

1973

## Save the Manatee: The Vanishing Floridian

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Florida. Department of Natural Resources

Florida Marine Patrol

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# SAVE THE **MANATEE**

The vanishing Floridian



## The Manatees are dying. . .

The manatees are dying. They are dying because human beings are killing them. In 1979 alone, 11 percent of the total number of manatees left in Florida were needlessly slaughtered by human carelessness.

Most of them were slaughtered, not by commercial businesses, but by ordinary people, just like you and me, driving motor boats. To a manatee, a speeding boat is more hazardous than disease, weather, poachers, or alligators, for its propeller blades can cut a manatee's two-inch hide to ribbons.



Jeff Foott

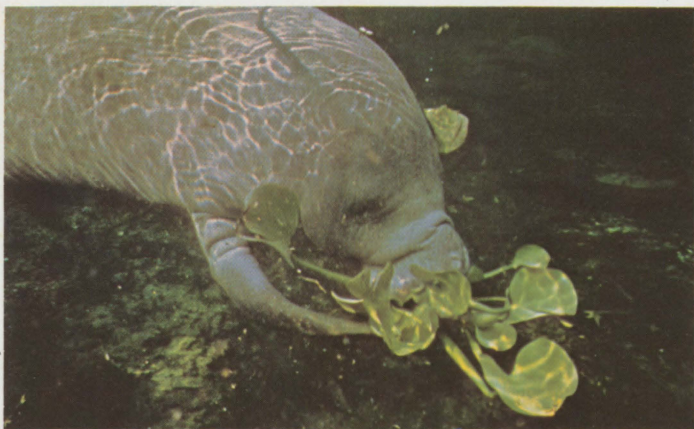


## We need Manatees

Our rivers and streams are becoming clogged with unwanted aquatic plants, which are the mainstay of the manatee diet. Manatees eat between 60 and 100 pounds of food each day, and can eat their way through a weed-choked waterway in a week.

These grey-skinned mammoths once ranged the coastal waters from North Carolina to Southern Texas. Now, their home is almost entirely restricted to Florida. It is up to us to see that they do not follow their larger relative, Stellar's sea cow, into extinction.

Florida Audubon Society



Jeff Foott



Florida Audubon Society

## And their only enemy is man!

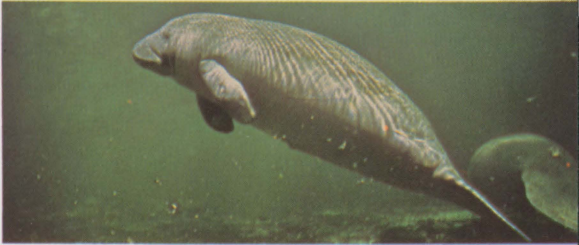
Manatees are *not* hunted. They have been protected by law since 1907. Manatees are *not* harvested commercially. They are protected by the Florida Manatee Sanctuary Act of 1978, the Federal Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 and the



Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Manatees *are* crushed in canal locks or killed by ordinary humans piloting speed boats through their habitat. Manatees cannot avoid a speeding boat. They can move at speeds of up to 20 miles per hour—but that is not fast enough to move their huge bulk out of the way when a motorboat gets too near.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Florida Audubon Society

## How do we save the Manatee?

The manatee can make a comeback in Florida. Here's how YOU can help:

**IF YOU DRIVE A MOTORBOAT**, slow your boat motor to idle or "no wake" speed when you see signs indicating manatee presence or habitat.

**IF YOU DIVE**, look, but do not touch the manatee. Photograph them if you like, but **ONLY** if they approach YOU.

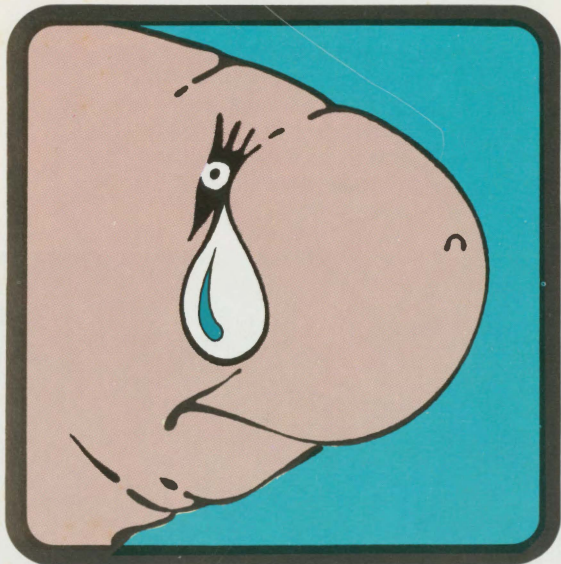
**IF YOU FISH**, do not discard tangled monofilament line into the water. Manatees are often injured by fish hooks and line trapped in the plants where they feed.

**IF YOU HAVE FRIENDS WHO LIKE THESE WATER SPORTS**, tell them about these defenseless creatures who harm no one and who could not fight if their lives depended on it.

**SAVE THE MANATEE...**

It has no friend, but you.

# SAVE THE MANATEE



Cover Photos:  
National Fish and Wildlife Laboratory  
Talley's Pro Dive (inset)

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Division of Law Enforcement  
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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
Division of Law Enforcement  
(904) 488-6559

FLORIDA MARINE PATROL  
Manatee Information Center  
Toll Free  
**1-800-342-1821**

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