



JULY 2025

# The Spoonbill

A quarterly newsletter by Friends of the Tampa Bay Aquatic Preserves



## IN THE PRESERVES

### Under the Sea

You might be surprised to learn that Tampa Bay has several species of hard and soft corals! While you won't see larger coral reefs in our aquatic preserves, we do have limestone outcroppings that create **hard-bottom habitat**.

TBAP is working to create a long-term hard-bottom monitoring project, in order to record species diversity and note changes over time. Staff re-visit the same sites in Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve each summer to perform surveys.

**Benthic surveys** are completed by running a measuring tape along a transect line and taking photos of the bottom at measured intervals. **Nekton surveys** are completed by dropping a GoPro camera on a tripod and recording all activity (fish, turtles, etc.) for 30 minutes. Photos and videos are later analyzed by staff in office.

If you have interest in volunteering with TBAP (for either field work or fish video analysis) reach out to [TampaBay\\_AP@FloridaDEP.gov](mailto:TampaBay_AP@FloridaDEP.gov).

## Member Spotlight

### MEET PRESIDENT ROSE POYNOR!

I worked for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for 20 years, in both the wetlands regulatory and ecosystems restoration programs. During this time, I had the privilege of collaborating with Dr. Randy Runnels on many projects. I left FDEP to teach middle school, hoping to help spark an interest in science amongst my students, and am currently in my 19<sup>th</sup> year of teaching. I am now so pleased at the opportunity to volunteer and help provide support to Dr. Runnels and the Aquatic Preserve staff through our Friends' Citizen Support Organization!





# Island Restoration, S'mores, and Camping

**TBAP PARTNERED WITH USF'S CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT TO ORGANIZE A BULLS SERVICE BREAK FOR STUDENTS**

A group of USF students pulled invasive Brazilian Pepper and Carrotwood, planted native plants, picked up a LOT of marine debris, and assembled a picnic table for boaters and campers to use on island SJS-22, just North of the Dunedin Causeway. After a hard days work, they snorkeled and shared s'mores before camping out overnight.



## SharkCon

**JULY 12-13, 2025**

Help the TBAP team with their outreach booth at at the Florida State Fairgrounds Expo Hall for SharkCon!

**EMAIL**

[Angelique.Kremer@FloridaDEP.gov](mailto:Angelique.Kremer@FloridaDEP.gov)



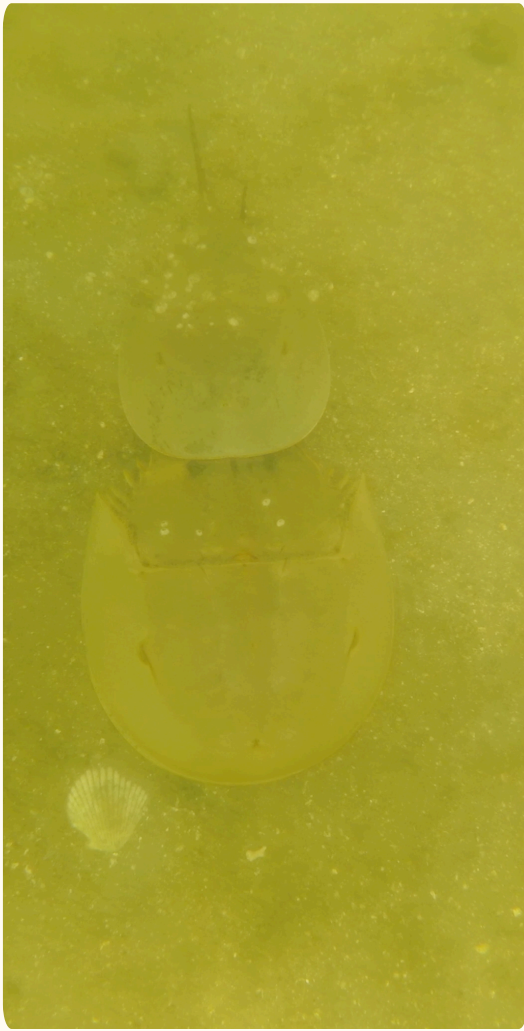
## General Interest

Volunteers are essential to our mission. We work closely with the TBAP team to plan projects in our four aquatic preserves. Get to know your local ecosystems through exciting hands-on experiences!

**EMAIL**

[friends@tampabayaquaticpreserves.org](mailto:friends@tampabayaquaticpreserves.org)





## Seaside Snapshots

MOMENTS FROM THE AQUATIC PRESERVES



Email your aquatic preserve photos to [heidibrockhaus@outlook.com](mailto:heidibrockhaus@outlook.com), with the subject line "Spoonbill Photo Entry", for a chance to be featured in our next quarterly newsletter!

# Stormwater Stewardship

THIS PAST MAY WAS TAMPA BAY'S FIRST  
STORMWATER STEWARDSHIP MONTH!

Most stormwater – water from rain – travels across land and paved surfaces into storm drains. From there, it moves through underground pipes and open channels, eventually reaching our streams, rivers, lakes, and oceans.

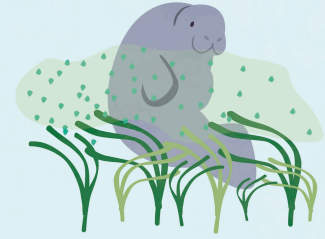
**Did you know that most stormwater is not treated before it enters our local waterways?** As stormwater moves, it picks up pollutants along the way – things like litter, yard debris, pet waste, fertilizers, and auto waste.

**Leaves, fertilizers, and pet waste add excess nutrients** to our waterways, which feeds **harmful algal blooms** that kill fish and make the water unsafe for drinking and swimming. Improving the quality of our stormwater can have a huge impact on both our communities AND ecosystems.

The monthly campaign was organized by the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council ([TBRPC](#)), the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences ([UF IFAS](#)), and other partner organizations. If you missed it, don't worry! **Stormwater stewardship is important year-round.** It is an easy way for you to **protect Tampa Bay's aquatic preserves.**

[CHECK OUT THE FULL RESOURCE LIBRARY HERE!](#)

**STOP THE GUNK,  
SAVE THE CHUNK**



**FOR OUR WATER. FOR OUR MANATEES.**

Nutrient pollution from stormwater fuels algae growth that blocks sunlight, harming seagrasses—an essential food source for manatees.



**SUMMER SPRAY  
WASHES AWAY!**



**FOR OUR WATER. FOR OUR HEALTH.**

Excess fertilizers wash off lawns and gardens when it rains and flow into our waterways. These added nutrients can contribute to algae growth.  
**Avoid spraying during rainy months.**



## Upcoming FTBAP Meetings

Tuesday, July 29<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 pm

Monday, August 25<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 pm

Monday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> @ 6:30 pm

ALL MEETINGS TAKE PLACE AT CLEARWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
(610 S FORT HARRISON AVE, CLEARWATER 33756)

[BECOME A FRIEND TODAY!](#)



[tampabayaquaticpreserves.org](http://tampabayaquaticpreserves.org)

