



# Dauphin Island Sea Lab's MANATEE SIGHTING NETWORK

## Fall/Winter 2020 Newsletter



### Manatee mating herds make a splash in Dog River



Credit: DISL/MSN  
Contributor S. Williamson

This summer's busy manatee sighting season peaked in late July and early August with reports of groups of up to 16 manatees in the Dog River area adjacent to Mobile Bay, Alabama. These groups displayed active, cavorting behavior consistent with mating herds that are often seen in Alabama waters during summer months.



Credit: DISL/MSN  
Contributor S. Williamson

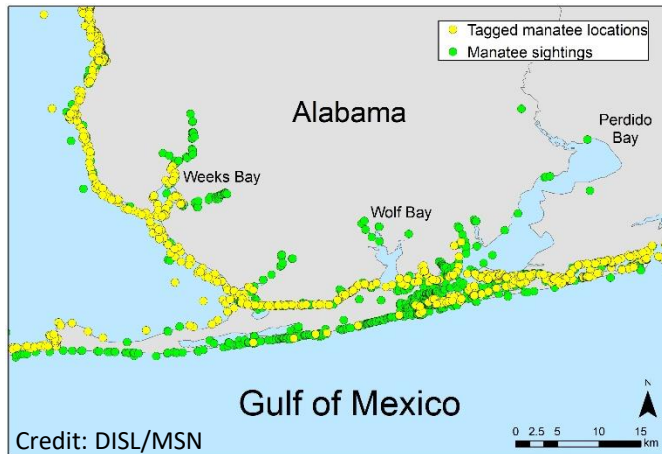
TMA001 nicknamed "Bama" was seen among these active groups, marking 9 out of 12 years since 2009 that Bama has been documented in Alabama. Bama, who is recognizable by a distinct propeller scar, was last seen again in Dog River in mid-October. These sightings of Bama are among more than 300 manatee sightings reported to MSN so far in 2020.

### Highlights

- **Manatees make a splash in Dog River**
- **MSN contributes data to USFWS**
- **New paper on stable isotopes**
- **Research and outreach efforts go virtual**
- **Monitoring manatee habitat**
- **Support MSN!**

### MSN contributes data to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

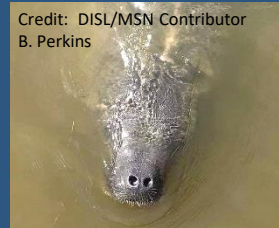
As part of our mission, MSN regularly contributes data to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and other management agencies to inform conservation and management decisions for manatees. This fall, MSN researchers were invited to collaborate on the USFWS's West Indian manatee Species Status Assessment and Species Range Project.



Credit: DISL/MSN

*Example data from tagged manatees and manatee sightings contributed to USFWS.*

These projects will use data from MSN and other researchers to better understand manatee habitat use and threats to manatees throughout their range. Thanks to YOU, our citizen scientists, for helping contribute to these very important data to guide future conservation efforts for manatees!



Credit: DISL/MSN Contributor B. Perkins

**It's now too cold for manatees in the northern Gulf of Mexico!**

**Report all sightings online or by phone!**

**Manatee.disl.org  
1-866-493-5803**

**Like! Us on Facebook:  
Mobile Manatees Sighting Network**

## New paper on diet analysis and habitat utilization



Credit: DISL/MSN Contributor P. Wilbur

MSN's latest research article is now published in the journal *Methods in Ecology and Evolution*. Lead author Dr. Carl Cloyd and fellow MSN researchers tested multiple methods for analyzing stable isotope data, which yield important information about what manatees eat and how they utilize various habitats. By improving methods for stable isotope analysis, MSN is working to better understand population connectivity and resource use among manatees across the Gulf of Mexico coast!

## Monitoring manatee habitat

Throughout the year, MSN collects water quality data at key sites representing manatee habitat in and around Mobile Bay, AL. Data including water temperature, salinity, and dissolved oxygen help us better understand why and when manatees use certain habitat areas. These data are especially important during periods with cold water temperatures when manatees in local waters may be at risk of cold stress.



Credit: DISL/MSN

MSN intern Elizabeth "Biz" Nasharr collects water quality data at manatee habitat sites.

## Research & outreach go virtual

With this year's new challenges, MSN has been working hard to bring our research and outreach programs to a virtual audience! In December, MSN staff virtually attended the **2020 Bays and Bayous Symposium**, featuring more than 160 presentations on research, extension, and education in the northern Gulf. MSN manager Elizabeth Hieb presented recent work examining the potential impacts of bridge and other in-water construction on West Indian manatees.

### More ways to keep up with MSN virtually:

- View presentations on **Dauphin Island Sea Lab's youtube.com** channel
- Take a virtual tour of the Marine Mammal Research Center at DISL by visiting [www.disl.org/about/virtual-campus-tour](http://www.disl.org/about/virtual-campus-tour)
- Follow us at [Facebook.com/mobilemanatees](https://www.facebook.com/mobilemanatees)



## New way to support MSN!

You can now support MSN by shopping our **Amazon wish list!** Through our partnership with **Save the Manatee Club**, you can send much needed supplies directly to MSN to support our research, outreach, and stranding response!

**Visit [www.amazon.com/wishlist](http://www.amazon.com/wishlist) and search for Save the Manatee Club!**



Use this QR code!