

You can be a **SEAGRASS SAVIOUR** by making sure that our Bahamian seagrass beds are healthy! We can do this in a few ways:

- **DON'T** throw garbage into seagrass meadows, and tell your family and friends to do the same.
- **ALERT** an adult if you see people dumping waste into a seagrass meadow. **ASK** your parents if they have a septic tank, and if it has been checked lately as they can leak into the ocean.
- **TALK** to your family and friends about the dangers of too much sediment in seagrass meadows.
- **CHECK** out how cool seagrass meadows are, so you can be an educated **SEAGRASS SAVIOR!**



Waste water full of nutrients dumping into the ocean



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*Are you
a seagrass
saviour?*

A Sammy the Seagrass
guide to protecting our
Bahamian seagrass
ecosystems!

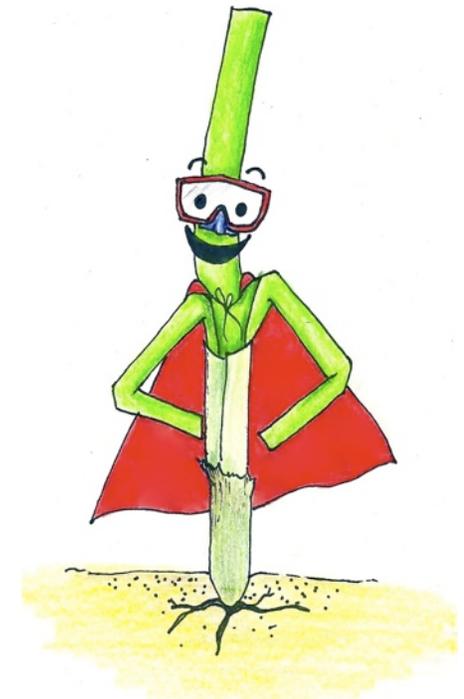


Illustration by Abby Stoner

What are seagrasses?

- They are flowering plants (angiosperms).
- They live under the sea in "meadows".
- They need the sun's energy to grow and survive.
- Seagrasses are found in shallow water throughout the world.

The most common species in The Bahamas are:



Turtle grass (*Thalassia testudinum*)



Shoal grass (*Halodule wrightii*)



Manatee grass (*Syringodium filiforme*)

What's cool about seagrass beds?

- Seagrasses act as "nurseries" for baby animals including conch, crawfish, snapper, grouper and even sharks!



Conch use seagrass beds as their homes

- Adult fish including grouper, snapper and grunts visit seagrass beds at night to munch on the nutritious animals that hide there.
- Seagrass blades themselves are even a tasty snack for many animals that graze on the blades such as parrotfishes and sea turtles!

Who do you think chomped on this seagrass blade?



Answer: a parrotfish

- Seagrasses can improve water clarity and produce lots of oxygen which is good for ocean animals and plants!

Threats to seagrasses

Over one billion people live near seagrass meadows around the world, but this means that there are many human dangers to seagrasses! Here are some threats you can watch out for:

Pollution: Did you know that your trash can kill seagrasses? Pollution from your trash such as aluminum cans and plastic can 'sink' into seagrass blades and make them die.



Trash thrown in the ocean can harm seagrasses

Nutrients: When humans add nutrients into the ocean (think flushing your toilet), the nutrients can cause algae and plants to grow, quickly covering seagrass.

Sedimentation: Seagrasses need light in order to live, but when there is a buildup of sand and dirt in the water, the seagrasses can't get the light they need. This will cause a decline in seagrass health.