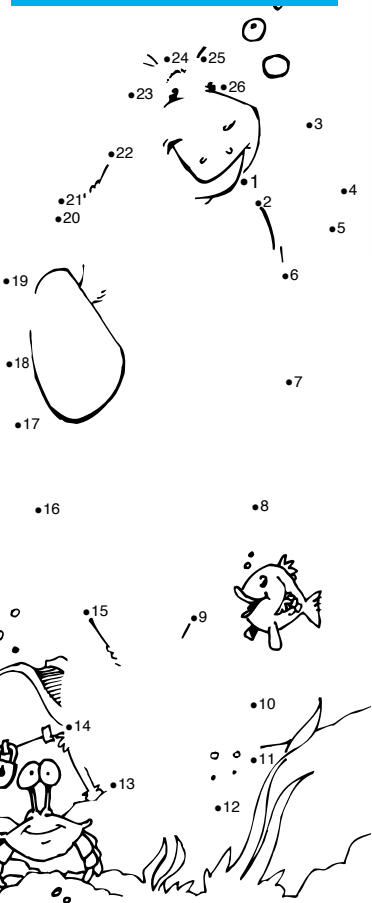


# THE MANATEE IS OUR FRIEND!



# CONNECT THE DOTS



COLOR ME!

# WATCH THE MANATEES!

The information and drawings you see in this brochure were created by students from Cypress Creek Elementary School.

## Introduction:

Visit me, Mollie the Manatee, and my friends from September through April at the Tampa Electric Company power plant on Big Bend Road. If you want to make me happy bring your friends to meet me, Howie, Doc, Success, and others.

## What is a Manatee?

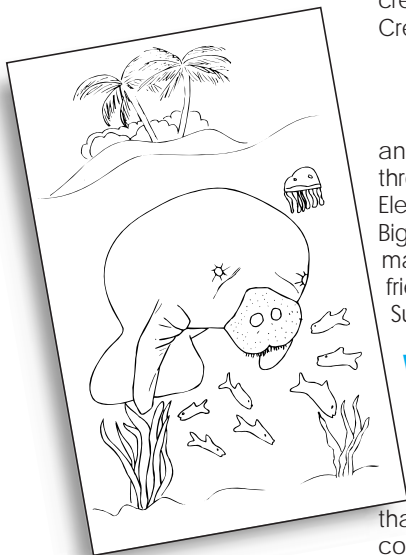
The manatee is sometimes called a sea cow, not the type of cow that goes "moo." The manatee is a mammal that swims slowly in warm, shallow coastal waters. The manatee has three species: the Caribbean (which lives in the Florida Coastal

waters), the African and the Amazon which are only found in fresh waters.

## Physical Description:

The manatee is normally a grey or greyish-brown color. Its body looks like a seal and it narrows down to a flat paddle-like tail. The manatees have two front flippers with three or four toe nails on each one. Two nostrils are located on the top part of the nose. They are closed by skin-like flaps and are only opened when the manatee goes to the surface to breathe.

When they are born, manatees are four to four and one-half feet long and weigh between 60 to 70 pounds. The average adult size is 10 feet and the average weight is 1,000 lbs. Adults have been known to grow up to thirteen feet and weigh up to 3,500 lbs.



COLOR ME!

# WATCH THE MANATEES!

## History and Myths:

In 1492 when Christopher Columbus reached the New World, he came to the conclusion that the so-called "mermaids" were not as beautiful as they were in paintings. The manatee was often mistaken for a swimming person.

Some people think that was what started the legend of the mermaids.

## Habitat:

A manatee is most likely to be found in canals, slow moving rivers, coastal areas, and estuaries. They are commonly found in 68 degree or warmer waters which can be either clear or muddy.

## Swims and Eats:

The manatee swims by moving its tail in an up and down motion keeping the flippers close to its sides. They

generally move at five miles per hour, but can travel up to speeds of 15 miles per hour.

The manatee is the only marine mammal that feeds exclusively on vegetation. They can eat up to 200 lbs. of food a day, which is a lot of plant growth.

They push plants into their mouth with their flippers, sort of like the way we use our hands. They chew the plants with their strong molar teeth. These teeth get dull as they chew the tough plant fibers. The molars are constantly being replaced with new ones—just like the teeth of elephants.

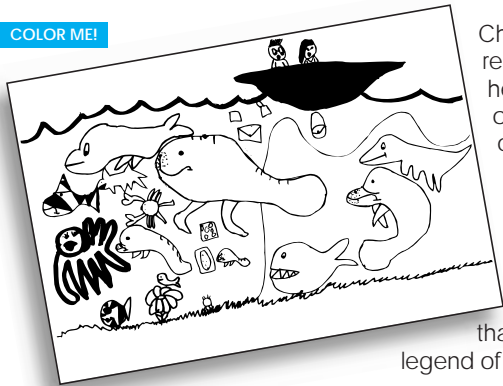
## Why are Manatees Endangered?

Manatees have been hunted by man for their meat and skin. Since they are tame creatures, they are very easy to catch and kill. Each year manatees die because of pollution, motor boats, fishing lines, hooks, barges, fishing nets, and pneumonia. It is estimated that fewer than 3,300 Caribbean manatees are left alive.

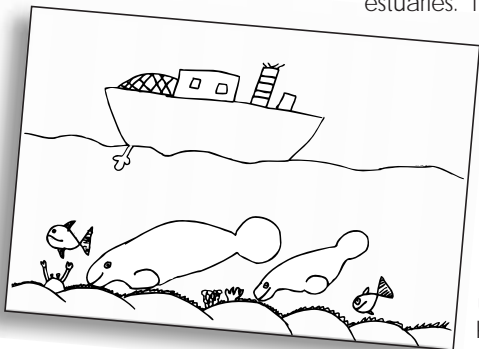
## How Can We Save the Manatee?

- Report any manatees that are ill or hurt.
  - Join a clean-up campaign in your area to keep our waterway clean from trash.
  - If you fish, don't throw broken or tangled fishing lines into the water.
  - Keep boats out of manatee areas.
  - Don't feed the manatee.
- Remember they are shy and you can scare them easily.

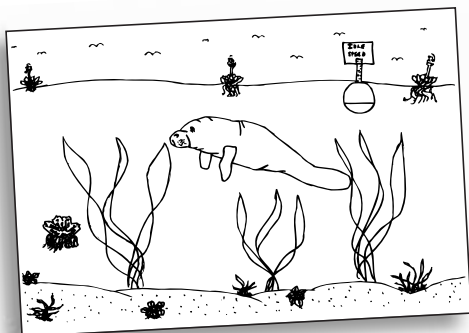
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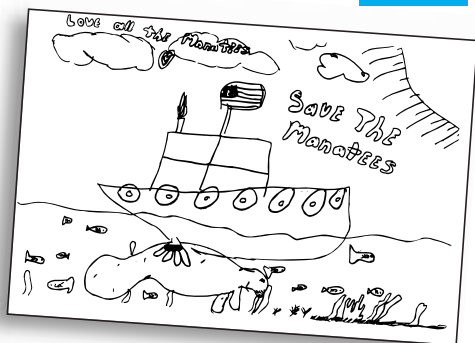
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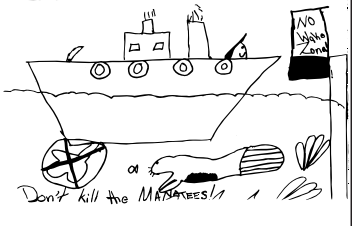
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COLOR ME!



Save Manatees!



Tampa Electric  
appreciates the efforts of the  
Cypress Creek Elementary  
students for developing this  
manatee information.



**TAMPA ELECTRIC**