

# SEAWATCH

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## ARTIFICIAL REEFS



All Release Redfish  
Tournament

WEEKLY WINNINGS

Be a Winner  
for Just \$20

NOAA's Decades  
of Red Snapper  
Count Inaccuracy



# An entirely new species of **EXTREME** predator is moving quietly offshore.

The all-new, Yamaha V8 XTO Offshore. It's more than an outboard; it's a fully integrated power system. And it's created an entirely new class of extreme offshore power.

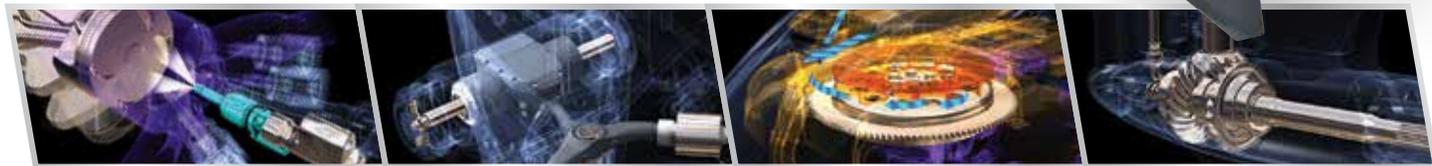


The Yamaha XTO Offshore was designed from the ground up to be smarter than anything you've seen offshore. Its 5.6 liters of extreme thrust and power has inspired a new class of 50-foot-plus boat. And it moves those rigs more reliably and efficiently with a naturally aspirated big block and the industry's first direct-injection four stroke. This revolutionary new take on power is evolving the entire offshore boating experience.

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

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# ANGLER DRIVEN. CONSERVATION MINDED.

PATHFINDER AND CCA FLORIDA

EDUCATION, ADVOCACY & HABITAT CONSERVATION



**PATHFINDER**  
ANGLER DRIVEN

# Together, We Got This

Now more than ever CCA Florida's success is reliant on your support. More than 95% of CCA Florida's annual fundraising is generated by banquets and events. With the postponement of our events, we have shifted our focus from in-person engagements to online participation, in an effort to give members fresh and fun opportunities to safely support our common cause.

There are three ways to continue supporting CCA Florida this spring:

**Membership  
Upgrades**



**Donations**



**Raffles**



By upgrading your membership, participating in our online raffles or donating to a specific campaign, your continued involvement helps insure that CCA Florida will be there to protect our fisheries and coastal habitats for today, tomorrow and generations to come.

Your continued support has shaped our organization and we are forever thankful. As we navigate this uncertain time together, we wish you and your family good health and happiness.

<https://www.ccaflorida.org/wegotthis>

**#GoFish**



# Red Snapper Count Reveals Decades of NOAA Inaccuracy

Snapper count should be final nail in NOAA's inept management of red snapper.

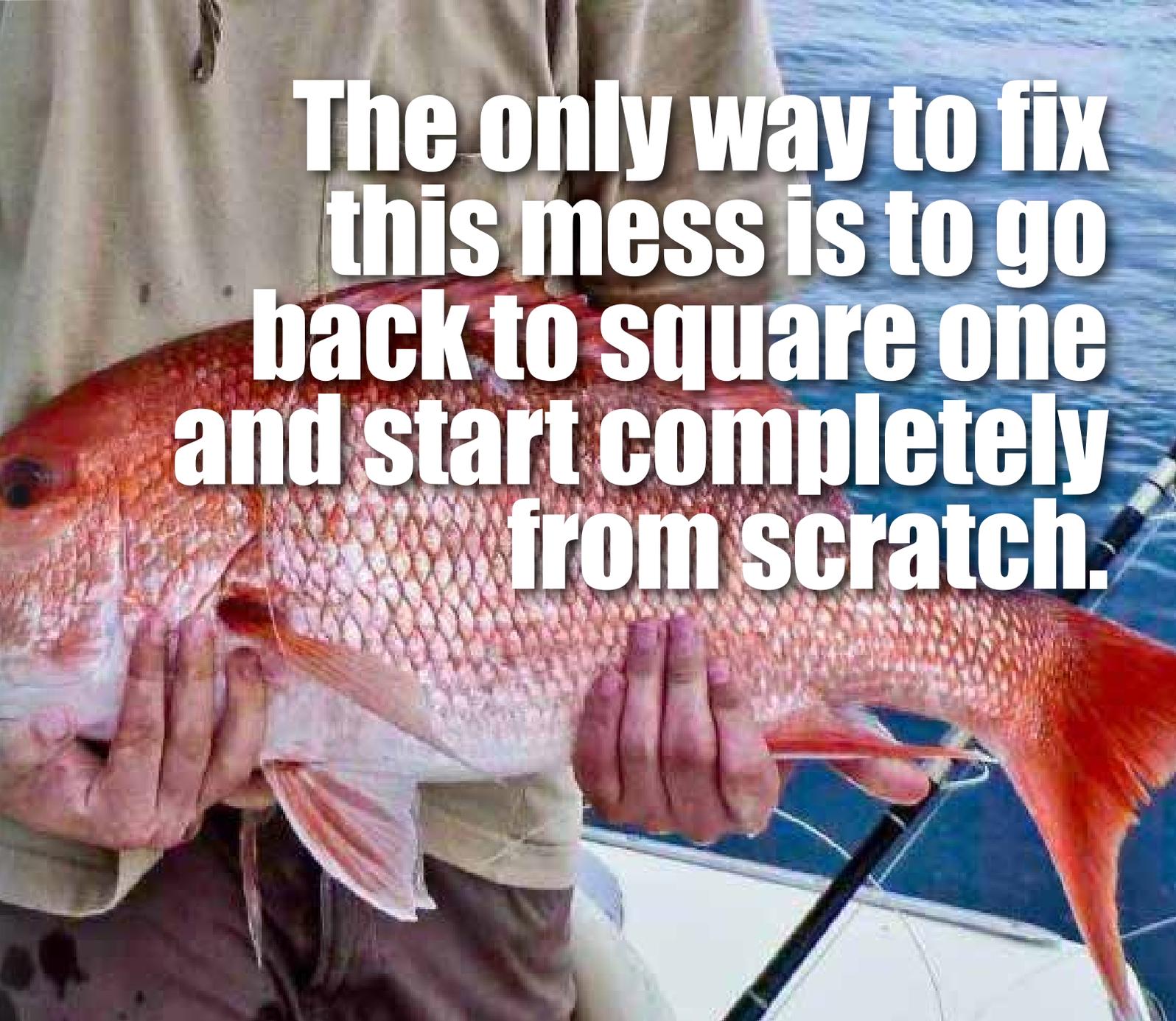
This week, the public and Congress finally heard why nothing seemed to add up in federal management of Gulf red snapper. It turns out that NOAA just doesn't count snapper very well.

After more than a decade of utter management chaos, Congress began to suspect that NOAA didn't know what it was doing and so Sen. Richard Shelby of Alabama appropriated \$10 million for an intensive, independent assessment of red snapper numbers in the Gulf of Mexico by more than a dozen marine science institutions around

the country. This week, the Great Red Snapper Count, as it was called, revealed that, while preliminary, instead of the 36 million red snapper NOAA believed were in the population, there are really more like three times that number or 100-plus million red snapper out there.

With a conservative 6.5-pound average size, that comes to roughly 700 million pounds of snapper swimming in the Gulf, most of which NOAA never knew was there. To put that in perspective, the current total allowable catch for commercial harvesters and recreational anglers is roughly 15 million pounds per year.

The implications of this are hard to overstate. It means that the foundation of everything NOAA thought it knew about red snapper is fundamentally cracked. It explains why the population kept expanding even when NOAA said anglers were catching too many fish and shortened our seasons down to just a few days each year. It implies that the allocation between the recreational and commercial sectors was never set right. It means all those stock assessments that drove shorter and shorter recreational seasons were wrong. It means NOAA didn't need to rapidly promote schemes to privatize public marine resources. It means that



# The only way to fix this mess is to go back to square one and start completely from scratch.

the only crisis in red snapper has been NOAA's faulty data and its culture that tailors management for the privileged few rather than the many. The snapper count reveals that NOAA has been wrong about a lot of things and has been wrong for a long time.

That is hugely reassuring for anglers who have suspected all along that something wasn't adding up. The danger now is that NOAA will find a way to take the new fish "discovered" by the GRSC and somehow use them to patch up its broken management system. Like a lottery winner who suddenly finds himself wealthy but blows it all on bad decisions, NOAA is more likely to

waste and misapply this windfall than manage it properly.

For all the disdain heaped upon the recreational angling sector by NOAA for the past 15 years, that would be an unacceptable outcome. Since everything NOAA thought it knew about red snapper is now suspect, it is impossible to calibrate anything we know today with what NOAA thought it knew yesterday. In fact, there are no trail markers at all from the past that can accurately guide us here. The map has to be totally redrawn and patches will not work.

The only way to fix this mess is to go back to square one and start completely

from scratch. Better yet, let the states use their new, superior data systems to manage the new biomass found by the independent marine scientists to take over management of the entire fishery once and for all.

NOAA has had decades to get red snapper right. In the end, the states, Congress and independent marine science institutions had to step in to clean up their mess. After decades of enduring the chaos of a fishery managed on so much wrong, we finally have a chance to start over and manage it right.



# CCA Florida Joins U.S. Department of Interior To Visit Tampa Bay Habitat Project

**Secretary of the Interior will showcase the success of a non-profit-led habitat restoration project during Florida visit**

Coastal Conservation Association Florida (CCA Florida), the state's leading organization dedicated to marine fisheries conservation, education and advocacy, joined U.S. Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt for a special event commemo-

rating the success of its Fantasy Island habitat restoration project in Tampa Bay.

The onetime eroding Fantasy Island, located in Hillsborough Bay near the mouth of Alafia River, suffered severe destruction due to heavy traffic from the nearby ship channel and topographical shifts. In an effort to restore lost habitat systems to the Bay, prevent further erosion and improve water quality, CCA Florida the Building Conservation Trust (BCT) - the national habitat pro-

gram of CCA - and Tampa Bay Watch joined forces to launch the restoration project in 2016.

"The Fantasy Island project is not just about habitat restoration, but habitat innovation through use of innovative design and science-backed data," CCA Florida Chairman JD Dickenson said. "In collaboration with our partners, our work has enriched the ecological system for oysters, birds, and

*(continued on page 10)*



**“The Fantasy Island project is not just about habitat restoration, but habitat innovation through use of innovative design and science-backed data.”**

**—CCA Florida Chairman JD Dickenson**



## Tampa Bay Habitat Project *continued from page 9*

fisheries while improving water quality and increasing opportunities for Florida's anglers."

To kick off the project, more than 1,000 oyster domes and 40 tons of fossilized oyster shells were placed in two feet of water to allow for low tide and high tide exposure. The materials and location used created ideal conditions to initiate the development of a thriving oyster reef and stabilize 700 feet of the island's southern shoreline.

Today, as a result of the restorative efforts, the planted spartina grass has spread nicely to stabilize the sand, and the placed reef balls and oyster domes are now covered with new oyster growth and the area is settled and stabilized. Additionally, the Island has become home to various species of fish and other sea life, such as crab and shrimp, and on land, white ibises have taken

over and can be found nesting on almost every tree. The overall goal is to keep Fantasy Island protected by an ever-evolving, natural ecosystem.

CCA Florida and BCT secured \$50,000 of the necessary \$150,000 for the project. CCA Florida is committed to enhancing Florida's marine resources for today and generations to come.

### About CCA Florida

The Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) was founded in 1977 after drastic commercial overfishing along the Texas coast decimated redfish and speckled trout populations. One of 19 state chapters, CCA Florida became the fifth state chapter in 1985. A 501(c)3 non-profit, the purpose of CCA is to advise and educate the public on conservation of marine resources. Through habitat restoration projects, water quality initiatives and fisheries advocacy,

CCA Florida works with its over 18,000 members including recreational anglers and outdoor enthusiasts to conserve and enhance marine resources and coastal environments. Join the conversation on Facebook or learn more at [ccaflorida.org](http://ccaflorida.org).

### About The Building Conservation Trust

The Building Conservation Trust (BCT) was founded in 2010 as the national marine habitat program of Coastal Conservation Association. BCT is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization exclusively dedicated to providing funding for local, state and national fisheries, habitat conservation and restoration projects. BCT has created a model for the successful collaboration of business, non-profit organizations and government agencies to revitalize critical habitat and establish a vibrant foundation for the marine ecosystem.



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RELEASE 'EM.  
PASS IT ON.

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CONSERVATION  
ASSOCIATION  
FLORIDA





# 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**

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



## 5k wrap up

During these “Corona” times we’ve all had to alter our normal routine. Practically all businesses and organizations have been forced to change the way they do things simply to keep the lights on. This couldn’t be more true for nonprofit organizations like CCA. For an organization that typically generates revenue through in person fundraisers, we’ve had to adapt quickly with virtual events, donation drives, and outside socially distanced programs. One of the more unique events we hosted was the FloGrown 5K for CCA. Our friends at FloGrown were a perfect partner for this and were more than eager to help in its success.

Over 100 participants got their running shoes on for this virtual event and helped CCA to continue its mission in conserving and protecting our Marine Resources. Participants could complete their socially distant 5K on their own time, at their own pace, anywhere they decided to do it. Some ran on the beach, in the woods, on the treadmill, some ran in their driveway! Runners, joggers, and walkers submitted their finishing times through a portal that was given upon registration. We encouraged runners to submit photos of participation while wearing their custom race bibs for chances to win prizes. Giveaways included Costa sunglasses, FloGrown apparel packages, and Aftco merchandise. The highlight of this event was a limited edition FloGrown T-shirt that

was mailed to participants upon completion.

These are strange times we find ourselves living in, and the obscurity of a fishing organization hosting a virtual running event is no stranger. What may seem even more odd is the number of nonanglers who registered. Even odder may be the number of nonrunners who registered. This event crossed so many demographics that a mere “fishing” organization would never be able to touch. Some folks signed up to save a fishery, some signed up to save the ocean, some signed up for exercise, for running, for the shirt, and some just wanted to rep the “FloGrown” way of life. Regardless of the why, we’re appreciative of all the support. In a time of such craziness it’s encouraging to see so many people coming together to DO SOMETHING.

Thanks for running with us and please stay tuned for future collaborations from FloGrown and CCA Florida.



**FLO GROWN**  
5K FOR CCA

FLO GROWN  
5K FOR CCA  
VIRTUAL RUN  
JUNE 1-8, 2020

A virtual run to support Florida's marine resources

JUNE 1ST 7:00 AM - JUNE 8TH 7:00 PM

around the state

# CCA FLORIDA 2020 TRASH TOURNAMENT A SUCCESS



We had a great “turnout” for our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Statewide Cleanup event using an online app and a tournament layout. The event is run similar to a fishing tournament, but instead of submitting fish, participants submit their trash collections!

98 participants registered for the event on the iAngler Tournament App or iAngler Tournament website. For each 5 gallon bucket of trash uploaded, the participant received one entry for raffle prizes including Costa Sunglasses, Academy Sports + Outdoors Gift Cards and American Express Gift Cards provided by CCA Florida and iAngler.

The event was one week long in early June and was Statewide! Individuals could choose which body of water, beach, canal, etc. they would like to clean up. Together, over 400 buckets of trash was picked up from State waters.



**THIS ANNUAL EVENT IS FREE TO PARTICIPATE AND HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH WORLD OCEANS DAY EACH YEAR.**

**JOIN US NEXT YEAR! PLEASE REACH OUT TO AMANDA KRPAN, [AKRPAN@CCAFLORIDA.ORG](mailto:AKRPAN@CCAFLORIDA.ORG) WITH QUESTIONS OR SPONSORSHIPS.**





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RECIPES GO TO  
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RECIPE & PHOTO BY  
HEATHER PETEREK



## 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.



### pair it

Acrobat Rosé  
of Pinot Noir

To buy or  
for more  
information

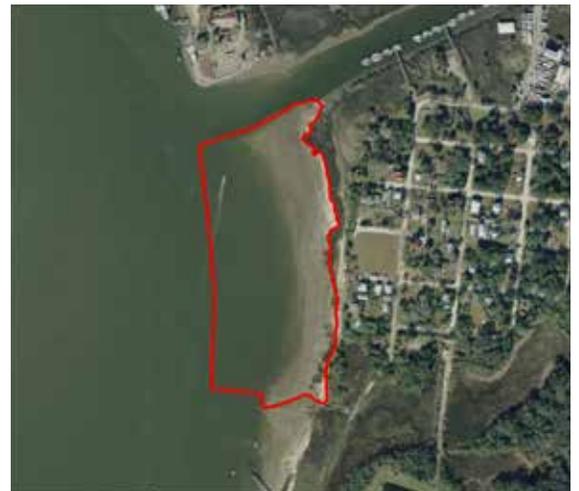




# St. Marys Riverkeeper Living Shoreline Project

UPDATE

The goal of this project is to establish a living shoreline oyster reef along the Old Town Fernandina waterfront on the Amelia River, Florida. The shoreline will function as a wave break to halt or slow erosion of the marsh while simultaneously providing oyster habitat, and will restore lost marsh vegetation. The shoreline directly in front of Old Town Fernandina is eroding, but still maintains some salt marsh vegetation and small scattered clusters of live oysters. Most of the oyster reef that previously protected the shoreline no longer remains, likely due to high energy from boat traffic traveling along the intercoastal waterway. In a high energy site like the Amelia River, a strong wave break dampens the wave energy to protect the marsh shoreline.



**Figure 1.** Old Town Fernandina, Living Shoreline site on the Amelia River.

On April 29, 2019, St. Marys Riverkeeper (SMRK) installed phase one of this living shoreline along the Old Town Fernandina waterfront. The wave break was constructed of derelict crab traps collected on the gulf coast of Florida and adapted to serve as the foundation for an oyster reef. Some of the derelict crab traps were also donated from the CCA/OceanAid360 Ghost Trap Rodeo in Tampa Bay. SMRK modified the traps to ensure that they can no longer fish, and coated them with oyster shells and a thin cement slurry that recruits and supports oyster growth. The concrete slurry

was composed of 3 parts Sakrete Multipurpose Sand, 1 part Sakrete Portland Cement type I-II, and 1/4 part Austinville Lime Fine Pulverized Limestone. The ingredients in the cement were iron oxide, silica, crystalline, quartz, calcium oxide, gypsum, calcium carbonate, and magnesium oxide. All traps were disarmed by opening all entrance funnels on the sides, and cutting and folding the funnels down to create large openings in the sides. Many of these derelict traps already have large openings with large exits in place of the funnels. These openings

*(continued on page 20)*

**Within the first two weeks of deployment, all deployed traps showed oyster recruitment.**



### **St. Marys Riverkeeper Living Shoreline Project**

*continued from page 19*

were left and widened if necessary. SMRK checked all traps to ensure that all openings remaining were a minimum of seven inches (the size of the large end of the funnels on the sides). Each crab trap was anchored to the bottom with a crab trap iron, which is a square piece of rebar that is attached to each trap and acts as a weight. Traps were anchored to each other with zip ties with excess plastic cut off. SMRK also secured PVC pipes to every other trap, and hammered the PVC into the substrate. The traps were placed in ten groups of six at intervals allowing for wildlife passage. Traps were placed no more than 10 feet below

mean high water, with exposure optimal for oyster recruitment.

Within the first two weeks of deployment, all deployed traps showed oyster recruitment. The small clusters of live oysters at the site provided excellent spat, and the site showed excellent recruitment and growth throughout 2019. SMRK found that derelict traps with plastic coating did not retain the concrete slurry and did not recruit well. In future deployments, only uncoated traps will be used. Because the majority of derelict crab traps are now coated, collecting uncoated traps does present a challenge, however SMRK has 90 uncoated traps ready for future deployments. SMRK also found that opening the entrances to the crab traps to prevent them from fishing is not the most appropriate methodol-

ogy. The openings that were created were almost immediately filled in with mud, and SMRK had to do constant monitoring in the first week to ensure that the traps did not fish. In future, SMRK will close all openings rather than making them wider.

In addition to environmental benefits, this project provided social and economic benefits. The contracted project lead was a former commercial oysterman who SMRK transitioned into the conservation world. SMRK also provided a summer internship with these funds to a marine science student at Stetson University. Local eco tours also always stop in front of the site and explain to tourists its purpose and the importance of coastal resilience.

Unfortunately, SMRK was unable to deploy phase two of the project in the spring



of 2020, as the planned deployment occurred during the Covid lockdown. SMRK plans to deploy again in the spring of 2021. More traps will be added to the reef as the project continues, including traps that are closer inshore in order to promote reestablishment of marsh vegetation. SMRK will work in collaboration with the Kelly Smith lab at UNF and with support from the Northeast Coast Resilience Coordinator with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. With the Kelly Smith

Lab, traps will be deployed with different concrete slurry and oyster shell treatments to test for recruitment, and SMRK will also deploy traps at differing distances below mean high water in order to research the best management practices for *Spartina* recruitment. Undergraduate students at UNF will conduct regular monitoring at the site, and local high schools will be involved in propagating and planting *Spartina* at the site.

The project is currently supported by multiple partners who have pledged fund-

ing or volunteer support. Partners include Florida and Georgia Sea Grant, the Coastal Conservation Association Florida, the Ritz-Carlton, The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, CSX Corporation, The Amelia Island Sailing Club, Salt Life Food Shack, Fernandina Beach High School, and Hilliard Middle Senior High School, and the City of Fernandina Beach.

**Article courtesy of Anna Laws, St. Marys Riverkeeper**

**CCA FLORIDA**  
ccaflorida.org

## FISHING GUIDE FRIDAYS

For just \$20, you could WIN a half-day guided, inshore trip.

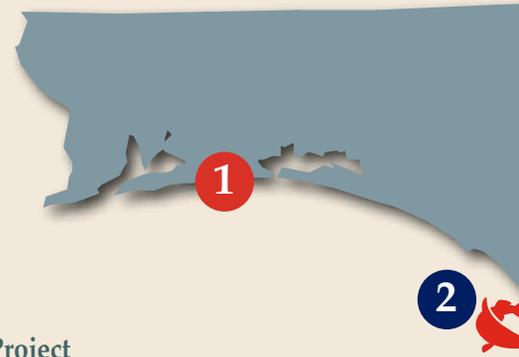
CCA Florida's newest promotion offers the opportunity to help our favorite guides during these uncertain times all while giving you the chance to fish with some of Florida's finest!

Every other Friday, CCA Florida will kick off a new round of Fishing Guide Fridays. Tickets are only \$20 and only 100 are available. One (1) winners will be randomly drawn and win a half-day charter with the guide of his or her choice. The winner will be drawn by the following Friday or when all 100 tickets have been sold (whichever comes first).

Enter at <https://ccaflorida.org/product/fgf>

# HABITAT PROJECTS

Since 2010, and in collaboration with the Building Conservation Trust, CCA has contributed \$800,000 which has been leveraged with our partners to over \$4,800,000 in habitat projects statewide. Join us in these efforts!



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



● Completed

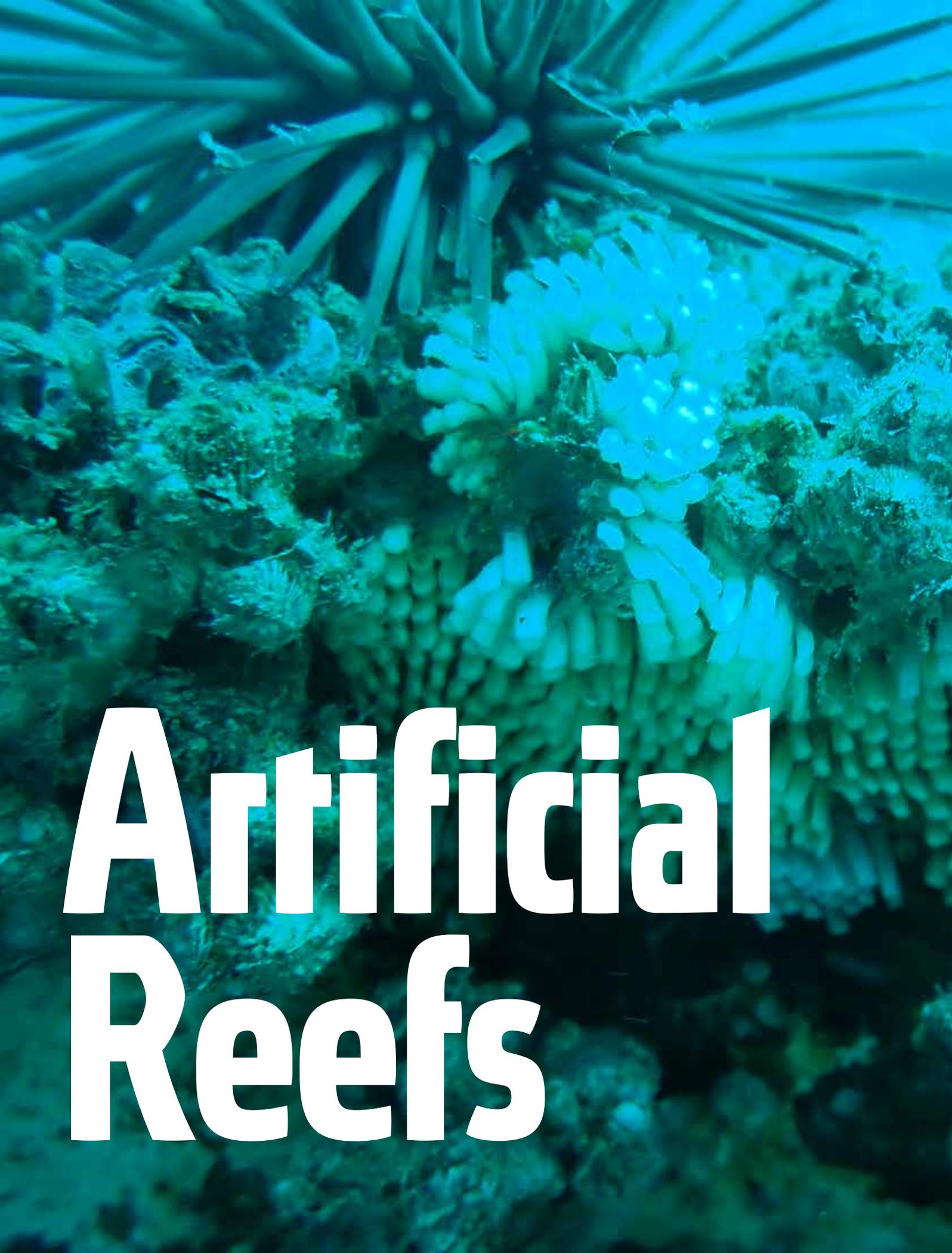
● Ongoing

● Upcoming

▲ Coastal Cleanups

 Redfish Stock Enhancement  
Locations - Total of 200 Adults  
and 34,000 Juveniles released

 Snook Stock Enhancement  
Location - 5,000 Juveniles  
released



# Artificial Reefs



In the early years of CCA Florida (back when we were FCA), our mission was strictly limited to fisheries management advocacy, and if you look back at those times the reasons were very clear. Management councils were stacked with commercial interests, longlines and fish traps were indiscriminately killing marine life of all kinds, and gill nets were wreaking havoc on fish populations. With limited resources it was all we could do to make progress on those issues, yet over time our members wanted to do more to make real and lasting impacts on the waters we love and the fish we seek. Progress is defined as a forward or onward movement, as toward a destination. From the inception of CCA Florida in 1985 through to 2014, CCA was involved in a total of 3 artificial reefs during this 29-year period. During the last 5 years from 2015 to present, CCA has been involved in deploying 17 artificial reefs. Progress! And the destination? Clean waters and healthy fish stocks.

*(continued on page 27)*

*Maverick*  
Fish the Legend.

**PATHFINDER**  
ANGLER DRIVEN

**MBG MAVERICK BOAT GROUP**

*Maverick*  
Fish the Legend.

**PATHFINDER**  
ANGLER DRIVEN

**HEWES.**

**COBIA**

**HEWES.**

**COBIA**

PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE CCA FOR OVER THREE DECADES!

## Artificial Reefs

continued from page 25



Moving toward that destination requires a lot of time and effort to plan, permit, fund and deploy successful artificial reefs. CCA Florida is proud to partner with the Building Conservation Trust (BCT) - the national habitat program of CCA – on all of our artificial reef and habitat projects in addition to the many other partners and sponsors that have helped make this a successful program. And our local members are the most critical element in our success,

identifying potential projects, grants or reef materials and assisting in making those projects a reality.

Prior to permitting an artificial reef, a benthic survey must be completed to ensure that no live bottom exists in the proposed deployment area. Live bottom can consist of anything from coral to aquatic grasses to sponges and invertebrates. Once an area is determined to be adequate, typically a barren sandy area, a permit must be obtained from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) in federal waters, and by the Corps and Florida Department of Environmental Protection in state waters. With one small exception in the panhandle, artificial reef permits must be completed by local or state governments only (cities and counties). The Corps does not issue artificial reef permits to the general public because of liability issues. While the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission does not issue artificial reef permits, they do oversee artificial reefs in Florida and act as an intermediary for the Corps. Permitting a new artificial reef site can take up to 2 years depending on the area and any issues encountered such as cultural resources or listed species.

(continued on page 28)

## Artificial Reefs

*continued from page 27*



Once a permit is issued, reefing materials that meet the specific permit conditions need to be acquired and transported to a staging site prior to deployment. Naysayers argue that reef building is simply dumping trash into the ocean, but that couldn't be any further from the truth. Long gone are the days of deploying tires and washing machines and refrigerators. Permit requirements for artificial reef materials are detailed and very specific. For instance, concrete must be clean and free from any contaminants such as asphalt, petroleum or toxic residues, and each piece must weigh a minimum of 500 pounds. Metal materials must also be clean and a minimum of one-quarter inch in thickness. If a vessel is being deployed, it must

first be properly cleaned of all hazardous materials by a licensed contractor. The concrete materials or vessel must be available for inspection prior to deployment and another benthic survey is required for the exact location where the materials or vessel will be deployed within the permitted area. A qualified marine contractor must be hired to transport and deploy the materials or vessel at the reef site. And of course none of this would be possible without the funding. Funding for artificial reefs can come from a variety of sources including donations, grants, and fundraising events.

*(continued on page 30)*



To learn more about our reefs, click here: <https://ccaflorida.org/habitat/reefs/>

CCA Florida Artificial Reefs				
Artificial Reef Name	Date Deployed	Tangibles	Latitude	Longitude
CCA Pensacola Reef	4/30/2007	1 Walter Florida Limestone Module (2.5 tons)	30° 06.739' N	87° 11.70' W
USS Mohawk CGC Reef – Veterans Memorial Reef	7/2/2012	165-foot vessel	26°33'14.64"N	82°43'42.347"W
Jacksonville River Reef - George Holt and CCA	12/12/2014	1,300 tons concrete	Holt = 30.18484, CCA = 20.17973	Holt = -81.40026, CCA = -81.40290
Andrew "Red" Harris Foundation Reef	Aug. 2015	40 artificial reef modules	26° 57.945 N	80° 03.549 W
Goggle Eye Reef	10/15/2015	700 tons limestone boulders and concrete	26° 33.030 N	80° 02.229 W
Billy's Barge Artificial Reef	7/28/2016	100' steel barge (from movie "Anaconda")	29° 39.653	84° 30.008
Andrew "Red" Harris Foundation "No Shoes" Reef	8/9/2016	100 artificial reef modules	26° 57.702 N	80° 03.216 W
CCA South Walton Artificial Reef Association, Inc. Reefs	2017-2018	Multiple artificial reefs (coords are of Dolphin Reef)	30° 22.549' N	86° 23.306' W
Lady Philomena Cargo Ship - Volusia County Reef Site No. 12	6/23/2018	150-foot cargo ship	29° 11.590 N	-80° 46.130 W
Larry Borden Artificial Reef – Manatee County	7/27/2018	575 tons limestone boulders	N27° 24.473	W82° 47.843
John Michael Baker Memorial Reef	8/14/2018	735 tons concrete on two reefs	Inshore = 26.158108, Offshore = 26.157721	Inshore = -80.078907, Offshore = -80.070395
MCAC Brause Girls Reef	8/24/2018	100' Tugboat	27.20742	-80.00467
Jacksonville Starship Reef	10/20/2018	1,500 tons of natural rock and concrete materials	30° 10.177' N	81° 09.351' N
CCA Phoenix Reef - Lee County	11/30/2018	200 tons high quality concrete	26° 45.582'	-82° 28.443'
Hernando County Ghost Ship Reef	5/26/2019	33 Dome-shaped modules around ghost ship	28° 31.819' N	82° 58.745' W
CCA Curtis Bostick Reef	6/23/2019	180-foot Voic Bernardette coastal freighter	27° 23.870' N	80° 02.970' W
Cary Kresge Reef	7/16/2019	23 Pre-fabricated Reef Modules (8' Tetrahedrons)	28° 23.575' N	80° 18.250' W
Sean Gucken Memorial Reef	6/29/2020	200-tons clean concrete pipes	27° 30.55.44	82° 49.1.56
CCA Reef (MBARA)	7/17/2020	6 Florida Limestone Artificial Reef modules 8' H X 10' triangular base, 5,000 lbs ea. 1 Grouper Reef, steel reinforced concrete/limestone, 5' H X 9' L X 6' W, 7,000 lbs.	29° 54.750	-85° 37.633
Brevard County Artificial Reefs	Ongoing	Multiple Tetrahedrons and concrete	Various	Various



## Artificial Reefs

*continued from page 29*

The benefits of artificial reefs are numerous and include enhanced recreational fishing and diving, fisheries conservation, biological and economic benefits, and the creation and enhancement of marine habitat on multiple levels. Once materials are deployed, fish will typically move onto the reef within hours. For instance, when CCA and BCT deployed the Starship Reef off of Jacksonville in 2018, divers went down 45 minutes later and observed tomatoes swimming around the concrete and a remora was following the divers around. Over time, the reef will slowly be colonized by a variety of marine species and will evolve into a living, thriving ecosystem. It is estimated to only take 3 to 5 years for an artificial reef to be fully efficient at sustaining a healthy population of fish and invertebrate species. Reefs provide marine species a place of refuge from predators and increased opportunities for feeding and reproduction. They can increase the size of fish stocks and fish populations around the reef. Filter feeding animals such as mussels, tubeworms and barnacles attach to the reef and feed on and strain plankton from the water. Artificial reefs provide a place for fisherman and divers to recreate, and by doing so, the local economy directly benefits. A single artificial reef site can generate millions of dollars per year for decades as money is spent on fishing tackle, bait, ice, food, hotels, restaurants, car rentals, diving and fishing charters, gas stations, and so on. Deploying new artificial reefs also serves as an important management tool by allowing

nearby stressed natural and artificial reefs sites to recover.

The ultimate goal of artificial reef building is to enhance the biological productivity of marine species on the ocean floor. Our progress towards this goal, which results in cleaner water and healthier fish stocks, is coming from your contributions and your support for our efforts. As a grassroots organization, our members are tasked with taking responsibility and action in their own local communities. In other words, without you none of this would be possible.

### Links to CCA Artificial Reef Deployment Videos:

CCA Phoenix Reef: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-PM-6C576s>

John Michael Baker Reef: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_Wa1m5K4W0k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Wa1m5K4W0k)

John Michael Baker Reef 3<sup>rd</sup> Deployment: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OXRk7Z\\_-co](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OXRk7Z_-co)

CCA National/BCT Artificial Reef Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0GE-t9Ojcls>

Lady Philomena Reef: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRVVcnLDLbk>

CCA Curtis Bostick Reef: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpbSAVHSYts>

MCAC Brause Girls Tug Boat Reef: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6KsrWcRrvE>

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# HISTORIC CLAM PLANTING IN INDIAN RIVER LAGOON

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planting will create  
a foundation for  
natural habitat  
development and  
restore shellfish  
populations  
in the IRL**

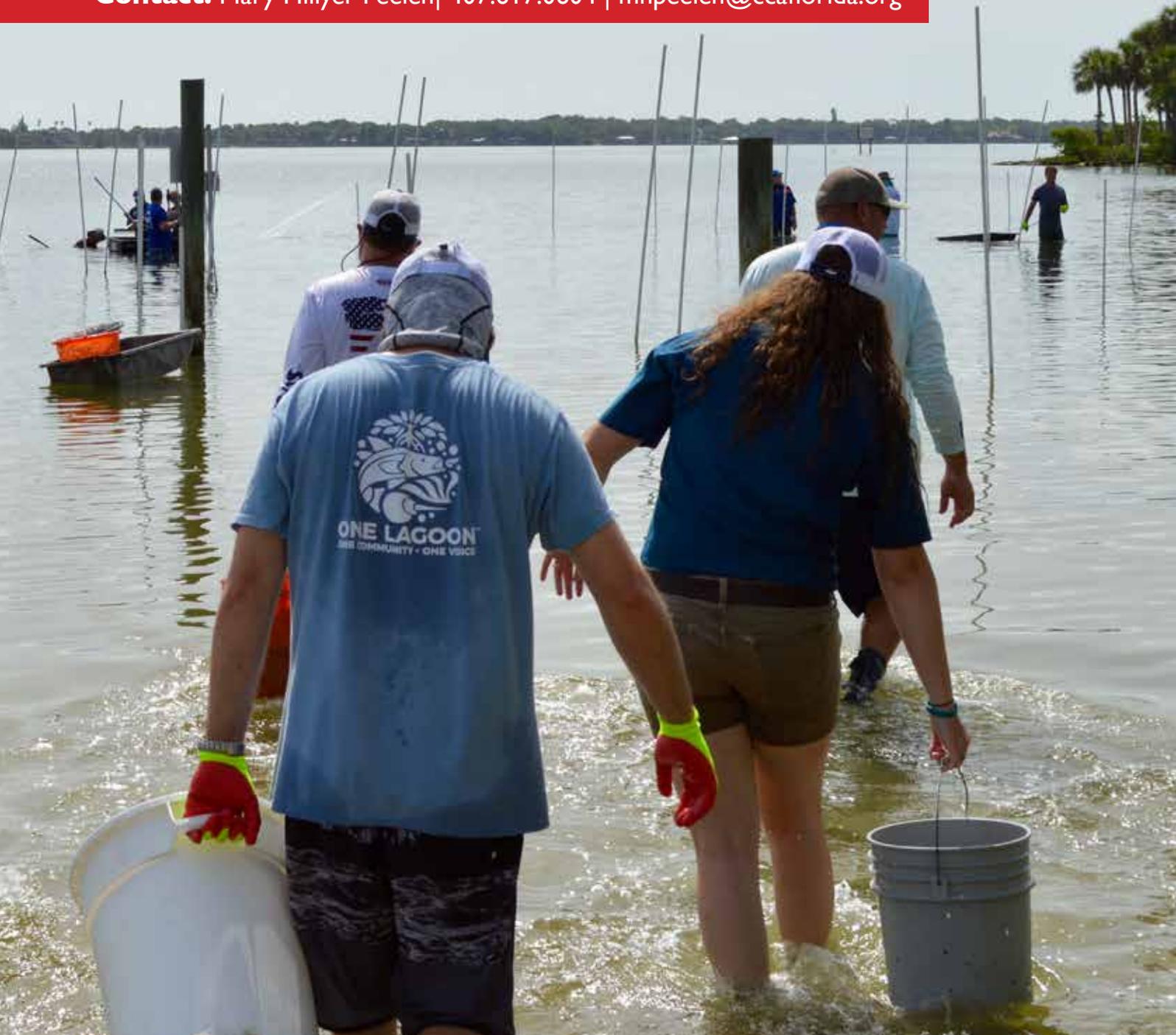
Coastal Conservation Association Florida (CCA Florida), the state's leading organization dedicated to marine fisheries conservation, education and advocacy, Capt. Blair Wiggins of Addictive Fishing, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and University of Florida (UF) will host a historic clam planting in the Indian River Lagoon (IRL), deploying more than 2 million clams in the river's Northern sector.

*(continued on page 36)*



# CCA FLORIDA IS COMMITTED TO ENHANCING FLORIDA'S MARINE RESOURCES FOR TODAY AND GENERATIONS TO COME

**Contact:** Mary Hillyer Peelen | 407.617.0604 | [mhpeelen@ccaflorida.org](mailto:mhpeelen@ccaflorida.org)



## Clam Planting

*continued from page 35*

The IRL Clam Restoration Project began in 2017 after Captain Wiggins contacted CCA Florida to discuss his concerns for the demise of clams in the IRL. A few months later, CCA Florida teamed up with Captain Wiggins, FWC and UF on the project, the first of its kind in the IRL. The primary goal is to initiate clam restoration by repatriating hardy varieties of native clam species and assessing their survivorship under various environmental conditions.

“The IRL Clam Restoration Project is a science-backed, collaborative effort between public, private, academic and non-profit organizations to improve the water quality of the IRL,” CCA Florida Director of Habitat and Environmental Restoration Frank Gidus said. “The clam planting is a historic event for the IRL, as clam restoration has never been conducted in the area. In addition to filtering out pollutants, the clams

will improve water clarity, and in turn, help grow and expand seagrasses.”

Clams are filter feeders, removing excess nutrients from inshore coastal waters, as a result, creating clearer water. Improved water clarity allows more sunlight to penetrate the ecosystem and supports the growth of essential seagrasses, a vital need for the IRL. The restorative work from the clam planting will form the foundation for rebuilding shellfish populations, benefitting the needs for today and tomorrow.

Last year, CCA Florida, FWC and UF collaborated won a grant through the IRL National Estuary Program in the amount of \$103,322 and included \$105,591 match. CCA Florida and CCA's Music City Chapter exclusively donated \$34,000 to the project. In January, the IRL Clam Restoration Project received the “Project of the Year” award from Marine Resources Council.

CCA Florida is committed to enhancing Florida's marine resources for today and for

generations to come. For additional information, visit [irlclamproject.com](http://irlclamproject.com).

### About CCA Florida

The Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) was founded in 1977 after drastic commercial overfishing along the Texas coast decimated redfish and speckled trout populations. One of 19 state chapters, CCA Florida became the fifth state chapter in 1985. A 501(c)3 non-profit, the purpose of CCA is to advise and educate the public on conservation of marine resources. Through habitat restoration projects, water quality initiatives and fisheries advocacy, CCA Florida works with its over 18,000 members including recreational anglers and outdoor enthusiasts to conserve and enhance marine resources and coastal environments. Join the conversation on Facebook or learn more at [ccaflorida.org](http://ccaflorida.org).

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# REGISTER FOR THE CONSERVE FLORIDA'S FISHERIES LICENSE PLATE



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- > The "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" license plate voucher can be purchased online at [REDFISHTag.com](http://REDFISHTag.com) or at your local Tax Collector's Office.
- > 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.
- > For the "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" plate to go into service, at least 3,000 prepaid vouchers must be submitted prior to its production and distribution.
- > 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 contact the Indian River Tax Collector's Office**  
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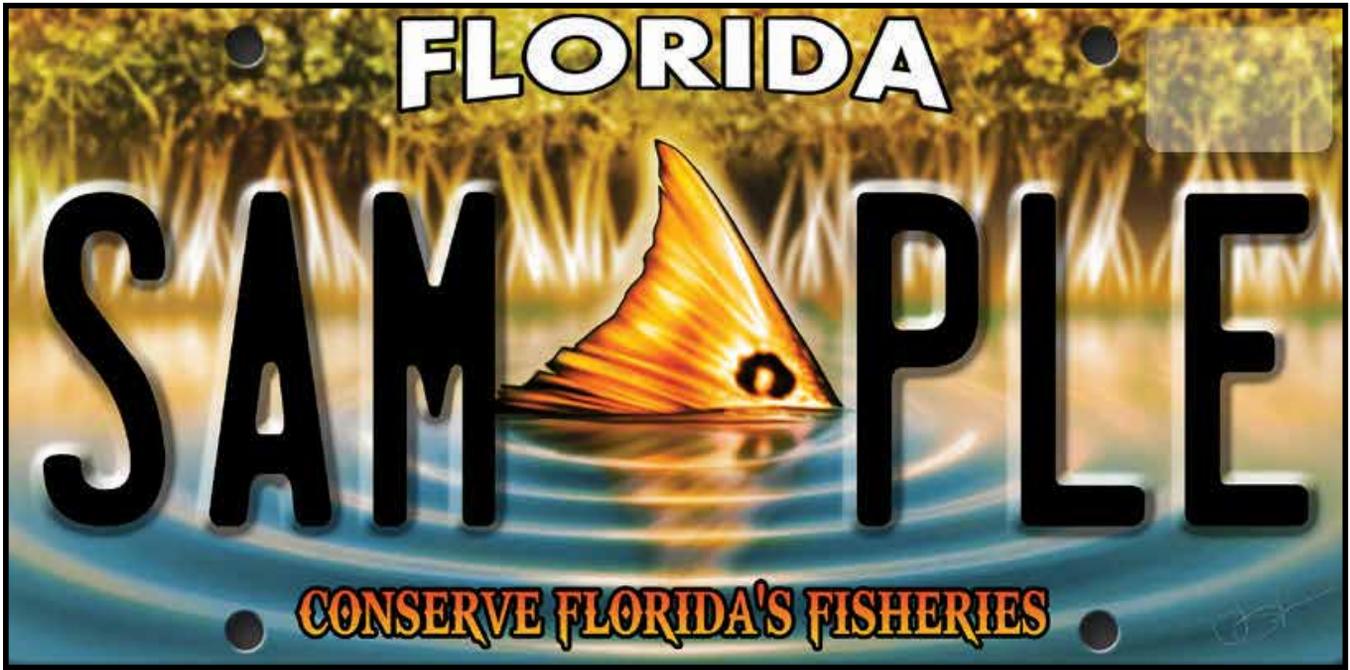
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## CONSERVE FLORIDA'S FISHERIES SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATE TO SUPPORT STATEWIDE MARINE CONSERVATION EFFORTS

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

In October, Gov. Ron DeSantis signed House Bill 1135 into law, approving Coastal Conservation Association Florida (CCA Florida)'s "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" specialty license plate. The plate features lush mangroves accompanied by a vibrant redfish tail, designating the plate "redfish tag."

In 2017, CCA Florida, the state's leading organization dedicated to marine fisheries conservation, education and advocacy, began working with state Legislature on the now-approved Bill. To fulfill final requirements for the specialty plate process, at least 3,000 license plate vouchers must be sold prior to the redfish tag's production and distribution, as mandated by Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV).

"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 license plate voucher is \$32.50 and available online at [redfishtag.com](http://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 the sale requirement has been met.

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.

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](mailto:mhpeelen@ccaflorida.org)**



For this and past recipes, visit [joincca.org/ccarecipes](http://joincca.org/ccarecipes)

RECIPE & PHOTO BY HEATHER PETEREK



## crispy sheephead with cheesy spinach rice

### ingredients

#### CHEESY SPINACH RICE

- 2 c Jasmine rice
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 c chicken broth
- 1 c heavy cream
- ½ tsp salt & pepper
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 3 c tightly packed fresh spinach, coarsely chopped
- 1 c parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 c mozzarella cheese, grated
- 4 tbsp butter

#### CRISPY SHEEPSHEAD

- 1-2 lbs sheephead fillets
- ½ c all-purpose
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1 tbsp lemon pepper
- 1 egg
- ¾ c milk
- 1 box Italian seasoned panko breadcrumbs
- Canola oil for frying

### directions

#### CHEESY SPINACH RICE

Sauté rice in the oil over medium heat for about 3 minutes. Add the broth, heavy cream, spices and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer on low for about 10 minutes, or until rice is cooked through.

Stir in the spinach and simmer for another 5 minutes, until spinach is wilted.

Stir in the cheeses and butter and cover until ready to serve.

#### CRISPY SHEEPSHEAD

Combine flour, baking powder and lemon pepper in a medium bowl.

Dredge all fillets in the flour mixture and set aside.

Create a batter by adding the egg and milk to the remaining flour mixture and beat well, removing all lumps.

Pour the panko breadcrumbs into a large bowl for breading.

Dip each flour-coated fillet into the batter, coating completely and shake off any excess.

Dredge and press the battered fillets into the breadcrumbs, coating completely on both sides.

Fry each coated piece until golden brown and fish is cooked though, about 3-5 minutes.

**SERVES 4.**

# ALL RELEASE REDFISH TOURNAMENT



CCA Florida has been hosting “All Release” Tournaments in Tampa and Sarasota Bay for over 20 years and The Tampa CCA chapter has been scoring and converting tournaments to “All Release” competitions for years as well. Capt Leiza Fitzgerald, CCA Florida STAR Tournament Director has taken this concept to heart. She has incorporated CCA’s mission statement, to conserve and preserve marine fisheries as part of her job description as well as making it a personal and professional crusade. She is trying to convert tournaments who bring dead redfish, trout and snook to a weigh-in to a format that allows the fish to survive. “With the number of redfish, trout & snook tournaments that take place annually in Florida, converting them to a live weigh-in or Catch Photo Release format puts the big fish back into our waters to spawn more fish. Since I have participated in the CCA “All Release” Tournaments and other Live weigh-in competitions for nearly 20 years it just makes sense to work on converting these tournaments and getting them to release the fish alive” states Capt Leiza.

Using technology to promote the conservation of marine resources and our fisheries has become popular and is a great way to engage more anglers in conservation and the sport of fishing. By using a Smart Phone app, text or email and by encouraging local fishing tournaments state-wide to use a Catch, Photo Release format or Live Weigh-in for their tournaments we can and are making an impact on the number of inshore species, especially redfish that would otherwise be harvested to win a competition. However, it is a process to get change implemented. So in order to help with the process and to further educate anglers on saving as many redfish and other inshore spe-

cies as possible, CCA Florida and STAR Director, Captain Leiza Fitzgerald have put together a resuscitation tank system with recirculating tanks and oxygen and they bring this set up to tournaments throughout Florida.

The resuscitation tank system allows anglers to bring their fish in Live wells to the weigh scales alive and then transport them from their boats in fish bags with water to the scales with a stop at the tank system for a little TLC if needed. Once a fish has been weighed they are brought back to the tanks where they are either released or placed in large recirculating tanks and then released. If a fish is struggling the team will get it in the oxygenated tank and provide assistance until it is stabilized and ready for release.

Through education and incentives, CCA Florida is working to encourage local Florida tournaments to move away from the standard weigh-in where redfish, trout and snook come to the scales on ice and switch to a live weigh-in or Catch, Photo and Release format. CCA is not opposed to anglers keeping fish for dinner but they are not in favor of killing fish to win a competition and this is evident in the STAR competition presented by Yamaha with it’s Catch, Photo, format and nearly \$500,000 in incentives.

Over the past four years, Capt Leiza has been working to educate tournament directors and committees on the benefits of having either a live weigh-in or catch photo component to their competitions by offering to score their CPR formatted tournament or provide resuscitation tanks on the tournament site to revive fish and then release the redfish or other live species back into the lo-

*(continued on page 45)*





## All Release Redfish Tournament

*continued from page 42*

cal waters. It is baby steps to get tournaments who for decades have for the purposes of winning a prize have brought their fish on ice to a weigh scale. Most first steps a tournament takes to make a change is the live weigh-in. With this change we hope the tournament will implement a penalty of a half pound of weight for a dead fish brought in by an angler, in addition to CCA providing an incentive of a performance shirt, hat or other gift for bringing their fish in alive and being released. Even though an angler may not win in the tournament there is still a win, win. For releasing their fish, the anglers name is entered in a drawing for a Bull Bay Rod and Florida Fishing Products Reel combo or other great prizes for that tournament and there is a win for the fisheries because at least one big fish was released back into Florida's waters.

In addition to providing the incentives and bringing the tanks, oxygen, release fish bags and nets, at the captains meeting, CCA will provide each angler with a bottle of T-H Marine G-Juice Salt-water Live Well Treatment which keeps fish healthy by adding essential electrolytes to live well water and removing harmful nitrates, ammonia, chlorine and heavy metals, the G-Juice Live Well Treatment along with a functioning live well system will help ensure that fish make it to the dock in a better condition to be released.

To accomplish providing tournaments with a Catch, Photo, Release format, CCA Florida partnered with iAngler to provide their CPR app which can be downloaded on a Smartphone to allow anglers just to photograph and release their fish and win-

ners would then be determined by total length of fish or catch bag not by weight.

Since 2015, this effort has resulted in many partnerships with tournaments on both the east and west coast providing the means for anglers to bring their redfish or other inshore species alive or participate in a CPR format.

The east coast tournament partnerships such as Fish Stock, Flagler Sportfishing Club Spring Classic, Ancient City Redfish Tournament and Central Florida Shootout, have resulted in 456 redfish released back into east coast waters over the last 5 years.

The west coast tournament partnerships such as Plantation Redfish Classic, Robert Wade Philips Classic, Ladies Redfish Classic, Florida Cracker Invitational, Eggnog Open and others have resulted in 352 redfish released back into west coast waters over the last 5 years.

These released redfish and other species are critical to healthy fish stocks on both coasts. The fish that are released are generally large reds or other species over 25 inches that are close to maturing to spawn. It is not just one fish we will save but millions because of the fish it will spawn. Killing these fish for a competition just does not make sense.

If you are planning an inshore tournament, have an ongoing tournament that you fish or are on a tournament committee that still allows dead redfish, snook or trout to be entered for the purposes of winning a prize please reach out to [info@ccaflorida.org](mailto:info@ccaflorida.org) to see how we can help offer the tournament the ability to become an instrumental part in the conservation of our marine resources and help sustain our fisheries for future generations.



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As a CCA Florida Life 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.

Invest in a CCA Florida Life Membership and receive these gifts:

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- Engel 65 High Performance Cooler



## Looking For A Guide?



Log on to  
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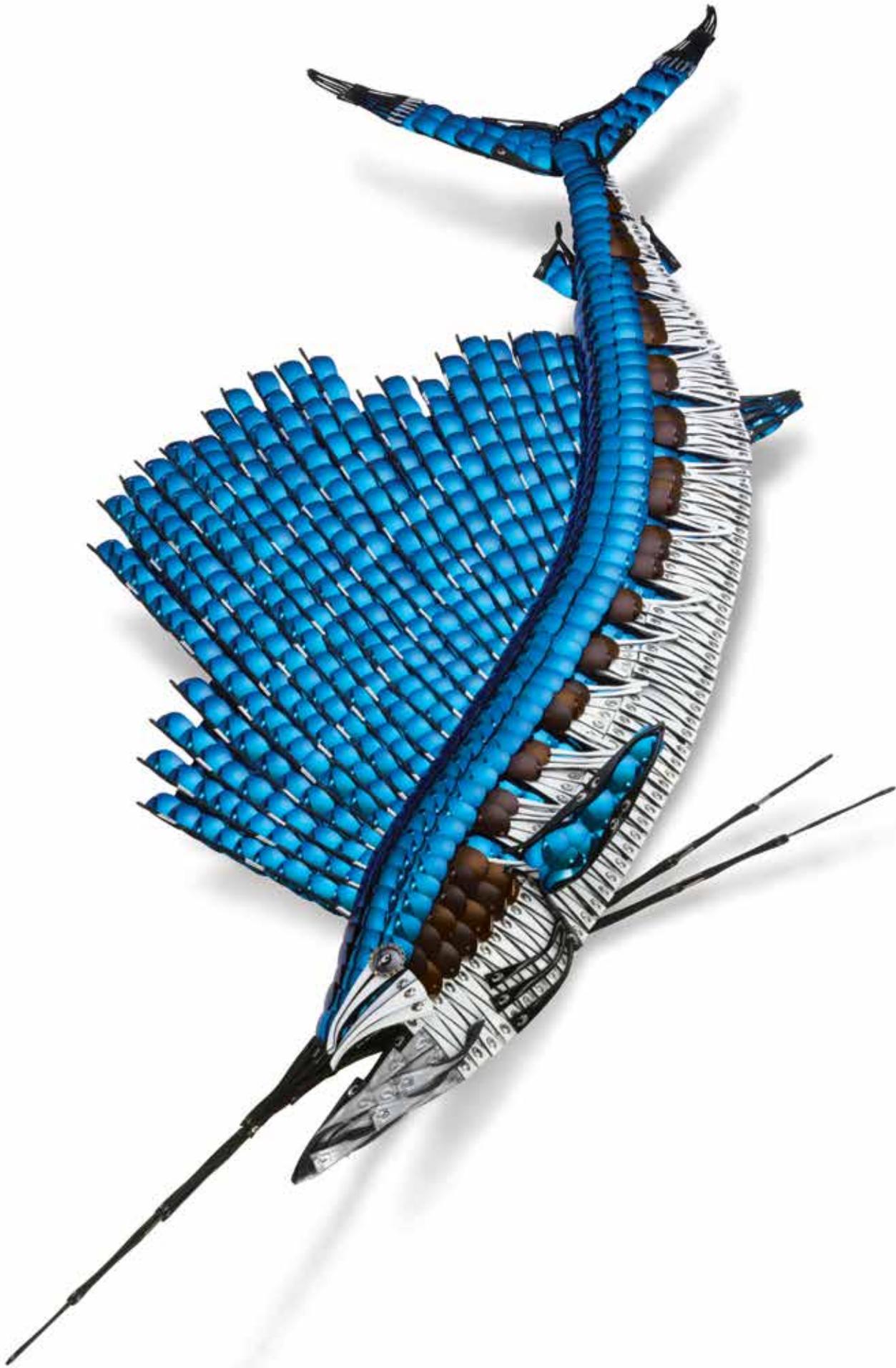
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Learn about the I-for-I Initiative and get yours online. Visit [freesunshields.com](https://freesunshields.com) and click I-for-I.



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## Become a Legacy Member Today

As a CCA Florida 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.

Invest in a CCA Florida Legacy Membership and receive these gifts:

20-piece Rhineland Knife Block Set  
Engel 123 High Performance Cooler  
Traeger Tailgater



# don't miss it

## CCA FLORIDA PET CLUB

By joining the CCA Florida Pet Club\*, your pet will 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. Invest in the CCA Florida Pet Club and your pet will receive:

AN EXCLUSIVE  
CCA FLORIDA  
PET BANDANA

THE OFFICIAL  
CCA FLORIDA  
PET CLUB  
CERTIFICATE

\*Please Include Name of Pet in  
"Order Notes" upon Checkout

<https://ccaflorida.org/product/petclub/>

Debuting the first time,  
the CCA Florida Pet Club  
for Florida's four-legged  
fish friends!

## Looking For A Guide?



Log on to  
[ccaflorida.org](http://ccaflorida.org)  
and choose from  
our regionalized  
directory of Florida  
guides who support  
CCA's conservation  
initiatives.

CCA FLORIDA  
[ccaflorida.org](http://ccaflorida.org)

## YOUR MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

### Become a Heritage Member Today

As a CCA Florida Heritage 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.

Invest in a CCA Florida Heritage Membership and receive these amazing gifts:

13-piece Rhineland Knife Block Set  
Engel 80 High Performance Cooler



**CCA FLORIDA**  
ccaflorida.org

# WINNER'S CHOICE WEDNESDAY!

For just \$20, you could WIN during Winner's Choice Wednesday!

Winner's Choice Wednesday is here and 100 tickets are available for purchase for just \$20 per ticket. One winner will be randomly selected to have his or her choice of dozens of great prizes! NEW prizes added almost weekly! Set your alarms for Wednesdays because you don't want to miss #WCW!

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

Purchase your custom **CCA Florida Toadfish Non-Tipping Can Cooler!** This koozie is the first of its kind un-spillable beverage cooler. From rocking on a boat or wagging dog tails, this product will keep your drink upright, accident-free, and icy cold.



# CONTENDER

ALWAYS IN THE GAME



COASTAL  
CONSERVATION  
ASSOCIATION

FLORIDA

# 28<sub>T</sub>



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