3922
Law Enforcement	888-347-4356
Manatee and marine turtle collision hotline; rescue and recovery. Also to report oil spills, fishing violations, boating accidents, and marine mammal injuries or strandings. Information also available on saltwater fishing and shellfish harvesting.	
Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services	850-488-5471
Division of Aquaculture	For more information on shellfish harvesting, www.floridaaquaculture.com
Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute	727-896-8626
Florida Fishing Licenses	888-347-4356 www.wildlifefish.com
Florida Sea Grant Extension	941-722-4524
Manatee County:	
Marine Rescue	941-749-3500
Sheriff's Office	(Emergency) 911 (Report crime or incident) 941-747-3011
Conservation Lands Mgmt. Dept.	941-745-3723
Parks & Recreation Dept.	941-742-5823
Lake Manatee Dam/Water Treatment	941-746-3020
Mote Marine Laboratory	941-388-4441
For assistance with injured marine mammals or sea turtles.	
National Marine Fisheries Service	727-570-5301
Southwest Regional Office, responsible for managing marine fisheries in federal waters.	
NOAA Weather Service Broadcast	813-645-2506
24-hour weather and marine forecast	162.55Kz/VH
Sarasota Bay Estuary Program	941-955-8085
Tampa Bay Estuary Program	813-893-2765
Sea Tow Marine Towing Service	800-473-2869
U.S. Coast Guard Rescue	(Emergency) 911 (Non-emergency) 941-794-1261
For search and rescue assistance VHF Channel 16, Emergency Cell "CG."	
West Coast Inland Navigation District	941-485-9402
For information on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.	
Wildlife Inc.	941-778-6324
For assistance with injured birds.	

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Publication design: Patti Cross • patticross@comcast.net • www.tomcross-artist.com

BOAT RAMPS	Address	Open 24 Hours	Useable at all Tides	Boats Over 15'	Restrooms
1 Bishop Harbor	Bishop Harbor Rd., Palmetto	—	—	—	—
2 US Hwy 19 (limited parking)	Off of US Hwy 19, Palmetto	—	—	—	—
3 63rd St. Memorial Park	East end of 63rd St., Holmes Beach	—	—	—	—
4 Kingfish	Manatee Ave. W. (west of Intracoastal), Holmes Beach	•	•	•	•
5 59th St. W./Warners Bayou	5800 Riversview Blvd., Bradenton	•	•	•	•
6 Palmetto	801 Riverside Dr. on Manatee River, Palmetto	•	•	•	•
7 Highland Shores	353 Shore Drive on Manatee River, Ellenton	•	•	•	•
8 State Rd. 64/Bradenton River	Manatee Ave. E. (SR 64) on Bradenton River, Bradenton	•	•	•	•
9 Coquina North	Gulf Dr. S. (SR 789), on Anna Maria Island, Bradenton Beach	•	—	•	•
10 Coquina South	Gulf Dr. S. (SR 789), on Anna Maria Island, Bradenton Beach	•	•	•	•

Clean Marina Designation is given by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to marinas that meet federal and state environmental regulations as well as provide environmental education and services to boaters. For more information visit the Clean Marina website: www.floridadep.org/law

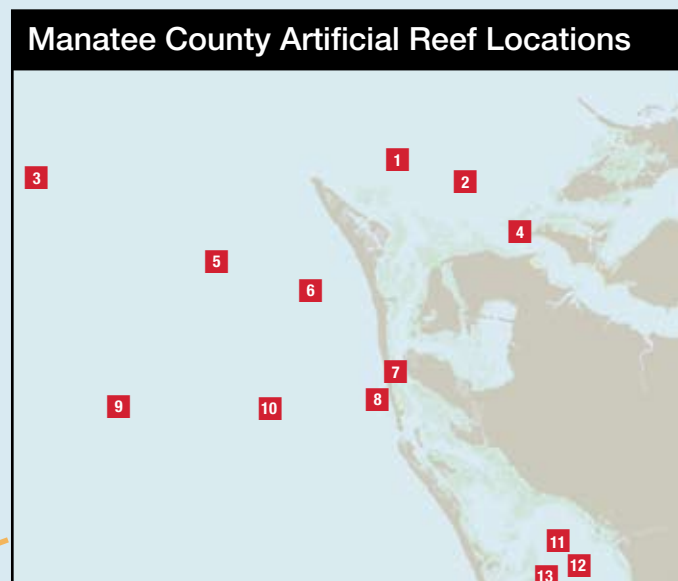
MARINAS	Clean Marina	Fuel Gas/Diesel	Pumpout	Bait	Marker No.	Contact	Address
1 Palm View Marina	—	—	—	—	53	941-729-8384	6817 Bayshore Rd., Palmetto
2 Catcher's Marina	•	•	•	•	53	941-778-1977	5501 Marina Dr., Holmes Beach
3 Tropic Isles Marina	—	•	•	•	—	941-729-8128	509 Marina Dr., Palmetto
4 Cut's Edge Harbor Marina	—	—	—	—	—	941-729-4878	4000 10th St. W., Palmetto
5 Regatta Pointe Marina	•	G D	•	•	19	941-729-6021	1005 Riverside Dr., Palmetto
6 Twin Dolphins Marina	•	G D	•	•	22	941-747-8300	1000 1st Ave. W., Bradenton
7 Bradenton Beach Marina	•	G D	•	•	49	941-778-2288	402 Church Ave., Bradenton Beach
8 Cortez Cove Marina	—	—	—	—	—	941-761-4554	4522 121st St. W., Cortez
9 Cannons Marina	•	G D	•	•	33	941-383-1311	6040 Gulf of Mexico Dr., Longboat Key
10 Sarabay Marina	•	G D	•	•	—	941-355-2781	7150 N. Tamiami Trail, Bradenton

AUDUBON BIRD SANCTUARIES	Address
1 Nina Griffiths Washburn	I-275, Terra Ceia
2 Terra Ceia Little Bird Key	Terra Ceia Rd. & Bayshore Rd., Terra Ceia
3 Dot Dash Bird Nesting Colony	5801 17th St. W., Palmetto
4 Cortez Key	Terminus of 75th St. W., Bradenton
5 Town Island	17th Ave. & 99th St. W., Bradenton
6 Whale Key	Terminus of Manatee Ave., Bradenton
7 Bowlees Creek Bird Island	Southwest side of Anna Maria Bridge
8 Coquina Beach	Gulf Dr. S. (SR 789), Bradenton Beach
9 Leflis Key Preserve	East side of Gulf Dr. north of Coquina Bayside Park, Bradenton Beach
10 Joan M. Durante Park	5550 Gulf of Mexico Dr., Longboat Key

PARKS/PRESERVES	Address
1 Skyway Fishing Pier State Park (South Skyway Fishing Pier)	I-275, Terra Ceia
2 Terra Ceia Preserve State Park/Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve	Terra Ceia Rd. & Bayshore Rd., Terra Ceia
3 Emerson Point Preserve	5801 17th St. W., Palmetto
4 De Soto National Memorial & Riverview Pointe Preserve	Terminus of 75th St. W., Bradenton
5 Robinson Preserve	17th Ave. & 99th St. W., Bradenton
6 Manatee Beach	Terminus of Manatee Ave., Bradenton
7 Neal Preserve	Southwest side of Anna Maria Bridge
8 Coquina Beach	Gulf Dr. S. (SR 789), Bradenton Beach
9 Leflis Key Preserve	East side of Gulf Dr. north of Coquina Bayside Park, Bradenton Beach
10 Joan M. Durante Park	5550 Gulf of Mexico Dr., Longboat Key

FISHING PIERS/POINTS OF INTEREST	Address
1 Skyway Fishing Pier State Park (South Skyway Fishing Pier)	I-275, Terra Ceia
2 Anna Maria City Pier	Terminus of Pine Ave. & Bay Blvd., Anna Maria
3 Green Bridge Pier	US 41, Palmetto
4 Cortez Fishing Village	46th Ave. W., Cortez
5 Bradenton Beach Pier	200 Bridge St., Bradenton Beach

ARTIFICIAL REEFS	Depth	Latitude	Longitude
1 Bulkhead Reef	15'	27° 33.19'N	82° 42.37'W
2 Southeast Tampa Bay Reef	14'	27° 32.90'N	82° 40.30'W
3 Seven Mile North Reef	40'-41'	27° 32.39'N	82° 52.70'W
4 Emerson Point Reef	12'-16'	27° 31.84'N	82° 38.77'W
5 Three Mile North Reef	30'	27° 29.99'N	82° 47.00'W
6 One Mile Reef	20'	27° 29.41'N	82° 44.99'W
7 Bradenton Beach Pier Reef	4'-10'	27° 27.99'N	82° 41.65'W
8 Coquina Near Shore Reef	8'-15'	27° 26.99'N	82° 41.83'W
9 Seven Mile South Reef	40'-42'	27° 26.59'N	82° 49.20'W
10 Three Mile South Reef	30'-31'	27° 26.56'N	82° 44.85'W
11 Bayshore North Reef	10'	27° 24.50'N	82° 36.10'W
12 Bayshore South Reef	10'-11'	27° 23.90'N	82° 35.60'W
13 Whale Key Reef	10'	27° 23.50'N	82° 36.25'W



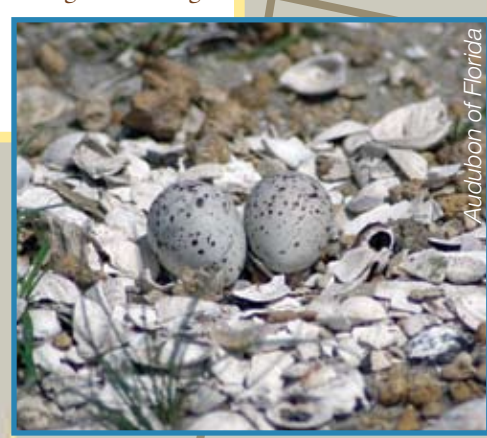
FISHING THE SEAGRASS FLATS

- Do not operate your boat in areas that are too shallow for your equipment.
- Use nautical charts and tide tables to plan your course.
- Never cut through seagrass beds with a propeller.
- Watch your prop wash for mud or plant life which may indicate you are too shallow. Remember prop scars take years to recover.
- Pole or use a trolling motor when traveling across or fishing on the flats. Quiet fisherman catch more fish.
- If you run aground, turn off your engine! Raise the motor and push or pole your way to deeper water. If necessary, wait for high tide to move your boat.
- Do not crowd another boat. If you see another boat fishing on the flats, do not approach unless beckoned.
- Stirred-up sediments are harmful to seafife. Always keep at least 12 inches of water under your propeller.

Special Regulated Watersport Areas
The County's Manatee Protection Ordinance designates Warners Bayou East and West as slow speed/minimum wake zones, but under certain restrictions provides for the operation of vessels at higher speeds when engaged in watersports, if the vessel operator and vessel are permitted through the County. Please contact the Conservation Lands Management Department at 941-745-3723 to obtain information on the County's permitting program.

Bird Sanctuaries/Beach Nesting Birds

- The Audubon of Florida recommends the following to help nesting and migrating birds found in bird sanctuaries or other nesting locations:
 - Always comply with signs and posted areas on nesting islands.
 - Never let dogs or children run through a colony of nesting birds.
 - Birds know dogs are effective predators and are highly disturbed by them.
 - On beaches, stay out of posted bird nesting areas. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) officers will post and "string fence" active nesting colonies. Beach-nesting birds, including state-listed Least Terns, Black Skimmers, and American Oystercatchers, choose sandy beaches as nesting sites in spring and summer.
 - Between April and August, gulls, terns, and skimmers may nest on unmarked beach areas. If you notice birds circling and calling over your head, you may be in a nesting colony. The nests, eggs, and even the chicks will be highly camouflaged, placed in shallow hollows or "scraps" in the sand. Watch where you step, leave quietly, and enjoy the spectacle from a distance. Contact FWC at 863-648-3205 or Audubon's Florida Coastal Islands Sanctuaries at 813-623-6826 to report nesting colony locations that have not yet been posted.
 - Birds resting and feeding on sandbars and mudflats should not be disturbed. Migrating birds depend on our area's resources to provide critical food and rest stops during their long-distance trips between nesting sites in the far north and wintering locations in South America. Disturbance of birds on sandbars can interfere with normal feeding and resting behavior, reducing weight gain and the endurance needed for long journeys.
 - Important bird nesting colonies are shown in this guide.



SAFETY EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- The following equipment is required on recreational boats:
- **Personal Flotation Device (PFD)** - must be available for every person on board. Children under 6 years of age are required by Florida law to wear a life jacket on boats less than 26 feet long. Federal law requires persons under the age of 13 to wear a life jacket when more than 9 miles off the Gulf coast, except when below deck or in an enclosed cabin.
 - **Fire Extinguisher** - is required on motorboats with built in gas tanks or if constructed in a way that will allow fumes to accumulate. Always keep your fire extinguisher fully charged.
 - **Sound Signaling Device** - Vessels under 39 feet must carry a whistle, horn or other attention getting device. Boats over 39 feet require both a whistle and a bell.
 - **Visual Distress Signals** - Motorboats operating in coastal waters are required to have appropriate visual distress signals. For more information refer to www.myfwc.com.

**The operator of a boat (owned, rented, or borrowed) is responsible for having ALL the required equipment onboard and in good working condition. Different sized vessels may require additional safety equipment.

Contact the FWC Boating and Watersways Section at 850-488-5600 or go to www.myfwc.com/boating for more information.

BOATER'S TIPS

- Take a boating education course.
- Call 800-336-2686 or log on to www.myfwc.com/boating
- Learn and observe the rules of the waterway - remember "red, right, return" when considering channel markers.
- Obey all navigational warnings such as slow- and idle-speed zones.
- Always pay close attention to what's going on around your boat.
- Wear your life jacket.
- Stay sober.
- Know how to swim.
- Know the limits of your boat and your boating abilities.
- Keep your boat in good repair.
- Tell others where you are going and when you plan to return.
- Be aware of changing weather conditions.
- Respect the rights of others.
- Check all boat equipment before each trip.
- Don't litter, properly dispose of all trash.

DIVER DOWN FLAG
This flag indicates divers in the water. Boaters in the vicinity of a vessel displaying the diver down flag must give 100' clearance inshore or 300' clearance in the open waters, or drop to idle speed within these distances. A flag displayed on a vessel must be at least 20" by 24", and be displayed for 360° visibility. Flags attached to a float may be 12" by 12". A stiffener is also required to keep the flag unfurled.

LEGEND
Intracoastal Waterway
Intracoastal Waterway - 25 mph
Regulated Channel - 25 mph
Regulated Corridor - 25 mph
Regulated Area - 25 mph
Slow Speed/Minimum Wake Zone
Idle Speed/No Wake Zone
Historical Recreation Area - areas historically used for watersports
Manatee Key Security Zone - entry by permit only
Internal Combustion Engine Exclusion Zone
Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve Boundary
Special Regulated Watersport Area - by permit only
Seagrass
Artificial Reef
Marina
Boat Ramp
Draw Bridge
Point of Interest
Park/Preserve
Swim Area - no vessel entry
Bird Sanctuary
Bird Viewing
Exit Number

BRIDGES
Bridge tenders can be contacted on channel 9 of your marine radio. In an emergency, or in the event you are unable to contact the bridge tender by radio, the emergency toll free number is 866-335-9696.

BRIDGE OPENINGS
Anna Maria and Cortez Bridges:
May 16 - Jan. 14: opens on the hour and 20 and 40 minutes past the hour from 7am to 6pm daily and on demand between 6pm and 7am.
Jan. 15 - May 15: opens on the hour and half hour from 6am to 7pm.
Longboat Pass Bridge: opens on demand.

This chart is not intended for navigational use. For navigation, see N.O.A.A. charts #11400-#11420. Use caution: Speed zones depicted on this map are accurate at the time of printing. Please look for and obey all marked speed zones and informational signs.



Vessel Control & Water Safety

"Idle Speed" means the lowest speed at which a vessel or personal watercraft can operate while maintaining steering control and forward progress. Actual speed will depend upon the design of the vessel, the vessel's load, wind direction and speed, and sea conditions. Generally, idle speed is between 1-3 mph for outboard and inboard/outboard vessels, 2-5 mph for fixed shaft/rudder vessels, and is the minimum speed necessary for personal watercraft to maintain steering control and forward progress.

"Slow Speed" means the speed at which a vessel proceeds when it is fully off plane and completely settled into the water, and not producing a wake that endangers other vessels under the existing circumstances.

A vessel in a slow speed zone:

1. that is operating on a plane is not proceeding at slow speed;
2. that is in the process of coming off plane and settling into the water, by which action creates more than a minimum wake, is not proceeding at slow speed.

A vessel in a slow speed zone:

1. that produces no wake or minimum wake is proceeding at slow speed;
2. that is completely off plane and which has settled into the water is proceeding at slow speed.

MIND YOUR WATERWAY SIGNS
 • BOATS • SHIPS • AIRBOATS • PERSONAL WATERCRAFT
EMERGENCY: CALL: 888-404-3922
CELL: #FWC OR #FWC
VHF RADIO: CHANNEL 16

Lowest speed needed to maintain steering and headway.

Settled in the water, not plowing, minimum wake.

Resume safe speed.

Manatees, Sea Turtles & Dolphins

"LOOK OUT BELOW! Where Seagrasses Grow, Manatees Go."

Manatees spend all or part of the year in Manatee County waters. Many have been hit by a boat at least once and bear the telltale scars of those encounters.

Manatees are at greatest risk from speeding boats when they are feeding or resting in or near seagrass meadows. In these shallow waters, manatees often cannot swim fast enough or dive deep enough to get out of harm's way.

The maps included in this guide depict the areas of County waters where boaters are required to operate at slow speed to protect manatees. Just as you put on the brakes when you drive through a school zone, you are required to back off your throttle when you are boating in these areas. Take it easy please, and remember... where seagrasses grow, manatees go.

What's the Connection?

Manatees graze in seagrass meadows at high tide, and on the deeper fringes of grass beds at low tide. They aren't the only residents that need seagrasses to survive. Spotted sea trout, a popular sport fish, depend upon grass beds during all stages of their life cycle. Seagrasses also nurture crabs, shrimp and smaller bait fish that are consumed by prized gamefish such as snook and redfish.



Manatees

Manatee County's namesake, the West Indian Manatee, is a gentle, whiskered mammal that lives year round in Florida's shallow coastal waters, including rivers, bays and the near-shore Gulf of Mexico.

Manatees, sometimes called sea cows, are marine mammals that periodically surface to breathe. They are gray in color with a seal-like body that tapers to a flat, paddle-shaped tail and can reach weights of up to 3,000 pounds and lengths of more than 10 feet. Although generally slow moving, they can exert bursts of speed of 15-20 mph.

Manatees are found in the Southeastern United States, the Caribbean Sea and have been reported as far south as Brazil. Rarely, they have been sighted along the eastern seaboard as far north as Chesapeake Bay and Cape Cod. Local sightings are more common in the spring and summer months, when warming water temperatures trigger the return of manatees to this area to feed on seagrasses. In the winter, when water temperatures dip, manatees move to warmer springs and near warm-water power plant outfall pipes.

Since manatees are usually found near the shore, they are threatened by fast-moving boats. Many "sea cows" are killed each year as a result of collisions with boats, or are seriously injured by propellers.

In order to adequately protect manatees, Manatee County has implemented slow-speed zones in many of our waterways. Signage has been placed throughout Manatee County to warn boaters of areas manatees frequent. Speed zones have been depicted on the maps that are included in this guide.

It is important to avoid contact with manatees. If a manatee appears injured or threatened in any way, call the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at 888-404-3922 or #FWC, *FWC on your cell phone.

Sea Turtles

From the months of April through October, sea turtles nest on Manatee County beaches. Although five species of sea turtles inhabit the Gulf Coast region; loggerhead, green, hawksbill, leatherback and Kemp's ridley, the loggerhead is the most common nester along Manatee County beaches.

At night during the summer months, female sea turtles will come ashore, dig a burrow in the sand, lay up to 100 golf-ball-sized eggs, cover them, and then return to sea.

In about 60 days, the little turtles will break through their shells, dig their way out of the nest and traverse the beach to the Gulf of Mexico, where they will swim offshore to hide amidst floating seagrass. Both people and predators pose a great threat to the survival of the newly hatched sea turtles; few hatchlings survive the difficult journey back to the sea.

Sea turtles, both adult and hatchlings, use the dim light reflected from the Gulf of Mexico to find their way from the beach to the water. Lights on shore can distract turtles, often with deadly results. Shorefront property owners and businesses should turn off any lights that can be seen from the beach during the nesting season. Beachgoers should never approach a sea turtle coming ashore or disturb a nesting sea turtle or hatchlings.



Dolphins

Manatee County waters are home to more than 100 resident Bottlenose Dolphins. During the spring and summer, mothers and their calves can be found feeding in the shallow waters of Palma Sola Bay and Anna Maria Sound. In the fall and winter, dolphins are more frequently found in the passes and along the Gulf shorelines.

As air-breathers, dolphins are vulnerable to the effects of red tide. They are also endangered by marine debris such as fishing line, which can entangle them and cause injury or death.



Native Habitat



Rivers and Bays

Portions of the Manatee and Braden Rivers, and many of the bays within Manatee County such as Anna Maria Sound, Terra Ceia Bay and Sarasota Bay, are estuaries; some of the world's most productive natural systems. The mixing of fresh and salt water in these rivers and bays provide breeding grounds for adult fish and vital nurseries for young fish, shrimp and crabs. Over 70 percent of all fish, shellfish, and crustaceans spend some critical stage of their development in these nearshore waters, protected from larger predators that are found in the open sea.

Salt Marshes and Mud Flats

Salt marshes, which are comprised of salt-tolerant rushes, sedges and grasses, occur along the shoreline of estuaries within Manatee County, where wave action is minimal. These marshes, which periodically become submerged, nourish and protect many fish and animals. They also buffer upland areas from storms and help filter pollutants that run off the land.

Mud flats are exposed at low tide. Although these flats appear to be barren, they are actually teeming with life. Small crabs, clams, and worms, which burrow in the mud, are an important food source for the many bird species foraging at low tide.

Oyster Bars

Oysters are immobile shellfish that filter water as they feed. Their grayish-white shells are irregular in shape, and form mounds on the river or bay floor, creating bars or reefs. Most prevalent near river mouths and in sections of the bays that regularly receive fresh water, oyster bars attract adult snook and redfish, making them popular fishing spots.

Caution should be exercised in these areas. Oyster bars can cause severe damage to boat hulls and are treacherous for those on foot.

Shellfish harvesting is regulated in Florida. For information on seasonal closures, size and bag limits, contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at 888-404-3922.

Mangroves

Three species of mangroves can be found along the shorelines of Manatee County. Red mangroves are closest to the water, and are easily identified by their long seed pods or propagules, and tangled reddish roots that branch out over the water. Mounds of oysters frequently colonize at their base. Black mangroves have short root-like projections, or pneumatophores, that project from the bottom and provide oxygen to the tree. White mangroves are found farther from the water than the red or black mangroves, and are distinguished by a broad rounded leaf with a notch in the tip and two small "bumps" or salt glands on opposite sides at the base of the leaf stem.

Like seagrasses, mangroves provide food and cover for a vast array of small fish and animals. Their roots anchor shorelines, and their branches serve as nesting sites for a wide variety of birds. Loss of this important habitat has contributed to a decline in fisheries throughout the state.

Barrier Islands

Barrier islands naturally buffer the mainland from wind and water damage. These narrow strips of offshore land are continually changing in shape, size and location because of constant wind and wave energy. In addition to protecting mainland property, these islands provide critical habitat to resident and migratory wildlife.

Seagrasses

Seagrasses are flowering underwater plants found at shallow depths in protected bays and lagoons and in patches along the continental shelf of the Gulf of Mexico. As a nursery environment, seagrasses support small fish, shrimp, and crabs that hide among the blades and eat decaying leaves. Seagrasses also help stabilize shifting sands on the bottom of the bay and improve water clarity by trapping fine sediments and particles.

Once plentiful, seagrass beds now cover a small fraction of their original acreage statewide. Seagrass losses have been triggered by dredge-and-fill activities, a decline in water quality, and damage from motorboats. Seagrass damage occurs when boats carve through shallow grass flats, leaving trenches that may stay barren for years. To help preserve seagrasses, stay within the marked channels whenever possible. If you run aground or enter grass flats to fish, stop your motor; tilt it up, and pole or push your boat through.



Upper Manatee River Rd.

Rye Rd. E.



ENGINE RESTRICTION:
 Only boats equipped with an engine of 20 h.p. or less may operate on Lake Manatee.

STANDARD WATERWAY SYMBOLS AND MESSAGES

RESTRICTED AREA SYMBOL	RESTRICTED AREA SYMBOL	RESTRICTED AREA SYMBOL	RESTRICTED AREA SYMBOL
Standard Messages: SWIM AREA NO BOATS CLOSED AREA NO BOATING DANGER LOCKS	Standard Messages: ROCK DANGER SIGNAL SHALLOW AREA DANGER DAM	Standard Messages: SLOW SPEED/ MINIMUM WAKE IDLE SPEED/ NO WAKE	Standard Messages: STATE PARK AHEAD MARINA ENTRANCE FISH ATTRACTOR ARTIFICIAL REEF

MANATEE TIPS



- Be alert to signs of manatee presence (swirls, tip of snout breaking the water when surfacing to breathe).
- Wear polarized sunglasses to better see what is beneath the water.
- Obey posted speed and manatee caution signs. Manatees move slowly and have difficulty evading boats operating at planing speeds. Even slow-moving boats can crush manatees when clearance is inadequate.
- Avoid or idle slowly across shallow grass beds, where manatees feed and rest. Lift your engine to avoid prop dredging, if you get caught by the tide in an area too shallow for your draft.
- Pole or use a trolling motor to fish the "flats" (seagrass meadows).
- Stop your trash, and retrieve any snagged monofilament fishing line. Dispose of these items on shore. Manatees can be injured or even killed by swallowing plastic debris or becoming entangled in abandoned monofilament or trap line.
- If you see a sick, injured or dead manatee, or to report accidentally striking one, call 888-404-3922.
- Do not attempt to feed or give water to manatees. Harassment in any form can result in fines of up to \$50,000 and a year in prison.
- For more information about manatees and their protection, go to www.myfwc.com

debris such as fishing line, which can entangle them and cause injury or death.

Popular Sport Fish

Commit yourself to ethical angling; the future of your sport depends on it!

- Help increase fish stocks through catch and release
- Observe regulations and report violations
- Limit your take and vary your target
- Only keep fish for food or trophy
- Share what you know to help the sport grow

NAME: FLOUNDER	REDFISH (RED DRUM)	SHEEPSHEAD	SNOOK	SPOTTED SEATROUT
HABITAT: Channel edges on sandy bottoms near tidal passes and docks.	Near docks and pilings, deeper holes in seagrass beds and channels during the warmest and coolest months; also around seagrass beds and oyster bars.	Near bridges, docks, seawalls, pilings or any underwater structure.	Canals, tidal creeks, and other deep, warm waters in cool months; near tidal passes, mangrove fringe and along the beaches in warmer weather.	Seagrass beds during moderate water temperatures, deeper waters during warmer and cooler months.
FISHING TTP: Use live shrimp, sand fleas, sardines, pinfish or jigs bounced slowly along the bottom as you drift.	Use live shrimp fished on bottom or free-lined, soft-bodied jigs bounced slowly along bottom, or small gold spoons.	Use live shrimp, sand fleas, or small crabs on small hook. Fish just off the bottom and on first tug, strike hard.	Use live shrimp, small mullet, live pigfish, sardines, jigs or minnow-like lures, either free-lined or on a bobber.	Use live shrimp, pigfish, soft-bodied jigs or minnow-like lures, either free-lined or on a bobber.
SEASON: All year.	All year.	All year.	Closed December 15- January 31 and May-August.	Closed November-December.
SIZE: Minimum 12", 10 fish per person per day allowed.	Not less than 18" or more than 27", 1 fish per person per day allowed.	Minimum 12", 15 fish per person per day allowed.	Not less than 28" or more than 33", 1 fish per person per day.	Not less than 15" or more than 20", 4 fish per person per day, only 1 fish per person may be more than 20".

Please note that fishing regulations change frequently; please check with authorities for current size limits and closed seasons by visiting www.myfwc.com/marine/regulation.htm

MONOFILAMENT RECOVERY & RECYCLING PROGRAM

The Monofilament Recovery and Recycling Program (MRRP) is a statewide effort to educate the public on the problems caused by monofilament line left in the environment, to encourage recycling bins and drop-off locations, and to conduct volunteer monofilament line cleanup events.

Outdoor recycling bins constructed of PVC are mounted at many piers, boat ramps, and marinas throughout the state. Indoor recycling bins are hosted by tackle shops and department stores.

To learn more about the program and the effects that monofilament line has on our wildlife, visit the website at: www.fishinglinerecycling.org/index.asp

LEGEND

- Intracoastal Waterway
- Regulated Channel - 25 mph
- Regulated Corridor - 25 mph
- Regulated Area - 25 mph
- Slow Speed/Minimum Wake Zone
- Idle Speed/No Wake Zone
- Historical Recreation Area - areas historically used for watersports
- Boat Ramp
- Point of Interest
- Park/Preserve
- Bird Sanctuary
- Bird Viewing
- Exit Number

This chart is not intended for navigational use. For navigation, see N.O.A.A. charts #11400-#11420. Use caution: Speed zones depicted on this map are accurate at the time of printing. Please look for and obey all marked speed zones and informational signs.

PARKS/PRESERVES

Address	Address
11 Rye Preserve	751 Rye Wildness Tr. E., Parrish
12 Lake Manatee State Park	19001 SR 64 E., Bradenton
13 Braden River Park	5201 51st St. E., Bradenton
14 Jiggs Landing	6106 Braden River

BOAT RAMPS

Address	Open 24 Hours	Useable at all Tides	Boats Over 15'	Restrooms
8 State Rd. 64/ Braden River	•	•	•	•
11 Fort Hamer	•	•	•	•
12 Lake Manatee State Park (fee required)	•	•	•	•
13 Lake Manatee	•	•	•	•
14 Jiggs Landing	•	•	•	•

FISHERMAN'S CATCH AND RELEASE GUIDE:

Proper release techniques increase a fish's chance of survival while preserving this valuable resource for future generations. Mishandling of fish, may lead to unnecessary mortality. Follow these simple steps to increase a released fish's chance of survival:

- 1. How to Begin**
 - Try to set the hook quickly to prevent the fish from swallowing the bait.
 - Use hooks that are barbless and made from metals that rust quickly.
 - Keep release tools handy.
- 2. Handling Your Catch**
 - Try to keep the fish in the water while removing the hook.
 - Use a wet glove or rag to hold the fish if it must be handled.
 - Get the fish back in the water as quickly as possible.
- 3. Removing the Hook**
 - Back the hook out the opposite way it went in.
 - Cut the leader close to the fish's mouth if the hook cannot be quickly removed.
 - Use needle-nose pliers or a de-hooker to work the hook free and protect your hands.
- 4. The Release**
 - Gently place the fish in the water, supporting its body until it swims away.
 - An exhausted fish can be resuscitated by moving it back and forth to force water through its gills.
 - If a released fish does not swim away, recover it and try again.

A RELEASED FISH THAT HAS BEEN HANDLED PROPERLY HAS AN EXCELLENT CHANCE OF SURVIVAL!

Fish illustrations by Diane Frame Feedles. Provided by the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission