



FLORIDA KEYS

MARINE SCIENCE CONFERENCE & WORKSHOP

OCTOBER 27–30, 2025
Coral Springs, Florida

 WiFi: Conference F | Password: FLKEYS2025!

 conference.ifas.ufl.edu/floridakeys

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Name Badge

Your name badge is your entry pass to all networking events, so please wear it throughout the conference. Guests must also wear their name badges for event access. The guest fee permits individuals aged 18 and older to attend the Welcome Social on Monday, as well as the Poster Session & Networking Reception on Tuesday and Wednesday. Please ensure all guests are registered and that the appropriate fees are paid.



All documents are available electronically on the website: **conference.ifas.ufl.edu/floridakeys**

SCAN THESE QR CODES FOR QUICK ACCESS:



Agenda (PDF)



Posters (PDF)



Abstracts (PDF)



Program (PDF)



Exploring and Safeguarding the Marine Ecosystems of the Florida Keys

A Special Collection in honor of Dr. Billy Causey, John Halas, and Dr. Walter C. Jaap, leaders who united science and stewardship to protect Florida Keys reefs.

You are invited to publish a paper in a special Research Topic with the journal Frontiers in Marine Science.

This Research Topic aims to address the urgent need to explore and safeguard the marine ecosystems of the Florida Keys through a comprehensive understanding of their structure, function, and vulnerability. We seek to bring together research that not only advances fundamental ecological knowledge but also informs practical approaches for conservation, restoration, and management. Linked with the Florida Keys Marine Science Conference and Workshop in October 2025, this initiative will help disseminate new findings and encourage community engagement to promote science-based policies and interventions that secure the long-term health of this vital marine region.



If you are interested in participating in this opportunity, scope and information for authors can be found here: <https://www.frontiersin.org/research-topics/73842/exploring-and-safeguarding-the-marine-ecosystems-of-the-florida-keys-a-special-collection-dedicated-to-dr-billy-causey-john-halas-and-dr-walter-c-jaap>



FLORIDA KEYS

MARINE SCIENCE CONFERENCE & WORKSHOP

Dear Colleagues, Friends, & Fellow Stewards of the Sea!

On behalf of the Scientific Program Committee, it is our sincere pleasure to welcome you to the Florida Keys Marine Science Conference and Workshop! It has been 15 years since an event such as this has taken place and this year's gathering comes at a critical moment—not just for the Florida Keys, but for marine ecosystems across the globe. As we confront the accelerating impacts of many stressors such as rising ocean temperatures, disease outbreaks, habitat degradation, and intensifying storm activity, the urgency of collaboration and innovation in marine science has never been greater.

The Florida Keys represent one of the most biologically rich and ecologically significant regions in North America. Home to a wide variety of marine habitats, the Keys serve as a living laboratory for marine scientists, conservationists, educators, and resource managers and impacts the lives of the community members of the region. From coral restoration to fisheries monitoring, water quality research to community resilience planning—this region brings together a depth and diversity of work that is unmatched.

Yet, the very uniqueness that makes the Keys so valuable also makes them vulnerable. Coral loss, fish population shifts, and increasing development pressures are just a few of the challenges we face. These issues demand not only scientific understanding, but also co-production of knowledge among many sectors with strong communication, coordination, and the translation of knowledge into action.

That is why this year's conference is so important. It provides an opportunity for researchers, managers, students, policymakers, and interested resource users and community members to share knowledge, forge new partnerships, and chart a course forward together. By gathering for this event, we immerse ourselves in the ecosystems we aim to understand and protect.

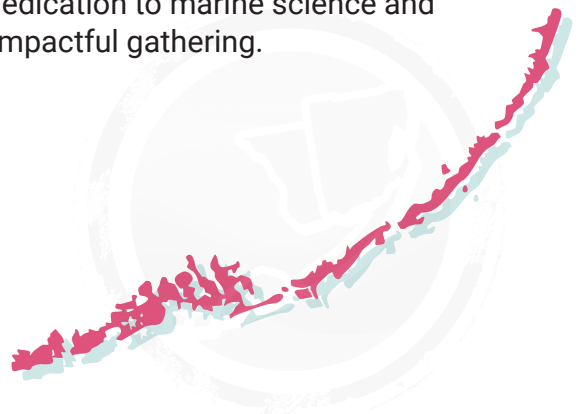
Despite the challenges, there is much reason for hope. Progress is being made—through innovative research techniques, advances in ecosystem monitoring, stronger cross-sector collaboration, and the passionate work of individuals like you. The energy and ideas exchanged at this conference will continue to drive that progress.

We thank you for your commitment, your curiosity, and your dedication to marine science and stewardship. We look forward to a productive, inspiring, and impactful gathering.

With appreciation,

THE SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM COMMITTEE
FLORIDA KEYS MARINE SCIENCE CONFERENCE & WORKSHOP

conference.ifas.ufl.edu/floridakeys





IN MEMORIAM

Honoring Leaders in Marine Science and Conservation

This year, we honor the lives and legacies of three extraordinary leaders whose scientific contributions and commitment to conservation transformed our understanding and stewardship of coral reef ecosystems. Billy Causey, John Halas, and Walter Jaap each brought unique expertise—integrating research, field innovation, and community collaboration—to advance science-based management of some of the most treasured marine habitats in the Florida Keys and beyond. Their work set new standards in marine conservation, informed international best practices, and inspired generations of scientists, managers, and stewards. Their legacies live on in the science they advanced, the protections they secured, and the people they mentored.



Billy Causey

1944 – 2025

Billy Causey was a wise, generous, and passionate leader whose work bridged science and management to protect coral reef ecosystems. For more than 30 years, he championed the integration of ecological research, monitoring data, and stakeholder input into marine policy—securing precedent-setting protections, including the nation’s largest network of fully protected marine areas. He helped establish the Tortugas Ecological Reserve, informed by biological and fisheries science, which today safeguards over 200 square nautical miles of coral reefs and associated habitats.

Billy’s NOAA career began in 1983 at Looe Key National Marine Sanctuary and grew to encompass the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and later the entire Southeast Region of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, where he applied ecosystem science to management challenges from the Everglades to the Caribbean. He fostered collaborations with research institutions, advanced marine protected area science internationally, and ensured that policy decisions were grounded in rigorous monitoring and ecological understanding.

Beyond his professional achievements, Billy was known for his warmth, humor, and ability to connect people to the science and stories of the ocean. His legacy endures in thriving marine protected areas, stronger links between science and management, and the many scientists and managers he inspired.



John Halas

1943 – 2025

John Halas, a pioneering marine biologist and decorated Vietnam veteran, advanced marine science through practical engineering that addressed a critical ecological problem—anchor damage to coral reefs. Drawing on field observations and reef ecology studies, he designed the permanent embedment mooring system, first tested on Key Largo’s French Reef in 1981 with U.S. Geological Survey collaborators. By preventing physical damage to corals while allowing vessel access, his innovation demonstrated how applied science and engineering can directly conserve sensitive habitats.

As the first employee of Key Largo National Marine Sanctuary, John integrated biological monitoring into site management and worked closely with scientists to evaluate the effectiveness of mooring systems. Over time, his design became a global model, backed by empirical evidence of reduced benthic damage and improved reef condition in high-use areas.

Even after his 2012 retirement, John continued consulting with coastal communities and marine scientists to adapt and implement buoy systems in diverse ecosystems worldwide. His work remains a textbook example of science-driven innovation with lasting ecological benefit.



Walter C. Jaap

1940 – 2021

Walter Jaap was a coral reef ecologist whose scientific work over more than three decades advanced our understanding of reef health, disturbance, and recovery. At the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, he led long-term coral reef monitoring programs in Biscayne National Park and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, producing foundational datasets used by scientists, managers, and policymakers. His early research connected coral bleaching in the Florida Reef Tract to El Niño events, among the first to link global climate variability to local reef impacts.

Walter authored key publications on Florida’s coral reefs, including a widely used compendium of reef ecology, and played a central role in launching the Florida Keys Coral Reef Evaluation and Monitoring Program, which continues to provide critical data for science-based management. His work spanned Florida, the Caribbean, and beyond—documenting disease outbreaks, evaluating restoration methods, and developing reef assessment protocols that remain in use today.

After retirement, Walter co-founded Lithophyte Research, applying scientific methods to assess reef damage and guide repair. He mentored students, trained divers in scientific monitoring techniques, and helped launch ScubaNauts to inspire young scientists. Walter’s legacy endures in the scientific record he built, the reefs named in his honor, and the community of researchers he helped shape.

COMMITTEE RECOGNITION

Planning Committee

Danielle Morley

Conference Chair, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Thomas R. Matthews

Conference Co-Chair, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Beth Miller-Tipton -and- Danielle Marden

Conference Coordinators, UF/IFAS Office of Conferences & Institutes

Scientific Program Committee

Andy Bruckner

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Laurent Cherubin

Florida Atlantic University - Harbor Branch

Alexandra Fine

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Lucas Griffin

University of South Florida

Kristen Hart

U.S. Geological Survey

Shelly Krueger

Florida Sea Grant

Michael Parsons

Florida Gulf Coast University

Kimberly Ritchie

University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) Dept. of Natural Science

Bill Sharp

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Manoj Shivlani

University of Miami - RSMAS

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Without their generous support, this conference would not be possible.

GOLD SPONSOR

The logo for FIU (Florida International University) features the letters "FIU" in a bold, blue, serif font.

Institute of
Environment

SILVER SPONSORS

The logo for xylem features the word "xylem" in a blue, lowercase, sans-serif font, with the tagline "Let's Solve Water" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below it.The logo for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation features a circular emblem with a blue and white wave pattern.

National
Marine Sanctuary
Foundation

The logo for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary features a circular emblem with a blue and white wave pattern and a small registered trademark symbol.

FLORIDA KEYS
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

The
Florida Keys
& Key West
come as you are®



BRONZE SPONSORS

The logo for Sea Grant Florida features a stylized green bird or fish shape above the text "Sea Grant" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, with "FLORIDA" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below it.

Sea Grant
FLORIDA

The logo for Bio-Tech Consulting features a stylized green plant or leaf shape.

Bio-Tech Consulting
Environmental and Permitting

The logo for SHEDD AQUARIUM features a stylized blue and white wave shape.

SHEDD
AQUARIUM

The logo for the Coastal Conservation Association Florida features a stylized red fish shape.

COASTAL
CONSERVATION
ASSOCIATION
FLORIDA
CONSERVATION | HABITAT | RESTOCKING | ADVOCACY

The logo for the Bonefish & Tarpon Trust features a circular emblem with a blue and white wave pattern and the text "Bonefish & Tarpon" and "TRUST" around the perimeter.

Bonefish
& Tarpon
TRUST

The logo for the ANGARI FOUNDATION features the word "ANGARI" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, with "FOUNDATION" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below it.

ANGARI
FOUNDATION

The logo for the Everglades Foundation features a stylized green and blue wave pattern.

EVER
GLADES
FOUNDATION

The logo for Dynasty Marine Associates, Inc. features a stylized black and white wave pattern with the word "DYNASTY" in a bold, black, sans-serif font, and "MARINE ASSOCIATES, INC." in a smaller, black, sans-serif font below it.

DYNASTY
MARINE ASSOCIATES, INC.
Caribbean Tropical Fish Supplier to the World

The logo for frontiers features a stylized blue and green wave pattern.

frontiers

The logo for INNOVASEA features a stylized blue and white wave pattern.

INNOVASEA

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF

GOLD SPONSOR

FIU

**Institute of
Environment**

FIU Institute of Environment

environment.fiu.edu

The FIU Institute of Environment at Florida International University is a global leader in environmental research, addressing urgent challenges in coastal resilience, water quality, ecosystem health, and climate change. As the primary research partner for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and Rookery Bay Reserve, FIU provides essential data for species protection under CITES. The Institute exemplifies FIU's deep commitment to science, sustainability, and international collaboration that drives both local and global environmental impact through innovative research, interdisciplinary expertise, education, and wide-reaching community-focused outreach initiatives.

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FIU | Institute of
Environment
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

The Institute of Environment focuses on environmental science and sustainability, addressing challenges like coastal resilience, water quality, ecosystem health, and climate change through interdisciplinary expertise. Florida International University is an urban, multicampus, public research university serving its students and the diverse population of South Florida.

www.environment.fiu.edu



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SILVER SPONSORS



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The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) manages the State's fish and wildlife resources for their long-term well-being and the benefit of people. FWC's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute through effective research and technical knowledge provides timely information and guidance to protect, conserve and manage those resources. FWRI's South Florida Regional Lab has 50 years local experience providing critical data and knowledge to inform resource management in the Florida Keys.



visitfloridakeys.com

Visit Florida Keys (VFK), the official Destination Marketing Organization for the Monroe County Tourism Development Council, promotes the 125-mile island chain of the Florida Keys & Key West through a comprehensive tourism marketing and public information program that supports sustainable economic growth. Linked by 42 bridges between the Atlantic and Gulf, the Keys offer world-class fishing, diving, nature, dining, and cultural heritage.



**National
Marine Sanctuary
Foundation**



FLORIDA KEYS
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

marinesanctuary.org

The National Marine Sanctuary System protects 18 underwater parks with over 629,000 square miles of ocean and Great Lakes waters. The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is home to a diverse community of underwater habitats, where scientists from all over the world come to study. The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation is the official National Marine Sanctuary System nonprofit partner. Programs include science and conservation, connecting people and communities to sanctuaries, and creating the next generation of ocean stewards.



xylem.com/en-us

Xylem works with professionals to develop solutions for the growing burdens on our planet's natural resources. Our instruments, software and data collection platforms are mainly focused on environmental monitoring and testing. We develop, manufacture, and integrate instrumentation and systems for measuring and monitoring water quality, level and flow. This covers the spectrum of outdoor water applications such as oceans, coasts, estuaries, groundwater, surface water, wastewater and aquaculture.

CONFERENCE CHAIRS



Danielle Morley

Conference Chair

Research Administrator
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Marathon, Florida

Danielle Morley is a Research Administrator with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). She directs the Finfish Research Team at the South Florida Regional Lab in the Florida Keys. She originally moved to the Keys and joined FWC in 2009. Since then, she has been researching reef fish in the Florida Keys with a focus on spawning aggregation ecology. She and her team participate in research using tools such as acoustic telemetry, passive acoustic hydrophones, biosampling, and underwater fish counts. Ms. Morley holds a BS from the University of Rhode Island, and MS from both Nova Southeastern University and the University of Florida and is currently a PhD candidate with the University of Massachusetts – Amherst.



Thomas R. Matthews

Conference Co-Chair

Program Administrator
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Marathon, FL

Tom is the Program Administrator for the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute's South Florida Regional Laboratory in the Florida Keys. For 36 years Tom has lived and worked in the Florida Keys. Tom also has 29 years experience as an Adjunct Professor with the College of the Florida Keys. He has conducted research in numerous Caribbean lobster fisheries as a Research Consultant and Project Manager with the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute. At the policy level, Tom has been a Chair or panel member on numerous international and US lobster fishery panels. Tom completed a B.S. in Marine Biology from Auburn University in 1986 and a M.S. in Marine Science from the University of Alabama in 1988. Tom's M.S research was primarily on shrimp fisheries, recruitment, and ecology at the Dauphin Island Sea lab. Tom gained experience in research and fisheries management in small fishing communities which developed into his career research focus, the Caribbean spiny lobster and the associated fisheries. Research areas associated with lobsters include population dynamics, fishery management, fishing gear design, marine protected areas, marine debris, aquaculture, and economics with over 30 grants and 40 publications in these fields.





ABOUT US

As a division of the FWC, the **Fish and Wildlife Research Institute** conducts collaborative research and monitoring to provide timely information and guidance to protect, conserve and manage Florida's fish and wildlife resources.



VISIT US ONLINE
MyFWC.com/Research



PLENARY SESSION SPEAKERS

Tuesday, October 28, 2025

8:15am – 10:00am



Dr. Steve Gittings | 8:25am–9:05am

"Dear Sloane – A Letter to My Granddaughter..."

Retired Science Coordinator
NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
Dayton, MD

Dr. Steve Gittings spent his career working in the field of conservation science. Beginning in 1980 at Texas A&M University, he studied chemosynthetic communities and reef ecology, mostly in the Gulf of Mexico and Florida Keys. He became the inaugural manager of Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary in 1992. He then served for 28 years as Chief Scientist for NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, where he led the development of a system-wide approach for the assessment of sanctuary conditions. He has characterized and monitored ocean ecosystems, responded to and assessed damage from ship groundings and oil spills, supported accident investigations, and told the stories and lessons of a changing ocean in news, print media, documentaries, and presentations. He has been diving for over 50 years, led and participated in four saturation missions in the Aquarius habitat, and one as submarine pilot and trainer on a NASA mission. He also works to control invasive lionfish in the western Atlantic through planning, education, research, and the promotion of new commercial products and technologies.



Dr. Mark J. Butler IV | 9:05am–9:30am

"Shallow Seas and Shifting Baselines: A Glimpse of the Florida Keys Undersea History"

Professor and Eminent Scholar (Retired)
Newfound Harbor Marine Institute, Big Pine Key, FL

Dr. Mark Butler is a marine biologist who has spent over four decades working in the Florida Keys. In spring 2025 he retired from his position as an Eminent Scholar and the Walter and Rosalie Goldberg Professor of Tropical Ecology at Florida International University in Miami, Florida. Prior to that, he was an Eminent Scholar and Professor at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia and a recipient of the "Outstanding Faculty Award" from the Commonwealth of Virginia, the state's highest faculty honor. The Florida Keys have been the home base for his research about which he has published nearly 200 scientific articles and book chapters, the majority of those on the undersea ecology of the Florida Keys. Many of his studies have focused on Caribbean spiny lobsters and shallow-water sponges, but his research has spanned a range of topics, including: the restoration of coral reefs and hard bottom communities, the effects of plankton blooms and Everglades restoration on shallow-water communities, underwater soundscape ecology, the ecology of octopus, and more. He and his wife now live on a ranch with their Great Dane in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.

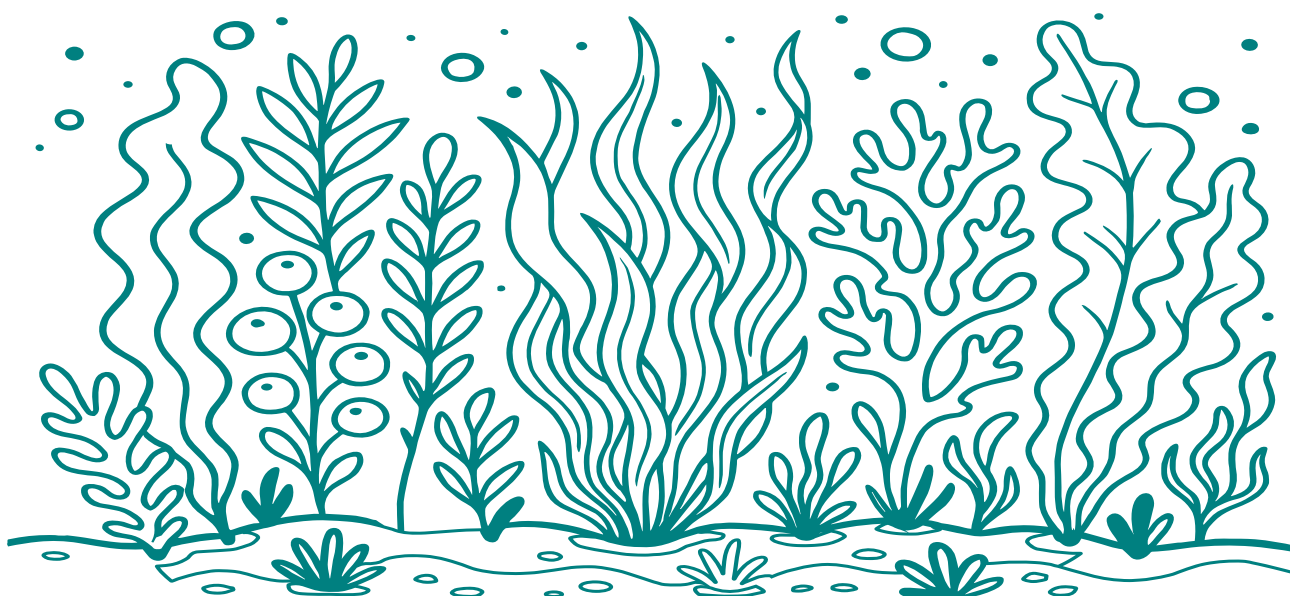
**Dr. James W. Fourqurean | 9:30am–9:55am****"Water Quality and Seagrass Health in the Florida Keys: How Far We've Come, and How Far We Still Have to Go"**

*Distinguished University Professor and Director of the Coastlines and Oceans Division
Florida International University – Institute of Environment, North Miami, FL*

Jim Fourqurean is a distinguished university professor of biological sciences and an associate director in the Institute of Environment, leading the Coastlines and Oceans Division. He has been on the faculty at Florida International University in Miami since 1993. He is a marine and estuarine ecologist with a special interest in benthic plant communities and nutrient biogeochemistry. He and his students address many aspects of ecological and biogeochemical processes in coastal plant communities, including carbon and nutrient cycling, plant-plant interactions, plant-animal interactions and the structure of food webs.

Over the last 10 years, Dr. Fourqurean has been helping translate the science of carbon dynamics in coastal ecosystems into actionable policy and climate change mitigation strategies. He is one of the lead scientists in the International Blue Carbon Working Group and he also serves as a scientific representative to the International Blue Carbon policy Working Group. These groups have been successful in bringing the importance of carbon cycling in coastal ecosystems for climate change mitigation into the spotlight and helped influence the inclusion of coastal ecosystems into national greenhouse gas inventories.

Fourqurean received his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Virginia and completed a postdoctoral fellowship working on the Tomales Bay LMER program at San Francisco State University. He was recently elected as the next president of the Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation, the world's largest association of scientists and resource managers whose work concentrates on the coastal environment.



PLENARY WORKSHOP

"A Collaborative Visioning and Research Identification Workshop for the Florida Keys Marine Ecosystem"

Thursday, October 30, 2025

8:30am–12:00pm

The closing plenary will be an interactive, interdisciplinary workshop open to all participants.

What does a "successful" Florida Keys marine ecosystem look like 10 years from now – and how can science help get us there?

We know that the future of this region does not rest in the hands of one group alone and want participants from across the scientific community, managers, resource users, and other interested parties to co-develop a shared vision for the future of the Florida Keys marine ecosystem.

Through a series of facilitated discussions and collaborative activities, we will work to define what ecological and socioeconomic "success" could look like for this unique and rapidly changing region and explore what it would take to get there. Outcomes from this workshop will include research priorities that will help drive future collaborations and shape a unified path toward long-term resilience and sustainability of the Florida Keys ecosystem in the face of accelerating change.

About the Facilitator



Joy Hazell

Interim Director
Florida Natural Resources Leadership Institute
UF/IFAS Extension
Gainesville, FL

Joy Hazell is a UF/IFAS Extension faculty member in the Department of Forest, Fisheries and Geomatics Sciences. Joy is the State Specialized Agent in Facilitation and Conflict Management and Interim Director of the Florida Natural Resources Leadership Institute. Joy plans, develops, facilitates, and evaluates comprehensive needs-based collaborative decision-making processes around natural resources in the state of Florida and beyond. She holds an undergraduate degree in Marine and Freshwater Biology from the University of New Hampshire and a graduate degree in Marine Affairs and Policy from the University of Miami. Joy started her career as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Central African Republic teaching high school biology.

The Florida Master Naturalist Program

A Natural History Training Program



The Florida Master Naturalist Program (FMNP) is a UF/IFAS Extension environmental education program for adult audiences. FMNP courses are provided by certified instructors throughout the state of Florida at Extension offices and other environmental education organizations.

The goal of FMNP is to promote awareness, understanding, and respect of Florida's natural world. FMNP graduates share their knowledge through formal and informal training programs. FMNP consists of three tracks of courses:

Core, Land Steward, and Restoration!

Are you interested in becoming an FMNP instructor or guest speaker? Scan the code below to find out how!



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Hands-on Learning



Explore our Wildlife



MasterNaturalist.org

AGENDA-AT-A-GLANCE

Monday, October 27, 2025	
4:00pm–6:30pm	Attendee Arrival and Registration
4:00pm–6:30pm	Sponsor Displays and Group 1 Posters Installed
5:00pm–6:30pm	Welcome Social & Networking
Tuesday, October 28, 2025	
7:00am–5:00pm	Registration Open
7:00am–8:15am	Morning Refreshments in Poster Hall
8:15am–10:00am	Opening Plenary – Setting the Stage
10:00am–10:30am	AM Refreshment Break
10:30am–12:00pm	Concurrent Sessions
12:00pm–1:30pm	Lunch Buffet for Attendees
1:30pm–5:00pm	Concurrent Sessions
3:00pm–3:30pm	PM Refreshment Break
5:00pm–7:30pm	Poster Session & Networking Reception – Group 1 (hors d'oeuvres and beverages provided)
Wednesday, October 29, 2025	
7:30am–5:00pm	Registration Open
7:30am–8:30am	Morning Refreshments in Poster Hall
8:30am–10:00am	Concurrent Sessions
10:00am–10:30am	AM Refreshment Break – Group 1 Posters Removed
10:30am–12:00pm	Concurrent Sessions
12:00pm–1:30pm	Lunch Buffet for Attendees – Group 2 Posters Installed
1:30pm–5:00pm	Concurrent Sessions
3:00pm–3:30pm	PM Refreshment Break
5:00pm–7:30pm	Poster Session & Networking Reception – Group 2 (hors d'oeuvres and beverages provided)
Thursday, October 30, 2025	
7:30am–5:00pm	Registration Open
7:30am–8:30am	Morning Refreshments in Poster Hall
8:30am–10:00am	Closing Plenary Session Workshop
10:00am–10:30am	AM Refreshment Break
10:30am–12:00pm	Closing Plenary Session Workshop (continued)
12:00pm	Workshop Concludes – Group 2 Posters & Sponsor Display Removal

DETAILED AGENDA

Monday, October 27, 2025	
4:00pm-6:30pm	Conference Registration Opens Sponsors/Exhibitors and GROUP 1 Poster Presenters Move-In Displays
5:00pm-6:30pm	Welcome & Networking Social
Tuesday, October 28, 2025	
7:00am-5:00pm	Conference Registration Open
7:00am-8:15am	Morning Refreshments in Exhibit and Poster Hall
8:15am-10:00am	Opening Plenary – Setting the Stage <u>Welcome and Opening Remarks</u> 8:15am Danielle Morley, Conference Chair, Research Administrator I, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Marathon, Florida <u>Speaker Presentations</u> 8:25am Dr. Steve Gittings, Retired Science Coordinator, NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Dayton, MD "Dear Sloane – A Letter to My Granddaughter..." 9:05am Dr. Mark J. Butler IV, Professor and Eminent Scholar - Retired, Newfound Harbor Marine Institute, Big Pine Key, FL "Shallow Seas and Shifting Baselines: A Glimpse of the Florida Keys Undersea History" 9:30am Dr. James W. Fourqurean, Distinguished University Professor and Director of the Coastlines and Oceans Division Florida International University – Institute of Environment, North Miami, FL "Water Quality and Seagrass Health in the Florida Keys: How Far We've Come, and How Far We Still Have to Go" 9:50am Q&A
10:00am-10:30am	Refreshment Break in Exhibit and Poster Hall

Tuesday, October 28, 2025 (continued)

	Concurrent Sessions - 10:30am-12:00pm	
	Session 1	Session 2
	Great Cypress	Royal Poinciana
	Understanding Changes in Coral Community Structure and Function Over Time	Assessing Shifting Dynamics in Fish and Fisheries Management
	Kimberly Ritchie University of South Carolina, Beaufort, South Carolina	Danielle Morley Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, Marathon, Florida
10:30am	Opening Remarks	Opening Remarks
10:35am	Octocoral Population Response and Recovery to Reef Disturbances Lindsay Huebner Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, St. Petersburg, Florida	National Coral Reef Monitoring Program's Reef Fish Surveys Support Diverse, Multi-Agency Fisheries Management Efforts Rob Harper Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies, University of Miami, Miami, Florida
10:50am	Assessing the Long-Term Growth and Survival of Boulder Corals Outplanted in the Florida Keys Dr. Lindsay Spiers Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Marathon, Florida	Multidecadal Analysis of Fish Community Change Across the Florida Keys Reef Tract Dakota Lewis University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida
11:05am	The Boom and Bust of Coral Reef Accretion Potential Associated with Restoration and Coral Bleaching Dr. Lauren Toth US Geological Survey, St. Petersburg, Florida	Length-Based Risk Analysis of Management Options for the Southern Florida USA Multispecies Coral Reef Fishery Dr. Jerald Ault University of Miami, Miami, Florida
11:20am	The Last Genotypes: Elkhorn Coral Demography, Genotypic Diversity, and Restoration in Florida Dr. Mark Ladd NOAA/Southeast Fisheries Science Center, Miami, Florida	Integrated Science for Atlantic Tarpon Conservation in the Florida Keys Dr. Lucas Griffin University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida
11:35am	The National Coral Reef Monitoring Program's Environmental Monitoring in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Nicole Besemer NOAA/Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory, Miami, Florida	Spawning Aggregation Length Demographics Reveal Disparities Between Physiological and Functional Maturity in Snapper Jesse Secord Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Marathon, Florida
11:50am	Discussion Period	Discussion Period
12:00pm-1:30pm	Networking Lunch Buffet for Attendees	

PRESENTATION NOTES

[illegible]

Tuesday, October 28, 2025 (continued)		
	Concurrent Sessions - 1:30pm-3:00pm	
	Session 3	Session 4
	Great Cypress	Royal Poinciana
	Science for Species at Risk: Research on Imperiled Wildlife in the Region	Shifts and Strategies for Seagrass, Sponges, and Nearshore Hardbottom Habitats
	Dr. Kristen Hart US Geological Survey, Davie, Florida	Shelly Krueger Florida Sea Grant/University of Florida, Key West, Florida
1:30pm	Opening Remarks	Opening Remarks
1:35pm	Smalltooth Sawfish: 15 Years of Research to Promote Recovery of a Critically Endangered Species Dr. Dean Grubbs Florida State University Coastal and Marine Laboratory, St. Teresa, Florida	The Potential of South Florida Seagrass Meadows as Natural Climate Solutions Dr. Johannes Krause Florida International University, Miami, Florida
1:50pm	Eighteen Years of Goliath Grouper Research in Florida: Documenting the Recovery of an Iconic Fish Dr. Robert Ellis Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, St. Petersburg, Florida	What Happens in Florida Bay Does Not Stay in Florida Bay: Seagrass Die-Off Under Climate Change Dr. Marguerite Koch Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida
2:05pm	Horror, Homing and Habituation: Effects of Translocation Between Aggregations of Queen Conch in the FKNMS Dr. Andrew Kough John G. Shedd Aquarium, Chicago, Illinois	Development of a Sponge Restoration Strategy for Florida Bay William Sharp Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Marathon, Florida
2:20pm	Migratory Patterns and Seasonal Habitat Use of Great Hammerhead Sharks (<i>Sphyrna mokarran</i>) in the Southeastern United States Dr. Grace Casselberry University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, Massachusetts	Seagrass Non-Cryptic Fish Assemblage Across the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary - USA Seascape Paula Pabon Quintero Florida International University, North Miami, Florida
2:35pm	Biodiversity Hotspots of Satellite-Tracked Marine Turtles in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Dr. Kristen Hart US Geological Survey, Davie, Florida	Treating All Roadway Stormwater Runoff to Remove Contaminants Sandra Walters Eco Legacy Solutions, LLC & Member of EPA Water Quality Steering Committee for FKNMS, Fort Myers, Florida
2:50pm	Discussion Period	Discussion Period
3:00pm-3:30pm	Refreshment Break in Exhibit and Poster Hall	

PRESENTATION NOTES

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Tuesday, October 28, 2025 (continued)		
	Concurrent Sessions - 3:30pm-5:00pm	
	Session 5	Session 6
	Great Cypress	Royal Poinciana
	Mystery in Motion: The Spinning Fish and Sawfish Mortality Event in the Florida Keys	Voices of the Keys: Integrating Communities, Science, and Stewardship
	Dr. Michael Parsons Florida Gulf Coast University, Ft. Myers, Florida	Dr. May Lehmensiek Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission/ Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, Marathon, Florida
3:30pm	Opening Remarks	Opening Remarks
3:35pm	The Dance of Death Returns: Keys Spinning Fish Event, Historical Context and Overview from FWC Micah Bakenhaster Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, St. Petersburg, Florida	Getting the Water Right: Economic Links Between Everglades Restoration and the Florida Keys Dr. Paul Hindsley The Everglades Foundation, Palmetto Bay, Florida
3:50pm	Benthic Dinoflagellates, Spinning Fish, and Sawfish Mortalities: Is There a Connection? Dr. Michael Parsons Florida Gulf Coast University, Fort Myers, Florida	Moving Beyond Ecology: Valuing Restoration Success with Socioeconomics Madeline Rothwell Coral Restoration Foundation, Tavernier, Florida
4:05pm	Pioneering a First-in-Kind, Fishing Guide-Led Model for Rapid Scientific and Ecological Response Allison Delashmit Key West and Lower Keys Fishing Guides Association, Summerland Key, Florida	Florida's Marine Aquarium Fishery: Integrating Regulatory Strengths with Fisher Engagement for Coral Reef Conservation Dr. Paul Anderson Aquarium Fisheries, Groton, Connecticut
4:20pm	Spinning Sawfish in the Florida Keys: Weather Conditions, Movements, and Mortality Dr. Gregg Poulakis Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Port Charlotte, Florida	The Human Side of Spiny Lobsters: Situation Assessment of the Commercial Fishery Dr. May Lehmensiek Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission/ Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, Marathon, Florida
4:35pm	Seascape and Food Web Impacts of the Fish Spinning Phenomenon in the Florida Keys Dr. W. Ryan James Florida International University, Miami, Florida	Collaborative Fisheries Science with a SMILE (Size Matters: Innovative Length Estimates) Dr. Jennifer Loch REEF/Reef Environmental Education Foundation, Key Largo, Florida
4:50pm	Discussion Period	Discussion Period
5:00pm-7:30pm	Poster Session & Networking Reception - GROUP 1 (hors d'oeuvres & beverages provided)	

PRESENTATION NOTES

[illegible]

Wednesday, October 29, 2025		
7:30am-5:00pm	Conference Registration Open	
7:30am-8:30am	Morning Refreshments in Exhibit and Poster Hall	
	Concurrent Sessions - 8:30am-10:00am	
	Session 7	Session 8
	Great Cypress	Royal Poinciana
	Coral Reef Restoration Interventions to Mitigate Stressors	Emerging Technologies and Techniques for Improving Science in the Florida Keys
	Dr. Andy Bruckner NOAA/Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, Key Largo, Florida	Dr. Benjamin Binder Florida International University, North Miami, Florida
8:30am	Opening Remarks	Opening Remarks
8:35am	Developing Realistic Science-Based Performance Standards for Acropora Relocation Efforts William Precht Bio-Tech Consulting, Miami Lakes, Florida	The Aquarius Coral Reef Observatory: A Flexible Remote Sensing Solution in the Florida Keys Dr. Benjamin Binder Florida International University, North Miami Beach, Florida
8:50am	Building Capacity for Resilience on Florida's Coral Reef Through Coral Rescue and Propagation Stephanie Schopmeyer Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, St. Petersburg, Florida	Prototyping a Modular Autonomous Data Buoy for Video and Data Monitoring in the Florida Keys Lauren Gentry Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, St. Petersburg, Florida
9:05am	<i>Diadema antillarum</i> Production and Distribution to Florida Partners – Creating a Growout and Stocking Network Dr. Joshua Patterson University of Florida, Apollo Beach, Florida	Novel Methods for Tracking Shell-Crushing Predation in the Florida Keys Dr. Matthew Ajemian Florida Atlantic University Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, Fort Pierce, Florida
9:20am	Developing SNP Based Genomic Markers for 20 Scleractinian Caribbean Corals Alicia Vollmer Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, St. Petersburg, Florida	Developing a Machine Learning-Powered Boat Detector for Underwater Acoustic Data Dr. David Kochan Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, St. Petersburg, Florida
9:35am	Restoration Strategies are Preventing the Local Extirpation of Florida's Acropora Species Dr. Erinn Muller Mote Marine Laboratory, Sarasota, Florida	Assessing Coastal Blue Carbon Residence Times Using Radiocarbon Techniques Dr. Amy Scott SGS Beta, Miami, Florida
9:50am	Discussion Period	Discussion Period
10:00am-10:30am	Refreshment Break in Exhibit and Poster Hall GROUP 1 Posters Removed	

PRESENTATION NOTES

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Wednesday, October 29, 2025 (continued)

	Concurrent Sessions - 10:30am-12:00pm	
	Session 9	Session 10
	Great Cypress	Royal Poinciana
	Benthic Biodiversity in Flux: Changes in Invertebrate Communities	From Flats to Reefs: Spatial Ecology of Fishes in the Florida Keys
	William Sharp Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Marathon, Florida	Dr. Lucas Griffin University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida
10:30am	Opening Remarks	Opening Remarks
10:35am	Drivers of Spiny Lobster (<i>Panulirus argus</i>) Population Trends and Emerging Risks to Sustainability in Florida Thomas R. Matthews Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Marathon, Florida	Movement, Home Range, and Habitat Selection of Mesopredators in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Dr. Margaret Malone Florida International University, North Miami, Florida
10:50am	From Nurseries to Reefs: Spiny Lobsters as Lenses of Habitat Degradation in the Florida Keys Casey Butler Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission/ Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, Florida International University, Marathon, Florida	Longterm Use of a Shark Breeding Ground: Three Decades of Mating Site Fidelity in the Nurse Shark Dr. Nicholas Whitney New England Aquarium, Boston, Massachusetts
11:05am	A Regional Survey of Clypeasteroid and Spatangoid Echinoids of the Central Florida Keys Prof. Michael Kowalewski University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida	Movement, Habitat Use, and Seasonality of Coastal Sharks in the Lower Florida Keys Dr. Matthew Smukall Bimini Biological Field Station, Hollywood, Florida
11:20am	Will Stone Crab Larvae Be Able to Swim Away From Their Future Climate Troubles? Prof. Philip Gravinese Eckerd College, St. Petersburg, Florida	Permit Spatial Ecology at Western Dry Rocks: Insights from a Newly Established Seasonal Fishing Closure in the Florida Keys Jessica Robichaud Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario
11:35am	Crumbling Coral: Investigating How Changes in Structural Complexity Impact Cryptofauna Communities Luke Stoeber Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina	Mapping Undiscovered Bonefish Spawning Aggregation Sites in the Florida Keys Dr. Ross Boucek Bonefish and Tarpon Trust, Marathon, Florida
11:50am	Discussion Period	Discussion Period
12:00pm-1:30pm	Networking Lunch Buffet GROUP 2 Posters Installed	

PRESENTATION NOTES

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Wednesday, October 29, 2025 (continued)

	Concurrent Sessions - 1:30pm-3:00pm	
	Session 11	Session 12
	Great Cypress	Royal Poinciana
	Mapping of Marine Resources, Use, and Habitat Dynamics in the Keys	Watershed to Reef: Assessing Hydrology and Water Quality Challenges in the Florida Keys
	Dr. David Kochan Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, St. Petersburg, Florida	Dr. Laurent Cherubin Florida Atlantic University - Harbor Branch, Ft. Pierce, Florida
1:30pm	Opening Remarks	Opening Remarks
1:35pm	Decreasing Water Quality Unmasked on Florida's Coral Reef Dr. Brian Walker Nova Southeastern University, Dania Beach, Florida	Hydrologic Connectivity between the Everglades and the Florida Bay Through Coastal Mangroves and Freshwater Sloughs Dr. Wei Huang Florida International University, Miami, Florida
1:50pm	Mapping Seagrass-Coral Reef Mosaics Using Satellite Imagery to Quantify Seascape Structure in the Florida Keys Marianna Coppola Florida International University, North Miami, Florida	Hydrodynamic and Salinity Modeling in Florida Bay Dr. Kelin Hu Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana
2:05pm	Quantifying and Modeling the Spatial Patterns of the Florida Keys Recreational Reef Fishery Matthew Marrero Florida International University, Miami, Florida	Restoring Balance: Tracing Nutrient Patterns from Ridge to Reef Dr. Paul Julian Everglades Foundation, Palmetto Bay, Florida
2:20pm	Photogrammetric Analysis Reveals Distinct Topographic Footprints for Stony Coral Genera in Dry Tortugas National Park Christina Mallica Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, St. Petersburg, Florida	Florida's Coral Reef Water Quality Data Compilation, Analysis, and Decision Supports Jade Lee Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission/ Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, St. Petersburg, Florida
2:35pm	Mapping Spatial-Temporal Changes in Restored Coral Reefs using Multiple Mapping Technologies Prof. Jennifer Dijkstra University of New Hampshire, Durham, New Hampshire	Water Mass Histories Modulate Reef Carbonate Chemistry: A High-Resolution Model for the Florida Keys Dr. Heidi Hirsh Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies, Miami, Florida
2:50pm	Discussion Period	Discussion Period
3:00pm-3:30pm	Refreshment Break in Exhibit and Poster Hall	

PRESENTATION NOTES

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Wednesday, October 29, 2025 (continued)		
	Concurrent Sessions - 3:30pm-5:00pm	
	Session 13	Session 14
	Great Cypress	Royal Poinciana
	Reefs in Transition: Understanding Change and Mitigating Loss of Ecosystem Services in the Florida Keys	Integrating Science and Decision Tools to Examine Ecosystem Responses in the Region
	Casey Butler Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Marathon, Florida	Jennifer Waldo Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Division of Marine Fisheries Management, Marathon, Florida
3:30pm	Opening Remarks	Opening Remarks
3:35pm	From Top to Bottom: Rethinking Coral Reef Community Structure After Decades of Disturbance Dr. Michael Childress Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina	Development of a Comprehensive Decision Support System for Florida's Coral Reef Nick Alcaraz Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, St. Petersburg, Florida
3:50pm	The Influence of Structural Complexity on the Fine-Scale Diurnal Space Use of Reef Fishes Dr. Alastair Harborne Florida International University, North Miami, Florida	Spatiotemporal Analyses of the Biological Condition Gradient Model on Florida's Coral Reef Maya Becker Nova Southeastern University, Davie, Florida
4:05pm	Modeling the Impacts of Coral Reef Restoration on Wave Energy Dissipation at Eastern Dry Rocks, Florida Prof. Jim Hench Duke University, Beaufort, North Carolina	Identifying Nutrient Sources Driving Algal Blooms in Florida Bay: A Causal Modelling Approach Dr. Jennifer Rehage Florida International University, North Miami, Florida
4:20pm	Using Habitat Support Structures to Address Habitat Deficits within the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Dr. Hanna Koch Monroe County Board of County Commissioners, Marathon, Florida	Decades of Dedication: Fish Spawning Aggregation Research in the Florida Keys Danielle Morley Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission/ Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, Marathon, Florida
4:35pm	A Decade of Rapid Coral Community Change on the Florida Reef Tract: Insights from NCRMP Nicole Krampitz CSS, Inc./NOAA National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	Characterizing and Forecasting Reef Responses to Multiple Stressors Across the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Dr. Ian Enochs NOAA/Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory, Miami, Florida
4:50pm	Discussion Period	Discussion Period
5:00pm-7:30pm	Poster Session & Networking Reception - GROUP 2 (hors d'oeuvres & beverages provided)	

PRESENTATION NOTES

[illegible]

Thursday, October 30, 2025	
7:30am-12:00pm	Conference Registration Open
7:30am-8:30am	Morning Refreshments in Exhibit and Poster Hall
8:30am-10:00am	PLENARY SESSION Dr. Joy Hazell, <i>Interim Director</i>, Florida Natural Resources Leadership Institute, School of Forest, Fisheries and Geomatic Sciences, University of Florida/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL "A Collaborative Visioning and Research Identification Workshop for the Florida Keys Marine Ecosystem" What does a “successful” Florida Keys marine ecosystem look like 10 years from now—and how can science help get us there? On our final day, we invite all attendees to this interactive, interdisciplinary workshop. We know that the future of this region does not rest in the hands of one group alone and want participants from across the scientific community, managers, resource users, and other interested parties to co-develop a shared vision for the future of the Florida Keys marine ecosystem. Through a series of facilitated discussions and collaborative activities, we will work to define what ecological and socioeconomic “success” could look like for this unique and rapidly changing region and explore what it would take to get there. Outcomes from this workshop will include reserach priorities that will help drive future collaborations and shape a unified path toward long-term resilience and sustainability of the Florida Keys ecosystem in the face of accelerating change.
10:00am-10:30am	Refreshment Break in Exhibit and Poster Hall
10:30am-12:00pm	Workshop Discussions Continue
12:00pm	Florida Marine Science Conference & Workshop Concludes Group 2 Posters and Sponsor Display Removal

PRESENTATION NOTES

PRESENTATION NOTES

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POSTER DISPLAY INFORMATION

Poster presentations play a key role in the exchange of information. Considerable time is dedicated to viewing them, giving scientists, policy makers, planners, practitioners, and managers valuable opportunities to interact and share details of their work, successes and lessons learned.

Posters are divided into two sessions. Consult the poster directory to confirm the session assignment for individual poster presentations.

The agenda allows for ample time to view posters, network, and have discussions. Please take time to explore posters, review displays and visit with posters presenters during the early morning, mid-day and afternoon and especially during the poster session.

Poster Session One

Poster Installation:	Monday, October 27, 4:00pm–6:30pm
Formal Poster Session:	Tuesday, October 28, 5:00pm–7:30pm
5:30pm–6:15pm	Presenters at Odd Numbered Boards* to stand by their posters.
6:15pm–6:30pm	Break Between Presentations
6:30pm–7:15pm	Presenters at Even Numbered Boards* are asked to stand at their posters.
Poster Removal:	Wednesday, October 29, 10:00am–10:30am (<i>During AM Break</i>)

Poster Session Two

Poster Installation:	Wednesday, October 29, 12:00pm–1:30pm (<i>During Lunch</i>)
Formal Poster Session:	Wednesday, October 29, 5:00pm–7:30pm
5:30pm–6:15pm	Presenters at Odd Numbered Boards* to stand by their posters.
6:15pm–6:30pm	Break Between Presentations
6:30pm–7:15pm	Presenters at Even Numbered Boards* are asked to stand at their posters.
Poster Removal:	Thursday, October 30, 12:00pm

*As a courtesy to the presenter before/after you, please only stand at your poster during the assigned session. Posters are divided into two sessions. Consult the poster directory to confirm your session assignment.

Poster display boards will be dismantled by the vendor Thursday after sessions conclude. Organizers are not responsible for lost posters discarded by the board vendor. Thank you.

POSTER DIRECTORY

(In alphabetical order by presenter last name)

Poster #	First Name	Last Name	Organization	City	ST	Abstract Title	Poster Session
21	Hayden	Acors	Florida International University	North Miami	FL	Spatial Patterns and Habitat Structure Influence on Seagrass Invertebrate Communities Across the Florida Keys	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
41	Sean	Ahearn	SGS Beta	Miami	FL	Spectroscopic Tracking of the Dissolved Organic Carbon (DOC) Conversion to Carbon Dioxide (CO ₂) for Isotopic Analysis and Carbon Fate Tracking	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
9	Phil	Allman	Goshen College JN Roth Marine Biology Station	Layton	FL	Tracking Sea Turtles with Photos: A Citizen Science Photo-ID Initiative in the Florida Keys	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
60	Gina	Badlowski	Florida International University	North Miami	FL	Mesoconsumer Trophic Linkages Across Reef-Seagrass Seascapes Within Sanctuary Preservation Areas in the Florida Keys	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
34	Timothy	Birthisel	Terra Sub Aqua	Asheville	NC	Helping the Reef Biome Emigrate Away from Florida's Dying Reefs	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
30	Liberty	Boyd	Florida Atlantic University	North Palm Beach	FL	The Elusive Hawksbill Turtles (<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>) of The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
64	Leah	Cifers	Florida International University	North Miami	FL	Optimizing Invertebrate Herbivore Restocking Strategies to Enhance Coral Recruitment	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
58	Gina	Clementi	Florida International University	North Miami	FL	Length Distributions of Aggregating Permit (<i>Trachinotus falcatus</i>) in Response to the Western Dry Rocks Seasonal Closure	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
1	Katherine	Cummings	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Marathon	FL	Marine Debris Characterization of the Marquesas, Florida	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
4	Ross	Cunning	John G. Shedd Aquarium	Chicago	IL	Rapid Increases in Tolerance of Surviving Corals Across Extreme Heatwaves	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
16	Alexandra	Draime	Bimini Biological Field Station Foundation	Hollywood	FL	Investigating the Potential Sublethal Physiological Impacts of the 'Spinning Fish Condition' for Coastal Sharks in the Lower Florida Keys	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
29	Courtney	Eshelman	FWRI	Marathon	FL	Population Demographics of <i>Xestospongia muta</i> on Ten Florida Keys Reefs from 2014 to 2024	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025

Poster #	First Name	Last Name	Organization	City	ST	Abstract Title	Poster Session
27	David	Ganz	University of Miami	Key Biscayne	FL	Presence, Abundance, and Distribution of Common Invasive and Non-Native Species in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
2	Carsten	Grupstra	Florida Atlantic University	Boca Raton	FL	Diversity in Disguise: Leveraging Cryptic Coral Diversity for Conservation in South Florida	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
54	Abigail	Haddock	Dolphin Research Center	Grassy Key	FL	Determining Ranging Patterns and Association Preferences of Bottlenose Dolphin Communities in Southeast Florida	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
31	Rob	Harper	Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies, University of Miami	Key Biscayne	FL	Evaluating Atlantic Goliath Grouper (<i>Epinephelus itajara</i>) on Florida Reefs Using 25 Years of Visual Surveys	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
13	Cailin	Harrell	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Marathon	FL	Disturbance Response Monitoring: Two Decades Spent Documenting Stressors Impacting Coral Populations Across Florida's Coral Reef	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
5	Taylor	Hill	University of Central Florida	Orlando	FL	Connectivity and adaptation of South Atlantic coastal fisheries populations: a genomic perspective	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
56	Emily	Jackson	Florida International University	North Miami	FL	Murky Waters, Clear Signals: The Behavioral and Epigenetic Responses of Bicolor Damselfish to Increased Turbidity	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
33	Nicholas	Jones	Nova Southeastern University	Dania Beach	FL	Site Selection for Florida's Coral Reef Restoration & Recovery (FCR3) Initiative	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
57	Alia	Jones	Florida International University	Miami	FL	Regional Differences in Permit Diet and Resource Use Suggest Shifts in Seagrass Flat Food Webs	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
20	Heather	Kalaf	New York University, National Geographic, The Nature Conservancy	Boca Raton	FL	Queen Conch and Marine Conservation Through Signage	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
37	Carolyn	Kalinowski	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Tallahassee	FL	Artificial Reefs in the Florida Keys: Opportunities to Support Fisheries Management Objectives	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
26	Hanna	Koch	Monroe County BOCC	Marathon	FL	Using Habitat Support Structures to Address Habitat Deficits within Bayside Nearshore Hardbottom of the FKNMS	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
45	Cory	Krediet	Eckerd College	Saint Petersburg	FL	Microbiome Manipulation: Using Beneficial Microorganisms of Coral (BMCs) to Increase Disease Resilience	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
28	Shelly	Krueger	University of Florida	Key West	FL	Sponge Restoration Aquaculture: Reproductive Viability Following Propagation for Nearshore Spongiidae Species in the Florida Keys	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025

Poster #	First Name	Last Name	Organization	City	ST	Abstract Title	Poster Session
40	Nicole	Merck	Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission	Marathon	FL	Restoration Under Stress: Understanding Bleaching Risk in Large-Scale Coral Outplanting	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
10	Kayla	Merrill	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Marathon	FL	Marine Lens Florida Keys: Empowering Participatory Scientists to Explore Marine Habitats via Zooniverse	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
55	Andrew	Natter	Florida International University	North Miami	FL	Assessing Genetic Connectivity of the Permit (<i>Trachinotus falcatus</i>) Between South Florida and Belize	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
6	Zach	Niedermaier	Nova Southeastern University	Dania Beach	FL	Hot-Spot Cluster Analysis of Large Parrotfish in the Florida Reef Tract to Inform Restoration	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
24	Nicholas	Parr	Florida Department of Environmental Protection	Marathon	FL	Florida Keys Aquatic Preserves Seagrass Monitoring Program	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
36	Kristene	Parsons	FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute	Marathon	FL	Refining Nursery-to-Reef Restoration Practices for Resilient Stony Coral Enhancement of Florida's Coral Reef	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
46	Veronica	Paul	University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, & Earth Science	Miami	FL	Utilizing Alkalinity Enhancement to Increase Growth Rates of Corals in Ex-Situ Nurseries	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
61	Taylor	Queen	Eckerd College	St. Petersburg	FL	Effect of Elevated Temperature on Oxygen Consumption and Survival in Caribbean King Crab (<i>Maguimithrax spinosissimus</i>) Larvae	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
7	Noah	Reiser	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Marathon	FL	Quantifying Tagged Fish Mortality Using an Incentivized Reward Program and Acoustic Telemetry within Marinas	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
62	Sarah	Rider	Clemson University	Clemson	SC	From Cryptofauna to Cleaners: Effects of Mission: Iconic Reef Restoration on Invertebrates and Fish	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
25	Megan	Russell	Florida Atlantic University	Fort Pierce	FL	Population Genetics of Sponge Restoration in Florida Bay	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
53	Chase	Schaffhauser	Florida International University	North Miami	FL	Evening Movement Patterns in Permit Pre-Spawn Aggregations as Observed by Active Acoustic Tracking	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
38	Genevieve	Schave	FL Sea Grant/FDEP	Marathon	FL	Overview of the State's Water Quality Monitoring Program in The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and Aquatic Preserves	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
14	Whitney	Schwab	Nova Southeastern University	Dania Beach	FL	Identify and Widen Bottlenecks in the Asexual Restoration of Endangered <i>Orbicella</i> Boulder Corals	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
42	Francis	Serrano	NOAA AOML	Miami	FL	Utilizing eDNA Metabarcoding to Monitor Biodiversity at Mission: Iconic Reef sites in the FL Keys	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025

Poster #	First Name	Last Name	Organization	City	ST	Abstract Title	Poster Session
63	Gillian	Smith	Eckerd College	St. Petersburg	FL	Assessing the Impact of Elevated Temperatures on Caribbean King Crab Physiology	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
22	Brandon	Sosa	Florida International University	North Miami Beach	FL	Quarry-Based Mariculture of the Caribbean King Crab to Support Reef Restoration	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
49	Robert	Spekis	Nova Southeastern University	Dania Beach	FL	Baseline Mapping of Florida's Largest Yellow Finger Coral, <i>Madracis auretenra</i> , Patches Amidst Environmental Stress	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
3	Sharla	Sugierski	Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute	Marathon	FL	Bleaching and Recovery of Boulder Corals on a Patch Reef in the Middle Florida Keys	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
44	Anna	Travis	Anderson University	Anderson	SC	Closed-System Saltwater Aquarium as a Model of the Florida Keys Ecosystem: Real-Time Monitoring Applications	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
19	Justin	Voss	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Marathon	FL	Warming Sea Surface Temperature Trends in the Florida Keys: Implications for Queen Conch Population Persistence	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
32	Jordan	Waldron	Florida Atlantic University	Boca Raton	FL	Spatiotemporal Abundance of Whitespotted Eagle Rays in the Florida Keys	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
35	Alexander	Wheeler	Nova Southeastern University	Dania Beach	FL	Experimental Core Healing in <i>Orbicella faveolata</i> as an Indicator of Colony Health Across Multiple Gradients	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
8	Camille	White	Clemson University	Clemson	SC	Losing Levels: Shifts in Reef Fish Trophic Dynamics Across a Coral Habitat Gradient	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
17	Holly	White	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Fish and Wildlife Research Institute	Key West	FL	Paving the Way to Sponge Restoration in Florida Bay: Evaluating Sponge Restoration Techniques	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
48	Alexandra	Zelaya	UNCW Coral Reef Lab	Wilmington	NC	Monitoring Thermally Preconditioned <i>Pseudodiploria Clivosa</i> Post-Outplanting	Session 2: Wednesday, 10/29/2025
12	Lauren	Zitzman	Fish and Wildlife Research Institute	Marathon	FL	Honoring the Past, Exploring the Future: Human Dimensions of the Caribbean Spiny Lobster Fishery	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025
23	Treiana	Zuill	Florida International University	Miami	FL	Sexual Reproduction and Seedbanks of the Seagrass <i>Syringodium filiforme</i> as a Tool for Seagrass Restoration	Session 1: Tuesday, 10/28/2025

CONTINUING EDUCATION

(CEUs & PDHs)

If you are a licensed engineer or maintain a professional license issued by a society, an association, an occupational licensing board or a department of professional regulation within your state, you may be eligible to earn Continuing Education units (CEUs) for your participation in this conference. You will need to contact the appropriate authority who manages your professional certification to verify your organization or individual state's licensing requirements, and to confirm what documentation is required. While we are not approved as an official CEU provider, your state may recognize this event as a qualified program, and you may be eligible to earn CEUs for your participation.

Certificate of Attendance

If you requested a certificate when registering, we will email you a PDF within 45 days upon conclusion of the conference. It is your responsibility to compile all necessary paperwork and provide it to the appropriate licensing board or professional organization with whom you are certified, and to confirm the program content is acceptable based on their individual standards.

Important Note

In general, one Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is defined as 10 hours of instruction. One hour is calculated as 50 minutes of face-to-face instruction. If you have any questions regarding CEU requirements as they pertain to your professional certification or license, please directly contact the appropriate licensing board within your state. The UF/IFAS Office of Conferences & Institutes and its employees are not authorized to act on your behalf or to provide consult regarding CEUs.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Complimentary Internet Access

A limited amount of free, wireless internet access is available to attendees in the meeting space. To access internet in the meeting center, follow these instructions on your device:

1. Search for a Wi-Fi network on your device.
2. Depending which device you have, select the appropriate option: +Add Network or Hidden Network.
3. When asked for a network name, type in: Conference F
4. Enter the password: FLKEYS2025!

At this point you should see your device connect and you should be good to go.

Note: The passcode is different for internet access in your guest room. Be sure to obtain the most current complimentary access code from the front desk when you check in.

Marriott Bonvoy members get free Wi-Fi access in their guest rooms. Not a member? Visit their enrollment web site at: www.marriott.com/loyalty/createAccount/createAccountPage1.mi

Conference Message Board

A Conference Message Board is located in the pre-function area outside the main ballroom. This is a physical board where conference attendees can post jobs, internships, grants, workshops, and other resources to help connect students and postdocs with opportunities.

Name Badge

Your name badge is your entry pass to all networking events, so please wear it throughout the conference. Guests must also wear their name badges for event access. The guest fee permits individuals aged 18 and older to attend the Welcome Social on Monday, as well as the Poster Session & Networking Reception on Tuesday and Wednesday. Please ensure all guests are registered and that the appropriate fees are paid.

Cell Phones, Mobile Devices, Tablet Devices

Kindly silence your cell phones, tablets, and other mobile devices while in meeting rooms. If using a keyboard, please type quietly to avoid disturbing others, and ensure your laptop sound is muted. Additionally, please respect presenters' requests by refraining from photographing or sharing certain sensitive information on social media. **Note:** Don't forget your cell phone and laptop chargers. We will have a charging station with power, but you will need to bring appropriate cords.

Morning Refreshments, Breaks & Lunches

Networking events will take place in the Sponsor & Poster Display Area.

- Light morning refreshments, including coffee, tea, decaf, fruit, yogurt, and assorted pastries, will be available from 7:30am to 8:30am.
 - Complimentary beverages, such as regular and decaf coffee, assorted teas, and sodas, will be provided during mid-morning (10AM) and afternoon (3PM) breaks. Water coolers are placed throughout the hotel.
 - A 90-minute lunch buffet is provided on Tuesday and Wednesday, offering ample time for networking and connecting with colleagues.
 - The lunch buffet will be in the hotel restaurant foyer. Seating will be on the outdoor patio, Breeze's Terrace, where you will also find a tea and water station. You may also take your plate to the poster hall or anywhere else you would like to sit.
 - Poster session receptions are scheduled Tuesday and Wednesday from 5:00pm–7:30pm. Complimentary beverages and hors d'oeuvres will be available. Display hours for both poster sessions are on the page preceding the poster directory.
 - Make sure to bring a reusable water bottle—there are water stations at the hotel where you can refill it.
 - Please be sure to visit with sponsors at their displays and thank them for their support of the conference.
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Speaker Slides & Poster Presentations

PDFs of speaker slides and poster presentations authorized for post-conference viewing will be available on the web site within 30 days upon conclusion.

Lost & Found

If you find a lost item, please bring it to the registration staff. If you lose something, start by checking with the conference registration staff. If it has not been turned in, you can also inquire at the hotel front desk.

Code of Conduct

We are dedicated to providing a harassment-free experience for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, religion (or lack thereof), or technology choices. We do not tolerate harassment of participants in any form. Suggestive statements, sexual innuendo, or offensive remarks are not appropriate during any activity, including during talks, poster sessions, workshops, social functions, after hours parties, via Zoom chat or on Twitter or other online media. Participants asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately. Those violating these rules may be sanctioned or expelled without a refund at the discretion of the organizers. **If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have any other concerns about participant behavior, please notify the organizers immediately.**

ACTION ITEMS

Use this page to record new ideas and names of people you would like to follow up with for future collaborations.

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