

Lemon Bay

# AQUATIC PRESERVE

*“Imagine Florida without its tourism-driven economy - without fishing, boating, wading and beachcombing. Thankfully you won’t have to, because the state’s 41 aquatic preserves, like, Lemon Bay, will help safeguard Florida’s environment and quality of life for future generations to come.”*

*U.S. Senator Bill Nelson*

## Key Accomplishments

- Ongoing assessment of seagrass habitats and water quality data show variability in seagrass health and diversity due to decreased light availability caused by stormwater runoff from its tributaries.
- Continue to coordinate with local regulatory agencies in providing water quality and resource data and comments regarding local comprehensive plans and proposed projects in the aquatic preserve.



Aerial view of Lemon Bay

## Project Spotlight

### Region-wide Citizen Water Quality Monitoring Partnership

In 1996, the Charlotte Harbor Estuaries Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Network was developed. At sunrise on the first Monday

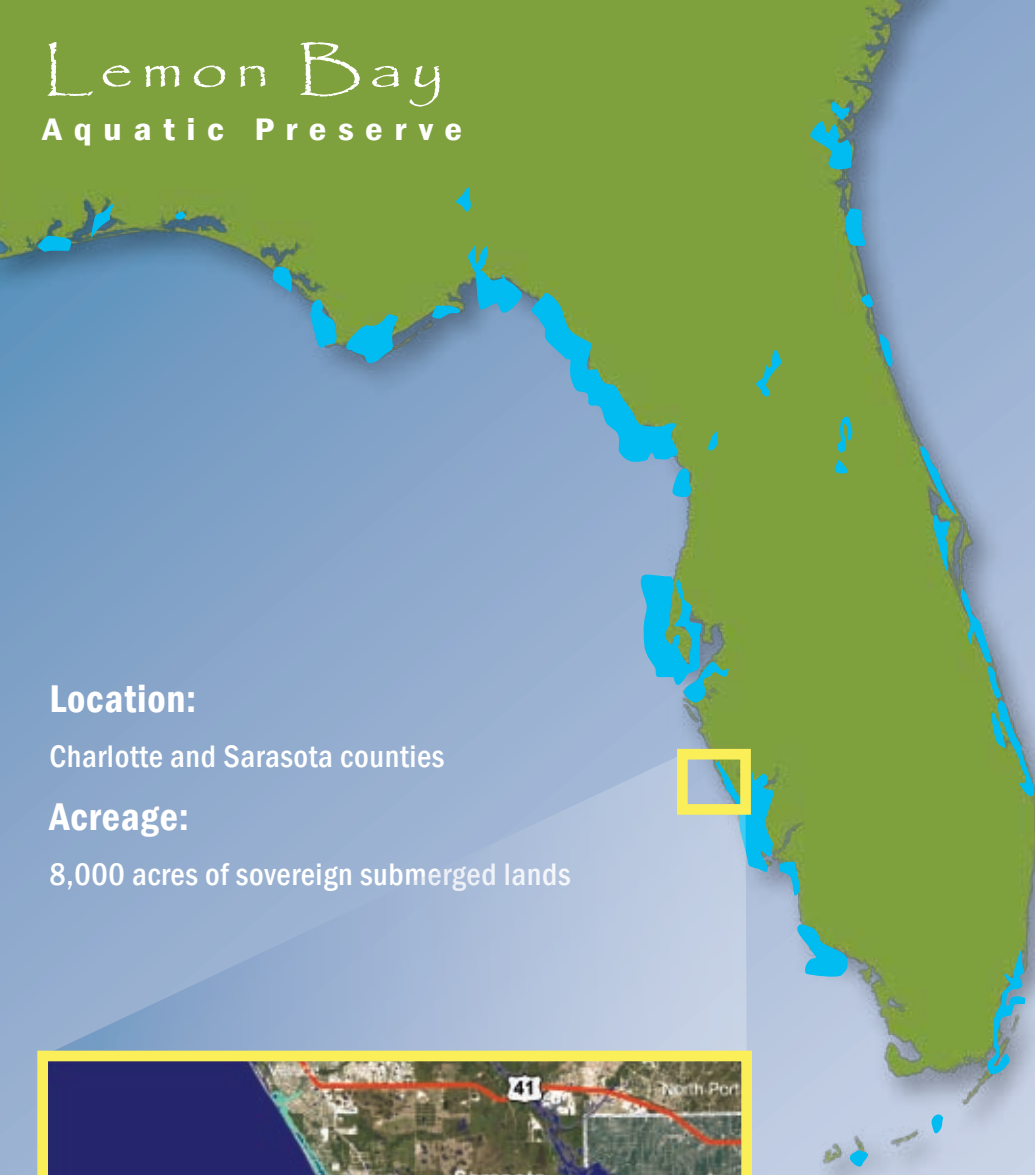


Training for water quality monitoring volunteers

of each month, 20 citizens in Lemon Bay monitor 12 sites for 19 key water quality parameters. These data, as well as findings from other water quality monitoring programs, are used to compare relationships between locations, time and parameters. A summary of the results has been published in Florida Scientist, and a citizen summary and technical

report are available upon request. Water quality conditions in Lemon Bay show average conditions, with very high nutrient, chlorophyll and bacteria levels associated with summer rain events. Comprehensive watershed management activities will be directed toward reducing detrimental conditions.

# Lemon Bay Aquatic Preserve



## Location:

Charlotte and Sarasota counties

## Acreage:

8,000 acres of sovereign submerged lands



## Local Contact:

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Bald eagle



Manatee grass



Young naturalist holding a horse conch



White pelicans in residence for the winter

## Aquatic Preserve Facts:

- Lemon Bay, the smallest of the 5 Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves, was designated as an aquatic preserve in 1986.
- It is long, narrow and shallow. Two Gulf passes and 7 tributaries flow into the aquatic preserve, creating a diverse network of mangroves, marsh grass, and vast expanses of seagrass meadows which cover most of the underwater habitats.
- Over 150 species of birds, 100 species of invertebrates, and 200 species of fish reside in the bay.
- Residents and visitors enjoy fishing, kayaking, birding, wading and beachcombing. Ski Alley, the Intracoastal Waterway and several anchorages are popular with recreational boaters.

