



# ST. LUCIE INLET



The St. Lucie Inlet is located between the southern most tip of Hutchinson Island and northern tip of Jupiter Island in Martin County, Florida. The St. Lucie inlet is one of six inlets into the Indian River Lagoon. The other five inlets, from north to south are the Ponce De Leon Inlet, Port Canaveral Inlet, Sebastian Inlet, Fort Pierce Inlet and the Jupiter Inlet. The St. Lucie Inlet offers ocean access to the Intracoastal Waterway, the St. Lucie River and Okeechobee Waterway.

The St. Lucie Inlet was viewed by the famous explorer Cabot in 1496 and appeared on maps in 1500 and 1683. Jonathan Dickinson's crew passed through in 1696. In 1844, before the modern dredge, Samuel Peck and settlers of the Indian River Armed Occupation Colony took picks and shovels making the first recorded opening. The Inlet has been opened and closed many times throughout its history. A dredge was used to deepen the inlet in 1892 for a cost of \$2,000. In 1981, the inlet was dredged at a cost of \$8 million. To keep the inlet from shoaling closed as the barrier islands move requires regular dredging of the inlet.

Just south of the inlet is the St. Lucie Inlet State Park with hard and soft coral reefs. Just to the north of the inlet is Bathtub Beach Reef, a Sabellariid Worm Reef. The beaches that you see along Hutchinson Island are the third highest nesting beaches in the western hemisphere for the Loggerhead Sea Turtle.