



# Dauphin Island Sea Lab's MANATEE SIGHTING NETWORK

## Spring 2023 Newsletter



### DISL/MSN tagged manatee update

Our four tagged manatees spent the winter at warm-water sites in peninsular Florida. This January, the DISL/MSN team traveled to these sites to check on the manatees and their tagging equipment. Tagged manatee, “Clog” spent most of the winter in Weeki Wachee, FL. Two other manatees, now nicknamed “Lynnspin” and “Sanford” have been residing in Crystal River and Homosassa River, respectively. Both manatees have previous sighting histories from these areas, with Sanford’s first sighting documented 20 years ago! Our fourth tagged manatee, “TexasTeeMiguel” spent the fall and winter in Crystal River and recently began his spring migration, traveling to Apalachicola in the Florida panhandle. We will continue to monitor these animals as part of our study on migration and habitat use in the northern Gulf of Mexico.



*Tagged manatee Lynnspin in Crystal River, FL (left) and the DISL/MSN team recording observational data (right)*

### Highlights

- **Tagged manatee update**
- **Cold season manatee responses**
- **New publication on stable isotopes**
- **MSN goes to SEAMAMMS!**
- **Spring outreach events**
- **Amazon wishlist**

### Cold season manatee responses

This winter, the DISL/MSN team responded to a number of manatee strandings. Five total mortalities, all adult males, were recorded from November through January in Alabama and Mississippi. Initial necropsy findings indicate at least two boat strikes and two cold stress related mortalities, with one case still pending additional diagnostic analyses. Our team also responded to four live, cold-stressed manatees in Magnolia River, Dog River, and Chickasaw Creek in Alabama. Data from these cases will be used to learn more about overall population health and threats to manatees in our area



*Carcass recovery Long Beach, MS*



*Cold stressed manatees Magnolia Springs, AL*

P. Strange



Deluna Vision

It's manatee season in the northern Gulf of Mexico!

**Report sightings** online or by phone!

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

**Like! Us on Facebook:**

Mobile Manatees Sighting Network

## New paper on stable isotopes in stranded marine mammals

A new research paper, led by **Dr. Carl Cloyd** and REU student **Che'Isha Johnson** (right), examines the use of stable isotope analysis (SIA) in tissues from dead-stranded marine mammals.



SIA can be used to answer questions about habitat use and diet in species like manatees that are often hard to continuously and directly monitor. We found that SIA values vary with decomposition, but certain tissues can be used to represent live animals. This research emphasizes the need for quick response and sampling of stranded animals to answer ecological questions.

Citation: Cloyd CS et al. 2023. Effects of tissue decomposition on stable isotope ratios and implications for use of stranded animals in research. *Ecosphere*. DOI: 10.1002/ecs2.4385

## Spring Outreach Events

Mark your calendars to join DISL/MSN at these upcoming outreach events!

**DISL's Discovery Day,**  
Dauphin Island, AL, April 22<sup>nd</sup>

<https://www.disl.edu/events/discovery-day/>

**Delta Woods & Waters Expo,**  
Spanish Fort, AL, April 29<sup>th</sup>

<https://www.deltawoodsandwatersexpo.com>

**Cocktails with the Critters,**  
Spanish Fort, AL, May 4<sup>th</sup>

[https://sealabfoundation.org/cwc\\_tickets](https://sealabfoundation.org/cwc_tickets)



## MSN goes to SEAMAMMS!

This March, staff and students from DISL's Marine Mammal Research Program joined the University of South Alabama's *Stokes School of Marine and Environmental Sciences* to host the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic Marine Mammal Symposium (SEAMAMMS). Over 100 attendees participated in the symposium, which included oral and poster presentations, a banquet at DISL, and an expert panel on Effective Science Communication. This also marks the first time SEAMAMMS was held on the northern Gulf of Mexico coast!



*Marine mammal fun at the SEAMAMMS banquet!*

## Amazon Wish List - Thank you to our supporters!

A huge **THANK YOU** goes out to all of our supporters who have purchased items from our Amazon Wish List! We received more than **\$2,500** worth of supplies in the past year alone! Thank you also to our friends at Save the Manatee Club for hosting the Wish List!

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

