

# ATTENTION, BOATERS: HELP PROTECT MANATEES

Manatees face many threats, but one of the most serious—and preventable—is collisions with boats and other watercraft. On the water or in the marina, watch out for manatees to help keep them safe.

## ON THE WATER...

1. **SLOW DOWN** and obey all posted speed zones. Manatees swim slowly and often spend time breathing, resting, feeding or swimming near the water's surface. Going slower gives you and manatees a better chance of avoiding a collision.
2. **AVOID SHALLOW AREAS WITH SEA GRASS.** Manatees often feed in these areas, so stay in deep water channels.
3. **STAY OUT OF PROHIBITED AREAS.** You'll protect manatees—and avoid an expensive ticket!
4. **KEEP AN EYE OUT** for signs of a manatee, such as a nose, back, flipper or tail breaking the water's surface or the signature broad, flat whorls created by a manatee traveling close to the surface.



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**5. WEAR POLARIZED SUNGLASSES** to cut glare and make it easier to spot manatees just below the surface.

**6. SEE A MANATEE AND WANT TO CHECK IT OUT?** Do not chase or pursue it. Turn off your boat or personal watercraft to stop and observe it.

## IN THE MARINA...

Manatees are curious and sometimes hang around marinas and docks. Before you head out on a boating trip, make sure to:

- 1. CHECK THE SURROUNDING WATER** for signs of manatees before turning on your motor, easing out of your slip and getting underway.
- 2. GIVE A WIDE BERTH** to any manatees you see. Even if you only see one, it could be traveling with others—or even a calf—that you cannot see.
- 3. NEVER GIVE FOOD OR WATER TO MANATEES.** It's illegal and manatees used to handouts from humans are more likely to approach boats and get injured.

## IF YOU SEE AN INJURED OR DEAD MANATEE OR SOMEONE HARRASSING A MANATEE...

Report it the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at **1-888-404-FWCC (3922)**, **#FWC** or **\*FWC** on your cell phone or send a text message to **Tip@MyFWC.com**. You can also use **VHF Channel 16** on your marine radio.



## HOW DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE HELPS MANATEES

Defenders of Wildlife works to keep manatees safe from watercraft strikes by ensuring that appropriate speed zones are established and observed. Our Florida and national offices also collaborate with conservation allies and federal, state and local agencies to protect manatee habitat such as the warm-water springs they need in winter. Learn more at [www.defenders.org](http://www.defenders.org).

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