

Florida Fish and Wildlife: Be a Citizen-Scientist This Horseshoe Crab Spawning Season

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By [Space Coast Daily](#) // March 11, 2017



If you see a horseshoe crab on its back, gently pick it up (holding both sides of the shell) and release it back into the water. Simple actions like this help conserve this species and the countless other species that depend on it.

BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA (FWC) – Spring is approaching and that means it is peak mating season for horseshoe crabs. Biologists with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) are asking the public to report horseshoe crab sightings.

Horseshoe crabs mate year-round, and spring is the peak season to see them in groups along the shore. To identify mating pairs, look for a smaller male on top of a larger female.

Beachgoers will likely have the best luck spotting horseshoe crabs around high tide, within three days of a new or full moon. The next full moon is this Sunday, March 12, and the new moon is Monday, March 27.

For 15 years, citizens have reported horseshoe crab sightings to the FWC, providing important information about population distribution. Although horseshoe crabs have been around for approximately 450 million years, their numbers have declined in recent decades due to overfishing and loss of habitat.

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The FWC asks the public to [report sightings](#) through one of several options. Go to MyFWC.com/Contact and go to “Horseshoe Crab Nesting Activity” for the “Florida Horseshoe Crab Spawning Beach Survey” link. You can also report findings via email at horseshoe@MyFWC.com or by phone at [866-252-9326](tel:866-252-9326).

