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**UPCOMING EVENTS**



**Oyster Dome Construction**  
Weekday mornings;  
Check our web site for availability



**Day on the Bay Kayak Ecotours**  
Spring, 2010



**March 4-5**  
Oyster Bar Construction at Green Key



**March 6**  
Pancake Breakfast at TBW

# The Bay Watch Log

## Who's Keeping Score? We are!

### Tracking our Program Successes in 2009

Thanks to your support, we have made significant steps in restoring the Tampa Bay estuary and making it a better place to call home. Take a look how our restoration and education programs fared in 2009:

Tampa Bay Watch Project Report Card 2009			
SUBJECT: Restoring the Tampa Bay Estuary through hands-on community volunteerism.			EVALUATED BY: TBW Science Staff & Crew
PROJECT NAME	GRADE	STATS	NOTES
<b>BAY GRASSES IN CLASSES</b>	A		Middle and high school students maintain salt marsh wetland nurseries which provide plants for use in community habitat restoration projects.
Students		1,550	
Plugs of <i>Spartina</i> Planted		23,710	
Acres Restored by Students		6	The planting of <i>Spartina alterniflora</i> , or salt marsh grass, protects and stabilizes low-lying coastal lands and provides protection and food sources for fish and marine mammals.
<b>COMMUNITY SALT MARSH</b>	A		
Acres of Shoreline Restored		5.5	
Plugs of <i>Spartina</i> Planted		13,107	The Community Oyster Reef Enhancement (C.O.R.E.) program reduces erosion, provides habitat and encourages oyster growth.
Volunteers Helping		316	
<b>C.O.R.E. OYSTER PROGRAM</b>	A		
Dome Volunteers		1,163	Thousands of volunteer hours go into the building and installing of oyster domes and bars around declining Tampa Bay shorelines.
Domes Built		1,391	
Linear Feet of Shoreline Installed		1,200	
Oyster Bar Volunteers		158	In this educational program, students learn about the Tampa Bay ecosystem and estuarine ecology while being empowered to act as stewards of their environment.
Tons of Oyster Shell for Bars		80	
Feet of Oyster Bars Built		700	
<b>ESTUARY EDVENTURES</b>	A		Coastal cleanups help solve the growing international issue of marine debris at a local level by preventing pollution of our land and water and protecting wildlife.
Students Educated		3,228	
Field Trips		197	
Summer Campers		153	This is the fourth year in a row that the scallop numbers have increased, which indicates improving water quality across Lower Tampa Bay.
<b>COASTAL CLEANUPS</b>	A		
Volunteers		546	
Pounds of Debris Collected		2,790	This is the fourth year in a row that the scallop numbers have increased, which indicates improving water quality across Lower Tampa Bay.
<b>GREAT BAY SCALLOP SEARCH</b>	A		
Volunteers		200	
Scallops Found		674	



*Together, it's amazing what we can do!*





## It really was a Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown!

*Pumpkins on the Porch Event a Spooktacular Success!*

Tampa Bay Watch's first annual **Pumpkins on the Porch** kicked off Friday, October 30 with over 130 costumed attendees.

"The goal of the evening was to involve friends of our organization and the Tierra Verde community in a fun-filled family event," Tampa Bay Watch special events coordinator Jessica Combs explains.

Families enjoyed pumpkin carving, painting, snacks and games around the facility. A brilliant sunset accompanied the viewing of **It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown!** on the lawn to cap off the night. Hydro Harvest Farms generously donated 70 pumpkins for the event, so everyone could carve their own jack o'lantern. 🎃



*Touch Tank Makeover:*

# Art Imitates Life— and Enhances It!

*New Mangrove Sculpture Offers More Realistic Environment for Touch Tank Residents*

Resident grouper, sea trout, sheepshead and other marine creatures that inhabit our 5,000 gallon touch tank recently benefitted from an upgrade in their habitat with the installation of a seven-foot-high red mangrove tree sculpture. The touch tank is one of our centerpieces of our environmental education programs and is used as an interactive teaching tool essential to our marine educational objectives.

Why did we install a mangrove? Since the Tampa Bay Watch touch tank is located under the classroom building, we cannot grow a real mangrove tree. Using a sculptured tree created by Lee and Sharon Jones, we are able to mimic the mangrove root habitats for the many fish and invertebrates that reside in the touch tank, offering our resident creatures a more realistic environment.

In the wild, mangrove species protect and stabilize low-lying

coastal lands and provide protection and food sources for estuarine and coastal fishery food chains. Mangroves also serve as feeding, breeding, and nursery grounds for a variety of fish, shellfish, birds, and other wildlife.

Special thanks to Gulfstream Natural Gas System, L.L.C. for generously sponsoring the sculpture. Come by and check it out! 🐠

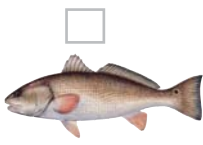


*The new mangrove sculpture adds realistic surroundings to the touch tank.*

*What creatures reside in the Tampa Bay Watch*

# Touch Tank?

**Test your species identification acumen. Better yet, stop by Tampa Bay Watch and identify them up-close and personal!**



1. White Grunt
2. Sheepshead
3. Red Drum (Redfish)
4. Gag grouper
5. Red grouper
6. Oyster toad fish
7. Spotted sea trout
8. Southern puffer fish
9. Striped burr fish

2010 Outlook:

# A Healthier Tampa Bay

Here's just a few of our goals for 2010, which we'll accomplish only with YOUR help! Become a volunteer or member today.



**Oyster Domes:** Install 1,800 domes, with 1,400 at MacDill Air Force Base.



**Oyster Bars:** Create 1,340 linear feet of oyster shell bar; roughly 128 tons over 13 events.



**Cleanups:** Conduct three large-scale shoreline cleanups and at least one fishing line cleanup on bird nesting islands in Tampa Bay.



**Derelict Crab Trap Removal:** Conduct two local derelict crab trap removal events in late 2010, plus two regional events during the ten-day season closure in July.



**Estuary EDventures:** Students in the coastal service learning initiative will plant seven acres of coastal habitat grasses, build 200 new oyster domes, and prep 500 linear feet of new oyster shell bars.



**Field Trips:** Implement 300 student and camper field trips through the environmental education restoration initiative, with nine involving elementary and secondary summer camp sessions.

## Help Restore Tampa Bay with your Vehicle Donation!

Visit [TampaBayWatch.org](http://TampaBayWatch.org) to learn more about charitable auto, marine, or other vehicle donations that can help fund the restoration of Tampa Bay.

Want to know what Floats our Boats? You Do!

Do you have a boat, car, or RV that you no longer want or need? Donate it to Tampa Bay Watch, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and receive the full tax deduction allowed by law!

Your property donation will benefit marine habitat restoration, conservation, education, and protection of marine life. Your gift will also enable us to continue programs that improve our local estuary and enhance the quality of life for all of the fish, birds, marine mammals, and people that live here!

Many of Tampa Bay Watch's habitat restoration projects are completed through the use of our boats. We also fund many programs from donated vehicle sales!

**Help Restore Tampa Bay with Your Vehicle Donation!**

For more information on how your donation can benefit Tampa Bay Watch, please contact Dennis Kellenberger at 727-667-8166, extension 222 or [dkellenberger@tampabaywatch.org](mailto:dkellenberger@tampabaywatch.org).

Visit our web site to learn more about Tampa Bay Watch environmental restoration programs. [www.TAMPA Bay WATCH.ORG](http://www.TAMPA Bay WATCH.ORG)

Together, it's amazing what we can do!



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## Gearing up for Florida's Winter Weather

The winter weather outlook for the Bay Area is cooler than normal and includes more rain than normal. That may sound pleasant, but it comes with a price. Thanks to El Nino (a warming of the equatorial waters in the Pacific Ocean), we may be facing more severe weather than usual this winter. El Nino alters the position and strength of the jet stream which in turn affects winter storm systems across the United States—especially in the southeast and Florida. During hurricane season, El Nino was good for us because among other things, it created unfavorable wind shear that hampered tropical development. In the winter, that stronger jet stream is nearby and it helps spin up more powerful storms and larger tornadoes.

Since records have been kept, Florida's deadliest tornado outbreaks have occurred during the winter months—with most of those occurring in El Nino years. Florida is more vulnerable to severe weather than most other states because our peak population is during the winter when snowbirds flock to our shores, and we have a large number of mobile homes.

Unfortunately, tornadoes are unpredictable and develop quickly. Many times, this happens at night. Unlike hurricanes—which afford plenty of time to evacuate—you may have only minutes to seek shelter from a tornado. Now is a good time to review your severe weather plan. This should be a simple task since it closely resembles your hurricane plan. Choose a safe place at home or nearby if a tornado warning is issued for your community. Your plan should also include having a NOAA Weather Alert Radio on hand, which can be one of the best and most inexpensive ways to stay safe during severe weather. You can also sign up for severe weather alerts and WeatherCall at [10connects.com](http://10connects.com) or [ForecastFirst.com](http://ForecastFirst.com).

A stormy winter season also means more beach erosion, more debris and more pollutants washed into the bay. The cooler air temperatures will lead to cooler water, which, along with any pollutants washed into the bay, may affect bird and sea life—including the manatee population.

Join Tampa Bay Watch for scheduled beach cleanup days and be aware of any loose items around your home or work that can be washed into rivers, lakes, and the bay.

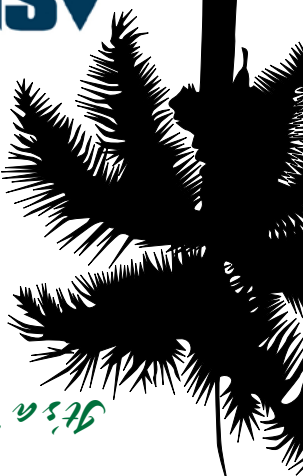
It's a Wrap!

# Evening for the Bay

*The Tampa Bay Community Delivers Results for the Third Year in a Row.*

Our third annual Evening for the Bay fundraiser was our most successful event to date! It took place on the evening of Saturday, October 24 at the Tampa Bay Watch Marine Center. Guests—more than 250 of them!—donned island casual attire while enjoying live music while seated comfortably in their new camping chairs sponsored by ASI. Jim Morris and the Big Bamboo Band provided live music.

Guests won exciting silent auction items such as a South African photographic safari, sports memorabilia, and beautiful stained glass artwork featuring marine life. A special thanks to all of our event and table sponsors who contributed to the event. 🌱

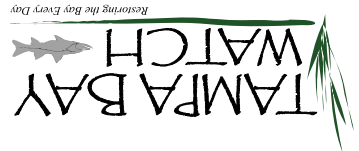


Top: Guests enjoy fireside chats in their comfortable ASI-sponsored chairs.  
Bottom: Jim Morris and the Big Bamboo Band perform on the lawn.

The *Bay Watch Log* is a quarterly newsletter designed to inform and educate the volunteers, members, partners, and sponsors of Tampa Bay Watch about environmental events, restoration opportunities, agency activities, and other environmental stewardship information.

For information, call 727.867.8166 or visit our web site at [www.TampaBayWatch.org](http://www.TampaBayWatch.org).  
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*Restoring the Bay Every Day*

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