



## Seagrass Hidden Word Puzzle

(Directions on next page.)

E	S	R	P	T	S	Z	M	A	R	I	N	E	P	A	T	R	O	L	T	O	R	R	A	P
R	T	N	O	R	E	H	F	E	E	D	K	L	N	V	B	O	N	E	F	I	S	H	K	C
A	C	S	B	T	M	G	U	P	W	S	T	U	R	T	L	E	G	R	A	S	S	A	R	W
W	A	E	S	H	O	A	L	L	O	W	U	D	E	L	O	P	R	U	V	I	N	X	R	F
A	P	R	N	D	Z	M	S	T	L	T	U	O	R	E	W	O	P	N	F	C	L	A	M	S
S	M	C	O	E	I	L	E	A	F	S	S	L	I	G	H	T	J	N	U	J	S	Y	I	E
B	I	A	P	S	H	E	A	C	F	B	S	A	H	N	O	M	D	E	E	P	E	R	R	L
A	R	E	R	E	R	E	G	R	O	W	T	H	O	P	L	T	U	R	B	I	D	I	T	Y
R	E	G	A	R	O	F	R	C	O	W	F	A	A	E	E	G	R	E	T	S	I	U	R	T
C	T	N	T	E	A	C	A	R	E	S	O	B	D	L	C	E	S	H	R	I	M	P	G	I
E	S	O	P	R	O	P	S	C	A	R	S	I	H	L	L	E	B	W	A	T	E	R	J	N
U	B	P	L	A	N	T	S	J	U	A	T	T	I	A	E	O	I	G	R	U	N	T	S	U
L	O	S	T	A	B	I	L	I	Z	E	C	A	G	E	A	H	W	J	T	W	T	S	G	M
B	L	T	U	O	L	K	F	U	O	Y	E	T	H	T	R	E	P	P	A	N	S	D	U	M
Q	S	D	A	M	A	G	E	I	I	K	L	S	D	E	P	O	S	I	T	S	O	R	A	O
M	A	R	K	E	D	C	H	A	N	N	E	L	S	A	F	L	A	T	S	A	U	I	R	C
N	U	T	R	I	E	N	T	S	A	L	G	A	E	S	P	O	L	L	A	C	S	B	D	W

# Seagrass...

Seagrasses are *flowering plants* that grow in the *marine* environment. They serve many important functions. The *rhizomes* or *runners of the seagrass* plants form an interconnecting network across the seafloor that *stabilizes* the bottom *sediments*. The *leaf* blades trap sediments from the *water* column, thus reducing *turbidity* and promoting *clear* water. Seagrasses need *sunlight* to grow and prefer water that is low in *nutrients*. They serve as *habitats* for many animals including *sponges*, *pink shrimp*, *blue crabs*, *scallops*, and *clams*. Many *fish* also live in the seagrass *community* including *grunts*, *snappers*, *parrotfish*, and wrasses. Predatory fish such as *bonefish* and *tarpon* forage, or *feed*, in the seagrass *flats*. Spiny *lobsters* also *forage* at night in the seagrass. Top *snails* and other grazers feed on the algae growing on the grass *blades*. Long-legged wading *birds* such as *herons* and *egrets* feed on invertebrates found on the shallow shoals that are exposed at *low tide*. Some filter-feeding sponges are also found in the seagrass *community*. *Turtlegrass* is one of the more common species of seagrass found in south Florida.

Aerial photographs of the Florida coastline show that many *acres* of seagrasses have been damaged by *boat* propellers and *hulls*. It may take *years* for a *prop scar* to fully heal. *Regrowth* is often slow especially when the same area is damaged repeatedly. If given a chance, *shoal* grass, or *Halodule*, usually colonizes the bare area. Boaters can minimize *damage* to the flats by staying in *marked channels* and deep water. If you find yourself in water that is too *shallow* for your boat, *stop* and *trim* your *motor* up. Do not attempt to *power off*. This creates a crater or *blowhole* and *deposits* sediment on top of the nearby grasses. Wait for *high tide* and walk or *pole* your boat to *deeper* water. Contact the Coast *Guard* or *FWC Marine Patrol* for further assistance. Losing seagrass to boating *impacts* means more than losing a few blades of grass. Be *aware* and boat with *care*.

**Hidden Word Puzzle Directions:** Find and circle the hidden words in the puzzle (on previous page).  
**Hint:** The hidden words are italicized in the paragraphs above.

...it's alive!

## Hidden Word Puzzle Word List

Flower	Parrot	Regrowth
Marine	Bonefish	Halodule
Rhizomes	Tarpon	Marked channels
Runner	Feed	Shallow
Seagrass	Flats	Stop
Plants	Lobsters	Trim
Sediments	Forage	Motor
Leaf	Snail	Power
Water	Algae	Off
Turbidity	Blade	Blowhole
Clear	Birds	Deposits
Light	Heron	Tide
Nutrients	Egret	Pole
Habitats	Shoal	Deeper
Sponges	Community	Guard
Shrimp	Turtlegrass	FWC
Blue crabs	Acres	Patrol
Scallops	Boat	Impacts
Clams	Damage	Aware
Fish	Hulls	Care
Grunts	Years	Plants
Snappers	Prop scar	

