ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide includes a chart of the Intracoastal Waterway and Indian River Lagoon in Brevard County depicting main channels, seagrasses, boating speed zones, anchorages, aquatic preserves, fishing piers, and marinas and boat ramps open to the public. It also features information about Indian River Lagoon habitats and animals, popular sport fish, boating safety and protocol, and a resource directory.

The Boating and Angling Guide to Brevard County was produced by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (http://research.MyFWC.com) and Brevard County Parks & Recreation Department (www.brevardparks.com). We welcome your comments and inquiries. To take our boating survey, visit http://research.MyFWC. com/boating, or address comments to

Fish and Wildlife Research Institute 100 Eighth Avenue S.E. St. Petersburg, FL 33701

(727) 896-8626 The producers extend special thanks to the following organizations for their contributions to this guide:

Brevard County Marine Advisory Council Brevard Boating Improvement Fund Fish and Wildlife Service Sport Fish Restoration Program St. Johns River Water Management District U.S. Coast Guard National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service National Audubon Society's Florida Coastal Islands Sanctuaries **Environmental Protection Commission of Brevard County**

Florida Sea Grant Florida Department of Environmental Protection









NOT FOR RESALE 2005





BOATING AND ANGLING GUIDE



This guide is NOT intended for navigational use. For local navigation, see NOAA Charts 11472, 11476, 11478, 11481, 11484, and 11485.

RESOURCE

DIRECTORY

For educational information about Florida's coastal zone and marine resources

To report oil spills, marine violations, boating accidents, marine mammal injuries

or strandings. For information on saltwater fishing and shellfish harvesting

For information about Florida's fish and wildlife resources and research

For answers to boating safety questions and to report safety defects

Responsible for managing marine fisheries in federal waters

321-952-4536

321-633-2046

321-633-2016

321-861-0667

800-226-3747

321-254-8843

1-888-404-3922

321-383-2740

321-984-4828

888-404-FWCC

888-404-FWCC

321-455-0576

321-783-7831

321-853-7601

1-800-424-8802

1-800-368-5647

321-269-0004

321-255-2900

162.55Kz/VHF

or VHF channel 16

r Lagoon

For information on boating skills and safety courses offered locally

U.S. Power Squadron Banana River Squadron

Brevard County Parks and Recreation Office

Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program

Hospital for treating injured wildlife Melbourne

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Law Enforcement Titusville, District 1

Fish and Wildlife Research Institute

Marine Mammal Stranding Network

For search and rescue assistance

U.S. Coast Guard, Marine Safety Office

U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Hotline

National Marine Fisheries Service

NOAA Weather Service Broadcast

24-hour weather and marine forecast

Southeast Regional Office

Sea Turtle Preservation Society Melbourne

Government partnership implementing long-range master plan

Brevard County Natural Resources Office

Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge

County Cooperative Extension Service

Brevard County Sea Grant

Canaveral National Seashore

restoration and management

Florida Wildlife Sanctuary

Law Enforcement

St. Petersburg

Statewide

Manatee Hotline

Port Canaveral

U.S. Coast Guard

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WELCOME TO

revard County is one of the longest in Florida, extending 75 miles from north to south. It is also fairly narrow, only 20 miles wide. The estuarine waters of the Indian River Lagoon have supported people here for thousands of years. The Ais Indians and their ancestors inhabited the lagoon region for hundreds of years before 1565, when the first Spanish explorers arrived. The Ais Indians knew how to defend themselves against the Spanish, who viewed the Indians as cheap slave labor. Cabo Cañaveral, or "Cape of the Wild Canes," received its name after the Ais repelled a Spanish slaving party by shooting arrows made from swamp reeds with fire-hardened tips. Today, the area is known as Cape Canaveral, the home of Kennedy Space Center, America's Space Port. This guide to the waterways and marine resources of the Indian River Lagoon in Brevard County is designed to be a boater's on-board companion. Included in the guide are map locations for boat ramps, seagrass beds, and navigation channels. Tables provide details of marina services, boating safety, and natural resource information. Please use this guide to help do your part to protect our diverse and productive marine environment. By boating safely and with greater awareness of the natural environment, you can help protect Brevard County and the wildlife that depends on these waters for survival. NATIVE HABITATS

The Indian River Lagoon, an Estuary of National Significance, is considered to be the most biologically diverse estuary in North America, containing more than 4,300 types of plants and species of animals. Brevard County is located in the transition zone between the tropical and temperate climatic zones along the U.S. eastern seashore. The major habitats within the Brevard County portion of the Indian River Lagoon include seagrass habitats, open water habitats, mangrove forest and salt marsh habitats, spoil island and shoal habitats. The Lagoon's shallow bays and rivers often serve as nursery and breeding grounds for numerous species of fish and other aquatic life. Much of the historic mangrove forest and salt marsh wetlands along the Lagoon in Brevard have been destroyed through early development in the county or have been impounded and diked off from the Lagoon's open waters for control of the salt marsh mosquito. However, through increased protective efforts, many impounded wetlands are being reconnected to the Lagoon, and many acres of important Lagoon habitat have been purchased for preservation in Brevard County. The Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge and Canaveral National Seashore have also helped to preserve native habitat in Brevard along the Indian River and

SEAGRASSES Seagrasses are flowering underwater plants found at shallow depths in the Indian River Lagoon. As a nursery environment, seagrasses support small fish, shrimp, and crabs that hide among the blades and feast on decaying leaves. Seagrasses also help stabilize shifting sands on the bottom of the Lagoon and improve water clarity by trapping fine sediments and particles. One of the most popular fishing methods in Brevard is poling skiffs in shallow water. Never drag your engine through the seagrass while poling; always tilt the motor up. Never power up until you're certain

the water is deep enough to get on plane without harming the bottom. To help preserve seagrasses, stay within marked channels and avoid shallow grass beds while your motor is running. MANGROVES

Mangroves are tropical trees that thrive in the salty environment along the water's edge. Like seagrasses, they 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. In order to protect mangroves, local and state regulations restrict pruning and removal. Three species of mangroves are found in Brevard County. The tangled reddish roots that branch out over the water distinguish red mangroves. These are typically located closest to 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. **OPEN WATER**

Open water habitat constitutes about 65 percent of the area of the Indian River Lagoon. These areas include all of the submerged parts of the Lagoon not covered by seagrasses and encompass both the water column and the bottom of the Lagoon. The bottom may be rocky, sandy, or muddy. Most animals that live in this habitat are invertebrates and include mollusks such as clams and oysters, tiny polychaete worms, amphipod crustaceans, sponges, and blue crabs. This is a delicate habitat, similar to seagrass beds, where phytoplankton and zooplankton are eaten by larval forms of important fish species such as the spotted seatrout and by small fish such as the bay anchovy and black mullet, which in turn are major foods for the prized red drum, tarpon, and snook.

SPOIL ISLANDS Formed as a by-product of dredging the Intracoastal Waterway, the islands near the Haulover Canal are popular for wade-fishing for trout and redfish. A number of islands closer to Titusville are particularly good camp sites, but they can get crowded during space shuttle and rocket launches. When approaching any of the spoil islands, be alert for seagrass beds and be prepared to tilt your motor up. In spring, a number of spoil islands are popular nesting sites for pelicans, egrets, cormorants, and other birds. Never invade their territory; instead, watch from a distance. Carry binoculars whenever possible. All spoil islands, except Grant Farm Island, belong to the state. Short-term camping is allowed on all publicly owned spoil islands open to recreation. No construction or cutting of living plants or trees is permitted. Visit www.spoilislandproject.org/.

SEA TURTLES AND MANATEES

SEA TURTLES

Nesting season, stretching from April to the end of October, brings sea turtles ashore on Atlantic beaches, where people and predators may pose a threat. Although three species—the loggerhead, the green turtle, and the leatherback commonly nest along Florida's coastline, most coastal nests belong to loggerheads.

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
- Preserve nesting beaches and nearshore habitats such as seagrass beds and coral reefs.
- In areas where nesting takes place, beachfront property owners should turn off exterior lights. Bright lights discourage nesting sea turtles from coming ashore and may disorient hatchlings.



MANATEES

These gentle, whiskered giants, found in the southeastern United States and in the Caribbean Sea as far south as Brazil, live in Florida year-round. They grow to an average length of 10 feet and, as adults, can weigh as much as 3,000 pounds. In the summer, manatees are found throughout the St. Johns River and Intracoastal Waterway.

In the winter, more than 300 manatees gather near power plants in Brevard County to bask in warm-water discharges. That number drops by about 50 percent in the summer, when manatees disperse throughout the Lagoon and along the east coast. In the Lagoon, it is not unusual to find manatees in water less than six feet deep because the seagrasses on which they feed grow in shallow water.

Collisions with boat hulls and propellers that slice their thick hides injure and kill many manatees each year. Almost all manatees in Florida bear telltale scars of impacts with boats. Additionally, many manatees become entangled in crab pot lines or discarded monofilament fishing line. These entanglements can result in loss of limbs and even death.

YOU CAN HELP

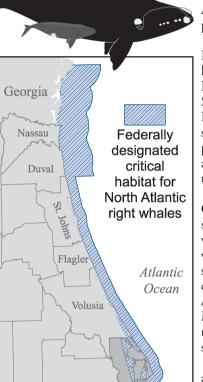
- Watch for manatees; they are often difficult to see. For example, when a manatee surfaces to breathe, only the tip of its snout is
- When in shallow waters with seagrass beds, go slow, pole, or
- Wear polarized glasses to reduce surface glare and to allow better through-water visibility.
- Obey posted speed and manatee caution signs. • Stow trash and properly discard monofilament fishing line.
- Manatees can swallow or become trapped in lines and other plastic debris that litter our waterways.
- Obey state and federal laws that make it illegal to harass, capture, hunt, or kill a manatee. Convictions can result in imprisonment and fines of up to \$20,000.

To report violations, manatee injuries, or deaths, call the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at

NORTH ATLANTIC RIGHT WHALES

North Atlantic right whales are critically endangered. The coastal waters of Georgia and Florida are the only known calving grounds of these rare whales, which migrate to this area during winter months (December-March) to give birth. Right whales can be 50 feet long, are black, have no dorsal fin, and produce a V-shaped blow. They have

light-colored, wart-like patches of skin on their heads. If you see a right whale, slow your vessel to avoid the whale(s), and do not attempt to approach them. Slowly move 500 yards or more away from the whale(s). Call FWC's Wildlife Alert Toll-Free Number, 1-888-404-FWCC (1-888-404-3922) to report the position of your sighting. If you sight an entangled or injured right whale, contact the U.S. Coast Guard on VHF channel 16 to report the sighting time, position or physical location of the whale, direction of the whale's movement, and a description of the animal's entanglement or injury. If possible, keep the entangled or injured whale in sight until help arrives.



Canaveral Authority's right whale protection program was implemented in 1993 after coastal waters off the Port were designated critical habitat for right whales by the National Marine Fisheries Service. The primary focus of the Port's program is to educate shipping interests about the presence of right whales in this area and steps that can be taken to avoid impact with them.

In 1995, the Marine Resources Council established a public sighting network that uses local volunteers who are trained to watch for whales and report sightings off the Brevard County coast. The Canaveral Port Authority granted \$3,000 to the Marine Resources Council to set up the network and continues to support it. The success of these programs

are a result of the Port's continuing efforts to help preserve this endangered species while maintaining the economic viability of the area.

FLOUNDER—Channel edges on sandy

REDFISH (RED DRUM)—Inshore near

grass beds, oyster bars, and docks and pilings;

deeper channels during warmest and coolest

months. Use live shrimp or pinfish fished on

bars, bridges, and pilings; nearshore in winter

artificial reefs. Use live shrimp, sand fleas, or fiddler crabs on small hook fished off bottom;

COBIA—Both inshore and nearshore around

during spring and early summer. Use trolling

groups in shallow nearshore waters, offshore

during autumn months, fresh and salt water. Use cast net in shallow water.

SNOOK—(Seasonal) Inshore in coastal and

Artificial bait. Prefer anything that moves on

brackish waters, along mangrove shoreline,

seawalls, bridges, on reefs and pilings.

top of the water. Lies motionless in the

pilings, buoys, and wrecks; along beaches

or casting lures, cobia jigs or live pinfish. STRIPED MULLET—School in large

and early spring over bottom structure and

pottom or free-lined, or soft-bodied jigs

SHEEPSHEAD—Inshore around oyster

bounced slowly along the bottom.

bottoms, near tidal passes and docks. Use live shrimp on bottom or can be gigged while

POPULAR SPORT FISH

Name & Habitat

wading in shallow water.

set hook on first tug.

BIRDS OF THE LAGOON

Despite the environmental pressures from growth and development in the region, Brevard County continues to attract a remarkable variety and number of birds. Open waters are habitat for loons, grebes, and ducks. 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—gather to rear their young. These large colonies are found on islands, where nests are safe from predators and disturbance. Mudflats and seagrass meadows in shallow sections of the Lagoon provide a bountiful fishing ground for resident,

migrant, and wintering shorebirds. Maintaining these bird populations in a growing metropolitan area is challenging. Many species are declining, and some have virtually disappeared because their habitat has been lost or disrupted.

• Observe posted signs that identify breeding colonies. Do not go ashore or let dogs run loose in these areas!

• Between May and August, gulls, terns, and skimmers may nest at unmarked sites. It vou discover a cloud of birds circling your picnic, you may be in a colony. Carefully pick up your belongings and leave, then, watch where the birds settle. Choose a spot 100 yards away and enjoy the view. • Birds and other animals that ingest or become entangled in fishing line

may die. If you are fishing and a bird becomes entangled in your gear, carefully remove the hook and monofilament line. If you are walking along the beach, pick up any stray fishing line and dispose of it • Do not throw filleted fish carcasses or unwanted catfish to pelicans;

exposed fish bones and catfish spines can cause the birds severe internal • Report injured seabirds that require assistance. Consult the Boating

and Angling Guide resource directory for appropriate listings. • Operators of personal watercraft, WaveRunners®, and airboats should be aware that the noise and prop-wash from their vessels disturb

HELP PRESERVE THE INDIAN RIVER LAGOON

Residents and visitors share Brevard County's waters and coastal beaches with a magnificent array of birds and marine animals, including species that are threatened or endangered. How boat owners operate and maintain their boats has a great effect on the health of our waterways and the enjoyment of those who use them. Here are some ways that you can help preserve our waterways for the future.

Keep your engine well tuned. It will use less fuel, discharge fewer pollutants into the water, and last longer. Do not allow gas, oil, or toxic chemicals to spill into the water. Do not "top off" your tank when refueling. Leave 5% empty space at the top of the tank for expansion. Hazardous wastes should be properly disposed of through your local boatyard, an auto repair shop, or a hazardous-waste

collection/recycling facility. Minimize use of soaps/detergents when cleaning a boat in the water; they encourage algae growth. Clean your boat frequently with small amounts of non-toxic cleaner. This will reduce the need for painting and for using harsh chemicals that may wash overboard. Collect bottom paint scrapings and dispose of them with on-shore trash. Do not leave scrapings where they

can wash into the water. Save all trash for disposal or recycling on shore. It is a federal offense to discard any trash overboard within three miles of shore. It is also illegal to dump plastic trash overboard anywhere. Trash thrown overboard is unsightly, may damage boat motors, and can harm or kill birds, dolphins, sea turtles, and other

Use a holding tank or portable toilet to store sewage for disposal at a pump-out station on shore. It is illegal to discharge raw sewage into Florida waters. Even treated sewage can contaminate large areas of water and make them unsuitable for fishing and swimming. Use an on-shore toilet whenever possible. A partial listing of pump-out facilities is provided on the reverse side of this Guide. All state-designated "Clean Marinas" have pump-out

Get involved in environmental and boating-related issues. Keep track of these issues as the State Legislature, local

wildlife and may disrupt nesting and feeding. governments, and various agencies consider them.

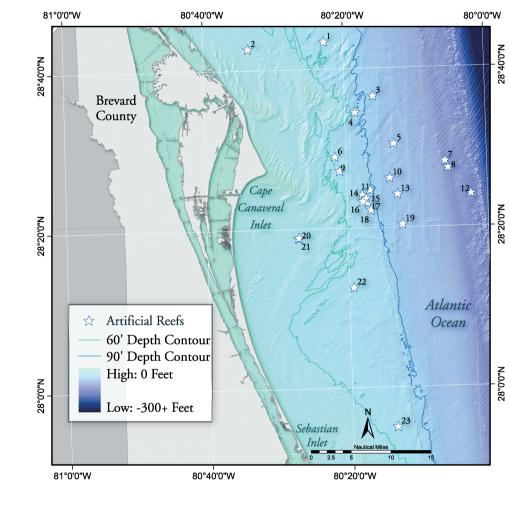
ARTIFICIAL REEFS

BE A SAFE BOATER

					9
1	Vera Cruz	80	Wreck, City of Vera Cruz 286'	28°43.116'	80°22.752'
2	The Rock	40		28°42.384'	80°33.600
3	Carol Lee	100	Wreck	28°36.216'	80°15.966
4	Sub Wreck	75	Wreck	28°34.188'	80°18.576
5	Port Canaveral Site 2	121	Tankers, sailboat, Titan Trans.	28°30.183'	80°13.183
6	Dutch Wreck	72	Steamship, Laertes 423'	28°28.668'	80°21.606
7	Wart 1	170	Wreck	28°27.900'	80°05.946
8	Lois Dubois Reef	170	Barge Steel, Concrete Rubble	28°27.036′	80°05.532
9	Defiance	75	Wreck	28°26.868'	80°20.970
10	Hummingbird Reef	110	Concrete and Steel Rubble	28°25.908'	80°13.878
11	Brevard Reef Site	60	Ship Steel, Damocles 148'	28°24.426'	80°16.716
12	Cities Services Tanker WF	R 210	Wreck	28°23.748'	80°02.376

Depth Materials

No.	Reef Name	Depth	Materials	Lat	Long
13	Barge	100	Wreck	28°23.856'	80°12.816'
14	Reef Ball Reef	80	Concrete Reef Balls (80)	28°23.832'	80°17.832
15	Lead Wreck	70	Wreck, Ocean Venus 425'	28°23.394'	80°17.322
16	Concrete Pile Reef	85	Concrete Blocks	28°22.986'	80°17.790
17	Unknown	80	Concrete Rubble	28°22.794'	80°17.046
18	Tiger Red	85	Ship Tugboat	28°21.912'	80°16.668
19	Port Canaveral Site	1 100	Culverts, NASA Ocean Test Fixture	28°20.083'	80°12.233
20	Brevard Reef 2	50	Wood Sailboat, Moby Dick 100'	28°18.612'	80°27.024
21	Brevard Reef 1	54	Barge Steel, Wood Sailboat 85'	28°18.522'	80°26.994
22	Liberty Wreck	70	Wreck	28°12.258'	80°19.392
23	County Site #3	70	Concrete Railroad Ties	27°54.708'	80°13.716



PORT CANAVERAL **ARTIFICIAL REEF PROGRAM**

In 1994, the Canaveral Port Authority received the necessary permitting from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to create two artificial reef sites offshore Port Canaveral. Over the years, the Canaveral Port Authority has received state grant funding in order to enhance the reef sites and also has partnered with local fishing clubs and businesses. Each site is 9.7 acres.



for bank fishing and camping overnight.

weather conditions.

County on the other side of this Guide.

three-fourths of a mile away.

It is REQUIRED BY LAW to display this flag when divers are in the water. Boaters in the vicinity of a vessel displaying the diver down flag must give 100' clearance inshore or 300' clearance in open waters. A flag displayed on a vessel must be 20" by 24". Flags attached to a float may be 12" by 12". A stiffener is also required to keep the flag unfurled.

buoys is often quite good. Jetty Park at the east entrance is popular

• Stay clear of the main ship channel when large ships are

• In case of emergency, use VHF Channel 13 for bridge-to-bridge

short and simple, and never tie up the frequency.

communication with commercial ships. Keep transmissions

• Exercise caution when boating around ships or tugs

approaching. Views from large ships may be obstructed up to



the future of your sport depends on it! • Help fish stocks increase through catch and release. • Limit your take and vary your target. • Observe regulations and report violations. • Only keep fish for food or trophy. Share what you know to help the sport grow Fishing Tip

ORT FIGH Fuels Supports Sport Fish

In many cases, a license is required for saltwater fishing. Contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for license requirements, as well as for information on size and bag limits and seasonal closures.

REQUIRED SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)—One USCG Approved wearable PFD for each person on board, plus one throwable PFD for boats over 16' long. Children under 6 years old must wear approved and properly fitting PFD whenever vessel is under way on boats less than 26'. **Fire Extinguisher(s)**—Must be USCG approved, in serviceable condition, and appropriate type/size for your

distance between shorelines is over two miles. **Bell and/or Whistle**—Whistle must be audible for one-half mile. A power whistle, power horn and bell are required on vessels over 36'.

responsible for having ALL the USCG required equipment onboard and in good working condition. Different class vessels (based on overall length) may have additional safety equipment requirements. In addition, passenger-carrying and other commercial vessels have slightly different requirements. For more information, please contact FWC Law Enforcement, 888-404-FWCC, or USCG, 305-536-5611. Reference: US Congress—Navigation Rules

BOATING COURSES

vessel.

For information on boating safety, seamanship and navigation courses offered to the public in Brevard County by US Power Squadrons and US Coast Guard Auxiliaries, call Boat/US toll free at 1-800-336-BOAT. An operator will provide information on what courses are scheduled and who to contact locally for up-todate information on time and place.

To operate a vessel powered by a motor of 10 horsepower or greater (including PWCs), a person 21 years of age or younger must have completed a boater education course approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) or passed an approved equivalency exam.

WILDLIFE TIPS

Keep the following tips in mind as you venture out into Florida's natural areas:

View wildlife from a distance. Human disturbances can be disastrous for animals, especially the cumulative effect of frequent disruptions, a common occurrence at beaches, waterways and other busy wildlife viewing sites. Disturbances can cause animals to use up valuable energy reserves, abandon nests, and risk exposing eggs or young to temperature extremes and predators. The signs of disturbance include these: an animal has stopped feeding, is looking at you, appears aggressive or skittish, moves or flies away, is dive-bombing or circling overhead, or exhibiting "broken wing" displays.

Respect private property boundaries. Stay in channels and on paths to minimize habitat

Do not feed wildlife. Fed animals may abandon their natural diet and become dependent on human food and lose their fear of humans. Such animals can become aggressive or dangerous. Report people who feed alligators, dolphins or sharks. They're breaking the law. Call the FWCC Wildlife Alert toll free number 1-888-404-FWCC.

Keep your pets at home. They may frighten or harm the wildlife you are seeking, and many sites prohibit them altogether. It is against Florida law for you or your pets to chase, harass or harm wildlife.

Size and bag limits exist for most species of gamefish. In addition, a Florida Saltwater Fishing License is required when fishing from a boat or from any ground or structure that requires a boat to reach. Anglers wading in more than 4 feet of water also need a license.

For the latest information on license requirements and size and bag limits, contact the FWC Law Enforcement.

Many important habitats—seagrass meadows, sandy bottoms, oyster bars, mudflats, and flooded marshes—have been damaged or destroyed by dredging, industrial wastes, prop dredging, and polluted runoff from land. Anglers should be aware of these habitats and be concerned for the health of the habitats, because anglers are the first ones affected by a loss of habitat and a decline in water quality.

1995, the

American

environmental quality of the dune

ecosystem. Planting native vegetation

strengthens the dunes and provides protection

from beach erosion. The high level of community

involvement in this project was the key to its success.

INDIAN RIVER LAGOON LICENSE PLATE

The snook swimming over seagrass is the symbol on the Indian River Lagoon license plate and was chosen because it represents the varied ecology and economic significance of the Lagoon. By purchasing an Indian River Lagoon license plate, you are making a significant contribution to Lagoon restoration (at your local auto tag office, \$15.00 per year plus registration fees). All proceeds from the Lagoon license plate go toward Lagoon restoration projects and education. No proceeds are used for salaries or administrative fees. Help restore a Florida treasure! Hook up now to a Lagoon license tag and show your support for a healthy and productive Indian River Lagoon.

Most fisherman are careful to release many of the fish they catch. This helps low fish populations to recover and ensures that there will be plenty of fish for the future. However, many fish caught and released may die because of the stress of capture and handling. A set of simple steps may be taken to greatly increase a released fish's chance of survival.

How to Begin • Try to set the hook quickly to prevent fish from swallowing the bait. • Use barbless hooks that are made from metals that rust quickly. Keep release tools handy. **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. 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 • Use needle-nose pliers or a de-hooker to free the hook and protect · Gently place the fish in the water and support its body until it swims

• An exausted 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!**

MERRITT ISLAND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS You may fish, crab, clam, oyster, and shrimp in the Indian River

Lagoon, Mosquito Lagoon, Banana River Lagoon, Mosquito Control Impoundments, and interior freshwater lakes **except** for restricted areas of Kennedy Space Center or as noted below. For several days before Space Shuttle launches, the normal restricted area is expanded, temporarily closing certain waters that are normally open to sports fishing. Individuals found in NASA's normal or expanded Restricted Area are subject to arrest. All Florida Fishing Regulations apply as well as the following Refuge-Specific Regulations:

• You must possess a current signed Refuge Sports Fishing Permit at all times while in the Refuge. The permit is selfissuing and assures that you have read and understand Merritt

Island NWR's fishing regulations. • You may fish at night from a boat in the waters in Haulover Canal, Mosquito Lagoon, Indian River Lagoon and Banana River Lagoon. Bank fishing after dark is not permitted.

Impoundments and interior ponds are not open to night • You may not crab or fish from Black Point Wildlife Drive or any side road connected to Black Point Wildlife Drive except L Pond

 Motorized vessels are not permitted in the Banana River Lagoon within the posted No-Motor Zone. This includes any vessel having an attached or non-attached internal combustion engine or electric trolling motor capable of use. You may not use air thrust boats, hover craft or personal

watercraft in Refuge waters. Vessel speeds must not exceed Idle Speed in Bairs Cove and KARS Marina or Slow Speed Minimum Wake in Haulover Canal. Florida law also regulates boat speeds on other waters of the

 You may not harvest or possess horseshoe crabs. Anglers and crabbers must attend their lines. Commercial fisherman and fishing guides are required to obtain an annual Special Use Permit.

• Camping, overnight parking, firearms, and open fires are prohibited. Pets must be on a leash or in your vehicle/vessel. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Refuge Headquarters on SR 402 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, telephone 321-861-0667. To report a law violation, call 321-861-3378.

Brevard County is home to Port Canaveral, which involved in docking. Their prop-wash can easily capsize ranks second among the nation's cruise ship ports, small vessels or send them into the path of oncoming and consistently ranks among the nation's ten largest in terms of trade activity. You'll find many good • Be sure that your boat is visible at night and in poor

SAFE BOATING TIPS · Wear your life jacket and know how to swim. • Keep your boat in good repair. Know the limits of your boat

leasure boats share Lagoon waters with modern ships that haul cargo along the Intracoastal Waterway.

Awareness of the constraints under which these vessels

operate is the best protection against dangerous encounters.

From the cockpit of an open boat, the Indian River Lagoon

may look big enough for many vessels, but looks can be

deceiving. While quite large in terms of the square miles it

covers, the Lagoon is also very shallow, which restricts

restaurants here and several county maintained parks,

too. The run through the inlet is normally not difficult,

depending on the wind. Fishing around the Atlantic channel

navigation for larger vessels.

and your boating abilities. • 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, • Watch your wake. Remember, you are responsible for damage

caused by your vessel's wake. Large wakes can

overturn smaller vessels and damage

Use nautical charts in

boats that are moored at the dock.

unfamiliar waters. Stay

within marked channels.

• Know your navigational rules. Use the boating rules of the road to avoid accidents.

Main ship channels appear in blue on the chart of Brevard

• Be aware of changing weather conditions.

each trip. Tell others where you are going.

• Respect the rights of others.

• 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-

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.

made features before you leave. Check all your equipment before

MARINE ADVISORY FOR BREVARD COUNTY

MANATEE REFUGE: A No Motor Zone/Federal Manatee Protection Zone excludes all motor boat traffic to provide a secure sanctuary for the endangered animals north of the powerlines and State Road 528 in the Banana River. This area is well marked and enforcement is strict. Farther to the north in the Banana River is the NASA Restricted Area, where entry is prohibited. TRIDENT SUBMARINE BASE: On the north side of Port Canaveral is the restricted

Trident Submarine Base, where entry is prohibited.

