



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

**Everglades and  
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## Everglades News Release

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

*For Immediate Release*

Date: April 21, 2014

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### **“Waterways: Wading Birds and Benthic Studies”**

HOMESTEAD, Florida: The educational television series, “Waterways,” continues to showcase the south Florida ecosystem in an exciting new two-part episode. The unique wading birds of Everglades National Park are featured, as well as benthic studies that explore the make-up of the seafloor in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

In the first segment, “Wading Birds of the Everglades,” Everglades National Park biologists discuss the importance of the habitat in the park, which provides for 16 species of wading birds. Everglades National Park protects the most significant breeding ground for tropical wading birds in North America, including White Ibis, egrets, herons, as well as Roseate Spoonbills and endangered Wood Storks. Decimated by plume hunters in the 1900s, populations of these and other wading birds are showing signs of rebounding, including moving back into historical nesting sites within the park.

The episode’s second segment, “Benthic Studies in the Florida Keys,” explores the seafloor and its community of plants and animals that make up the foundation of the coral reef ecosystem in the Keys. Studying this benthic community over time gives scientists critical information on the condition of the ecosystem. Mark Chiappone, a Research Associate at the Nova Southeastern University Oceanographic Center, and Scott Donahue of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, explain how an annual benthic survey (measuring coral populations and condition, seaweed, and invertebrates) provides a snapshot of the health of the coral system. They also describe how this information is used by scientists and managers.

With more than 200 episodes produced since 1993, the “Waterways” educational television series is a joint project between Everglades National Park, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, informing viewers of the diverse wonders of the south Florida ecosystem, and the research and conservation programs that protect them. “Waterways” airs on public and government channels throughout the state of Florida—check local listings for scheduling. Episodes may also be viewed on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/waterwaystvshow](http://www.youtube.com/waterwaystvshow) and Vimeo at [www.vimeo.com/waterwaystvshow](http://www.vimeo.com/waterwaystvshow).

**WHAT:** The latest episode of the educational television series, “Waterways: Wading Birds and Benthic Studies”

**WHEN:** Check local listings for scheduling

**WHERE:** “Waterways” airs on public and government channels throughout the state of Florida. Episodes may also be viewed on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/waterwaystvshow](http://www.youtube.com/waterwaystvshow) and Vimeo at [www.vimeo.com/waterwaystvshow](http://www.vimeo.com/waterwaystvshow).

This and other park releases are available at [www.nps.gov/ever/parknews/newsreleases](http://www.nps.gov/ever/parknews/newsreleases).

More information on Everglades National Park can be found on the park website at <http://www.nps.gov/ever>

**[www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)**

*About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America’s 401 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).*

*Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary protects 2,900 square nautical miles of critical marine habitat, including coral reef, hard bottom, sea grass meadows, mangrove communities and sand flats, as well as shipwrecks and maritime heritage resources. NOAA and the state of Florida manage the sanctuary. Learn more at <http://floridakeys.noaa.gov>.*

*The Environmental Protection Agency supports the “Waterways” program through the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Water Quality Protection Program established in 1993 and dedicated to the restoration and protection of corals, shellfish, wildlife and recreational activities on the water. Learn more at [http://ocean.floridamarine.org/fknms\\_wqpp/pages/wqpp.html](http://ocean.floridamarine.org/fknms_wqpp/pages/wqpp.html).*