

SEAGRASS SEARCH

Follow these directions until you reach the manatee munching on seagrass.

1. Are seagrasses the same as seaweeds? Yes **Go to #12** No **Go to #9**
2. **False.** Seagrasses are important for animals and people. **Now go to #11**
3. **True.** The beds of seagrass slow the waves and allow the **sediments** to sink to the lagoon's bottom. Are these thick seagrass beds avoided by juvenile fish and other young animals that grow or live in water? Yes **Go to #6** No **Go to #8**
4. **False.** In shallow water, boats can be a problem. **Now go to #5**
5. **True.** In shallow water, the propeller from a boat's motor can dig up the seagrasses. The boat may be damaged as well. It is important to avoid shallow seagrass beds. If you cannot avoid them, then drive very slowly and lift the motor. Are seagrass beds important to people? Yes **Go to #11** No **Go to #2**
6. **False.** Seagrass beds provide a nursery for young animals. **Now go to #8**
7. **False.** Seagrasses can help keep the water clear. **Now go to #3**
8. **True.** The seagrass beds provide places for the juveniles to hide from larger animals. The seagrasses also provide food. Many people use the lagoon along with the animals. Can boats be a problem for seagrasses? Yes **Go to #5** No **Go to #4**
9. **True.** Seagrasses are flowering plants, unlike seaweeds, which are algae. Seagrasses grow in the brackish (salty) waters of the Indian River Lagoon. Rainwater that runs too quickly off farms, roads and towns carries a lot of sediments (soil and other particles) into the Indian River Lagoon. These sediments make the water turbid, or cloudy. When the water is turbid, is this good for the seagrass? Yes **Go to #10** No **Go to #13**
10. **False.** If the water is very turbid, it can kill the seagrass. **Now go to #13**
11. **True.** Most of the fish, clams, oysters and **crustaceans** that people catch for food need seagrasses at some point in their lives. Seagrasses also help keep the Indian River Lagoon clear and healthy.
12. **False.** Seaweeds are algae. **Now go to #9**
13. **True.** High turbidity prevents sunlight from shining through the water to the seagrasses. Seagrasses need the sun's energy to produce food. Do seagrasses help keep the water clear? Yes **Go to #3** No **Go to #7**

