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New Federal South Atlantic Fishing Regulations: Descending Device Required on Board

By Shelly Krueger,
UF/IFAS Extension, Sea Grant Agent

Beginning July 15, 2020 all recreational, commercial, and for-hire vessels will be required to have a working descending device on-board and readily available when fishing for any of the fish in the snapper-grouper fishery management unit in federal waters of the Atlantic Ocean from North Carolina to Florida. In the Florida Keys, this means any vessel that is fishing for reef fish in the South Atlantic will be required to possess descending gear when fishing greater than 3-nautical miles offshore all the way through the Dry Tortugas. Fish may be released using a fishing pole or hand-line with a descending device attached to a minimum 16-ounce weight, or a weighted container, with at least 60 feet of line that is capable of returning fish back to a depth of at least 50 feet. The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council has examples of descending devices and a video to make your own using a weighted barbless hook at <https://catchandrelease.org>

Plant Clinics



EVERY TUESDAY & 3rd SATURDAY OF THE MONTH
Email Monroe@ifas.ufl.edu or call (305)292-4501 to register!

Plant Clinic Plus!

Along with answering all of your plant/insect questions, we will also start each clinic with a brief topical discussion. See topics and dates below:

August 4th:

How Do I Plant This?



August 11th: Benefits of Mulch

August 15th: Managing Plant Pests With Soap



August 18th: To Be Announced

August 25th:

Fertilizing Palms



(photos above) Fishermen demonstrate the proper usage of a descending device

NOAA Fisheries recommends using descending devices on fish exhibiting signs of barotrauma. The new regulation does not prohibit the use of venting tools, but a descending device will still need to be on

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Sea Grant News



Shelly Krueger
UF/IFAS Florida Sea Grant Agent

Shelly recently accomplished the following activities:

- Shelly presented Florida Sea Grant Bite-Sized Science webinar series about Florida's Marine Sponges, you can watch the recording here: <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/flagler/marine-and-coastal/environmental-education/bite-sized-science-webinar-series/>



- Shelly is co-lead of the Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease Communications & Outreach Team. We have spent the last few months doing extensive planning and brainstorming! To support efforts to expand the focus of the team beyond crisis disease communication, the Communications & Outreach Team has updated its objectives and communications plan to include general coral conservation messaging. The team has also added to its network of partners, including Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Force Blue, and Coral Restoration Foundation, who meet bi-weekly on reef-related activities in Florida.

- The UF/IFAS Water Watch Database is about to go live. Shelly has been busy moving volunteer data from the Georgia Adopt A Stream Database and will plan to share with Florida Keys Water Watch volunteers as soon as beta testing is complete.
- Florida Sea Grant Bite-Sized Science webinar series link to all of the great recordings, Kindergarten through Adult. <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/flagler/marine-and-coastal/environmental-education/bite-sized-science-webinar-series/>



The Environmental Horticulture Program and Master Gardener Volunteers remain dedicated to helping you with your plant related questions.



CALL OUR OFFICE:
(305)292-4501

We have many different ways we can assist!

ZOOM PLANT CLINICS:
Every Tuesday & 3rd Saturday of the month!!
Email Monroe@ifas.ufl.edu or
Call (305)292-4501 to Register

EMAIL YOUR QUESTIONS TO:
mastgardener@monroecounty-fl.gov

Please include a detailed description of the problem and photos if available

FACEBOOK PAGE:
Visit our Facebook page for updates, requests, information and so much more!
<https://www.facebook.com/MonroeCountyExtension/>

Horticulture News



Michelle Leonard-Mularz
UF/IFAS Environmental Horticulture Agent

Michelle recently accomplished the following activities:

- Michelle worked with Key West Wildlife Center to develop an infographic discouraging residents from feeding wild chickens.



- Michelle is developing an online Master Gardener course to begin September 17th to comply with University of Florida and Monroe County policies on social distancing during COVID-19.

- Michelle and the Master Gardener volunteers hosted 5 plant clinics in July with a new format for attracting more resident participation. The new format has been successful and there were 52 attendees in July.



Call (305)292-4501 or email Monroe@ifas.ufl.edu to register for the Master Gardener Course Premiere Session on August 11th at 4pm

Be sure to "Like" us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)!

Extension Director's News

Alicia Betancourt

UF/IFAS Family and Community Development Agent and
Monroe County Extension Director

Alicia recently accomplished the following activities:

- Alicia completed development of an online learning program "Climate Smart Florida, For Kids" which is a free web based program for students and teaches to learn the basics of climate change, greenhouse gasses, blue carbon, Florida's ecosystems impacts and how to take action on climate change.



- Alicia held training and sharing meetings for 30 Extension Professionals called "Skills for Dynamic Situations" which outlines best practices in having difficult conversations around race and racial issues.



- Alicia led week four of "Touring Florida" an online 4-H month long program for 90 participants. <https://sites.google.com/ufl.edu/touringflorida/home>



- Alicia worked with the Southeast Florida Climate Compact, Municipal Work Group to develop priorities for a municipal scorecard for regional implementation of climate resilient strategies. This framework will be presented in the fall at a workshop for municipal staff across the region.
- Alicia worked with the Florida Sea Grant, Climate Work Action Group determined goals for 2020 summer and fall including programming, website development and youth outreach.

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board and readily available for use. Barotrauma occurs when fish are caught and brought up from deep water, typically greater than 50 feet of depth. The rapid change in pressure when the fish is brought to the surface causes the swim bladder to expand (or even burst). Common signs of barotrauma are the stomach protruding out of the mouth, bulging eyes, and distended intestines. Descending devices use a weight to return the fish to depth, which recompresses the expanded gas and reverses the effects of barotrauma. Science has shown that descending gear is effective at getting fish back down to depth, and this increases survival rates by minimizing the effects of barotrauma.



(photos above) Fish showing signs of barotrauma

Reef fish like snapper and grouper are the most susceptible species to barotrauma because they live on the bottom. The snapper-grouper fishery management unit includes a large list of fish, including snappers, groupers, and popular food fish like amberjack, black seabass, spadefish, triggerfish, and tilefish. Considering that more than 60% of recreational fish are caught and released alive, use of descending gear can increase the number of fish that survive to be caught again at a larger size or later when in-season. Fisheries research conducted in collaboration with fishermen shows that using descending tools greatly increases survival rates. Another advantage is descending gear reduces depredation on "floaters," or released fish floating on the surface. These impaired fish are often eaten by birds, dolphins, barracuda, and sharks as they struggle to return to deeper water.

For more information on how to identify barotrauma and select and use descending gear, please visit the Florida Sea Grant Catch and Release website at catchandrelease.org or call the UF/IFAS Monroe County Extension at (305)292-4502.

Be sure to "Like" us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)!



UF/IFAS/MONROE COUNTY EXTENSION

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 Newsletter Editor: Brynn Morey, Extension Coordinator

This newsletter can be accessed online at:
<http://monroe.ifas.ufl.edu/newsletter.shtml>

We're on the Web at: <http://monroe.ifas.ufl.edu>



University of Florida (UF)
<http://SolutionsForYourLife.ufl.edu>
<http://ufl.edu>
 Electronic Data Information Source (EDIS)
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>



UF/IFAS Extension is
 Putting Florida First

Scan this code to go directly to our UF/IFAS Website for more information!



NEW! MONROE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER COURSE

PREVIEW SESSION

Learn about course details, volunteer requirements and opportunities for Monroe County Master Gardeners

Tuesday, August 11th at 4PM via Zoom

To Register call (305)292-4501 or email monroe@ifas.ufl.edu

Once registered for the meeting, you will receive the 2020 Monroe County Master Gardener packet to review prior to the meeting.



Susie Reutling, one of our beloved Master Gardener volunteers, is starting a new chapter in her life. Susie has been a Master Gardener in Monroe County since 2012, and in that time, has contributed over 800 hours of volunteer service; in addition to volunteering at the Key West Tropical Forest & Botanical Garden managing the nursery. She has been an invaluable resource on our team and brought to our program a passion and dedication that shines through to everyone she meets, all while doing it with a smile. We wish her and her husband, Karl, the best of luck on their next adventure. Susie will still be participating in our program in a reduced capacity. Safe travels Susie and Karl from your Keys family!



UF/IFAS/MCES QUARTERLY CONTACTS

	May	June	July	Totals
Phone calls	54	52	57	163
Office visitors	0	0	0	0
Email Consultations	150	150	191	491
Learning events	69	66	57	192
Participants	1150	831	598	2579
Media submissions	13	13	58	84
Publications distributed	243	169	182	594
TOTAL contacts	1679	1281	1143	4103

An Equal Opportunity Institution. UF/IFAS Extension, University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Nick T. Place, dean for UF/IFAS Extension. Single copies of UF/IFAS Extension publications (excluding 4-H and youth publications) are available free to Florida residents from county UF/IFAS Extension offices.