

BONEFISH & MANGROVES



What are Mangroves?

Mangroves are coastal ecosystems adapted to thrive at the intersection of land and sea. Found across The Bahamas, these resilient plants form dense forests that are important to marine life and coastal protection. In The Bahamas there are three species of mangroves: red, black, and white mangroves, as well as an associated species, the buttonwood. Red mangroves grow in the intertidal zone, while black and white mangroves grow above them at higher elevations. Mangroves play an important role in the Bahamian economy by providing habitat for many commercially important species and by reducing storm surge during hurricanes.

Why Mangroves Matter to Bonefish and the Flats Fishery

The Bahamas' bonefish fishery is globally renowned. The bonefishing industry has great cultural, historic, and economic importance. Bahamas bonefish need red mangroves to survive. **Here's why mangroves are important to the flats fishery:**

Nurseries for Bonefish: The prop-roots (walking roots) of the red mangrove provide protection for juvenile fish, lobsters, and crabs from predators. Bonefish prey also seek refuge from summer's warm waters in the shade of the mangroves.

Protecting Shorelines: Mangroves act as natural barriers against the waves and surge from storms and hurricanes, protecting our homes and properties.

Food: Mangrove forests are extremely biodiverse ecosystems. Many of the species you find in red mangrove habitats are important to the bonefish diet, including clams, crabs, worms, snails, and small fish.

Water Quality: Mangrove ecosystems filter sediments and pollutants, keeping our water clean, clear, and healthy.



Protecting mangroves secures the future of bonefish and the greater flats fishery in The Bahamas. Conservation efforts are critical for preserving these unique ecosystems and the economic and cultural benefits they provide. Together, we can ensure these natural treasures for generations to come.