

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**MARCH 23, 2021**

**CONTACT**

Elliot Zirulnik, Communications Manager  
321-254-9453, ext. 236  
[ezirulnik@brevardzoo.org](mailto:ezirulnik@brevardzoo.org)



**Brevard Zoo planting 100 clam beds in Indian River Lagoon**

MELBOURNE, Fla., March 23, 2021 — Brevard Zoo is adding clam restoration to its diverse portfolio of Indian River Lagoon conservation initiatives.

Beginning next month, the Zoo's conservation specialists will deploy young clams at designated sites throughout the Brevard County portion of the lagoon. The clams, which will be sourced from the University of Florida's Whitney Laboratory for Marine Bioscience in St. Augustine, will be covered by a net to protect them from predators. Some sites will be planted with aquatic grasses cultivated by Florida Oceanographic Society in Stuart. The installations will be monitored to evaluate the project's efficacy.

The Zoo plans to construct 100 clam beds with a total of three million clams by the summer of 2022. An additional five million "seed clams" will be placed in existing oyster reefs. This project is funded by the State of Florida through the St. Johns River Water Management District.

Clams are filter feeders that remove nitrogen and phosphorous from the water. These chemicals—which are found in fertilizers and human and pet waste—have been linked to the algae blooms, muck buildup and other environmental issues ailing the lagoon.

The Zoo has been actively involved in lagoon restoration since 2010, when it joined the now-famous "oyster mat" project. The Zoo gradually expanded its efforts to encompass mangroves and aquatic grasses, forming the basis of the Restore Our Shores (ROS) program.

ROS is seeking lagoon-front residents who are willing to have their properties considered as clam deployment sites. Interested parties can schedule an evaluation at [www.restoreourshores.org/clams](http://www.restoreourshores.org/clams).

Photos and video: [www.dropbox.com/sh/hleqf11vpjugvm3/AAAiWcfLPXBKlixoPd3EHgQLa](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/hleqf11vpjugvm3/AAAiWcfLPXBKlixoPd3EHgQLa)

###

*Brevard Zoo is home to more than 900 animals representing 195 species from all over the world. As a not-for-profit organization, it is a leader in the fields of animal wellness, education and conservation. More information is available at [www.brevardzoo.org](http://www.brevardzoo.org).*

*Treetop Trek features five aerial obstacle courses that whisk guests above parts of the Zoo and through lush Florida landscapes. More information is available at [www.treetoptrek.com](http://www.treetoptrek.com).*

*The Aquarium Project is a plan to construct a world-class aquarium and conservation center at Port Canaveral. More information is available at [www.theaquariumproject.org](http://www.theaquariumproject.org).*