

Manatee Facts

West Indian Manatee *Trichechus manatus*

Length: 12 plus feet

Weight: over 3,500 pounds

Color: gray to gray-brown

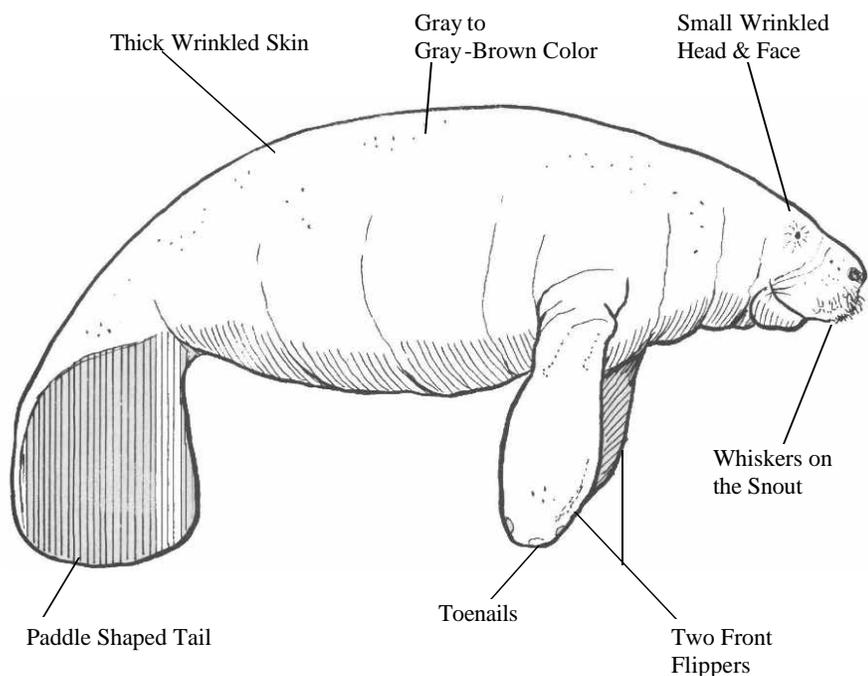
Food: 100 pounds of aquatic plants a day

Reproduction: One calf every 2 to 5 years

Range in US: North Carolina to Texas, mainly Florida

Location: Rivers, canals, estuaries, saltwater bays, & occasionally the open ocean

- ◆ Manatees only have molars to grind their food.
- ◆ Manatees chew two times per second.
- ◆ Manatee teeth are constantly being replaced as they wear down and fall out.
- ◆ The intestine of an adult manatee can measure 130 feet long.
- ◆ Manatees only breath through their nostrils.
- ◆ Manatee can hold their breath for up to 24 minutes.
- ◆ Manatee lungs are 2/3 the length of its body.
- ◆ A manatee cannot turn its head sideways, it must turn its whole body.
- ◆ It takes 13 months for a manatee to be born.
- ◆ Calves spend two years with their mothers learning the migration routes.



Manatees are Mammals

Manatees breath air and have hair like all other mammals. They look like a relative of dolphins and whales but manatees are more closely related to elephants.

Little Mermaid?

When the Spanish Explorers reached Florida they thought the Manatees were mermaids.



Florida
Oceanographic
Coastal Center

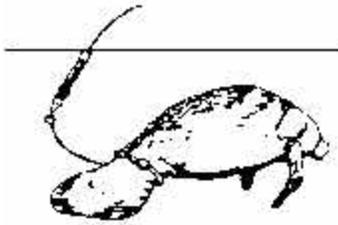
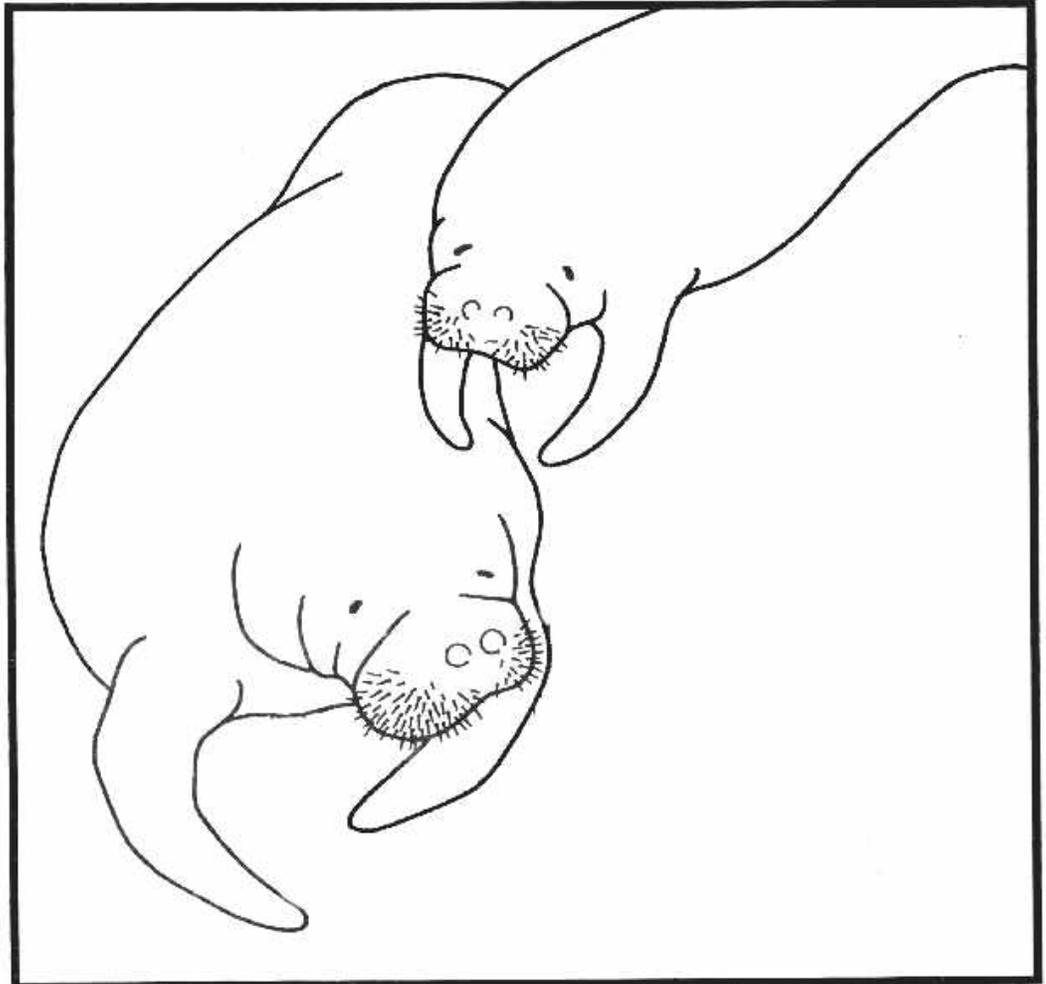
Name: _____

Manatees like warm, shallow water with lots of plants to eat.

Manatees are slow swimmers.

For a good habitat manatees need:
Food, Water, Shelter, & Space.

Color the picture so the Manatees have a good habitat.



Word Bank

Red Tide	Elephants	Boats
Threatened Species	Food	Mammals

- 1 Because manatees have hair and are warm blooded they are considered _____.
- 2 Manatees need up to 100 pounds of aquatic vegetation a day for _____.
- 3 _____ are the closest living relative to the manatee on land.
- 4 Since there are fewer than 2,000 manatees left they are considered an _____.
- 5 _____ and _____ are the biggest killers of manatees in Florida.