

# Peanut Island

Its spectacular location and water conditions make Peanut Island one of the premiere boating destinations in southeast Florida. The island is uniquely situated at the mouth of the Lake Worth Inlet (also known as the Palm Beach Inlet) in the Lake Worth Lagoon estuary. At high tide, Gulfstream-fed ocean water enters through the inlet, bathing the island with crystal-clear water that delights swimmers and snorkelers. It gets even better! The island has been enhanced with the establishment of native wetland and upland habitats and recreational amenities to create a complete island adventure. Come take a tour of our local island paradise!



## 1. Entryway to an Island

Begin your tour at the boat dock, but don't forget to look down! You'll notice an array of tropical fish swimming and feeding among the pilings. The slips on the boat dock are available without charge during daylight hours on a first-come, first-served basis. After dark, only campers in the reserved campground may keep their boats at the dock. A 1.25-mile brick walking path surrounds the island and provides easy access to island habitats and amenities.

## 2. Water, Water Everywhere

The snorkeling reef and shallow lagoon are unique features of the island's wetland habitats. From the beach, you may access rock breakwaters or enter the snorkeling reef to see common fish such as snapper, grouper, grunts, snook, sergeant majors, porkfish and parrotfish. The reef's nooks and crannies are home to many marine invertebrates including sponges, arrow crabs, banded coral shrimp, lobsters and hard and soft corals. The reef is also accessible to snorkelers via an accessible ramp and swim platforms.



## 3. Landlubbers Are Welcome, Too

The reef boardwalk extends 280 feet over water and is a perfect place to view the reef habitat without getting wet. You might even see a manatee lounging in the area. These gentle "sea cows" frequent Peanut Island, grazing on abundant seagrasses. Beyond the reef you will see boats of all sizes and shapes, from small open-water fishing boats to large cruise ships that pass through the Lake Worth Inlet.



## 4. A Bit of History

With their red roofs and clap-board walls, the historic Coast Guard station and boat house, placed in service in 1930, are reminders of days gone by. The Coast Guard station, boat house, and John F. Kennedy bunker are part of the Palm Beach Maritime Museum which is open to the public. Call 561-832-7428 for more information.



Photo Credit: Palm Beach Maritime Museum



Kennedy Bunker

## 5. Purpose of the Levee

In the center of the island, a 12-foot-high levee surrounds the Florida Inland Navigation District's 23-acre dredged material management area. This area has the capacity to store sand dredged from the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and the Palm Beach Inlet during maintenance activities for the next 50 years. Native plant species on the outside edge of the levee provide slope stabilization and habitat for wildlife.



## 6. Port of Palm Beach Dredged Material Area

The Port of Palm Beach has a smaller area designated for storage of material removed from the port's turning basin and docks during maintenance dredging work.

## 7. Take a Walk on the "Natural" Side

The west island dock and boat basin provide easy boat access to the more natural part of Peanut Island. Here you'll find day-use dockage. Tie up your boat and explore the island away from the crowd. Kayaks and canoes are welcome here, too – paddling quietly inside the slender mangrove flushing channels provides opportunities to see many of the animals featured in this brochure, including manatees, wading birds and ospreys. To enjoy locations designated for natural areas beach camping, contact the park office on Peanut Island or call 561-845-4445.



## 8. Maritime Hammock

Maritime hammock is one of the most rapidly-disappearing habitats in Florida. During the Peanut Island environmental enhancement project, 60 acres of invasive exotic vegetation were removed and replanted with maritime hammock species, including gumbo limbo, seagrape, cabbage palm, fiddlewood, firebush, sea-lavender, railroad vine, and East Coast dune sunflower. This hammock area is an important habitat for birds and wildlife and increases the diversity of species in Lake Worth Lagoon. It provides a lush, shady habitat for humans too!



Coco Plum

Wild Coffee

Saw Palmetto

Sea-lavender



## PEANUT ISLAND

- |                                          |                                                             |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Boat Dock and Reserved Campground     | 5. Florida Inland Navigation District Dredged Material Area |
| 2. Snorkeling Reef and Breakwaters Beach | 6. Port of Palm Dredged Material Area                       |
| 3. Reef Boardwalk                        | 7. Natural Areas, Flushing Channels & Boat Basin            |
| 4. Coast Guard House and Kennedy Bunker  | 8. Maritime Hammock                                         |
|                                          | 9. Mangrove Boardwalk                                       |



Restrooms

NOTE: Outside Showers Are Available for Public Use

## 9. The Magic of Mangroves

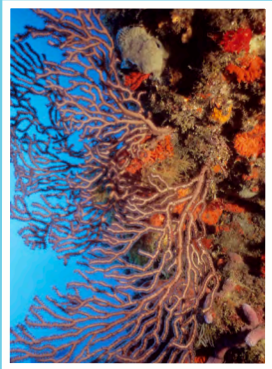
As you move along the 230-foot boardwalk past the mangroves to the beach, you'll see a series of flushing channels extending north and south from the boardwalk. These channels were cut to improve tidal flow to 3 acres of restored mangroves. Mangroves help stabilize the shoreline and provide nursery habitat for juvenile fish and invertebrates. Their decaying leaves provide the base for the estuarine food chain.



## BOATERS BEWARE!! PROP SCARS TAKE YEARS TO RECOVER!

Seagrass beds surrounding Peanut Island provide valuable habitat by supporting fish, shrimp, and crabs that hide among the blades and feast on decaying leaves. They also help stabilize shifting sands and improve water clarity. When operating a boat in shallow water, please use good "seagrass sense."

- Use charts and/or a depth finder to avoid areas too shallow for your boat.
- If you run aground, turn off your engine, raise your motor and push/pole to deeper water. If necessary, wait for high tide to move your boat.
- When anchoring in or near seagrass, secure your boat at a dock or mooring ball. Otherwise, anchor in sand only.

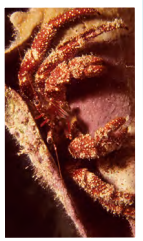


Soft Corals

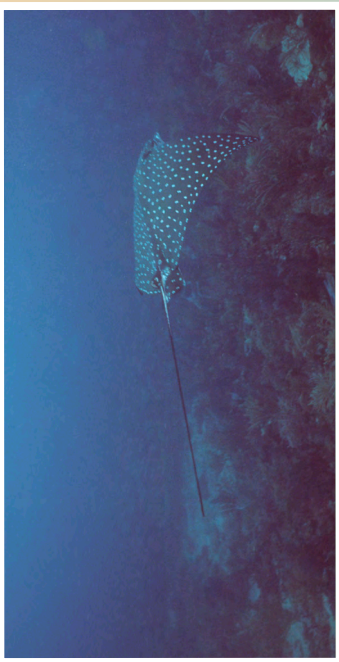
Grunts



Four-eyed Fish



Hermit Crab



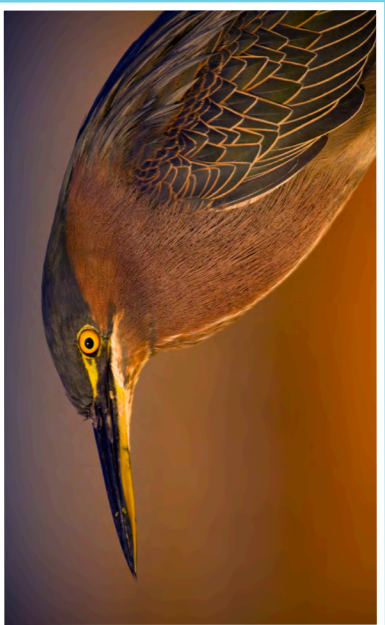
Spotted Eagle Ray



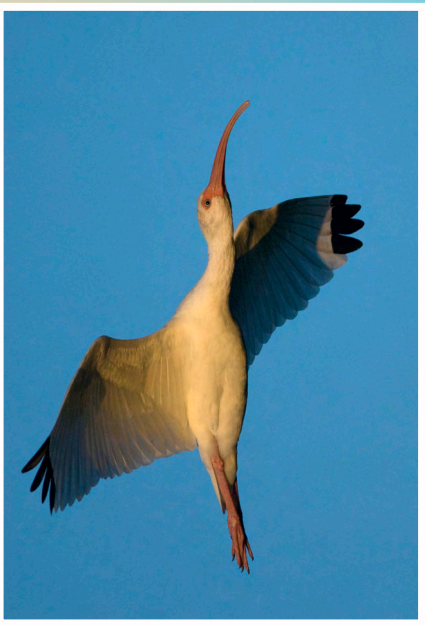
Starfish



Spiny Lobster



Green Heron



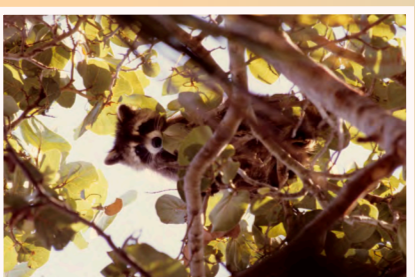
White Ibis



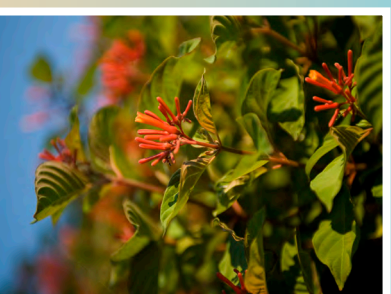
Osprey



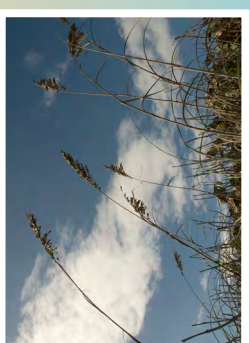
Brown Pelican



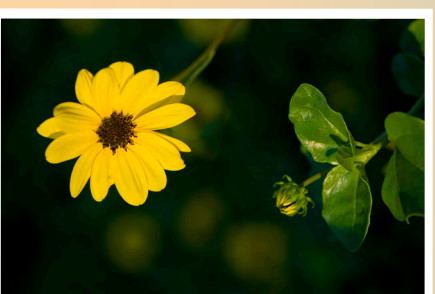
Seagrape/Raccoon



Firebush



Sea oats



Dune Sunflower



Florida Manatee

Photographs courtesy of John J. Lopinot  
[www.johnjlopinot.com](http://www.johnjlopinot.com)

# Plants and Animals of Peanut Island



lake worth  
**LAGOON**

The creation of the Lake Worth Inlet and urban development along the coast and inland changed the nature of Lake Worth forever. The old freshwater lake became the brackish estuary that it is today. Lake Worth Lagoon is about 20 miles long. It averages ½ mile wide and about 6 feet deep. Its shoreline includes 13 municipalities, from the Village of North Palm Beach to the Town of Ocean Ridge. In addition to parts of unincorporated Palm Beach County. The Lagoon is an important resource that supports habitats such as seagrasses, oyster reefs, tidal flats, inshore reefs and mangroves. These habitats are critical to the reproduction and survival of fish, shellfish, wading and migratory birds, manatees and sea turtles.

## Peanut Island - Then and Now

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Peanut Island was a submerged shallow area in the central part of Lake Worth, which at that time was a freshwater lake. The island was originally formed from material dredged to create the Lake Worth Inlet. This material, combined with decades of inlet and waterway maintenance, formed the 79-acre "Inlet Island." It quickly became overgrown with a forest of nonnative vegetation, primarily Australian pines. Because of a failed attempt to use the island as a terminal for shipping peanut oil, the island became known as "Peanut Island." In 2001 Palm Beach County and several partner agencies enhanced the island by creating native wetland and upland habitats, providing public access for recreation, and creating the dredged material management area levee. The \$15 million Peanut Island Environmental Enhancement Project, completed in 2005, is one of many projects completed to meet the objectives of the Lake Worth Lagoon Management Plan.

## DID YOU KNOW?

### The SNOOK ISLANDS

NATURAL AREA was created from 1.2 million cubic yards (that's 1,500 bargeloads!) of sand from Peanut Island that had been previously dredged to maintain the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and inlets. The sand was transported by barge 11 miles south and placed along the shoreline of the City of Lake Worth Municipal Golf Course.

The natural area includes seagrass beds, mangrove islands, spartina marshes, oyster reefs and deep water habitats with flushing channels.



Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative  
[www.LWLI.org](http://www.LWLI.org)

The Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative is a partnership-driven effort to increase public awareness of Palm Beach County's largest estuary and coordinate activities to protect and enhance this valuable natural system. We invite you to learn more about our work and to join us in supporting efforts to enhance fish and wildlife habitat and improve and protect water quality in the Lagoon.

There is a role for everyone to play in the Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative. If you would like to get involved or volunteer, please contact the Palm Beach County Department of Environmental Resources Management at 561-233-2400.



Palm Beach County  
Board of County Commissioners

In accordance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, this brochure may be requested in an alternate format.

### Department of Environmental Resources Management

2300 N. Jog Road - Fourth Floor  
West Palm Beach, FL 33411-2743

561-233-2400  
[www.co.palm-beach.fl.us/erm](http://www.co.palm-beach.fl.us/erm)

### Palm Beach County

### Department of Parks & Recreation

561-966-6600  
[www.pbcparks.com](http://www.pbcparks.com)

### Peanut Island Park & Campground

561-845-4445  
Toll Free: 866-383-5730  
[www.pbocgov.com/parks/peanutisland](http://www.pbocgov.com/parks/peanutisland)

### Palm Beach Maritime Museum

561-832-7428



# Peanut Island Environmental Enhancement



PROJECT PARTNERS