

THE PUBLICATION DEDICATED TO CONSERVING AND PROTECTING FLORIDA'S MARINE RESOURCES

WINTER 20-21

SEAWATCH

PRESENTED BY CONTENDER

SW FLORIDA REDFISH RESTOCKING

NO SHOES REEF
& DEPLOYMENT

STAR RECAP



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THE PUBLICATION DEDICATED TO CONSERVING AND PROTECTING FLORIDA'S MARINE RESOURCES

Sea Watch is published three times a year by CCA Florida, a nonprofit state affiliate of the Coastal Conservation Association.

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ANGLER DRIVEN. CONSERVATION MINDED.

PATHFINDER AND CCA FLORIDA
EDUCATION, ADVOCACY & HABITAT CONSERVATION



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REDFISH RELEASE RESTOCK

CCA Florida's East Coast Redfish Restocking Initiative

Anglers on Florida's east coast know that the redfish population has declined in recent years. And at CCA Florida, we know that something needs to be done to ensure this iconic fishery is healthy for generations to come.

We're working with the Duke Energy Mariculture Center to restock Florida's redfish population and you can help. Phase I of our east coast redfish restocking initiative includes the raising and release of up to 100,000 juvenile redfish, but we can't do it without you.

With your support, we can meet our \$100,000 goal, which will fund the equipment, feed and other supplies needed to support the effort. Feeding the broodstock and juveniles is a \$25,000 annual cost alone! Get more information online and donate today.

Corporate partnerships are welcome. Learn more online.

DONATE NOW

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INTRODUCING



**FRED CRABILL
CHAIRMAN**

Hometown: Lakeland, FL (born and raised in Falls Church, VA)

Years in CCA: Been a member of CCA Florida for 25 years. Polk County Chapter President for about eight years. Previously, serving as State President, Vice Chairman and Chairman 2012-2014, and currently, Chairman on the State Board (yes, again).

Why are you involved in CCA Florida? The health of our fisheries and the health of their habitat is directly related to the health of our planet. It is our responsibility to maintain and improve the fisheries and habitat for our grandchildren and generations to come.



**ANDY STEINBERGS
PRESIDENT**

WRIGHT



WRIGHT TAYLOR VICE CHAIRMAN

Hometown: I grew up in Lakeland (having immigrated from Canada at the age of 15) and now reside in Vero Beach on the shores of the Indian River Lagoon.

Years in CCA: Been FCA/CCA member since some time in the 1980s

Why are you involved in CCA Florida?

Passion for fishing began at the age of 10 and hasn't slowed down since. After retiring several years ago, I've found time to pursue habitat restoration and opportunities, as CCA Florida's Habitat Chairman and now State President, I'm hoping my involvement ensures a future fishery for my grandchildren and beyond.

Hometown: Marco Island (Moving from Texas in 2002)

Years in CCA: Having been involved with CCA in Texas (GCCA/CCA), I joined CCA Florida in 2002, then became President of the Naples Chapter for four years. Thereafter, I became involved on the state level, participating on the Government Relations Committee as well as becoming Chairman of the President's Counsel and a member of the Management Committee. Currently, I serve as Vice Chairman on the state board.

Why are you involved in CCA Florida? As a full-time Light Tackle Fishing Guide, the fishery is very important to me. CCA is my Insurance Card, so I can not only continue making a living from it, but more importantly, guaranteeing the fishery will be protected for my family and my customers to go out and enjoy.

A Bipartisan Win for Gulf Reef Fish Conservation

The Direct Enhancement of Snapper Conservation and the Economy through Novel Devices Act of 2020 (DESCEND Act) was signed into law on January 13. The bipartisan law requires recreational (including charter boats) and commercial fishermen to have on board a venting tool or descending device that is rigged and ready for use while fishing for reef fish in Gulf of Mexico federal waters.

The recreational fishing and boating community strongly supports the DESCEND Act, which was led in the House by Congressmen Garret Graves (R-La.), Jared Huffman (D-Calif.) and Steve Palazzo (R-Miss.), and in the Senate by Senators Bill Cassidy (R-La.), Doug Jones (D-Ala.) and John Cornyn (R-Texas). As anglers use these devices to return more fish to the deep, we will see conservation gains for Gulf of Mexico reef fish for many years to come.

“Reef fish in the Gulf of Mexico are economically and culturally

important to the region, and we are thrilled that the DESCEND Act has been signed into law to tackle wanton waste of these prized fish,” said Jeff Angers, president of the Center for Sportfishing Policy. “The future of recreational fishing and America’s blue economy depends on an abundance of fish and the opportunity to catch them. The DESCEND Act supports both of these goals.”

Red snapper and other reef fish are often returned to the water for a variety of reasons (e.g., being caught out of season, under the size limit, or over the bag limit). Due to the rapid change in pressure from being brought to the surface from depth, many of these fish experience barotrauma – a condition where a buildup of gas pressure in their bodies makes it difficult or impossible to swim back down. Consequently, countless fish returned to the water can die at the surface or fall victim to opportunistic predators.

A descending device is a weighted hook, lip clamp, or box that

Photo courtesy of SeaQualizer



This effort will result in saving hundreds of thousands of red snapper annually.



will hold the fish while it is lowered to a sufficient depth to recover from the effects of barotrauma and release the fish. A venting tool is a sharpened, hollow device capable of penetrating the abdomen of a fish to release the excess gas pressure in the body cavity when a fish is retrieved from depth.

"The signing of the DESCEND Act is a culmination of a multi-year effort by the recreational fishing community and our champions in Congress to further demonstrate our commitment to marine resource conservation," said Mike Leonard, vice president of government affairs for the American Sportfishing Association. "This effort will result in saving hundreds of thousands of red snapper annually, promoting a healthier resource and improving fishing opportunities in the future."

"Considering that a significant percentage of recreational fish are caught and released alive, the use of descending gear

will increase the number of fish that survive to be caught again at a larger size or later when in-season," said Ted Venker, conservation director for Coastal Conservation Association. "This conservation-minded law is an important piece of our overall efforts to reduce all sources of discard and bycatch mortality, and ensure marine resources are healthy now and in the future."

"Requiring descending devices for both commercial fishermen and recreational anglers fishing for reef fish in the Gulf of Mexico is an important first step," said Chris Horton, senior director of fisheries policy for the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation. "We look forward to working with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council on the implementation of the requirement, as well as encouraging their use, so that we can realize the full benefit for reef fish conservation."



CCA FLORIDA

SOUTH WALTON KIDS FISHING TOURNAMENT

Statewide conservation group to host local kids fishing tournament to promote the conservation of marine resources

The first 200 anglers to register will receive:

A Rod & Reel combo provided
by CCA Florida

Pompano Rigs & Shrimp

Beach Rod Holder

T-shirt

Lunch

Sunday, April 18, 2021 • 12 to 3 p.m.

Grayton Beach • 70 Hotz Ave • Santa Rose Beach, FL 32459

Pre-Registration is required. The cost is \$15 per kid, ages 2-12.
Visit www.CCAFlorida.org

Amanda Krpan • 352-278-2708 • akrpan@ccaflorida.org

MEDALS FOR TOP ANGLERS IN EACH AGE DIVISION

The Coastal Conservation Association is a 501-c3 non-profit marine conservation organization dedicated to conserve and protect Florida's marine resources.



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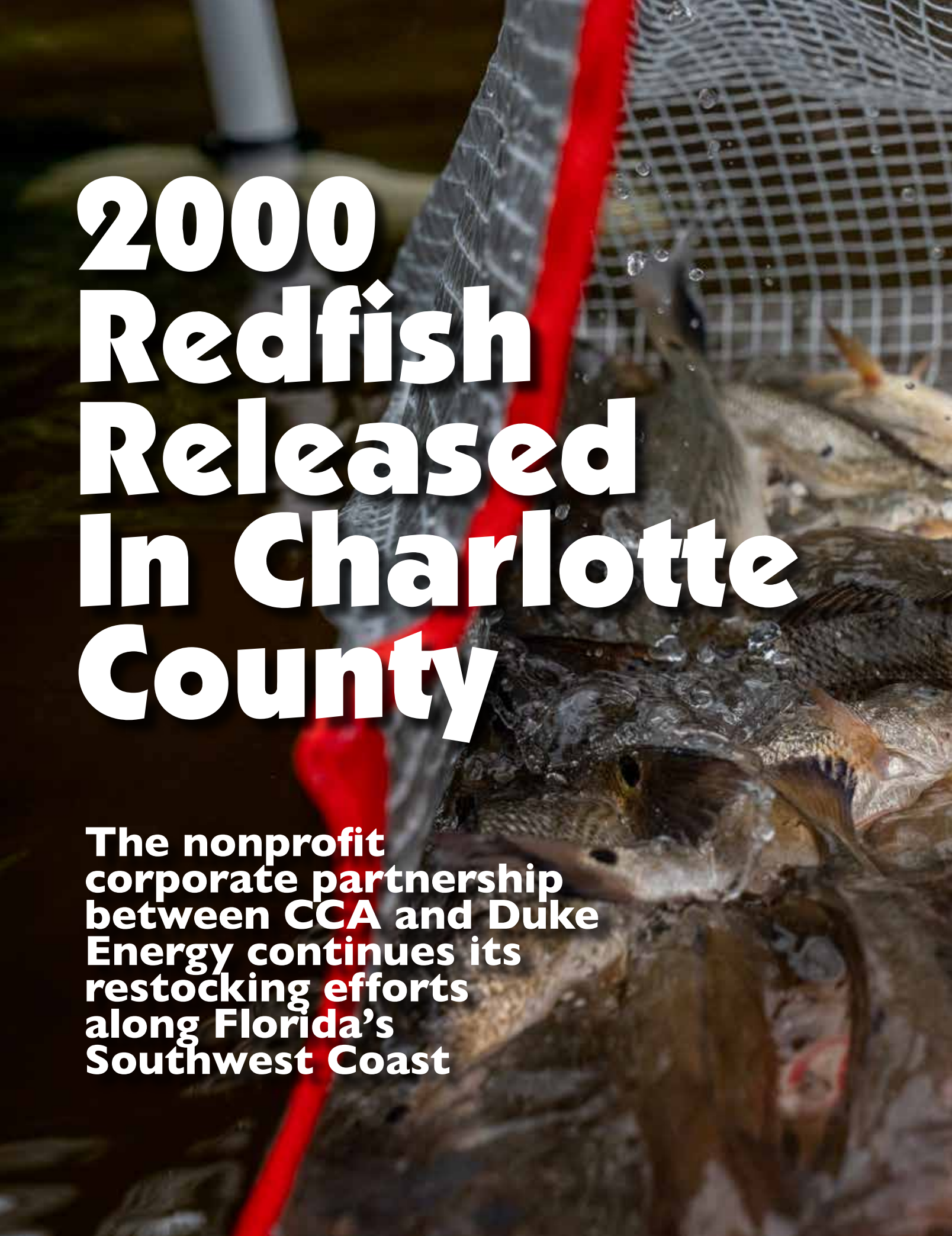
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FLORIDA





2000 Redfish Released In Charlotte County

**The nonprofit
corporate partnership
between CCA and Duke
Energy continues its
restocking efforts
along Florida's
Southwest Coast**



Our ongoing efforts with CCA Florida are helping repopulate a fishery that is iconic to the Sunshine State.

Eric Latimer
Duke Energy Florida
Mariculture Center
Manager



Coastal Conservation Association Florida (CCA Florida), the state's leading organization dedicated to marine fisheries conservation, education and advocacy, joined Duke Energy to continue addressing the loss of the redfish population along Florida's Southwest coast. Together, the partners will release 2,000 (8 to 12 inch), hatchery-reared juvenile redfish from the Duke Energy Mariculture Center.

"Revitalizing the redfish population through these releases is essential to helping restock this iconic species to the state of Florida," CCA Florida Executive Director Brian Gorski said. "Today, kicks off our third year partnering with Duke Energy, and together, our efforts are improving this fishery now and for generations to come."

In recent years, the redfish population has drastically declined as a result of water

quality issues and loss of habitat, to counteract these effects, CCA Florida has taken a proactive approach to habitat restoration, focusing on restocking efforts for one of Florida's most sought-after inshore fish, the redfish. Since 2018, in partnership with Duke Energy, nearly 38,000 redfish have been released in coastal areas across the state to relieve suffering redfish populations.

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Charlotte County Redfish Release

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"Our ongoing efforts with CCA Florida are helping repopulate a fishery that is iconic to the Sunshine State," Duke Energy Florida Mariculture Center Manager Eric Latimer said. "Every redfish we release is a step in the right direction, and if we can help be the solution to restocking this fishery, then we are helping

restore our entire marine environment.

In the past 30 years, Duke Energy's Crystal River Mariculture Center has cultivated and released over 4 million fish, shrimp and crabs into the Gulf of Mexico. In addition, the Center also grows seagrasses, oysters and mangroves to support the overall health of Florida's fisheries and marine habitats.

The redfish release was held in Charlotte County at the Port Charlotte Beach Park.

CCA Florida is committed to ensuring this iconic fishery is healthy for generations to come. To support or learn more, please visit: ccaflorida.org.

2020 STAR



2020 STAR HAD A TOTAL OF
17 DIVISIONS WITH MORE THAN
33,000 CATCH RECORDS LOGGED.



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STAR 2020

continued from page 19

As CCA Florida gears up for the 2021 CCA Florida STAR competition presented by Yamaha, we are reflecting back to last summer's strange times and the one activity that became the craze... fishing.

Fishing allowed families to get outdoors, practice social distancing and provide a much-needed escape from quarantining. As a result of this phenom, the 2020 competition flourished due to STAR's digital-based competition format, which requires almost no social interaction. Even though the competition's start date was pushed back, due to the closures of boat ramps and tackle stores, the statewide event concluded with some big numbers.

CCA Florida STAR officially wrapped on October 4, 2020, and the more than 100 STAR winners were drawn and announced, and more than \$280,000 in prizes were awarded.

In its sixth year, 2020 STAR was the largest competition to date,

and including more than 4,700 new members, nearly 1,300 renewing members and more than 1,200 of these participants were registered in the youth division.

2020 STAR had a total of 17 Divisions with more than 33,000 catch records logged. Additionally, there were 24 iHeart Radio tagged redfish recaptured during the competition, but unfortunately, none of these tagged redfish were caught by a STAR registrant and CCA Florida member. Since there were no tagged redfish winners in last year's event, it left six boat, motor and trailer packages unclaimed, including the Contender 22 Sport, Pathfinder 2200TRX, Carolina Skiff 21 Ultra, Hewes 16 Redfisher and two Salt Marsh Skiff 1656 all powered by Yamaha. The donated boats were sold and the monies will be used to underwrite the Youth Scholarship division. In

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STAR 2020

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the Tagged Dolphin division, two tagged dolphin were caught by unregistered anglers, and missed the chance to win the \$10,000 cash prize.

The Salt Marsh Skiff Open Inshore Division featured the T H Marine Non-tagged redfish division, which was the most popular, and the winning angler received a Salt Marsh Skiff 1656 with 40hp Yamaha and trailer. A close second in popularity was The Carolina Skiff Spotted Trout division, and the winner was awarded a Carolina Skiff 17LS with 90hp Yamaha and trailer. The Piranha Boatworks Snook division rounded out the Inshore Divisions, and the winner received a Piranha RASO 140 with 15hp Yamaha and trailer. The most challenging division was the Humminbird Tarpon Division, with the winner being awarded \$10,000 in prizes from Humminbird, Minn Kota, Engel, Costa and other great partners.

The most popular division in the Engel Coolers Open Offshore

Division was the danco sports Grouper Division, and the winner was awarded a 115 Yamaha motor. Next, the Cannon Kingfish division with a Salt Marsh Savannah Skiff, 9hp Yamaha and trailer being awarded to the winner. In the Tigress Outriggers & Gear Non-tagged Dolphin division the winner was awarded a 115hp Yamaha and Tigress Outriggers and Kite package. In the Costa Kick Plastic Trash Division, there was a whopping 3,106 five-gallon buckets full of trash recorded, almost tripling the count from last year. Most of the winners are determined by a random drawing of all entries in the division not by the biggest fish allowing anglers of all skill levels the opportunity to win. Lastly, the other divisions such as the Ladies, Native Watercraft Kayak, Power Pole Conservation and Lionfish divisions were equally as popular.

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STAR 2020

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The highlight of the competition was the Youth Scholarship Division presented by Academy Sports + Outdoors awarding \$100,000 in scholarships to 12 youth anglers who were drawn as winners from all the fish entries made over the summer. Many thanks to Realtree Fishing and Academy Sports + Outdoors for the sponsorship of the two, \$25,000 scholarships and to the \$5,000 scholarship sponsors, Southeast Environmental Solutions, Bealls Department Stores, Florida's Sports Coast, Plantation Inn Redfish Classic, Tailin Toads, Flagler Sportfishing Club, Florida Sportsman Live Radio Network, Jacksonville Offshore Fishing Club, Florida Cracker Invitational Fishing Tournament and Barnes & Thornburg LLP.

As the state's leading organization dedicated to habitat restoration projects, water quality initiatives and fisheries advocacy, we had once again produced a competition which since its launch in 2015 has now awarded over 1.2 million in prizes with \$600,000 of that

being Youth scholarships to young anglers from Florida and other states in our catch-and-photo event.

"STAR continues to be a tremendous tool for CCA Florida from bringing awareness to our organization and encouraging anglers to implement conservation practices, while enjoying a really cool fishing competition that has friends and families planning their summer around our event," STAR Director Leiza Fitzgerald said.

CCA Florida STAR is not only a fun fishing competition but provides a large amount of dependent data that can be used by fisheries management groups and universities for further research on stock assessment, habitat management and so much more. Please take the time to patronize the many partners and sponsors of STAR as we would not be able to offer such a wonderful event without their support.

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Basil Butter Scallops over Lemon Rice

INGREDIENTS

LEMON RICE:

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 c jasmine or long-grain rice
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ tsp kosher salt
2 c chicken stock
¼ c fresh lemon juice
2 tbsp butter
⅓ c green onion, chopped

SCALLOPS:

12 large or 8 jumbo scallops
All-purpose flour for dusting
Salt and pepper to taste
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
3 tbsp butter
1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 c fresh basil, chopped
1 tsp lemon zest

DIRECTIONS

LEMON RICE: Heat oil in a large pot over medium high heat and add rice. Stir and cook for about 5 minutes until rice starts to brown. Add garlic and salt and saute about 2 minutes. Add chicken stock, lemon juice and butter and bring to a boil. Turn heat to low and cover pot with a lid. Simmer 15-20 minutes until rice is cooked. Remove from heat, fluff with a fork and stir in green onion. Place lid on pot and set aside.

SCALLOPS: Dry scallops thoroughly with paper towels. Get as much moisture out of the scallops to ensure a good sear. Dust one side of the scallops with flour and season with a sprinkle of salt and pepper. Repeat on other side. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Once oil is very hot, place scallops into pan and cook without moving them, about 2-3 minutes, creating a golden brown crust.

Flip scallops; if any stick to the pan, either cook a few more seconds or wiggle the scallop loose with tongs and flip. Cook an additional 30 seconds, remove from pan and set aside.

Lower heat to very low, add butter and lemon juice. Once butter is melted, add garlic, basil and lemon zest and cook about 1 minute longer. Add scallops back into the pan and cook for an additional minute.

TO SERVE: Serve over rice, spooning pan sauce over scallops. **SERVES 2 LARGE PORTIONS.**



2021 STAR WILL RETURN TO THE ORIGINAL DATES FROM MEMORIAL DAY TO LABOR DAY, MAY 29 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 6.

We are experiencing more early registrations than ever before and will continue to provide great early bird incentives from our partners like Engel Coolers, Humminbird and danco Pliers, so get registered today and be entered in the early bird drawings.

STAR will once again provide another reason for anglers to fish and practice conservation over the summer. Just a little hint. ...

Brevard(www.visitspacecoast.com), Citrus County (www.discovercrystalriver.com), Engelwood/ Punta Gorda (www.pureflorida.com) are all our destination counties and will have more tagged redfish than any other counties. So start planning your fishing trips now.

For more information on STAR, please visit www.CCAFLSTAR.com

CCA Florida and Duke Energy Restocking Efforts in Manatee



Coastal Conservation Association Florida (CCA Florida) joined Duke Energy to continue addressing the loss of the redfish population along Florida's Southwest coast. Together, the partners released 2,000 (8 to 12 inch), hatchery-reared juvenile redfish from the Duke Energy Mariculture Center in Manatee County during reopening of its expanded Robinson Preserve.

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Energy Continue Redfish Manatee County



2000 additional redfish
released along Florida's
Southwest Coast

Revitalizing the redfish population through these releases is essential to helping restock this iconic species to the state of Florida.

Brian Gorski, CCA Florida Executive Director





Manatee County Redfish Release

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"Revitalizing the redfish population through these releases is essential to helping restock this iconic species to the state of Florida," CCA Florida Executive Director Brian Gorski said. "We're honored to continue our restocking initiative with Duke Energy, as it's a symbiotic relationship sharing the same goal – to improve our coastal environments and waterways, and today is especially exciting because Manatee County is once again joining our efforts."

In recent years, the redfish population has drastically declined as a result of water quality issues and loss of habitat, to counteract these effects, CCA Florida has taken a proactive approach to habitat restoration, focusing on restocking efforts for one of Florida's most sought-after inshore fish, the redfish. Since 2018, in partnership with Duke Energy, 38,000 redfish have been released in along Florida's Southwest coast relieve suffering redfish populations.

"The completion of the Robinson Preserve expansion fulfills a pledge we make to our community every day – prioritizing environmental restoration and improving water quality," Manatee County's Parks and Natural Resources Director Charlie Hunsicker said. "This restoration serves as an affirmation that our efforts will continue supporting local fisheries and protecting coastal

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Manatee County Redfish Release

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habitats for generations to follow, and we are proud to partner with CCA Florida and Duke Energy on this special day.”

The final phase of Manatee County’s Robinson Preserve expansion includes a 150-acre habitat restoration. The now, 684-acre Preserve provides visitors the chance to experience one of the County’s most valuable, natural assets and provides

local fisheries a healthier, more sustainable habitat.

“Our ongoing efforts with CCA Florida are helping repopulate redfish in the Gulf ecosystem,”

Duke Energy Florida President Catherine Stempien said. “We have a responsibility to protect and preserve our environment for future generations. Duke Energy

Florida is proud to be a small part of our state’s multi-layered approach to restoring our marine ecosystems.”

In the past 30 years, Duke Energy’s Crystal River Mariculture Center has cultivated and released over 4 million fish, shrimp and crabs into the Gulf of Mexico. In addition, the Center also grows sea-grasses, oysters and mangroves to support the overall health of Florida’s fisheries and marine habitats.

The redfish release was held in Bradenton at the newly expanded Robinson Preserve.

CCA Florida is committed to ensuring this iconic fishery is healthy for generations to come. To support or learn more, please visit: ccaflorida.org.

Where would you like to fish today?

AT MAVERICK, WE THINK THERE ARE NO BETTER WORDS TO START A MORNING. THAT'S WHY WE'VE BEEN A PROUD SUPPORTER OF CCA FLORIDA FROM THE BEGINNING. BECAUSE WE WANT ALL FUTURE FISHING PARTNERS TO BE ABLE TO ASK EACH OTHER THIS VERY QUESTION.



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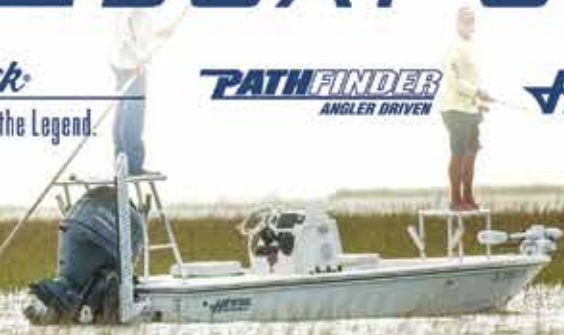
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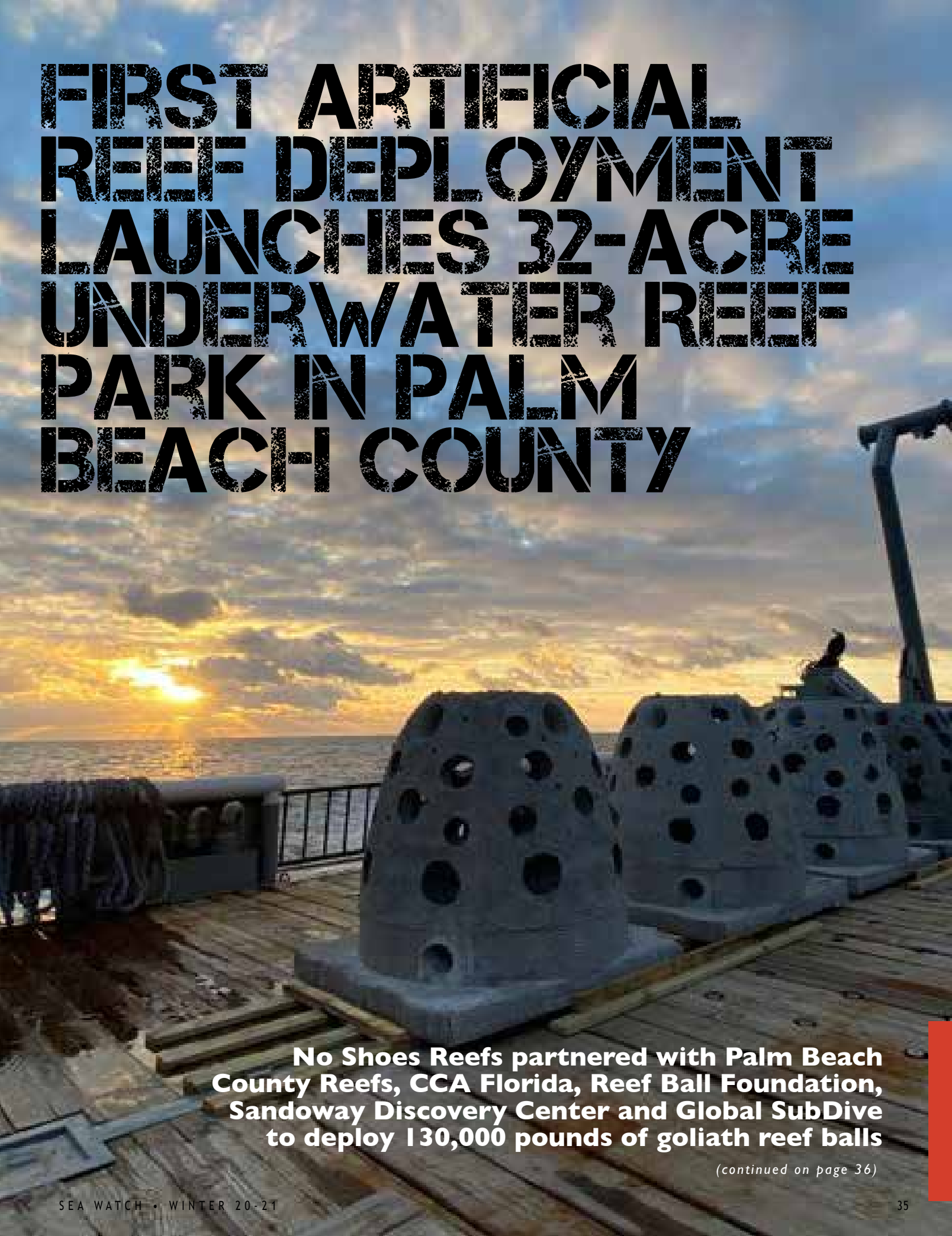
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PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE CCA FOR OVER THREE DECADES!

FIRST ARTIFICIAL REEF DEPLOYMENT LAUNCHES 32-ACRE UNDERWATER REEF PARK IN PALM BEACH COUNTY



No Shoes Reefs partnered with Palm Beach County Reefs, CCA Florida, Reef Ball Foundation, Sandoway Discovery Center and Global SubDive to deploy 130,000 pounds of goliath reef balls

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No Shoes Reefs, a grassroots organization committed to creating healthier oceans and spearheaded by Kenny Chesney, joined forces with Coastal Conservation Association Florida (CCA Florida), Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management, Sandway Discovery Center Reef Ball Foundation and Global SubDive to successfully deploy

13, 10,000-pound goliath reef balls, about 0.5 miles off Delray Beach, creating "No Shoes Reefs 4." This kicks off development for a 32-acre underwater reef park.

Global SubDive's Go America vessel deployed the 7-by-6-foot reef balls, donated by No Shoes Reefs and Reef Ball Foundations,

in the Delray Dredge Hole, the pre-permitted artificial reef site roughly 0.35-mile long by 0.13-mile wide. The reef site is located offshore just over 0.5 miles east of Delray Beach, Florida (26° 27.178/-80° 02.739). No Shoes Reefs 4 takes its name from the reef's four partners, -- and will provide long-term





educational opportunities for the students of Palm Beach County through the Sandoz Discover Center's ongoing educational programs. These educational opportunities will necessitate an ongoing reef monitoring program. NSR4 will also provide a long-term economic boost for the County, as well as a

positive impact on the marine species, tourism, and on the local fishing and diving community for many years to come.

"No Shoes Reefs is an extension of how I have tried to live for many, many years," says Chesney. "Love the water, give back to the water. Many people don't realize both

how fragile and resilient the ocean's ecosystems are, and I think it's the small projects that raise awareness on local levels that help people understand the ocean is a living thing. Our partners have been so tireless in terms of raising money, awareness and doing the ac-

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ABOUT NO SHOES REEFS

No Shoes Reefs, an evolving group of Brands, Ocean Habitat Conservationists Organizations and people working together to help Kenny make a difference for our oceans. With the overarching ethos One Reef At A Time, the loose-knit web of contributors are aligned to not just protect, but create new living reefs to provide environments for all form of aquatic life.. www.noshoesreefs.org.

Artificial Reef Deployment

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tual work – and it's a wonderful way to build the No Shoes Nation community of people who care about the ocean, the beach and our whole way of life."

This deployment will create a foundation for natural habitat development and also provide divers the opportunity to explore

dozens of future underwater acreages. Once complete, the 32-acre artificial reef will include countless paths for underwater enthusiasts to discover new marine habitats from unique seagrasses to variety of fish species.

"Improving and creating sustainable fisheries and protecting Florida's marine environ-

ment is CCA Florida's lifeblood," CCA Florida Director of Habitat and Environmental Restoration Frank Gidus said. "We're honored to be part of this reef project and partner with No Shoes Reef, as it's a symbiotic relationship sharing the same goal – to improve our coastal environments and waterways for today and





for generations to come.”

Artificial reefs initiate the development of natural, thriving habitats for various species of fish, invertebrates, and other marine life, such as smaller organisms that are vital food sources for other marine species, with the overall goal to create an ever-evolving ecosystem

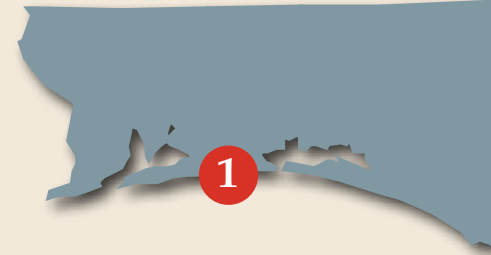
while enhancing fisheries, improving water quality and providing new opportunities for local anglers.

No Shoes Reefs and Reef Ball Foundation donated the 13 reef balls along with four flat-bed trailers to transport to the Go America vessel. Funds were secured from proceeds of

eco-friendly No Shoes Reefs products with partners Deep Apparel, SiliPint and RePatriot Flag. Additionally, CCA Florida secured funding from IMPACT 100 Palm Beach County, earning a merit award in the Environment and Animal Welfare category and receiving \$13,000 during the 2020 Grand Awards.

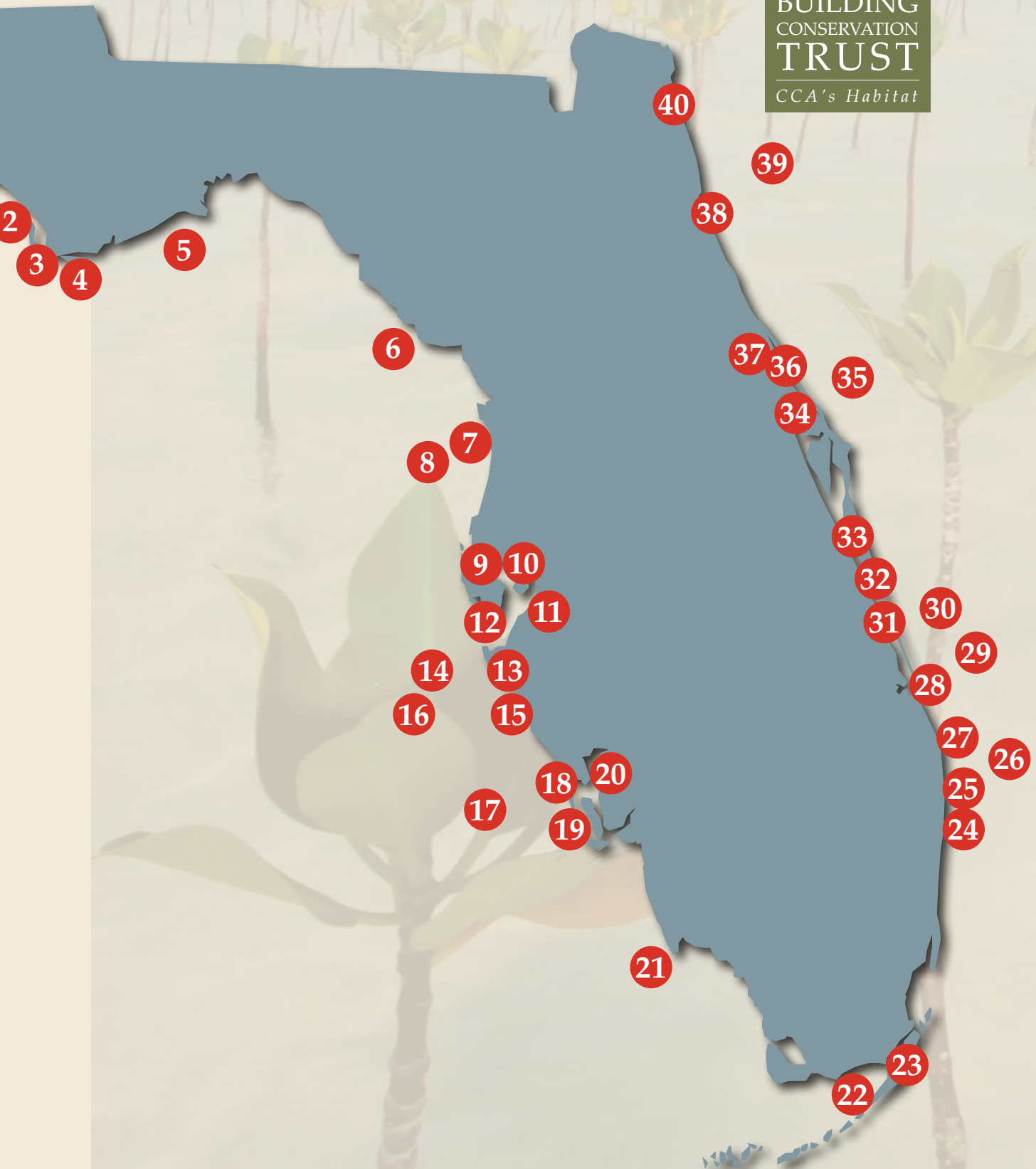


COMPLETED HABITAT PROJECTS

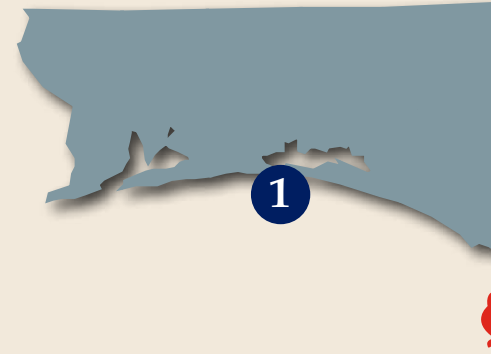


Since 2010, and in collaboration with the Building Conservation Trust, CCA has contributed \$820,000 which has been leveraged with our partners to over \$4,900,000 in habitat projects statewide. Join us in these efforts!

1. CCA/South Walton Artificial Reef Association, Inc. Reefs
2. CCA Reef/MBARA
3. CCA/Ocean Aid 360 Apalachicola Ghost Trap Rodeo
4. CCA/FDEP/Duke Spartina Grass Replanting
5. CCA/BCT Billy's Barge Artificial Reef
6. NCBS Lone Cabbage Reef Fish Monitoring
7. CCA/UF/IFAS Centipede Bay Oyster Reef Restoration
8. CCA/Hernando Co. Ghost Ship Reef
9. CCA/BCT/Tampa Bay Watch Fantasy Island Oyster Restoration
10. CCA/BCT/Tampa Bay Watch 2D Island Oyster Restoration
11. CCA/FWC Suncoast Youth Conservation Center Saltwater Pond
12. CCA/Ocean Aid 360 Apalachicola Ghost Trap Rodeo
13. CCA/UCF De Soto National Memorial Living Shoreline Stabilization
14. CCA/BCT Sean Gucken Memorial Reef
15. CCA/Sarasota Bay Watch Clam Restoration
16. CCA/FWC Larry Borden Artificial Reef – Manatee County
17. CCA/Lee County USS Mohawk CGC Reef – Veterans Memorial Reef
18. CCA/BCT/Lee County Punta Rassa Oyster Restoration
19. CCA/BCT/Lee County San Carlos Bay Oyster Restoration
20. LBHS Prop Scar Restoration and Sea Grass Project
21. Naples Bay Oyster Restoration Project
22. CCA Florida Bay Seagrass Restoration
23. CCA/UNF Florida Bay Turtle Grass Research Project
24. CCA/No Shoes Reef 4
25. CCA/BCT Goggle Eye Reef
26. CCA/BCT Andrew "Red" Harris Foundation Reef
27. CCA/BCT Andrew "Red" Harris Foundation "No Shoes" Reef
28. CCA/Florida Oceanographic Society Seagrass and Oyster Restoration
29. CCA/MCAC Brause Girls Reef
30. CCA Curtis Bostick Reef
31. CCA/Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute Seagrass Restoration
32. CCA Indian River Lagoon RISSA Seagrass Buoys and Oyster Restoration
33. CCA Spotted Seatrout Acoustic Study
34. CCA/UCF/NPS Canaveral Nat'l Seashore Indian Midden Living Shoreline Restoration
35. CCA/BCT Lady Philomena Cargo Ship - Volusia County Reef Site No. 12
36. CCA/UCF Tomoka State Park Indian Midden Living Shoreline Restoration
37. CCA/Heineken/UCF Tomoka State Park Indian Midden Living Shoreline Restoration
38. CCA/City of Fernandina Living Shoreline Oyster Restoration
39. CCA/BCT Starship Reef
40. CCA/BCT Jacksonville River Reef



ONGOING & UPCOMING HABITAT PROJECTS



Since 2010, and in collaboration with the Building Conservation Trust, CCA has contributed \$820,000 which has been leveraged with our partners to over \$4,900,000 in habitat projects statewide. Join us in these efforts!

1. CCA/Choctawatchee Bay/Toadfish Living Shoreline Restoration
2. CCA/FDEP/Duke Energy/Conservation Corps Spartina Grass Replanting
3. Dr. Bart Carey Memorial Reef
4. CCA/Epic Tails Charters/Watergoat Project
5. CCA Phoenix Reef
6. CCA/Turtle Bay Oyster Reef Restoration
7. CCA John Michael Baker Memorial Reef - Broward County
8. CCA Broward Chapter Pilot Oyster Project
9. CCA Bob Burton Memorial Reef
10. CCA/Additive Fishing/FWC/UF Indian River Lagoon Clam Restoration
11. CCA/Brevard County Artificial Reefs
12. CCA/UCF Mosquito Lagoon Oyster Restoration
13. CCA Oyster Shell Recycling Program



By Daniel L. Martin
Department of Biology,
University of North Florida



The Seagrass Isn't Always Greener on the Other Side

A bonefish cruises through the waters of a wavy-green seagrass bed, knowing such beds are a good place to snag a meal of shellfish, or rummage for worms; meanwhile, a fly-fisher adjusts his arc in pursuit of the bonefish itself. Anglers, wildlife and biologists alike have long known the importance of seagrass beds to coastal ecosystems. To science, however, they are also known to stabilize sediments, cycle life-giving nutrients and improve water quality and clarity.

But all is not well with seagrasses, with global estimates showing declines of about 7% per year (since 1990), caused by the usual suspects of nutrient pollution, coastal development, and even disease. In the 1930's eelgrass beds were nearly wiped out on both sides of the Atlantic by Seagrass Wasting Disease (SWD). Some beds have yet to recover.

Several years ago, CCA Florida helped fund a pilot study of turtlegrass wasting disease through the University of North Florida's (UNF) Coastal and Marine Biology program. Thus far, turtlegrass beds have avoided a SWD pandemic, but the disease is ever-present in today's population, causing brown lesions on otherwise healthy leaves (Above), and the potential exists for future mass mortality events. Much like COVID-19, efforts to understand SWD are underway, but our progress has been slow and many questions remain.

Perhaps the most important one is: Who is the culprit causing the disease? We have

known for a long time, that slime-mold like microbes called *Labyrinthula*, after their labyrinth-like cellular slimeways, were to blame; but which species or strain are pathogenic and how best to monitor them have eluded science to date. At UNF, Dr. Cliff Ross's lab developed the first quantitative molecular (DNA-based) tools to help both identify and measure the amounts of SWD in the plant, and they have recently adapted agriculture-based enzyme assays to track seagrass health in wild turtlegrass populations.

Together, these new tools were successfully deployed in a field test: across Florida Bay's immense and varied seascape. Early results show that the DNA-based tools (and likely the enzyme markers, as well) may work for most seagrass species and *Labyrinthula* strains. With help from CCA Florida, they are now poised to make rapid progress in future studies of these essential fish habitats, while also helping resource managers understand how Everglades restoration efforts might affect health in the future.

Publications benefitting directly from this CCA Florida funding: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpls.2021.612947>
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0230108>



A survey line running through a turtlegrass bed off the Florida coast.



Research team, including: Paige Duffin (now a doctoral student at the University of Georgia), and Drs. Bradley Furman (Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute) and Cliff Ross (University of North Florida) (left to right) collect seagrass samples for laboratory analyses. Not shown: Dan Martin (University of North Florida) and Katrina Lohan (Smithsonian Environmental Research Center).



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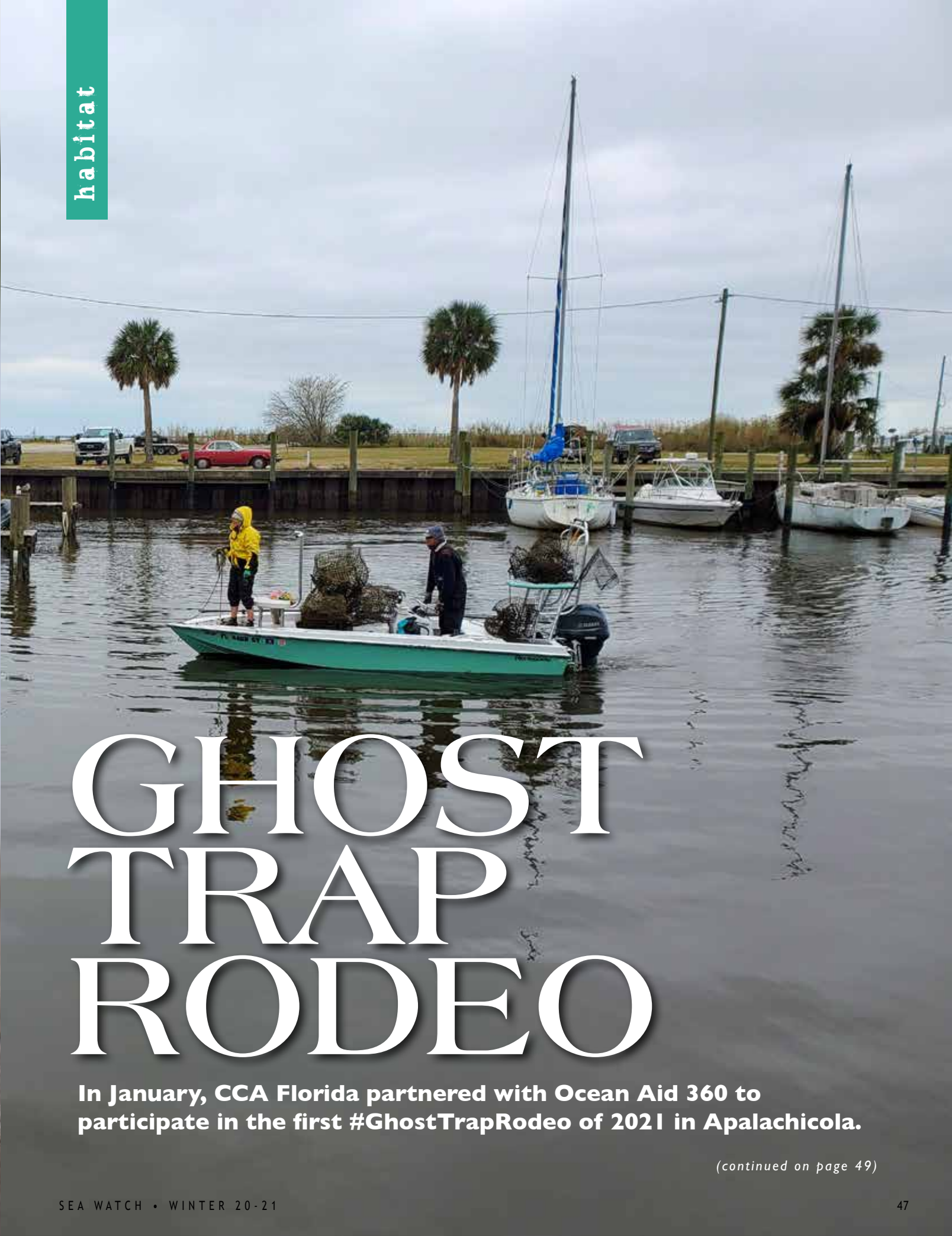


\$1 is donated to the Coastal Conservation Association for EVERY box of Coast Vodka purchased at ABC.

Your Coast Vodka purchase supports efforts to help restore Florida's fragile marine resources, including reef development, shoreline stabilizations, and the planting of hundreds of acres of saltmarsh, seagrass beds and mangroves.

Coast Vodka is 100% recyclable and made in Florida.





GHOST TRAP RODEO

In January, CCA Florida partnered with Ocean Aid 360 to participate in the first #GhostTrapRodeo of 2021 in Apalachicola.

(continued on page 49)

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Ghost Trap Rodeo

continued from page 47



During the event, volunteers braved the cold to collect 78 derelict traps and more than 4,000 pounds of trash, including a barnacle-covered Weed Eater, from the Bay. Special thanks to National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Clearwater Marine Aquarium, Apalachicola Riverkeeper, Gulf World Marine Institute, Oyster Boss, Coastal Impact Fund - fka ReelCycle, NOAA Marine Debris, Oyster City Brewing Company, Apalach Outfitters, Coombs Inn & Suites, Ascend Hotel Collection and Emerald Coast. Join us for the next Ghost Trap Rodeo in Tampa Bay/St. Pete on July 17! Additional details to follow.





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Tripletail with Crawfish Cream Sauce

INGREDIENTS

CRAWFISH CREAM SAUCE:

½ tsp cornstarch
 ½ c and 1 tbsp heavy whipping cream
 1 stick unsalted butter
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 1 c green onion, chopped
 1 lb crawfish tails, peeled, cooked
 ¼ c grated Parmesan cheese
 ½ c fresh parsley, chopped
 Salt and pepper to taste

TRIPELTAIL:

4 tripletail fillets
 ½ tsp Cajun seasoning
 1 tsp paprika
 1 tbsp unsalted butter
 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

DIRECTIONS

CRAWFISH CREAM SAUCE: Mix cornstarch and 1 tablespoon heavy whipping cream and set aside. In a small sauce pan melt butter over medium-low heat. Add garlic and onions and cook about 5 minutes. Add crawfish tails and cook an additional 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the ½ cup of heavy whipping cream and cook an additional minute. Stir in the cornstarch/cream mixture, mix thoroughly and cook an additional 5 minutes. Drop heat to low, add cheese, parsley and a pinch of salt and pepper to taste. Cover and keep warm while you cook fish.

TRIPELTAIL: Season both sides of all fillets evenly with the Cajun seasoning and paprika. Heat butter and oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until butter is melted and oil is hot. Sauté fillets about 4 minutes per side or until cooked through and golden-brown.

TO SERVE: Plate fillet over a hearty pasta like a tortellini or serve alone with a side of vegetables. Top with a generous portion of crawfish cream sauce. **SERVES 4.**





CCA HANGOUT AT THE HANGAR RECAP

On December 10, 2020, CCA Florida held Hangout at the Hangar Banquet & Auction presented by Winter Park Construction and located in a private, open-air aircraft hangar in Lake Mary. This event was one for the books with breathtaking views, classic cars, air plane and other collectible motor craft on display. We had an overwhelming amount of support from the local committee, sponsors and vendors! This incredible night included a live and silent auction, raffles, oysters provided by Oyster Bob's, catered dinner and open bar provided by Heathrow Country Club, and a live drawing of the 2021 Yamaha Wolverine X4 XT-R 850 that went to Mr. Virgil Schenck! [Thank you to all that attended and supported CCA Florida.](#)

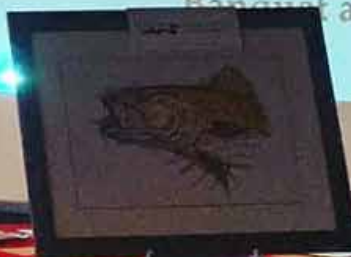


habitat

THE CCA HANGOUT
AT THE HANGAR BANQUET
& AUCTION PRESENTED
BY WINTER PARK
CONSTRUCTION WAS
A SUCCESSFUL EVENT
NETTING OVER \$45,000
AND A GREAT WAY
TO CLOSE OUT 2020!



Hangout @ the Hangar
Banquet and Auction



REGISTER FOR THE CONSERVE FLORIDA'S FISHERIES LICENSE PLATE



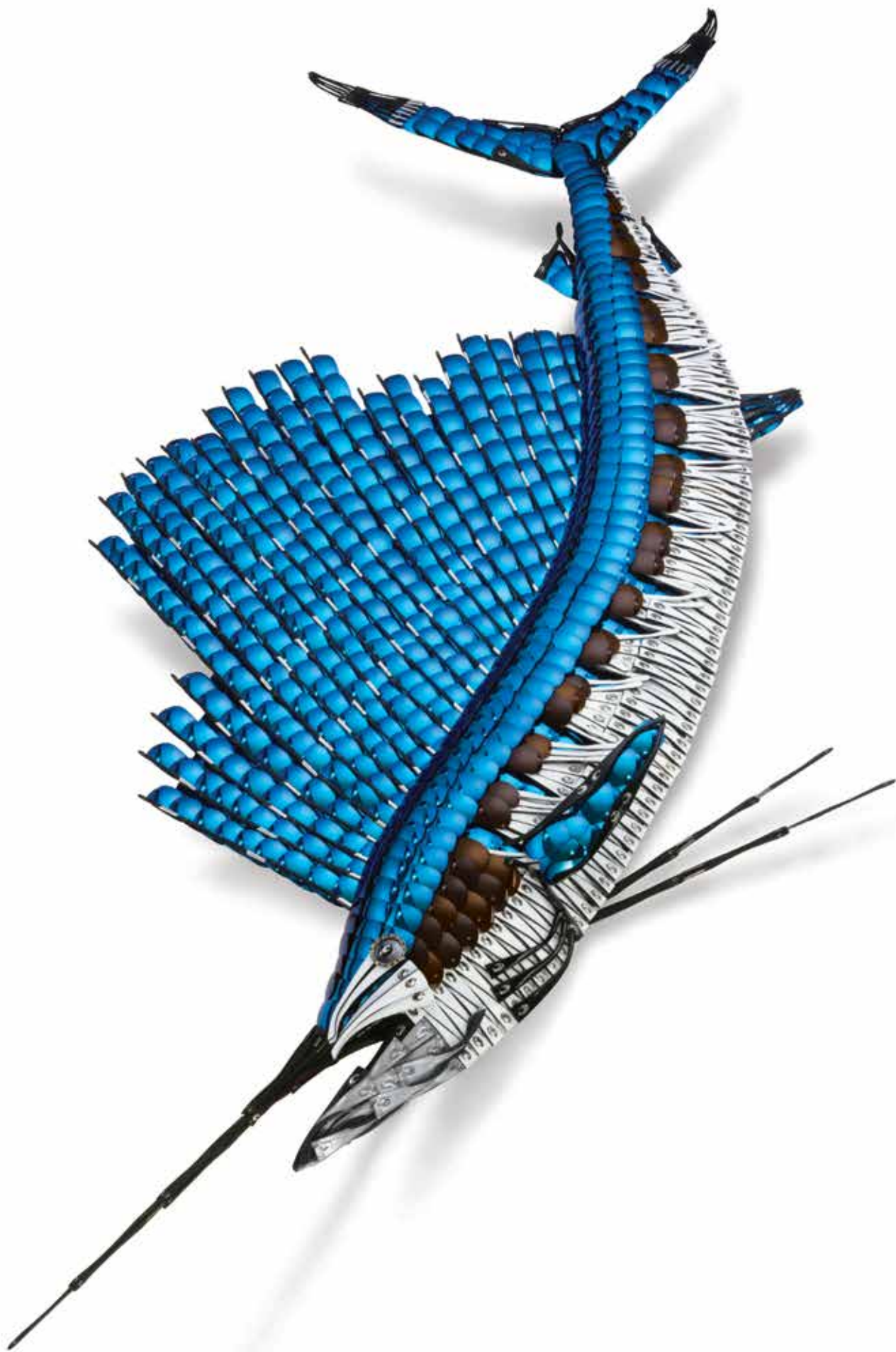
- Show your support for Florida's fisheries, coastal habitats and marine resources on the road with a "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" specialty license plate!
- The "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" license plate voucher will be available at local DMV offices across Florida's 67 counties
- Funds from the sale of this license plate support protecting and enhancing saltwater marine resources, expanding habitat restoration efforts, developing saltwater fisheries conservation and enriching coastal environmental education.
- Designed by Capt. Mike Goodwine of Blackneck Adventures and graphic designer Jesse Starr
- Special thanks to Rep. James "J.W." Grant and Sen. Aaron Bean for their support and helping advance the "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" license plate

For additional information, please visit REDFISHTag.com



REDFISHTag.com

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CONSERVE FLORIDA'S FISHERIES SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATE ACHIEVES 3,000 PRE-SALE REQUIREMENT GUARANTEEING STATEWIDE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

Proceeds from Specialty Redfish Tag will Protect and Enhance Florida's Marine Environments

Coastal Conservation Association Florida (CCA Florida), the state's leading organization dedicated to marine fisheries conservation, education and advocacy, announced its "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" license plate will officially go into production as it fulfilled the minimum 3,000 pre-sale vouchers, required by the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV).

The "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" plate was one of 41 approved plates under House Bill 1135, as signed into law by Gov. Ron DeSantis in October. Organizations were granted a two-year period to meet the minimum pre-sale mandate and CCA Florida completed the requirement within 12 weeks.

"After three years of working with Florida's lawmakers, the chance to see CCA Florida's license plate is now a reality," Director of Advocacy Trip Aukeman said. "We are passionate about protecting Florida's fisheries, and now, we can show that support off the water and on the road. Purchasing a Conserve Florida's Fisheries specialty plate is an investment to protect

our marine habitat today and generations to come."

The redfish tag features lush mangroves accompanied by a vibrant redfish tail, designating it the "redfish tag." Funds from the sale of this license plate support protecting and enhancing saltwater marine resources, expanding habitat restoration efforts, developing saltwater fisheries conservation and enriching coastal environmental education.

The redfish tag license plate voucher is \$32.50 and available online at redfishtag.com or in-person at local Tax Collector's Offices across the state. Vouchers can be purchased for car, trucks, boat trailers or any motorized vehicle and will be redeemable for the plate once printed.

CCA Florida appreciates the support of Rep. James "J.W." Grant, Sen. Aaron Bean, Sen. George Gainer and Rep. Chris Latvala for helping advance the "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" license plate. The redfish tag was designed by CCA Florida member Capt. Mike Goodwine of Blackneck Adventures and graphic designer Jesse Starr.

CCA Florida is committed to enriching Florida's marine resources for today and generations to come.

**Contact: Mary Hillyer Peelen | 407.617.0604
mhpeelen@ccaflorida.org**

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As a CCA Florida Life, Heritage or Legacy member, you help support Florida's marine fisheries, habitat, waterways, coasts and more. Join us as we continue to work toward enhancing these resources and Florida's fishing future.

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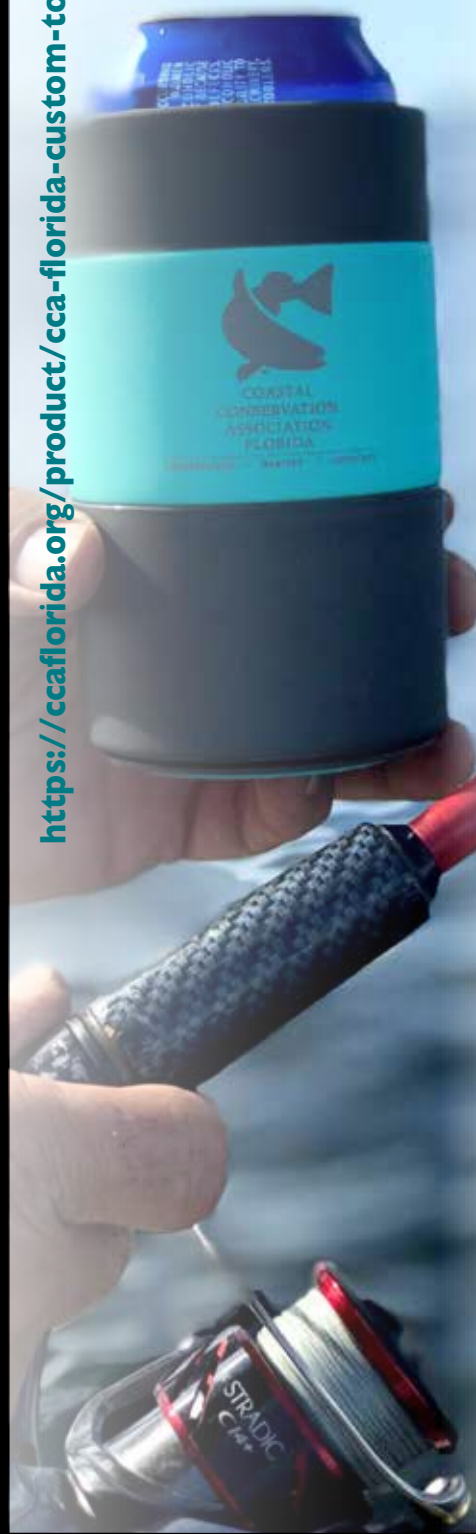
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Friday Prize Day is your chance to kick off the weekend as a winner! Tickets are just \$20, only 100 available and one (1) winner will be randomly selected!

Winner will have his or her choice of ONE, AMAZING prize from the week's selection!
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\$20 per Ticket | 100 Tickets | One Winner

<https://ccaflorida.org/product/cca-florida-custom-toadfish/>



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