

BAY REFLECTIONS



SeagrassFEST
sarasotabay.org



Announcements

Sarasota Bay Seagrass Success!

Sarasota Bay now has more seagrass on the sea floor than ever before - a record 13,288 acres of this lush green habitat. TheSouthwest Florida Water Management District's Surface Water Improvement andManagement (SWIM) program recently released the results from their 2014 survey andreport an increase of 701 acres - nearly 6% - over 2012 coverage. Read more...

Save the Date for the First Annual SeagrassFest: April 30, 2016

This Spring is the time to celebrate seagrass in Sarasota Bay! The SBEP is teaming up with Sarasota County on April 30, 2016 at Ken Thompson Park to bring SeagrassFest to Bay area residents and visitors. While Sarasota County's staff will be conducting its annual volunteer seagrass survey at Ken Thompson Park the same morning, the SBEP will collaborate with all of its partners to offer fun, family-friendly education and water-based activities highlighting the importance of seagrass to the Bay. Read more...

Science at SBEP

Citizens Action





SBEP Updates its Five-Year Habitat Restoration Plan

The SBEP has updated the Program's five-year habitat restoration plan, which prioritizes more than 20 sites throughout the Sarasota Bay watershed. The SBEP and its Wetlands Coordinator Scheda Ecological Associates evaluated potential restoration sites by examining various logistical and ecological factors, including proximity of the sites to natural habitat, potential supportive habitat to fisheries, stormwater improvement potential, cost, feasibility, public interest, and funding potential. Read more...

F.I.S.H. Preserve Habitat Restored!

The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program recently completed the restoration of nearly half of the Preserve through a cooperative funding agreement with SWFWMD and the Florida Institute for Saltwater Heritage, F.I.S.H. Restoration implemented by contracting firm Earthbalance resulted in more wetland acreage, improved tidal circulation, and the reestablishment of natural hydro-periods. Read more...

CAC 2016 Focus: Living Shorelines

In 2016, the SBEP Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) will embark on a concerted effort to promote and facilitate living shoreline projects throughout the Sarasota Bay watershed. Presented with a SBEP-compiled survey and analysis of potential areas of focus within the Program's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan, the CAC voted during its December meeting to tackle the survey's top-ranking choice. Living shorelines incorporate native plants and natural substrate to stabilize shoreline soils, provide habitat, and filter pollutants from runoff before it enters tributaries and the Bay. In advance of a joint workshop of the SBEP CAC, Policy Board, and Management Board in March to discuss implementation, CAC members will be compiling research on the regulatory and scientific considerations of living shoreline projects, as well as the potential for partnerships and resource leveraging in support of living shorelines. Thank you, CAC, for your energy and commitment!

About the Bay



"About the Bay" is a new feature of Bay Reflections, designed to inform our readers about fresh ideas, perspectives and interesting science relevant to Sarasota Bay and estuaries in general. We hope you enjoy it!

Volunteer Reports



SBEP partners with Sarasota and Manatee Counties in Hosting Alternative Break Pilot!

Blue Carbon: an added valueto coastal habitat restoration

Coastalecosystems are precious for many reasons: they provide habitat for a diversearray of life, support local economies through fisheries and tourism,and are intrinsically beautiful. However, their contributions to mitigatingclimate change are largely overlooked. In the first chapter of “About the Bay,”we outline the importance of coastal ecosystems as sinks for atmospheric carbonand examine the potential value of considering “blue carbon” as a benefit ofcoastal habitat restoration efforts. Read more...



Click on the video to watch a short YouTube clip about seagrass research in Florida.

Abigail Goecker is not your stereotypical college student. With an impressive professionalism and laudable determination, Ms. Goecker, a college junior at Winter Park’s Rollins College (originally from Sarasota), contacted SBEP looking for a way to help late last year. She was responsible for coordinating an “Alternative Break” immersion trip to the Sarasota area for a unique group of college freshmen from Rollins with outstanding leadership and community service backgrounds. The students, all in their first year of college, are part of two distinct cohorts of future (and current) leaders: the Bonner Leaders and Alfond Scholars Programs. During the week prior to the start of the spring semester, several groups of Rollins College students participated in intensive service projects across the country through their Immersion Program. Read more....

Bay Guardians: Oyster bagging with TBEP & Manatee County, invasive vegetation removal at North Water Tower Park

The SBEP Bay Guardians volunteers have been busy! At our last two events, we bagged fossilized shells to restore oyster reefs at Robinson Preserve and removed invasive plants to improve habitat at North Water Tower Park. Read more...



Upcoming Events

Want to know what's going on at the SBEP? Click on the calendar icon to see our public Google Calendar.

Visit our website to register for upcoming Sarasota Bay Guardians and Bay Wise Kayak Tour events.

Remember to mark your calendars for SeagrassFest on April 30, 2016!

Partner Projects

SBEP Team Updates



Manatee County: Rye Preserve Opening

Manatee County's Parks and Natural Resources Department is excited to announce the grand opening or the Rye Preserve Nature Center. This new East County resource celebrated its grand opening on Saturday, January 9th with a family-friendly day of activities and special guests. Read more...

Sarasota County: Low-Impact Development

Sarasota County is leading the progress of two Low Impact Development (LID) projects in the North Tamiami Trail area of Sarasota. Low Impact Development is an environmentally sensitive approach to developing land and managing stormwater runoff through better integration of the built environment with the natural environment. Read more...

City of Sarasota: Climate Adaptation Funding

The City of Sarasota allocated $125K of funding obtained through its Deepwater Horizon local claim settlement funds for a climate adaptation planning process. Read more...

City of Sarasota: Living Seawall

The City of Sarasota is working on a proposal to construct a Living Seawall at Bayfront Park, in front of a conventional seawall planned for the shoreline area in front of O'Leary's Pub. Read more...



Welcome Darcy Young to SBEP!

Darcy comes to SBEP after three years as a research assistant in a plant and fungal ecology laboratory at the George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Darcy holds master's and bachelor's degrees in biology from Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. She has a lot of enthusiasm for engaging the public in promoting stewardship of Sarasota Bay and will be supporting SBEP's outreach programs and new initiatives. Contact her at info@sarasotabay.org.

Thank you to Triple 3 Marketing

SBEP would like to extend its appreciation to Randy and Bryan Moore with Triple 3 Marketing, the firm that has served as our marketing contractor since 2010. Triple 3 Marketing was instrumental in revamping the SBEP website, managing the annual Sarasota Bay Water Festival, creating content for the Bay Reflections newsletter and media releases, and much more. Thank you, Triple 3 Marketing, for all you have done, and we wish you continued success and growth in your business!

See you in the spring!

In 2016, SBEP will be releasing Bay Reflections quarterly. While we will keep you up to date on important announcements and upcoming events throughout the year, our next Bay Reflections issue will be released in the spring.

Sarasota Bay Estuary Program
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The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program isdedicated to restoring the area's greatest natural asset - Sarasota Bay.

We offer special thanks to ourpartners: Sarasota County, Manatee County, City of Sarasota, City of Bradenton,Town of Longboat Key, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Florida Departmentof Environmental Protection and Southwest Florida Water Management District.

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