



### **30 FACTS ABOUT MANATEES**

1. Manatees are mammals and most closely related to elephants.
2. Manatees need air to breathe even though they live in water.
3. Manatees get around by swimming and also by walking along the seabed.
4. Manatees go to the surface to get a breath every 3-5 minutes.
5. Manatees can hold their breath for 20 minutes!
6. Manatees can be up to 14 feet long.
7. Manatees can weigh up to 3,000 pounds.
8. Manatees swim slowly – 3-5 miles per hour.
9. Manatees can swim at 20 miles per hour for short distances.
10. Manatees have no natural predators. Humans are their biggest threat due to boat collisions, propeller injuries and threats to their habitat.
11. Manatees live an average of 30-40 years.
12. Female manatees are pregnant for one full year.
13. A baby manatee is called a calf.
14. A manatee calf can start eating plants a few weeks after it is born.
15. Manatees have teeth that are continuously replaced throughout their lives.
16. Manatees are herbivores and eat sea grass, mangrove leaves and algae.
17. Manatees spend about half of their day eating.
18. Manatees eat an average of 10% of their body weight every day.
19. Manatee brains are small compared to the size of their bodies, but they can learn to do tasks like a dolphin.
20. Manatees can see color in the blue, green and gray spectrum.
21. Manatees communicate with each other using squeaks, squeals, chirps and grunts.
22. There are three types of manatees: West Indian manatee, Amazonian manatee and African manatee.
23. West Indian manatees live in the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic coasts of North & South America.
24. West Indian manatees are the largest of the three species.
25. Amazonian manatees live in freshwater habitats in the Amazon basin.
26. Amazonian manatees are the smallest of the three species.
27. African manatees live in coastal and inland waters of West Africa.
28. Manatees are at risk of extinction.
29. Long ago, sailors thought manatees were mermaids.
30. November is Manatee Awareness Month.