

senior living
activity assistant
powered by spectrio

THE MANATEE



GETTING TO KNOW..

THE MANATEE

Region & Habitat	Live in rivers and marshy coastal areas of West Africa, the Amazon, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico
Classification	Mammalia
Size	9-10 feet long
Nocturnal or Diurnal	Both diurnal and nocturnal
Conservation Status	Threatened
Average Lifespan	50-60 years in the wild and 65 years in captivity
Diet	Primarily herbivores
Scientific Name	Trichechus
Fun Fact	The first recorded sighting of a manatee in North America was by Christopher Columbus in 1492, who thought the manatee he saw was a mermaid.

Manatees are classified as mammals, and like all mammals manatees are warm-blooded, feed their babies milk, and have hair. The whisker-like hairs they have all over their bodies help them sense movement in the water as well as feel textures.

The Manatee, also known as the “sea cow”, is a large aquatic mammal and a relative of the elephant. Grayish-brown in color sporting a thick, wrinkled skin, the manatee uses their front flippers to help them steer, or occasionally crawl, through shallow water. Manatees also have powerful, flat tails that propel them through the water. They are herbivores and their diet consists of large amounts of seagrass, which helps them play an important role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem.

A lot of the plants manatees eat are abrasive, and with their large appetite, the manatees' teeth wear out quickly. However, manatees grow new teeth and as the teeth near the front of the manatee’s jaw wear down and fall out, they’re replaced by new molars at the back of the jaw. Over time, these new teeth slowly move forward. This is called “Polyphyodonty” and only manatees, kangaroos, and elephants have it.

The manatee has become an endangered species despite not having any natural predators. Their natural nesting areas get destroyed by sewage, manure, and fertilizer run-offs, and if algae becomes toxic, it can kill the manatees. These slow, gentle creatures spend most of their time in shallow, warm water, grazing on seagrass which leaves them little room to escape oncoming boats, which many times lead to deadly collisions. Numerous conservation efforts are in place to protect these gentle giants and increase their survival rates.

WORD SEARCH

E R V A I L M O Z M J I
H N X L T O D A U X E Y
S S D F P G Y W M S K B
P L D A P G A S L M W K
I F O N N H A I R S A R
L S N W U G L A F E T L
K Z M W C N E W L H E C
G R A Z E E B R R G R N
H E R B I V O R E S A S
E C O S Y S T E M D Z E
C O W R F L I P P E R S
C O A S T A L D I B F H

Water
Cow
Mammal

Slow
Coastal
Flippers

Ecosystem
Hairs
Graze

Algae
Herbivores
Endangered

MAZE

HELP THE MANATEE GET BACK TO HIS FAMILY.



