

EXHIBITS

At the Nature Center you can view an extensive sampling of local sea life. There are hard corals with intriguing names such as golfball, rose and lettuce leaf and dried sea fans and sea plumes that once waved back and forth in the shallow waters off shore. Unusual native crabs and urchins combined with an extensive sea shell collection will help you identify the creatures and shells you may see during your visit to Bahia Honda.

Learn about drift seeds, sea turtles and the strange sponges that wash up on our shores.

Take a break from the sun and view a nature video. We have over 30 to choose from, including our very own Bahia Honda video.



FOR THE CHILDREN

Young visitors like the Nature Center whether they come in school groups or with their parents. Here they can examine preserved sea life, play the Wrack Line Dice game, color pages from the Bahia Honda State Park Coloring Book or put a sea turtle puzzle together.

Mystery Boxes tempt young hands to reach inside and discover by touch. A whelk's egg chain spills a basket full of tiny shells. A small marine aquarium offers a glimpse of the sea life just offshore.

HABITATS

Bahia Honda State Park encompasses six distinct habitat areas: Lagoon, Beaches/Dunes, Coral Reef, Hardwood Hammock, Mangroves, and Gulf Side.

Six, three foot by five foot paintings illustrate these areas and show visitors a sample of the plants and animals living in them. Local artist and volunteer Sharon Buck created these beautiful paintings for Bahia Honda.



HISTORY OF THE SAND AND SEA NATURE CENTER

The building that houses the Nature Center was built in the 1950s and began life as a concession for what was at the time a county park (The County Park became a State Park in 1961). The second story of the building has always been used as an onsite residence for park personnel.

After the concession moved to their new building in 1984, the downstairs served as an office for Looe Key National Marine

Sanctuary. After the Marine Sanctuary moved to their new office in Marathon around 1991, the park used the area for office and storage space.

Around 1995 remodeling began under the direction of Assistant Park Manager Edgar Crum who envisioned a learning place for park visitors. The Education Center opened for visitors in 1997 but was forced to close in September 1998 when Hurricane Georges passed through Bahia Honda and the Florida Keys. Bahia Honda did not fully re-open until May 1999.

In January 2000 the name was changed from the Education Center to Sand and Sea Nature Center.

LOCATION

After passing the Ranger Station, turn right at the next stop sign

ILLUSTRATED TALKS

During the winter months, the Nature Center hosts speakers, including park rangers, that talk about a variety of interesting subjects. Learn about sea life, the coral reef, local history, the stars and constellations and Florida Keys plants and animals

SUMMER AND FALL PROGRAMS

Wet Beach Walk – Tuesdays at 3PM, meet at the kayaks at Loggerhead beach

Illustrated Talk – Fridays at 1PM at the Nature Center

WINTER PROGRAMS

Beginning Birders Beach Walk- Mondays at low tide, meet at the kayaks at Loggerhead beach (sign up at the Ranger Station)

Nature Walk - Tuesdays 11AM at the Silver Palm Trail (sign up at the Ranger Station)

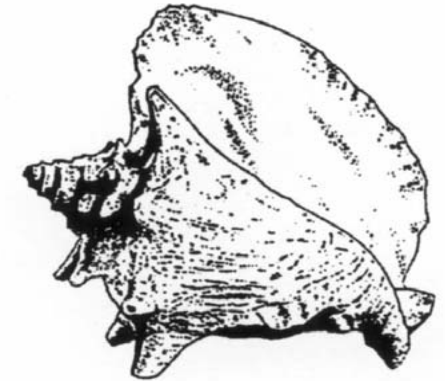
Illustrated Talk - Wednesdays at 1PM at the Nature Center

Story of the Overseas Railway - Thursdays 11AM on the old Bahia Honda Bridge

For Overnight Guests: Illustrated Talk- Fridays 8 PM at the Campfire Circle or the Nature Center.



Sand and Sea Nature Center



www.floridastateparks.org/bahiahonda



**Bahia Honda State Park
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