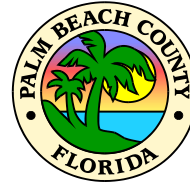




Lake Worth Lagoon E-News



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IN THIS ISSUE

- Eastern Oysters in Our Lagoon
- Oyster Reefs Thrive in Lagoon, but are Limited in Acreage
- Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative Work Begins

WHAT WE'RE DOING

- **Environmental Enhancement Status Reports.** Find the latest information on restoration efforts.
- **Environmental Times.** Read the latest issue of PBC ERM's Newsletter.

LEARN ABOUT THE LAGOON

- Visit the [Lake Worth Lagoon](#) web page.

GET INVOLVED

- Become a member of a [Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative](#) Working Group. The four working groups include: Habitat, Water, Pollution Prevention, and Public Outreach.

VOLUNTEER

- Thank you to all who participated in the Great American Cleanup – April 18th! See pictures from the [Munyon Island site](#).

CONTACT US

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Eastern Oysters in Our Lagoon

Did you know Eastern Oysters are found in several locations in our Lake Worth Lagoon? These oysters exist in every major estuary system from the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Canada, to the West Indies. However, the availability of clean water and firm substrate sites for attachment limits their distribution.

Oysters are an important part of a healthy estuarine system. They filter-feed on plankton (microscopic organisms including plants and animals) and detritus (tiny bits of dead plant and animal material) that are brought into the shell with the current. Individual oysters can filter up to 50 gallons of water per day, removing microorganisms, sediments, and pollutants from the water column. This process enhances light penetration, promoting the growth of seagrass.

Juvenile oysters, also called spat, attach themselves with a glue-like substance to adult oysters already attached to other rocks, shell, or oysters. Over time, the accumulation of oysters forms a reef, attracting numerous species of fish and invertebrates. Learn more about oysters, their value, and restoration by visiting [NOAA's Oyster Restoration Website](#)



Eastern Oyster
(*Crassostrea virginica*)

Photo Credit: NY Dept. of Environmental Conservation

Oyster Reefs Thrive in Lagoon, but are Limited in Acreage

Within the Lake Worth Lagoon, there are seven specific locations and multiple oyster reefs that cover about five acres. While oysters cover less than 1% of the Lagoon's total surface area, monitoring efforts have found these reefs are relatively healthy and environmental managers estimate there are over 185 acres of suitable area for oyster reef enhancement. Proposed projects would involve adding rock and shell substrate for oyster attachment.

Since 2005, scientists have monitored the health of oyster reefs in the Lagoon. At that time, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission started a 5-year study to monitor oyster reefs located near Everglades Island, Audubon Island, John's Island and Hypoluxo Island. In 2008, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at Florida Atlantic University began additional monitoring efforts near Munyon Island, Ibis Isle, and Snook Islands. On a monthly basis, researchers measure growth, abundance, reproductive effort, and overall health of the Eastern Oyster along with water temperature, salinity, and dissolved oxygen. Learn more by visiting the [PBC ERM oyster web page](#).



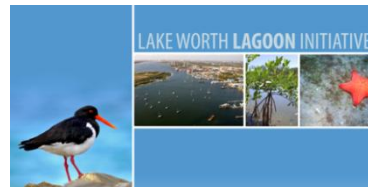
A researcher measures and records the size of an Eastern Oyster in the Lake Worth Lagoon.

Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative Work Begins

Much of the Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative's success will depend on the Water, Habitat, Pollution Prevention, and Public Outreach working groups which began organizing and meeting in February. On April 2, Working Group Chairs presented their progress to the Initiative's Executive Committee. A few highlights include:

- The Water Working Group is making progress on a decision framework to guide scientific research efforts that will improve water quality in the Lagoon.
- The Habitat Working Group reviewed habitat projects and monitoring results and is working to identify funding opportunities.
- The Public Outreach Working Group has identified several projects to focus its efforts, including creating televised public service announcements and a Lagoon speakers bureau.

Are you interested in becoming a member of a working group? If so, contact the lead staff member and find out how you can contribute. Contact information, past meeting notes, and future meeting dates, times, and locations are available on the web at: http://www.lwli.org/major_programs.htm



Learn more at:
<http://www.LWLI.org>

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