

SPREAD THE WORD

Awareness, Attitude and Action



To many people the words "powerboat racing" and "going green" might seem to be at odds but, through its Marine Foundation charity and selected partnerships such as with Audubon Florida, Powerboat P1 is committed to safeguarding and restoring the marine and coastal environment by raising awareness, enhancing knowledge and changing behaviour. Within motorsport there is rapidly increasing sensitivity to the environment and P1 has developed a corporate environmental policy and implements effective programs as an integral part of its business strategy.



Wildlife Conservation

Sarasota Bay is a coastal lagoon formed by a necklace of barrier islands to the west and the mainland of Manatee and Sarasota Counties to the east. The lagoon is characterised by unique embayments, tidal tributaries, small creeks, coves and inlets. More than 1,400 native species of diverse plants and animals inhabit Sarasota Bay Estuary in habitats which include mangrove swamps, saltwater marshes, tidal flats and seagrass beds.

The Bay is home to Atlantic Bottlenose Dolphins who hunt, socialise and raise their young in the protected and productive waters, and together with the Gulf beaches it provides essential habitat for endangered wildlife year round. The estuary and coasts have special needs in the summer months that impact on bird nesting activities and the welfare of other wildlife. Being aware and respectful of these endangered species and their nesting is critical for their viability.

On The Water

Over race weekends, Powerboat P1 implements its marine animal monitoring program. This involves marine observers being assigned specific locations on boats, on the land and in a helicopter to monitor the race area for marine animals. The observers report sightings such as dolphins, manatees and turtles, and they have the authority to stop the racing if necessary.

On the Beach

Beach-nesting birds, such as terns, plovers and skimmers, are struggling to survive in Florida, often because of the intense disturbance by recreational beachgoers. Flushed from their camouflaged nests in the sand, adult birds watch helplessly as eggs and chicks are exposed to the hot sun and predators, or are crushed by unwary pedestrians, dogs or drivers. Audubon Florida is dedicated to protecting birds and the habitat they need for survival and for more than a century has encouraged people to take care of the places that make Florida special. It recruits volunteers to assist with on-the-ground wildlife and habitat management. The benefits to wildlife are immediate and connect people with nature. The advice from Audubon to make the beaches safer for birds is:

- ~ Give nesting birds at least 100 feet of space and avoid walking through flocks of birds on the upper beach.
- ~ If pets are permitted on beaches, keep them leashed and well away from birds.
- ~ Remove trash and food scraps which attract predators that may also eat birds' eggs or chicks.
- ~ Do not drive on beach dunes or other nesting areas.



Photo credit: Jean Hall



Photo credit: Kylie Wilson