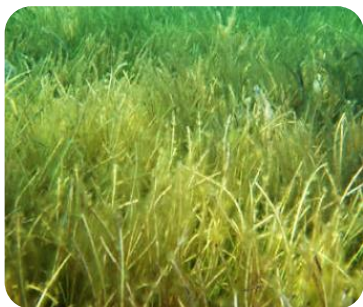




# Seagrasses at the Seashore



Manatee Grass  
(*Syringodium filiforme*)



Turtle Grass  
(*Thalassia testudinum*)



Shoal Grass  
(*Halodule wrightii*)

## What is Seagrass?

They are flowering plants that grow underwater in shallow waters on the north sides of the barrier islands. Named for their grass-like appearance, seagrass has a strong root structure that helps them withstand currents and waves on the sandy sea floor.

## Why is Seagrass Important?

Seagrass meadows serve as nursery grounds, and shelter for shrimp, crabs and many species of fish. A variety of birds, sea turtles and other wildlife depend upon them to live. Seagrass also promotes water clarity. The plants' extensive system of roots and rhizomes help stabilize bottom sediments.

# The Damages



Propeller Scars in seagrass bed



Blowhole created by a propeller

Seagrass habitat is declining. Seagrasses grow in shallow coastal waters and can be damaged by boaters with wakes, anchors, propellers, and fishing equipment that disturb and scar the seabed. Scaring exposes the seagrass meadow roots allowing waves and currents to erode the seabed, resulting in the loss of the seagrass habitat.

## You can Help - Boating Tips

- Know the waters well and know where you plan to put your boat.
- Look before you anchor, Do not drop your anchor in a seagrass habitat.
- If you do run into a sea grass flat, stop immediately and tilt your engine.
- If you DO get in too shallow, stop your motor and trim it up.
- "Push, Pull, Drift, and Troll" your boat to deeper water.
- Never try to power off, because that creates more damage.

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