

## WILDERNESS HYGIENE

**Use facilities on board** your boat, or a “portable potty”, and dispose of properly when in port.

**Urinate below the high tide line** and away from other people.

**Dig a cat hole** above the high tide line and at least eight inches deep for any fecal waste. Carry out waste paper in a ziplock baggie for proper disposal.

## PROTECT YOURSELF

**Wear sunscreen**

**Bring insect repellent**

**Be aware of dangerous currents - swim at your own risk**

## PROTECT WILDLIFE

**All plants and animals are protected.**

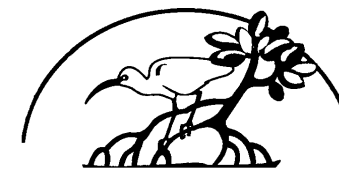
**Take no live shells.**

**Respect areas closed for nesting birds.** Shorebirds typically nest on beaches from April to August. Some wading birds use mangrove rookeries all year round.

**Stay far enough away from resting birds so they do not flush.** Coastal development has resulted in the loss of habitat needed by shorebirds for foraging and resting. Flushed birds expend valuable energy needed for survival.

The Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve is one of the few remaining pristine, mangrove-forested estuaries in the U.S.. As part of the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, it serves as an outdoor classroom and laboratory for students and scientists.

For more information, please contact the Reserve at (239) 417-6310.

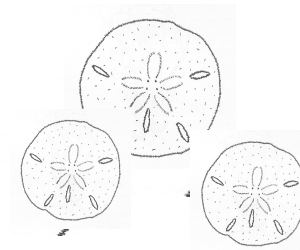


Rookery Bay

National Estuarine Research Reserve

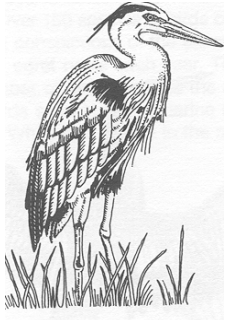
# Leave No Trace

## Guidelines to Protect Wilderness and Wildlife



Yours to explore...Yours to enjoy...Yours to protect





The Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve encourages visitors to utilize *Leave No Trace (LNT)* guidelines.

These guidelines provide a set of “outdoor good manners” to protect wildlands from unintended abuse by outdoor enthusiasts.

Originally established by the National Outdoor Leadership School, the first guidelines were intended for backpackers and mountain campers. Due to rapid population growth in southwest Florida, the need for an outdoor etiquette for boaters, birders, beach enthusiasts and recreational fishermen has increased.

The Reserve recommends the following guidelines to ensure your visit to this pristine estuary will...

***leave no trace.***

## **PROTECT WILDERNESS**

### **Avoid building campfires.**

Aside from the obvious wildfire threat, campfire scars are very unsightly and long lasting. Carefully use cookstoves and lanterns instead.

### **Use designated trails.**

Off-trail excursions destroy native vegetation and cause dune erosion.

### **Take your trash with you.**

- Garbage of any sort is unsightly and ruins the aesthetic experience of enjoying the wilderness of the Rookery Bay Reserve.
- Glass bottles are a safety hazard to visitors and wildlife.
- Plastic wraps and bags pose serious threats to wildlife.
- Monofilament fishing line is deadly to birds and many other forms of wildlife.

## **RESPONSIBLE BOATING**

Operate boats safely and courteously.



**Observe manatee slow zones.** Manatees are hard to spot. The greatest mortality among these endangered mammals is due to boat impacts.

**Avoid prop dredging.** Many of the inshore waters in Collier County have average depths less than three feet. Scars which result from boat props cutting through the bottom in shallow water is detrimental to the dwindling seagrass habitat throughout the Reserve.

**Watch your wake.** Small boats or canoes may be easily overturned by the wake of large speeding vessels.