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# Hobe Sound Beach Shop's Turtle Times

Volume 6 • Number 5 • October 2025

## Our History is a Treasure: Chapter Thirty-Five *By Jan Otten*

**INVASIVE VS. ENDANGERED:** (Here is Part 2 of this important and interesting topic.)

In the last chapter of *"Our History is a Treasure"* we explored the world of INVASIVE SPECIES affecting our community and most of South Florida. In this current chapter it makes sense to look into the ENDANGERED SPECIES that live here and call Hobe Sound and South Florida home.

There are scores of endangered wildlife creatures and crucial vegetation species on the brink of extinction. We cannot cover all of them in this publication but, like the *Invasive Species*, we will touch on some of the most prominent *Endangered Species* affecting our community.

We've established and agreed that Hobe Sound is a truly unique space in the peninsula we call Florida. This little "bubble" of an unincorporated village is surrounded by nature and protected by early settlers who had a vision to keep this community from being developed into towering apartment complexes and hotels. They established parks and natural preserves with habitats for all things nature.

In Part 1 of this topic, it was made clear that "invasive" refers to something that does not belong where it is. Essentially it is unwelcome and usually overly assertive and generally causes harm, most often because it was brought here improperly either on purpose or inadvertently and does not have any natural predators.

So now, what about "endangered"? How does that differ from "invasive"? We don't want "invasive" species here!!

"Endangered" species belong here, are native to the area, but sadly due to many different reasons have dropped dramatically in numbers to the point of possible extinction – never again to be a part of nature and potentially seriously impacting life on this planet as we know it.

We must also take into consideration the related words. Very often used in referring to "endangered" is "imperiled" meaning fish and wildlife species that meet criteria to be listed as federally endangered, federally threatened or State-designated Threatened. And the word "threatened" means a species is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future.

Another word that pops up most often when referring to endangered/threatened species is "fragmentation" ... "the process or state of breaking or being broken into small or separate parts." With respect to our endangered species, it refers to the breaking up of the places where they normally live. For example, by development of the land that is their natural habitat.

With all of that being said, on the other side of this topic is an important related word, "delisted." Delisting is the removal of species from the Federal Lists of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), "When we remove a species that was formerly listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), we "delist" that species. We remove species from the lists of endangered and



threatened species for three reasons: 1) The species has recovered to the point that it no longer needs the ESA's protection; 2) The original information warranting listing has been shown to be incorrect, or new information suggests that the species is not actually endangered or threatened; 3) The species has become extinct.

According to the ESA, when a species recovers and is delisted, it must be monitored where it occurs for at least five years. Generally, NOAA Fisheries develops a post-delisting monitoring plan to ensure that the species' status does not deteriorate. If new threats emerge or an unforeseen change means the species again needs the ESA's protections, NOAA Fisheries can list it again." Therefore, delisting and downlisting (the reclassification of a species from Endangered to Threatened) actions result from successful recovery efforts. It is important to note that as well as the protections in place by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), the NOAA Fisheries has jurisdiction over 163 endangered and threatened marine species, including 65 foreign species.

Basically, it is evident that humans cause the greatest harm to the environment. While on the other hand, and very importantly, it is humans who work diligently to protect and restore what has been damaged.

Some examples of the key threats to the most endangered/threatened species begin by eradicating natural habitats and moving onto the lands where the native species have always lived. Also posing significant threats, to name just a few, include things like boat strikes to manatees; to most all marine life, pollution in our waterways like plastic bags, fishing lines, and amazingly, balloons released on purpose or by accident. It has also been noted that trash and unsecured food waste can attract black bears from long distances, increasing conflict with humans. We're all very much aware of the historic impact by pesticides like DDT. One affect from that is to the eggshells of bald eagles, reducing their reproductive success. And let us not forget all of the "invasive species" as touched on in the previous chapter.

Here are a few of the most well-known species currently considered endangered or threatened:

**Gopher Tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*):** Listed as threatened this is the only native tortoise species east of the Mississippi River and its range includes all 67 counties in Florida. The tortoise habitats are found in sandhills, scrub, pine flatwoods and coastal dunes. Due to fragmentation and urbanization of their natural habitat they are forced to cross roads more frequently in search of food sources making them vulnerable to vehicle strikes. In addition, fire suppression has led to overgrown landscapes that are less suitable for them.

Gopher tortoises play a major role in the ecosystem mostly due to their digging of deep burrows that provide shelter for hundreds of other species. Built for digging, they have strong elephant-like legs covered in thick scales, with wide, shovel-like feet specialized for burrowing into sandy

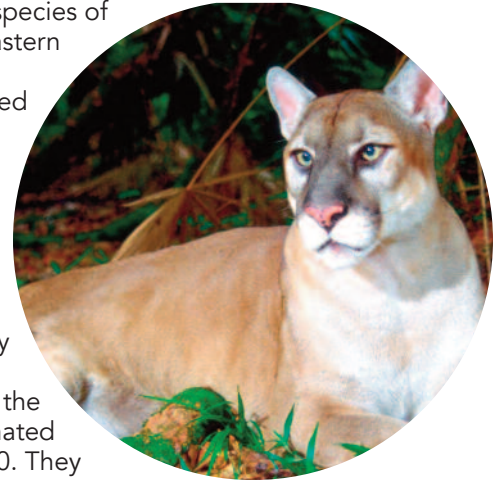


soil. Gopher tortoises are strictly land-dwelling and cannot swim. In fact, they are at risk of drowning if they are placed in water. They range in size from roughly 9-11 inches in length and generally weigh approximately 8-15 pounds.

Keep in mind that a permit is always required to possess, study, or relocate gopher tortoises.

**Florida Panther (*Puma concolor coryi*)** is the only subspecies of cougar in the southeastern United States and is considered endangered due to breakup of its habitat and conflict with humans.

According to the National Wildlife Federation it has been noted that during the 1970s, only about 20-30 Florida panthers remained in the wild. Today, it is estimated there are just over 200. They are found in southern Florida in swamplands such as Everglades National Park and Big Cypress National Preserve.



**Florida Bonneted Bats (*Eumops floridanus*)** are found from south of Orlando to Miami along both coasts in Florida. They are among the largest sized bats in the U.S. Considered "insectivores" these creatures help reduce the populations of bugs catching them while in flight. Their threats come from fragmentation of their habitats due to development and agriculture. Then add disease, their small population size, climate change, and pesticides.



Juan Cruzado Cortés  
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**The Florida Scrub Jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*)** is a bird found only in Florida's oak scrub ecosystems which are rapidly disappearing due to development of their habitat lands. For the most part these birds make their home in the oak scrub with its sandy soil in Jonathan Dickinson State Park in Hobe Sound. Scrub Jays rarely leave their home territory. They form permanent family units that include the young of the family helping to care for the very youngest of the family. Their almost 90%



decline over the last century has been attributed to human development (including vehicle strikes) and to fire suppression making the habitat too dense and tall. Prescribed fire is a key management tool helping to maintain the open scrub habitat necessary for their survival.

**The Florida Sandhill Crane (*Antigone canadensis pratensis*)** is another bird greatly affected by fragmentation of their habitat land as well as human interaction such as vehicle strikes. A general estimate is that there are approximately 4,000 to 5,000 left in the wild. In the

winter a huge migration of Greater sandhill cranes swells the numbers but they leave in the spring. The Florida sandhill cranes live in Florida year round and mate for life generally laying 2 eggs at a time.

Within 24 hours of hatching the babies are ready to leave the nest and begin foraging for food with their adult parents. Considered omnivorous, they forage for seeds, roots, insects, snakes, frogs, and small mammals. These large, grey birds sport a distinctive red patch on their heads, they stand about four feet tall with a wingspan about six feet, and are known for their loud, rattling bugle calls. They require both freshwater wetlands for nesting and roosting and open uplands for foraging. They are often spotted wandering in neighborhoods.



**American Alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*) and American Crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*)** are both

currently designated by the Endangered Species Act as threatened. South Florida is the only place that both animals live in the wild. They are easily distinguished from each other by the shape of their snout with alligators having a more U-shaped snout while crocodiles have a more pointed or V-shaped one, and alligators are black, while crocodiles are usually a lighter grayish brown.

The main threat facing the American alligator is the destruction and degradation of wetland habitat mostly due to human development. Alligator nests are vulnerable to raccoons and bears, and juveniles are vulnerable to predation by wading birds, otters and larger alligators.

Between about 1930 and 1960 crocodiles were hunted extensively for their very valuable hides critically damaging their population. Currently, they are threatened by illegal hunting and habitat destruction. While it is illegal to hunt crocodiles in the U.S, other countries in the crocodile's range, have difficulty enforcing conservation laws, or they have no conservation laws at all to protect the crocodile and its habitat. Damage to their eggs will occur if conditions in their habitat are too dry or too wet. Their nests also face threats from raccoons, birds, and crabs. And at the same time, other threats include vehicle strikes and disease and includes habitat damage from hurricanes.



**Alligator**

**SNOUT:** wide, rounded and U-shaped

**TEETH:** lower teeth are typically not visible when the mouth is shut

**COLOR:** gray or black

**RANGE:** China and southeastern US



**Crocodile**

**SNOUT:** narrow and V-shaped

**TEETH:** some teeth in the bottom jaw that are apparent, most notably the large fourth tooth

**COLOR:** olive or tan.

**RANGE:** North, Central, and South America, Africa, Australia, and part of Asia

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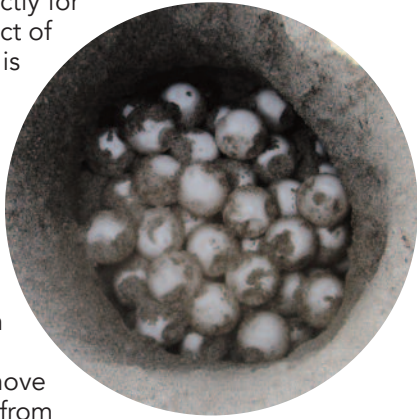
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**Five species of Sea Turtles** make Florida their home and are federally listed as endangered or threatened.

- Green (*Chelonia mydas*)
- Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*)
- Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) threatened
- Kemp's Ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*) considered critically endangered) rarest and most endangered
- Hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) considered critically endangered

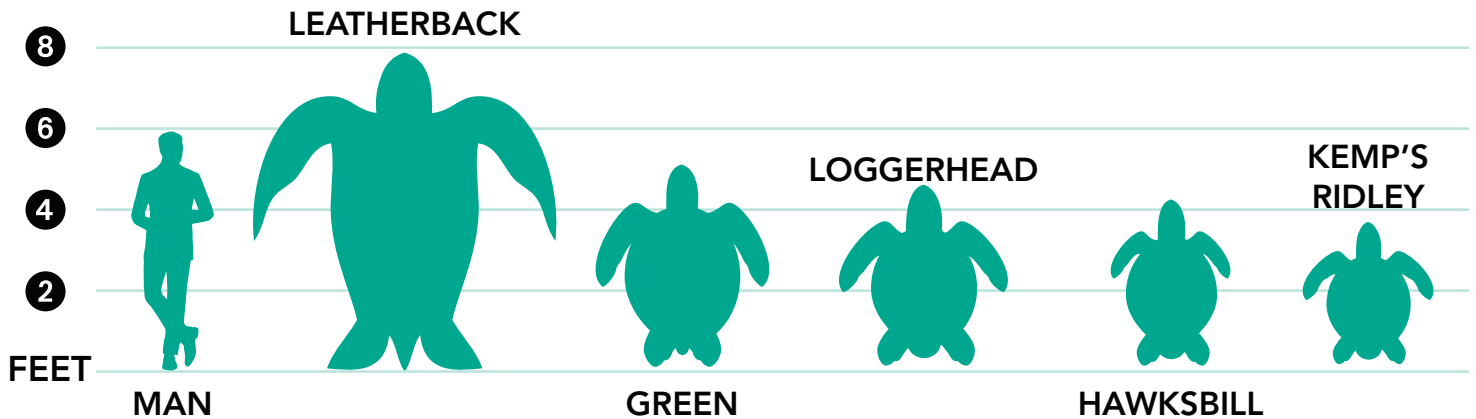
A Sea turtle's lifespan is anywhere from 40 to 60 years, or even more. Between March 1st and October 31st the females emerge from the sea at night to dig their nests in the sand, lay 80 to 120 eggs, cover and camouflage their nests and then head back into the sea leaving the nests unattended. After incubation of about two months, over a couple of days, the hatchlings will together dig out of their nest at night and head directly for the sea. An important aspect of their trek through the sand is to "imprint" their home beach so that once grown, they return to lay their nests on the same beach.



Sea turtle nests are often in excess of two feet deep. Seasonal erosion helps remove the leftover organic debris from the beach in preparation for the following season. Photo by Larry. Wood



Sea turtle nest protective barrier on Hobe Sound Beach.



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**West Indian Manatees** are considered threatened on the endangered species list. These mammals are protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Because of their low reproductive rates and along with the biggest threat to their survival by collisions with boats, and in addition, the loss of warm water springs that provide important habitat, their survival is seen as limited. They are also vulnerable to entanglement in fishing gear, red tide blooms, and due to pollutants, the loss of seagrass beds that they feed upon.

The two subspecies of West Indian manatee, the **Florida manatee** (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*) and the **Antillean manatee** (*Trichechus manatus manatus*) share several common traits: they are most often gray in color but can range from black to light brown. They have wrinkled skin covered sparsely with hairs and are sometimes spotted with algae or barnacles on their bodies. Their large bodies are seal-shaped with paired flippers, and a round, paddle-shaped tail. Their faces are wrinkled and have whiskers. A manatee's upper lip is flexible and split and used to pass food into its mouth. Due to their habit of foraging on aquatic plants they are often referred to as "sea cows".



West Indian Manatee.  
Photo by Cal Robinson.

## MANATEE FACTS AT A GLANCE

### WEIGHT

Up to 1,200 lbs

### LENGTH

Up to 13 feet

LIFESPAN 60 years or more

DIET Herbivorous; consume 5-10% of body weight in vegetation daily

UNIQUE TRAIT Replace their teeth throughout their lives



They are very agile in the water despite their large size (anywhere between 40 and 60 pounds). They spend most of their time underwater, but return to the surface to breathe, often remaining just below the surface with only their snout peeking out above the water, thus making them very vulnerable to boat strikes. They can remain underwater for as long as 12 minutes, but the average is 4.5 minutes.

We tend to think of endangered species as mostly referring to mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and marine life, but we must also consider the many varieties of plant life found in Florida. The good, the bad, the ugly and the pretty.



## MARTIN COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER

Jenny Fields, CFA



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According to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) "the list of Florida's native plants that are most in need of conservation efforts includes 448 endangered, 118 threatened and nine commercially exploited species. Fifty-four of these species are on the federal list of endangered plant species and 14 are on the federal list of threatened species."

The FDACS defines a native plant as "a plant species that is presumed to have been present in Florida before Europeans arrived." Through strict regulation Florida protects native plant species that are endangered, threatened or commercially exploited. The state also encourages the propagation of endangered species and provides means to legally collect these species for propagation. Harvesting from the wild requires a permit from FDACS.

Interestingly, in the plant world, in addition to endangered and threatened, commercially exploited species refers to species native to the state that are subject to being removed in significant numbers from native habitats and sold or transported for sale. Harvesting or collecting three or more plants or parts of plants listed as commercially exploited requires landowner permission and a permit issued by FDACS.

Martin County's is considered part of one of the most biodiverse estuarine systems in North America supporting over 30 threatened and endangered species, most of which are vulnerable to habitat loss. Some of the key areas for plant conservation include: Indian River

Lagoon & St. Lucie Inlet; Blowing Rocks Preserve, a sanctuary in Martin County that features a restored Florida dune habitat with native plants like sea oats, sea grape, and bay cedar; and The Nathaniel P. Reed Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge, a site for conservation efforts including the reintroduction of the four-petal pawpaw.

Plants found in Martin County, Florida, that are federally listed as endangered include:

#### **The Red Mangrove (*Rhizophora mangle*):**

A tree species vital for coastal ecosystems and protected by Florida statute. It has been noted on Hutchinson Island.

**The Four-petal Pawpaw (*Asimina tetramera*):** Listed as federally endangered this plant is found in the southernmost parts of Martin County and areas like the Juno Dunes natural area in



*Red Mangrove. Photo by Caroline Rogers, Ph.D. USGS*



*Four-petal Pawpaw Bob Peterson CC BY 2.0*

northern Palm Beach County. It is threatened by habitat loss and urban development.

**The Jobé Bluecurls (*Trichostema hobe*):** An exceedingly rare and fragrant cream and maroon-colored flower. It is considered to be so rare because it grows only in Palm Beach and Martin counties. In Martin County it is found in Jonathan Dickinson State Park and Palm Beach County along the Juno Ridge. Due to its limited presence, petitioners have sought Endangered Species Act protection for this flower.

Beyond the federally protected species, a 2010 University of South Florida atlas identified 30 state-listed threatened or endangered species in Martin County, a couple of which include:

#### **Coontie: (or Coontie**

**Palm)** Belonging to the ancient group of plants known as cycads, low-growing, fern-like in appearance, it is often referred to as a "living fossil" due to its evolutionary stability over millions of years. While not explicitly listed as endangered, it is a crucial host plant for the rare and endangered Atala butterfly as the preferred food source for its larvae population for recovery in the area. Conservation initiatives are underway to protect and restore these iconic plants, emphasizing the importance of preserving native flora for future generations.

I've barely just scratched the surface of the Endangered Species topic. There are many other endangered plants and wildlife found in Florida, not necessarily just in Martin County. To see more complete lists visit Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services website.



*Jobé Bluecurls. Photo by Kevan Schoonover McClelland*



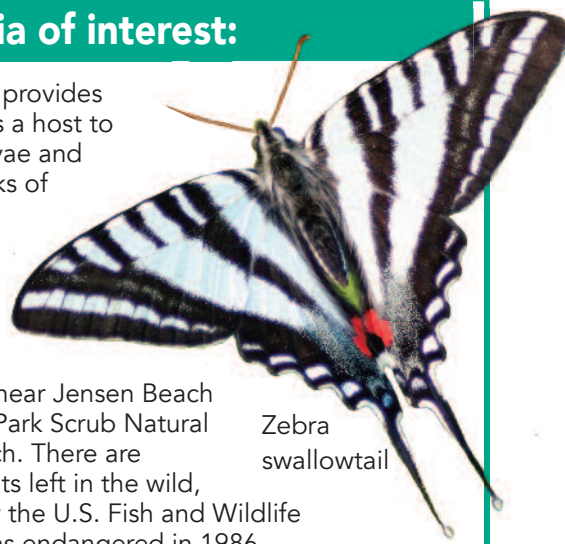
*Coontie Palm. Photo by Palm Leonora Enking. CC BY-SA 2.0*



Information in this article was resourced from: Florida State Parks; Florida Wildlife Federation; Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission; University of Florida Gardening Solutions; Florida Agriculture Consumer Service; Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; Florida Oceanic & Atmospheric Association

## Some trivia of interest:

- The four-petal pawpaw plant, provides fruit for the gopher tortoise, is a host to zebra swallowtail butterfly larvae and offers a bloom that either reeks of feces, yeast, rotten fruit or wafts the more pleasant earthy scent of root beer. Its world-wide habitat has been reduced to about a 35-mile strip of high and dry coastal sand pine scrub habitat from near Jensen Beach in Martin County to the Lake Park Scrub Natural Area north of West Palm Beach. There are believed to be just 1,400 plants left in the wild, according to a 2022 report by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The plant was listed as endangered in 1986.
- According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) the following is the endangered species rule: In Florida no person shall take, possess, or sell any Federal or State-designated Endangered or Threatened Species or parts thereof including their nests or eggs except as allowed by specific federal or state permits.
- As part of Florida Wildlife Federation's commitment to education, FWF has developed informative signs to teach the public how to safely interact with threatened gopher tortoises. Since 2016 over 300 signs have been installed in natural areas like state and county parks, forests, beaches, and nature preserves. These signs, distributed to public agencies and nonprofits, serve as valuable tools in raising awareness and fostering respect for gopher tortoises.



Zebra swallowtail

If you are asking, "How can I help?" Be it wildlife or plant life, following are a few suggestions while you keep in mind that above all losing even one species can cause a chain reaction, adversely impacting the entire world-wide circle of life!

1. As a general rule, NEVER FEED WILDLIFE. Bird feeders in your yard are totally appropriate, but feeding other wildlife is not helpful on many levels. A few examples illustrating this point are: the wildlife become dependent on being fed and no longer forage for food on their own; they are often fed food that is harmful to them; the aggressive wildlife become too familiar with humans and frequently do harm to humans interfering with their natural feeding routines; the wildlife will enter areas that are dangerous to them and dangerous to humans.
2. Be aware of and support conservation efforts and habitat protection for Florida's wildlife and plant life by staying informed about local initiatives and regulations designed to protect endangered species. For example, the Martin County chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society works to conserve native flora in the region.
3. Reduce the human impact by practicing safe driving and safe boating to avoid collisions with wildlife and properly dispose of food waste. Always be mindful of native ecosystems.
4. To learn how to apply for a permit regarding endangered or threatened Florida vegetation visit the FDACS website.
5. For more in-depth information the FWC has individual management plans for imperiled species such as the gopher tortoise as well as a comprehensive Imperiled Species Management Plan for state-listed species.
6. By learning about and supporting native species like the Coontie plant, we can contribute to the preservation of ecosystems, enhance urban green spaces, and create a more sustainable future for generations to come.
7. Anyone can volunteer in the non-native plant, animal, and river cleanups occurring in your area.
8. Know what to do if you find an endangered species. Report marine mammals or sea turtles in distress. Report wildlife harassment to NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement 24-hour hotline: (800) 853-1964. Never purchase anything made from an endangered or threatened species.
9. Do not disturb or collect any wild plants. Instead purchase from a reputable plant nursery.



- Coontie palm is not edible as is. All parts of the plant contain toxins, particularly the most lethal, the seeds. As few as two seeds can be fatal. Apparently indigenous tribes, such as the Seminole, developed an extensive process of preparation, including washing, mashing, fermenting, and drying, to extract the toxins and create an edible, starchy flour for baking. This plant is highly poisonous to dogs, and even a small amount can be fatal due to the presence of cycasin and other toxins. Symptoms of poisoning can include vomiting, bloody diarrhea, and liver failure, so it is crucial to seek immediate veterinary care if your dog ingests any part of a coontie palm.
- Animals and plants are early warning signs about environmental changes and pollution that negatively affect humans and animals alike.
- According to the Florida Wildlife Federation, the third Friday in May is Endangered Species Day celebrating Florida's rich biodiversity. This day is a reminder that many species in Florida, and across the globe, are at risk of extinction, largely due to human activities.



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**A little Trivia from Dictionary.com**

**untoward** [ uhn-tawrd ] adjective. unfavorable or unfortunate

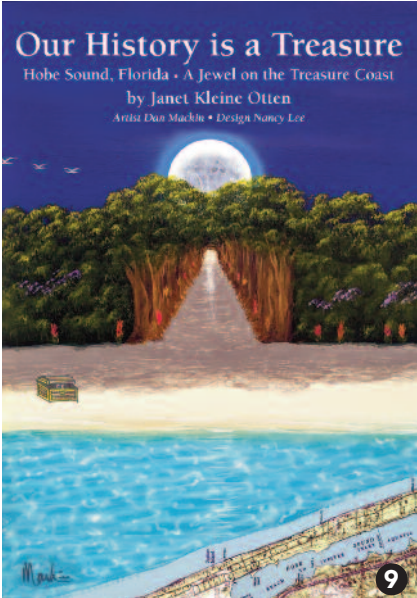
*Have you recently had an **untoward** experience when ordering something online? Come to the Hobe Sound Beach Shop and Hobe Sound Beach Shop Too... on Bridge Road where you can pick from a plethora of brands, in a myriad of styles and sizes that you can actually try on before making a commitment. In addition, there are up to ten choices of souvenirs and gifts available as well as custom-made tee shirts, caps, and more.*

**Our History is a Treasure**  
Hobe Sound, Florida • A Jewel on the Treasure Coast  
by Janet Kleine Otten  
Artist Dan Mackie • Design Nancy Lee

**Hobe Sound, Florida**  
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**By Janet Kleine Otten**

A journey through the history of this unique village in the State of Florida.

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9

## Real Estate Corner

"Rich...How's the real estate market?" The most common question every real estate agent is asked whenever someone knows you are a licensed Realtor®. The answer should be followed up with the response that goes like this "What market are you wondering about? The residential market, the commercial market, as an investor in residential real estate, the rental market, business investment, or vacant land?"

Any licensed realtor can offer information on any of these topics, but specific markets may have different answers. Some realtors specialize in certain markets just like a doctor specializes in different medical practices. Some realtors specialize in one building or a single community and become very knowledgeable in that building or community.

First what is a Realtor®? -----A Realtor® is a federally registered collective membership mark which identifies a real estate professional who is a member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and subscribes to its strict Code of Ethics, as well as a local Board of Realtors® with ongoing study, testing and membership dues required.

### Three main specialized Realtors® are:

1. **A Residential Realtor®:** this will be the majority of real estate agents who primarily deal with buyers and sellers of single family homes and condos to individuals
2. **A Commercial Realtor®:** this will be a realtor who primarily deals with individuals and corporations selling buildings, such as hotels, shopping centers, office buildings etc. Any licensed realtor can sell commercial however a true specialist will have a designation of CCIM (Certified Commercial Investment Member). This means the specialized realtor has gone thru extensive training involving financial and market analysis and demonstrated broad experience in the commercial real estate industry. This is normally a two-year study. Designees are recognized as leading experts in commercial investment real estate.

Another special designation is a member of SIOR (The Society of Industrial and Office Realtors®) which is an international Professional Commercial and Industrial organization.

The Commercial Realtor® will also belong to CoStar which is a National Data base (with a high membership fee) much like the MLS (Multiple listing Service) but with National Commercial Buyers and Listings.

3. **A Business Broker:** this is a realtor who specializes in small business sales, sometimes without physical property perhaps using a rental space. They are knowledgeable in evaluation of financial information of the business from tax returns, profit and loss statements and more, to provide valuation and pricing to a business. They are discreet in marketing as sometimes employees do not know the business is for sale.

The business broker may belong to other associations like the IBBA (the International Business Brokers Association) which is an international organization of professional business brokers that train and educate Realtors® in the business specialty they offer a designation of CBI (Certified Business Intermediary) as well as other specialty organizations for business brokerage.

You see all these markets do vary and trend differently at different times. Since I am basically a residential realtor my answer may be different from your asking a specialist. All realtors will have some knowledge in specialty fields and can legally sell or help buyers in any aspect of real estate. Education in various special fields as well as constant knowledge testing is ongoing for your local Realtor®.

Just sayin!

### Rich Otten, PSA, C2EX

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## Exciting things are happening at the Hobe Sound Beach Shop!

### With the Grand opening of Hobe Sound Beach Shop Too...

scheduled for November 1st we'd like to introduce the new partner who has joined the team for both locations as "General Superintendent."

Richard O'Connell, formerly of Sandy Springs, GA and originally Boston (Weston), MA, brings a fun theme to the two Bridge Road shops, "We think LOCAL, but are really a GLOBAL shop. We work, so you can play." Rich is happy to be a resident of Jupiter Island and become involved in the special community that is Hobe Sound. In addition, he is proud to partner in this business with Barb McLaughlin, founder of the original Hobe Sound Beach Shop.

Rich also brings his brother Mark onboard as outside sales rep to help spread the word of all that's new and all that continues to be part of this community. Watch for Mark and his 1958 yellow pickup.

Please welcome Rich and Mark and watch how Bridge Road comes alive with new and fantastic beach items, clothing lines, jewelry, and souvenirs. Custom printing will still be available from one to hundreds, whatever your needs.

Rich O'Connell and Mark O'Connell with their prize-winning catch, Cabo San Lucas, 2025.

# Delegate the Worries

"No worries," the window installer said. He was installing my hurricane shutters. The shutters needed a hole redrilled. Another project for my South Florida home.

"I don't worry! I delegate." I said with a smirk. He paused his work, gave me a big grin and replied, "The world would be better off if everyone would do that... delegate their worries." I continued, "I delegate my worries to my worry dolls." The beginning of our philosophical discussion about the world of worries.

Worries, concerns, anxieties. The could've, would've, should've of life. Worries use personal energy to accomplish, in my opinion, nothing, wasting today's energy.

Worries often start as nighttime fears in childhood. They can affect a child's sleep. The Mayan culture of the indigenous people of Guatemala developed worry dolls centuries ago. A cultural tradition born. Worry dolls are small, handmade dolls used to help children manage their worries. The child tells the dolls their fears, sorrows, or anxieties, at bedtime. This storytelling helps the child release their worries to get a good night's sleep. The dolls were placed under the child's pillow, carrying away their worries.

Today, worry dolls are used by people of all ages and cultures. A simple,



effective nighttime practice. Delegating the worries in return for a good night's sleep, be it by talking to a doll, writing in a journal, praying, or meditating. A calmer spirit at bedtime for a better night's sleep.

The installer nodded as we chatted about worry dolls. He was aware of the worry doll tradition from a recent trip to South America.

We walked, talked, and tested each shutter. With the redrilling, I could now easily open and close the hurricane shutters all by myself. Another hurricane preparedness project done!

We agreed about the benefits of hurricane shutters and worry dolls. Shutters to shut out the hurricane force winds. Worry dolls to shut out nighttime worries. Less worries contributing to a better night's sleep. For more stories, visit [drmarlenemd.com](http://drmarlenemd.com)

References: Wikipedia, (April 1, 2025), Worry doll, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worry\\_doll](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worry_doll)

## Dr. Marlene Smith, MD

Educator, Author,  
Family Practice Physician  
[www.DrMarleneMD.com](http://www.DrMarleneMD.com)



Guatemalan Worry doll  
(guatemalská panenka  
strachu) by Kakarinka

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Opening Saturday,  
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Read **Turtle Times**, including all previous  
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**Hobe Sound Beach Shop Store Hours**  
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**Closed Sundays**

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