

BIRDS OF THE KEYS

The Keys attract a remarkable variety and number of birds. Most spectacular are the great breeding colonies where thousands of birds of some 25 species-including pelicans, cormorants, herons, egrets, ibis, spoonbills, terns, and skimmers-come to rear their young. These large colonies are found on islands, where nests are safe from predators and disturbance. Mud flats and seagrass meadows provide a bountiful fishing ground for resident, migrant, and wintering shorebirds. Open waters are habitat for loons, grebes, and ducks. Maintaining these bird populations in a growing metropolitan area is challenging. Many species are declining, and some have virtually disappeared due to loss and disruption of habitat.

- You Can Help -**
- Observe posted signs that identify breeding colonies. Don't go ashore! And don't let dogs run loose in these areas.
 - Gulls, terns, and skimmers may nest at unmarked sites. If you discover a cloud of birds circling noisily above your picnic, you may be in a colony. Carefully pick up your belongings and leave, and then see where the birds settle. Choose a spot 100 yards away and enjoy the view.
 - If you are fishing and a bird becomes entangled in your gear, carefully remove the hook and monofilament line. Or, if you're walking along the beach, pick up any stray fishing line and dispose of it properly. Birds and other animals that ingest or become entangled in fishing line may die.
 - Report injured seabirds that require assistance. Consult the Resource Directory for appropriate listings.
 - Stay clear of small islands that may harbor nesting colonies and of areas where flocks of feeding birds are visible. Operators of personal watercraft, wave-runners, and airboats should be aware that the noise and prop-wash from their vessels disturb wildlife and may disrupt nesting and feeding.
 - Remember: The best way to observe and enjoy these beautiful birds is by being quiet and moving slowly.

SEA TURTLES - YOU CAN HELP

- Never approach sea turtles coming ashore or disturb nesting sea turtles or hatchlings. Turtles produce many eggs, but few hatchlings survive the difficult journey back to the sea.
- Preserve nesting beaches and nearshore habitats, such as seagrass beds and coral reefs.
- Beachfront property owners should turn off exterior lights in areas where nesting takes place. Bright lights discourage nesting sea turtles from coming ashore and may disorient hatchlings.
- Support public and private efforts to protect sea turtles and their habitats.

CARIBBEAN SPINY LOBSTER

- Caribbean spiny lobsters are closely related to crabs, shrimp and crayfish. They are often called crayfish, crawfish, langosta, Florida lobster, and bugs.
- Spiny lobsters can reach a maximum size between 9-10 inches (carapace length) and weigh between 15 and 20 pounds.
- Adult spiny lobsters live in the caverns and caves of coral reef and hardbottom areas, hiding during the day and emerging at night to hunt and eat.
- Harvest of lobsters is prohibited inside Everglades National Park, Dry Tortugas National Park, Sanctuary Preservation Areas, and Special Use Areas (Research Only).

MANGROVES

Mangroves are tropical trees that thrive in salty environments along the water's edge. Like seagrasses, they provide food and cover for a vast array of small fish and animals. The submerged roots are a nursery and breeding ground for most of the marine life that migrates to the reef. Mangroves trap and produce nutrients for food and habitat, stabilize the shoreline by trapping debris and silt, and filter land-based pollutants. Mangroves are the dominant shoreline plant community providing storm protection for the islands.

There are three species of mangroves. Red mangroves, typically located closest to the water, are easily distinguished by their tangled reddish roots that branch out over the water. Black mangroves feature numerous finger-like projections, called pneumatophores, that surround the base of the tree. White mangroves, which often occupy the highest elevations of the three species, have no visible aerial root system. The leaves of the white Mangrove are yellow-green.

MARINE ZONING

Marine zoning is a management tool being implemented in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary to protect sensitive marine resources from overuse and to separate conflicting visitor uses. There are five zone types in the Sanctuary: **Sanctuary Preservation Areas (SPA), Existing Management Areas, Special-Use Areas (Research Only), Ecological Reserves, and Wildlife Management Areas.**

Please contact the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary headquarters listed in the Resource Directory of this guide for more information on the specific regulations for each zone.

PRACTICE SAFE BOATING

- Observe and obey posted speed limits. Local regulations include an idle speed/no wake zone in all residential man-made canals, and within 100 yards of residential shorelines. Channels and adjacent waters may also be regulated. When in doubt, slow down.
- Watch your wake. Remember, you are responsible for damage caused by your vessel's wake. Large wakes can overturn smaller vessels and damage boats which are moored at the dock.
- Use nautical charts in unfamiliar waters. Stay within marked channels.
- Know your navigational rules. Use the boating rules of the road to avoid accidents.
- Don't mix alcohol and boating. More than 50% of all boating accidents involve alcohol.
- Plan your route in advance. Use the appropriate nautical charts to reference depth, bridge clearance, and other natural and man-made features before you leave.
- Use VHF Channel 16 for bridge-to-bridge communication with commercial ships in case of emergency. Keep transmissions short and simple, and never tie up the frequency.
- Exercise caution when boating around ships or tugs involved in docking. Their prop-wash can easily capsize small vessels or send them into the path of oncoming traffic.
- Be sure that your boat is visible at night and in poor weather conditions.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary offers a free boat inspection to advise boaters of state and federal safety requirements. Violations found during these courtesy exams will not be reported to authorities.

FKNMS SHIPWRECK TRAIL

The FKNMS Shipwreck Trail consists of nine shipwrecks stretching from Key Largo to the Marquesas Keys. Each of these sites was chosen because of its historic, biologic, and aesthetic value. Conditions on the Shipwreck Trail sites vary from easy dives in shallow water to deeper dives of 100 feet or more where swift currents may be encountered. Diving and snorkeling charters, underwater site guides, and additional information on the conditions for each site are available from local dive shops. Two Shipwreck Trail sites shown on this guide, the *Thunderbolt* (shown on Sides A and B) and the *North America*. For more information about these wrecks, and other wrecks on the Shipwreck Trail, visit floridakeys.noaa.gov/sanctuary_resources/shipwreck_trail.

Boat Ramps

No.	FACILITY	ADDRESS	CITY	Temp/Lane	Permit	Boat	Dock	Ramp/Com
30	Royal Hawaiian Motel	12020 Overseas Hwy	Marathon	1/1	Y	Y	N	N
31	Crawl Key Boat Ramp	US-1, Mm 54, Bayside	Marathon	1/1	Y	N	N	N
32	Grassy Key Marina							
33	Hawk's Cay Resort And Marina	61 Hawk's Cay Blvd	Duck Key	1/2	Y	Y	Y	Y
34	Bay View Inn And Marina	MM 63 1/2 N Conch Avenue	Conch Key	1/1	Y	Y	Y	Y
35	Sea Bird Marina	69501 Overseas Highway Bayside	Long Key	1/1	Y	Y	Y	Y

Clean Marinas

No.	Name	Address	City	Phone
9	Sea Bird Marina	69501 Overseas Hwy.	Long Key	305-664-2871

Fishing Piers

No.	FACILITY	ADDRESS	CITY
16	Tom's Harbor Channel FB	US-1, MM 61	Duck Key
17	Tom's Harbor Cut Fishing Bridge	US-1, MM 61.5	Duck Key
18	Long Key Viaduct Fishing Bridge	US-1, MM 63.25 - 65.25	Conch Key Is.
			Long Key
19	Channel Five East	US-1, MM 71	Fiesta Key
20	Channel Two Fishing Bridge	US-1, MM 73	Islamorada

FB - Fishing Bridge

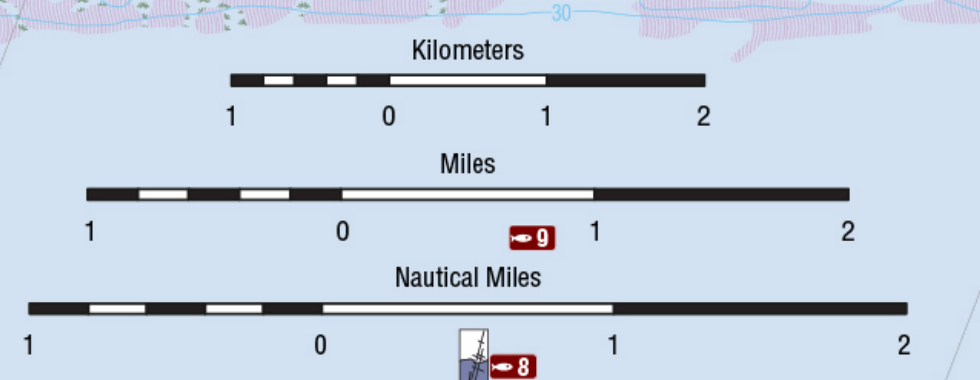
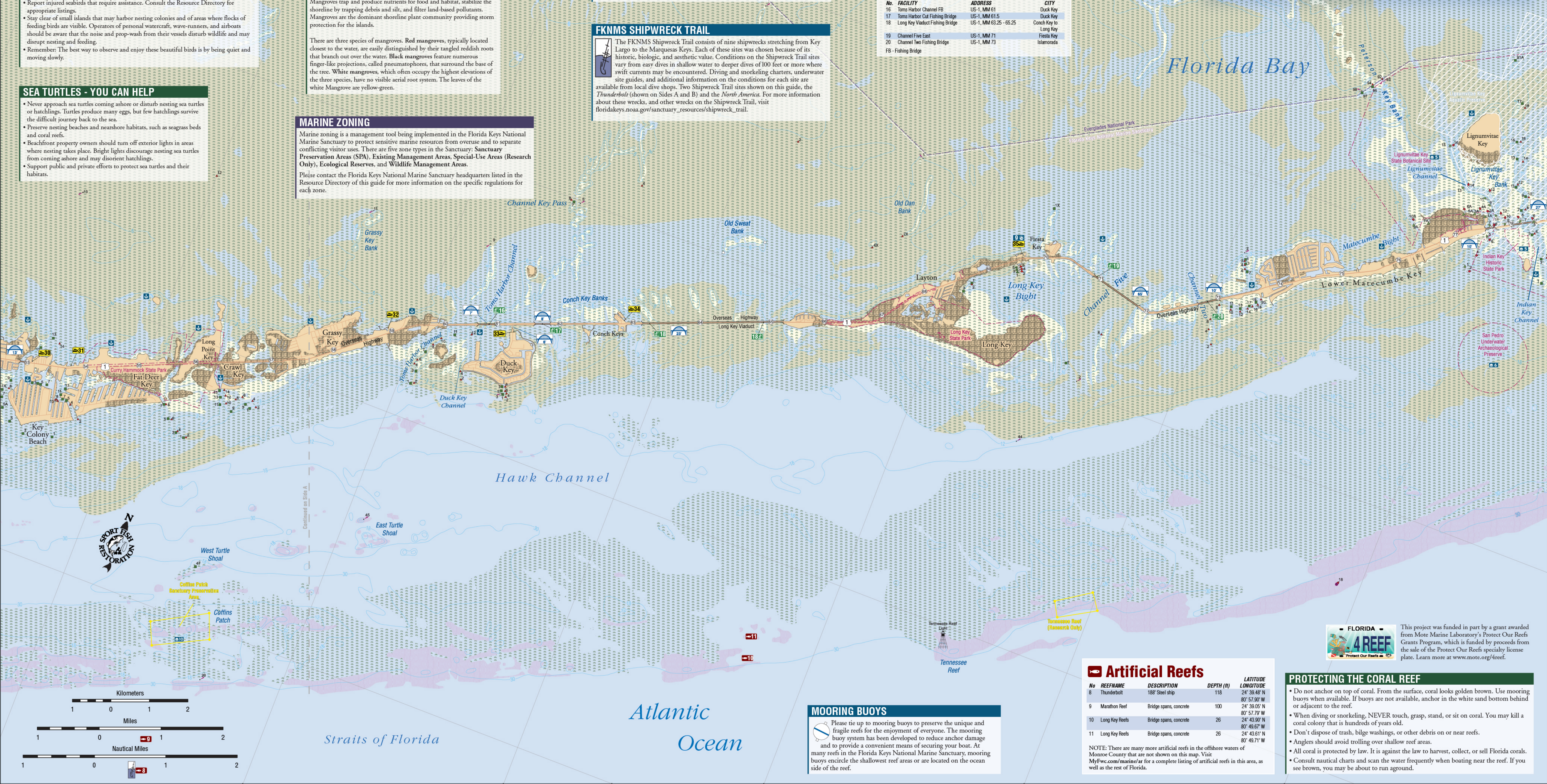
Legend

- Land
- Seagrass
- Mangroves
- Coral Reef
- Tidal Flat/Shallow Banks
- Hardbottom
- WATER DEPTH
 - Depth Contour (in feet)
 - Exposed at Mean Lower Low Water

- MANAGED AREAS
 - State Park
 - Aquatic Preserve
 - National Park
 - Existing Management Area
 - Marine Zone (Sanctuary Preservation Area, Ecological Reserve, Special Use Area)
 - Dredged Channel
 - Spoil Area
- Mile Marker
- Marinas
- Pumpout Facility
- Boat Ramps
- Artificial Reefs
- Anchorage
- Mooring Buoys (Number of Buoys in Area)
- FKNMS Shipwreck Trail
- Bridges
 - Fixed Bridge (Vertical Clearance)
 - Navigation Markers

NOTE: Anchorage may not be suitable for boats greater than 35 feet in length or with drafts deeper than four feet. Most anchorages do not provide protection from wind blowing in all directions. Before using, captains should consult weather reports, cruising guides, nautical charts, and knowledge of local surroundings.

This guide is not intended for navigational use. For local navigation, see NOAA Charts 11442, 11453, and 11453.



Artificial Reefs

No.	REFNAME	DESCRIPTION	DEPTH (ft)	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
8	Thunderbolt	188' Steel ship	118	24° 39.48' N	80° 57.90' W
9	Marathon Reef	Bridge spans, concrete	100	24° 39.05' N	80° 57.79' W
10	Long Key Reefs	Bridge spans, concrete	26	24° 43.90' N	80° 49.67' W
11	Long Key Reefs	Bridge spans, concrete	26	24° 43.61' N	80° 49.71' W

NOTE: There are many more artificial reefs in the offshore waters of Monroe County that are not shown on this map. Visit MyFree.com/marine/ar for a complete listing of artificial reefs in this area, as well as the rest of Florida.

PROTECTING THE CORAL REEF

- Do not anchor on top of coral. From the surface, coral looks golden brown. Use mooring buoys when available. If buoys are not available, anchor in the white sand bottom behind or adjacent to the reef.
- When diving or snorkeling, NEVER touch, grasp, stand, or sit on coral. You may kill a coral colony that is hundreds of years old.
- Don't dispose of trash, bilge washings, or other debris on or near reefs.
- Anglers should avoid trolling over shallow reef areas.
- All coral is protected by law. It is against the law to harvest, collect, or sell Florida corals.
- Consult nautical charts and scan the water frequently when boating near the reef. If you see brown, you may be about to run aground.

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