

WINTER 2009
Volume XIV, No. 1

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 10Connects with Tampa Bay Watch
- A Day on the Bay! Kayak Ecotours in February and March
- Planned Giving for Tampa Bay
- Tampa Bay Sports & Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve
- Derelict Crab Traps and Cockroach Bay
- Summer Camp schedule published for 2009

10CONNECTS and Tampa Bay Watch are Teaming Up!

Habitat Restoration Goes on the Air

10Connects and Tampa Bay Watch have joined forces as part of WTSP Channel 10's "Connecting Green" initiative, with the goal of increasing awareness of our mission of protecting and restoring the marine and wetland environments of the Tampa Bay estuary.

Digging in the Dirt

Be on the lookout for Tampa Bay Watch commercials and live appearances on Channel 10 promoting education, membership, and advocacy programs. Television anchors will also report on restoration projects during the news, as well as spending some time digging in the dirt at our Marine Center or local restoration projects.

Weather at your Fingertips

10Connects will install a fully-functional weather camera on the roof of the Tampa Bay Watch Marine Center to broadcast current weather conditions on 10Connects.com and TampaBayWatch.org.



The Tampa Bay Watch lighthouse weather station will soon broadcast live weather conditions to 10Connects.com and TampaBayWatch.org.

News in the Log

Expect a regular column upcoming issues of the *Bay Watch Log* from Tammie Souza, chief meteorologist of the WTSP weather department!

Our new partnership will help the Tampa Bay community to be better equipped with the knowledge, skills and passion to act as stewards of our local environment. **F**

Upcoming Events



March 1, 2009
Summer Camp Registration



March 21, 2009
Coastal Cleanup



June 19-20, 2009
Ed Alber Tarpon Rodeo



A Day on the Bay!

Kayak Ecotours for Everyone

Tampa Bay Watch is proud to announce the second year of *A Day on the Bay*, an exciting community course component of Tampa Bay Watch's Estuary EDventures program. Our Marine and Education Center, located on the Tampa Bay shoreline at the entrance to Fort De Soto Park, provides easy kayaking access to the bay, giving participants an opportunity to learn about our beautiful yet fragile surroundings in a fun and engaging way. The kayak ecotours will occur each Wednesday in February and March from 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Adult tuition for the course is \$20 for Tampa Bay Watch members and \$25 for non-members. Tuition for children 8-16 years old is \$15, and includes a free membership to Tampa Bay Watch. Visit www.TampaBayWatch.org to register for the course.

A Day on the Bay includes an overview of Tampa Bay Estuary habitats, its plant and animal life, bay impacts and restoration projects. Activities include a classroom orientation of the estuary, hands-on experience with touch tanks, and an exploration of Tampa Bay via tandem kayaks. Participants will paddle around Shell Key Preserve to observe oyster beds, a local bird rookery, seagrass beds and a mangrove forest! *A Day on the Bay* is designed specifically for the community: area residents, annual visitors to the Tampa Bay area, families, and Tampa Bay Watch members. Group sessions can be arranged by special request.

Planned Giving

Give the Gift of a Better Tampa Bay

Many of us would like to do something more significant to protect the future of Tampa Bay than our current income may allow. A planned gift can be the perfect solution. By leaving part of your estate to Tampa Bay Watch, you will have a lasting positive effect on the local environment by assuring the continuation of our vital restoration projects. Some of the types of planned giving include:

- D **Outright gifts** may be in the form of stock or securities, real estate, cash, personal property such as boats, cars, airplanes and other personal property of value or usage, etc.
- D **Estate gifts** may be in the form of bequests in wills, gifts of life insurance, gifts of retirement plans, etc.
- D **Life income gifts** may be in the form of life estates in property, charitable remainder trusts or unitrusts and charitable remainder annuities.

Your planned gift may also save you income on capital gains, gifts and/or estate taxes, provide income now or during retirement, and provide a legacy to ensure the future of the Tampa Bay estuary through Tampa Bay Watch programs.

Information in this article is not intended as legal, financial, or tax advice, nor a comprehensive overview of options available. If you are considering making a planned gift to Tampa Bay Watch, please contact Dennis Kellenberger with any questions that you, your family, or professional advisors may have. Call 727-867-8166 or e-Mail dkellenberger@tampabaywatch.org for a confidential discussion of how we can maximize your impact on the future of Tampa Bay.

Trace this Place!

Win a new Tampa Bay Watch T-shirt!

The first person to guess this location wins a Tampa Bay Watch T-shirt! (Can you see the monkey face in the photo?) Please e-Mail your guess to rarndt@tampabaywatch.org.

Last issue's answer was: Fort De Soto boat ramp.



Tampa Bay Sports and Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve

Team Up for Bay Restoration



Over 500 one-gallon red mangrove trees were planted at Terra Ceia.

along the Terra Ceia shoreline, helping to reduce the environmental impacts to the Tampa Bay area from large events like the Super Bowl.

This is the fifth year that the NFL, in partnership with the local Host Committee, has developed urban forestry projects as part of its overall environmental program at Super Bowl. This year, for the first time, a long-term monitoring program will be put in place to track the environmental impact of the tree plantings. Using software developed by the US Forest Service and with the support of the Florida Division of Forestry, data will be collected from planting sites as the trees grow and the actual greenhouse gas impact of the trees can be calculated each year.

In December, Tampa Bay Watch coordinated with the National Football League (NFL), the Tampa Bay Reforestation and Environmental Effort, and the State of Florida Division of Forestry to assist the **NFL Environmental Program** with a mangrove tree planting at Terra Ceia. In this event, community volunteers planted over 500 one-gallon red mangrove trees

“As part of our Employee Community Outreach Team program, we encourage all employees to take up to two paid hours each week or one day each month to volunteer in the community. This project was initiated by our staff and it meshes perfectly with our organization’s green efforts.”

—Rays Senior Vice President of Business Operations Brian Auld

January brought community volunteers and representatives from the **Tampa Bay Rays** baseball organization out to plant 5,000 plugs of salt marsh grass and 100+ one-gallon red mangrove trees along the Terra Ceia shoreline. The project is another step in the Rays’ green initiative, *Teaming Up for the Environment*, a sustainable business program that focuses on green procurement, practices and advocacy.

The planting of *Spartina alterniflora* (salt marsh or smooth cord grass) and mangroves protect and stabilize low-lying coastal lands and provide protection and food sources for estuarine and coastal fishery food chains. The plants serve as feeding, breeding and nursery grounds for a variety of fish, shellfish, birds and other wildlife. Mangroves also produce 3.6 tons per acre of leaf litter per year which benefit estuarine food chains. An estimated 75% of the game fish and 90% of the commercial species in Florida depend on the mangrove system. ➤

Community members and volunteers from the Tampa Bay Rays helped out with the planting efforts!



Derelict Crab Traps:

The “Ghosts” of Cockroach Bay

Along with Tampa Bay Watch and several community volunteers, the Florida Airboat Association generously provided their time and airboats to locate and retrieve 80 derelict crab traps from Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve on Saturday, January 24.

Part of the Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program, the primary objectives of this event were to remove derelict—or “ghost”—traps from the environment, thereby reducing unnecessary entrapment of marine organisms like blue crabs, stone crabs, small commercial and recreationally-important fish, and brackish water turtles. Manatees, dolphins and sea turtles can also become entangled in the trap line, causing injury or death. The program also seeks to remove marine debris from the environment, reducing boating safety hazards and increasing public awareness.



80 derelict crab traps were removed, saving countless species.

“This event is great because it gets organizations like the Florida Airboat Association and community volunteers involved in helping to preserve and protect the bay,” said Serra Herndon, environmental scientist for Tampa Bay Watch. “It’s estimated that there are thousands of derelict crab traps that have been accumulating for decades in Tampa Bay.”



Volunteers from the Florida Airboat Association and the Tampa Bay community participated in the event.



An exposed derelict crab trap appears at low tide.

Each year, Tampa Bay Watch performs surveys to identify derelict traps and conducts cleanups to remove them. Having conducted 14 crab trap removal events since May, 2004, Tampa Bay Watch has successfully removed 660 traps from the waters of Tampa Bay.

What is a derelict crab trap?

A derelict trap is defined as any trap found in the water during closed season for that species or any fishable trap during open season that lacks at least three of the following: buoy, line, current trap tag, and current commercial saltwater products license.

If derelict traps are found, do **not** remove them. Instead, record the location of the trap on a GPS or chart, as well as any other pertinent information, then call Tampa Bay Watch to report your findings.

For more information identifying derelict crab traps, please contact Serra Herndon at Tampa Bay Watch at 727-867-8166 or sherndon@tampabaywatch.org.

Dave Markett offers more insight into derelict crab traps in Tampa Bay. To read his article, visit www.TampaBay-Watch.org and navigate to the Derelict Crab Trap Removal program page.



Fish and other marine life are the unfortunate victims of derelict, or “ghost” crab traps.

Estuary EDventures kicks off

'09 Summer Camps

The fourth season of summer camps for kids kicks off in June. Join Tampa Bay Watch for some fun in the sun with our marine ecology summer camps, and learn about amazing Tampa Bay and its inhabitants. If your child has an interest in marine science, this is their chance to discover more about it!

Our ideal location on the Pinellas Bayway provides summer campers with exciting, hands-on opportunities to learn about marine ecology and restoration projects. The area boasts rich mangrove forests, grass flats, and shallow waters teeming with marine life.

Camp activities include snorkeling the grass flats, seine net pulls, animal collection and identification, kayaking through



Summer campers learn about the bay up close and personal.

the mangroves, and exploring nearby islands. Also on site is the marine education center and classroom featuring outdoor wet labs, touch tanks, and aquariums—all of which are utilized for education about Tampa Bay and restoring its marine habitats.

2009 Summer Camp Schedule

All-Day Summer Camp Sessions

9 am - 4 pm, \$175* or \$200*
June 8-12 (ages 12-14)
June 22-26 (ages 9-11)
July 6-10 (ages 12-14)
July 20-24 (ages 9-11)
August 3-7 (ages 9-14)

Independent Discovery Camp Sessions

9 am - Noon
Ages 15-16
\$75* or \$125*
June 15-19
July 13-17

Sea Monkeys Camp Sessions

9 am - 11:30 am
Ages 6-8,
\$75* or \$100*
June 22-26
July 20-24
August 3-7


*Member price *Non-Member price

Registration begins March 1 for Tampa Bay Watch members and returning campers. General registration begins March 15. For more information on Tampa Bay Watch Summer Camps, contact Andy Lykens. Remember, sessions fill quickly!

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.

Tampa Bay Watch, Inc. . 3000 Pinellas Bayway South . Tierra Verde . Florida . 33715

 Printed on recycled paper made from at least 30% post-consumer waste.



3000 Pinellas Bayway South
Tierra Verde, FL 33715

TampaBayWatch.org

727.867.8166

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
ST PETERSBURG FL
PERMIT NO 182



Kids' Pages

A supplement to
The Bay Watch Log



Winter 2008-09 issue

In This Issue:

All about
Horseshoe Crabs

The Crabs in
Tampa Bay

Fiddler Crab
Identification

The Facts About
Crabs

Crab Activity
Maze

Meet the Shame-
faced Crab!

Got a question? Ask a scientist!

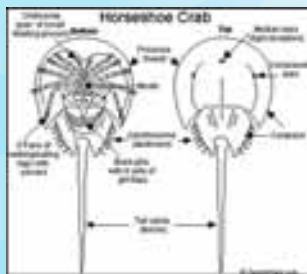
Q Why do Horseshoe Crabs look so different from other crabs?

—Harper Lily Minton



A Excellent question, Harper! Horseshoe crabs are one of the most awe-inspiring crustaceans we have here in Tampa Bay. They do not look—or act—like a typical crab we find on a daily basis. In addition, they provide many different services for humans and for nature.

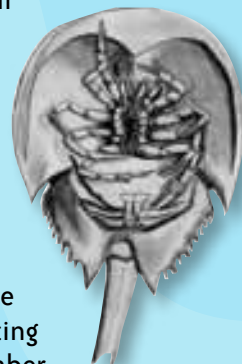
The horseshoe crab is actually more closely related to spiders, ticks, and scorpions than to crabs. Horseshoe crabs do have some similarities to crabs, like molting their shell. In fact, a horseshoe crab will have to shed its shell around 17 times before it becomes mature at age nine. However, there are some obvious differences as well. True crabs have two pairs of antennae and jaws, while horseshoe crabs have neither of these. True crabs only have five pairs of legs, while horseshoe crabs have seven pairs of legs. Also, true crabs have two eyes, while horseshoe crabs have four.



Horseshoe crabs in the Delaware Bay lay their eggs in large numbers. These horseshoe crab eggs serve as a vital food source for the Red Knot, a migratory bird. This bird flies from the Arctic to Argentina and Chile in its annual migration! Because of the overharvesting of horseshoe crabs for bait, the Red Knots have been struggling to make their epic journey.

Horseshoe crabs have their niche in the wild, but they also have an enormous impact on humans, through the medical field. Their blood is actually similar to that of humans, so scientists have developed ways to use their blood without harming them to test out medicines. Horseshoe crab blood contains a unique thickening material that the pharmaceutical industry uses to test IV drugs for bacteria. The blood actually traps bacteria, so no IV drug reaches your hospital pharmacy without its horseshoe crab test. Once the crabs are done donating their blood to science, they are released back into the ocean so they can continue their lives!

Horseshoe crabs are often considered living fossils because they are believed to have remained virtually the same for 445 million years. They are strange-looking creatures who seem very simple, yet they are very good at adapting to environmental conditions. So the next time you see a horseshoe crab, remember that you are seeing one of the oldest and most important animals alive!



The mouth opening is between the legs; the gills are visible below.



Be curious. Learn. Teach others about what you see. Become the bay stewards of tomorrow!

Be a part of our next issue, and Ask a Scientist! Just e-mail your question, along with your name, age, and address to ckarns@tampabaywatch.org. If we feature your question in our next issue, we'll send you a free Tampa Bay Watch decal!



Kids' Pages

Explore the world around you. There are hidden wonders in every nook and cranny

Meet the Crabs of Tampa Bay!

They're all around the Tampa Bay and Gulf of Mexico waters!

There are many different animals that live in Tampa Bay, but some of the coolest might be the crustaceans. They can grow up to be many different shapes, sizes, and colors. There are many types of crustaceans but they all have a few things in common, like a hard shell that protects their body, and jointed appendages. They all molt, which means they shed their shell as they grow larger. Check out a few of the common crustaceans we have here in Tampa Bay!



Blue crabs are easily identified by their gray carapace (main shell) and their blue-gray legs and claws; a bluish pigment found in their shell gives them their blue color. They are also well-known for their aggressive behavior, often inflicting a painful pinch on anything they deem a threat. They feed on small fish, mollusks with thin shells, plants, and anything else they happen to find. Blue crabs are an important food source for redfish, sea trout, some species of sharks, and cownose rays.



Fiddler crabs are typically found in salt marshes, mangroves, and on beaches. Fiddler crabs are quite small (under two inches wide). They dig small burrows in which to hide when threatened, and if you enter an area where they are present, you can see and hear them scuttle for cover. The males have the indistinguishably large claw, while females have two small claws. The male's small claw is used for feeding—he picks up sand and brings it to his mouth to sift for food. This motion gives off the effect of playing a fiddle, which is where the name comes from.



Stone crabs are commonly found around oyster beds or burrowing in muddy bottoms to hide. They feed on oysters, other crustaceans, polychaete worms, and small mollusks. Stone crabs are fairly easy to identify: juveniles are black but develop more coloration as they grow. An adult's carapace is brownish-red with small gray dots. Their body is not very large—only about 3-3½ inches long and four inches wide. Their claws can grow fairly large—well over three inches—and are brownish-orange with small gray dots and black tips. They get their name from their extremely hard shell, and can easily crush hard shells of prey with their claws.

Hermit crabs

have a soft exoskeleton covering their body, which is why they need to find a discarded snail shell [from gastropods] to call home. The shell offers protection from predators, but once they outgrow it, they must find a new shell. They get their name because they inhabit a second-hand shell. There are many different species of hermit crabs; they tend to be intertidal and are typically found in tidal pools at low tide. Hermit crabs normally live in colonies of over a hundred and don't do well in small numbers!



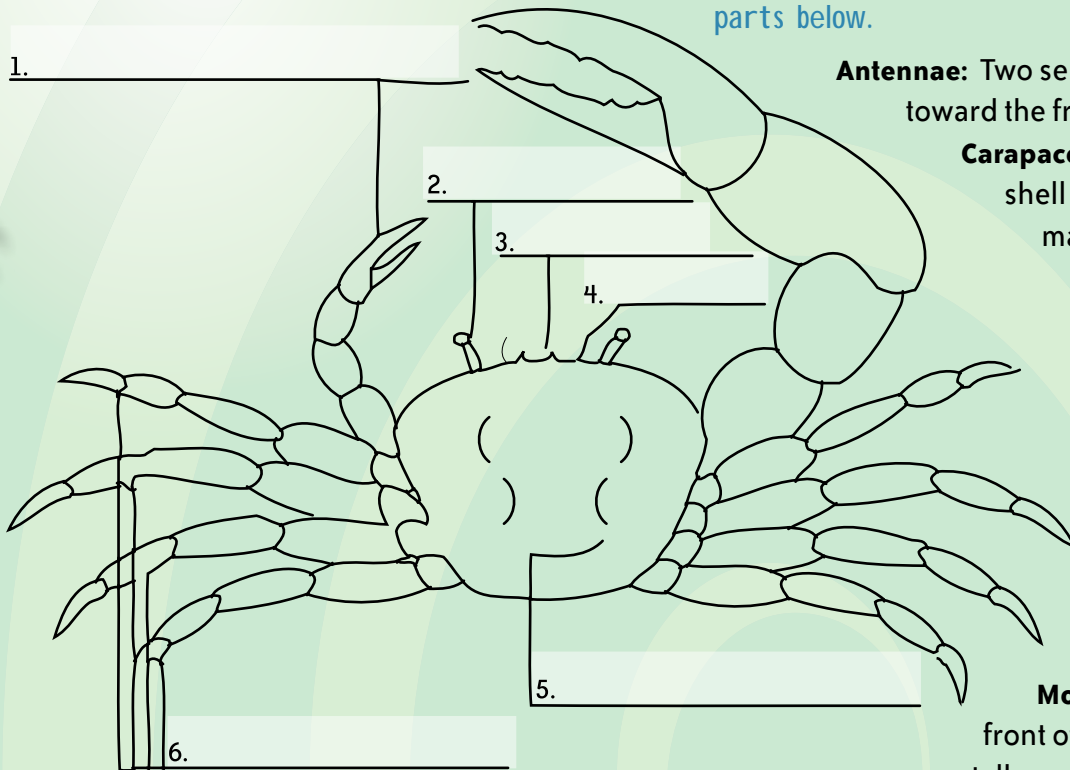
These common crabs are all important species of our ecosystem. Blue crabs and stone crabs are often found as bycatch (animals caught unnecessarily) in derelict crab traps. The habitat of fiddler and hermit crabs is often destroyed by development of coastline. It's important to keep these cool crustaceans around for a long time for future generations to enjoy, and to keep balance in our ecosystem.



Tampa Bay is an estuary! a mix of salt water and fresh water; it's an ideal nursery for fish!

Identify it!

Fill in the boxes on this fiddler crab with the correct parts below.



Antennae: Two sensory organs (feelers) located toward the front of the crab.

Carapace: The hard, protective outer shell of the crab. The carapace is made of chitin.

Cheliped: One of two big claws used for defense and food handling. In male fiddler crabs, one cheliped is much bigger than the other; in females, the two chelipeds are about the same size.

Eyestalk: The two compound eyes are located on eyestalks.

Mouth: The mouth is located at the front of the crab, near the base of the eyestalks and the antennae.

Walking legs: Four pairs of long, jointed legs used for locomotion (walking).

Answers: 1. Antennae; 2. Cheliped; 3. Carapace; 4. Mouth; 5. Eyestalk; 6. Walking legs

Fun Facts:

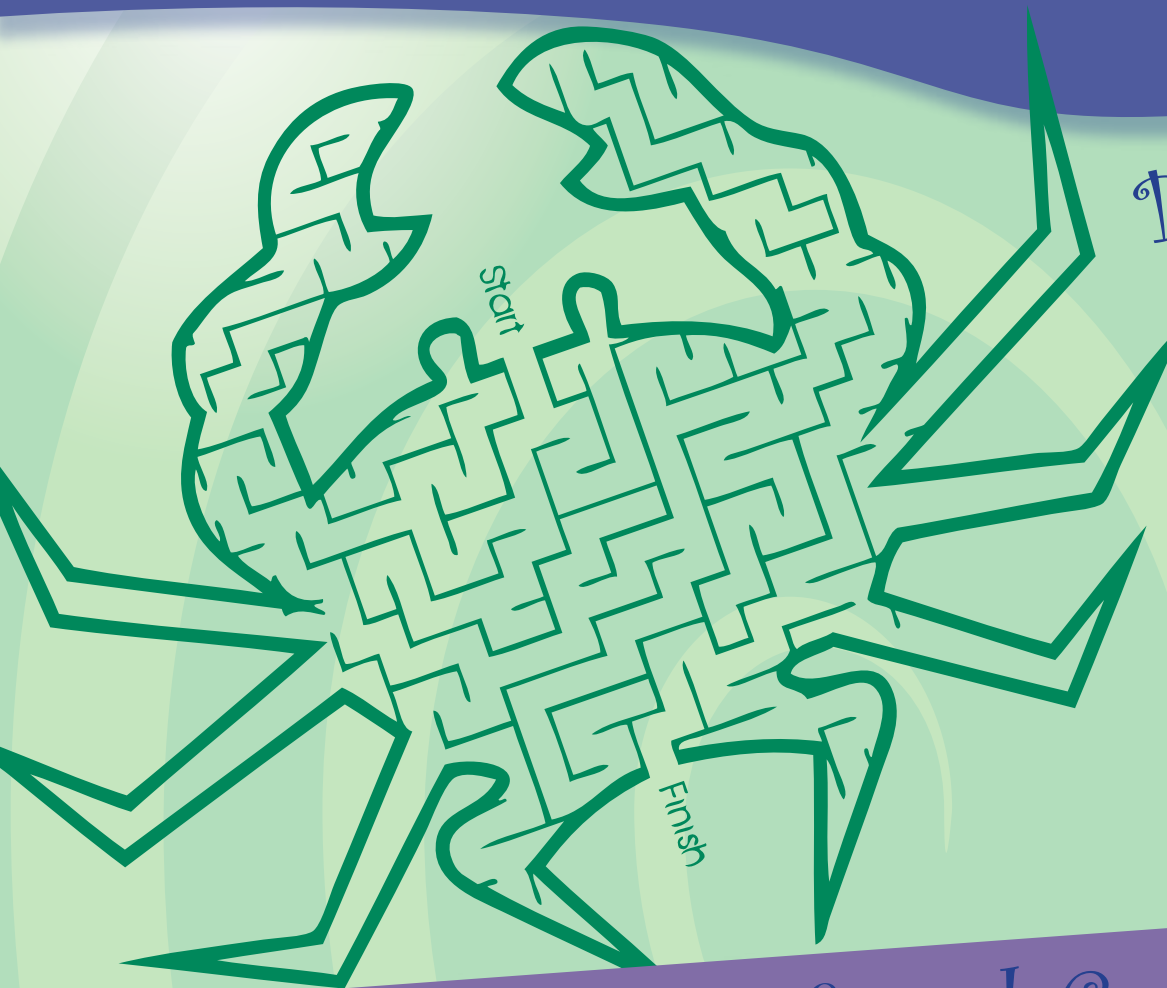
...not-so-trivial trivia about crabs

- D A horseshoe crab's tail—or telson—is *not* poisonous; they help to flip the crab over if it gets turned upside down.
- D Horseshoe crabs are 100 million years older than the dinosaurs!
- D Scientist have also used the horseshoe crabs' compound eyes to learn more about human eyes.
- D A large stone crab claw can weigh up to half a pound!
- D Stone crabs will only molt at night, and will release a hormone that prevents them from molting during the day.
- D Sometimes sea anemones grow on the shell of larger hermit crabs, helping scare away predators!
- D King crabs are actually hermit crabs that don't need a snail shell.
- D There are almost 100 different species of fiddler crabs!
- D If some species of fiddler crabs lose their large claw, the small one will grow larger to compensate, and the new one will be a small claw!



Crab Maze

Guide your way through the twists and turns inside this crab!



Did you Know...

Some experts believe that by sifting through the soil for food, fiddler crabs may actually help provide oxygen for the soil.

Meet the Shame-faced Crab

Do you know what these are?

Hint: they're **not** his eyes.



The **Flame Box** or **Shame-faced Crab** is named as such because it appears to “shamefully” hold its claws against its body. It is a rarely-seen crustacean that inhabits Tampa Bay.

Calappa flammea: the Shame-faced Crab

Typically burrowing itself in the sand, the Shame-faced Crab leaves only its eyes exposed. It feeds on sea snails, shrimp, and even other crabs. It uses its powerful claws to break open the outer shell of its prey in order to pry the animal out! When full-grown, the Shame-faced Crab’s carapace will be four to five inches across.

Printed on recycled paper made from at least 30% post-consumer waste.

Kids' Pages is a quarterly newsletter supplement to the Tampa Bay Watch Log, and is sponsored by the Southwest Florida Water Management District. Please get your kids involved! Sign them up to be a member today, and enroll them in Estuary EDventures! e-Mail jcombs@tampabaywatch.org, or visit www.TampaBayWatch.org.



3000 Pinellas Bayway South
Tierra Verde, FL 33715
www.TampaBayWatch.org
727.867.8166

Sponsored by a grant from the Alafia River, Hillsborough River, Manasota, Northwest Hillsborough and Pinellas-Anclote River Basin Boards of the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

