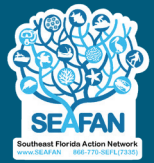




# SEAFAN BleachWatch Program

CURRENT CONDITIONS REPORT #20241121

NOV. 21, 2024



**Summary: Based on climate predictions, current conditions and field observations, the ongoing threat of thermal stress that causes coral bleaching, in the Kristin Jacobs Coral Aquatic Preserve (AP), from Miami-Dade to Martin counties, is LOW.**

The 2024 SEAFAN BleachWatch season has officially come to an end, with a total of 105 reports submitted by BleachWatch observers across [Florida's Coral Reef](#). One hundred of the total reports were from the [Kristin Jacobs Coral Aquatic Preserve](#) (Coral AP) and the other five reports came from Monroe County. Of the reports for the AP, 86 documented signs of bleaching and 20 confirmed observations of disease on stony corals.

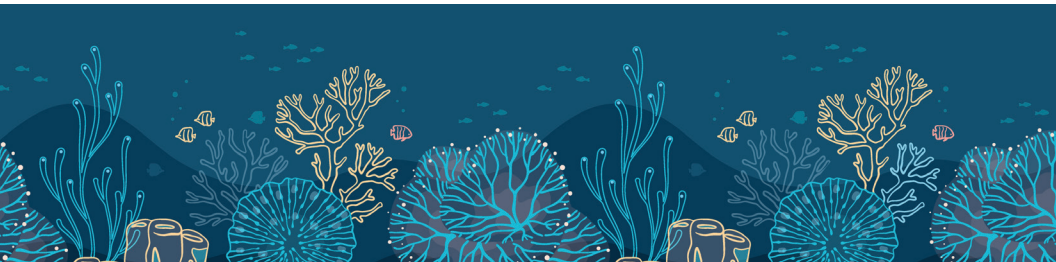
At sites within the Coral AP where paling, partial, or full bleaching was observed, the overall percentage of coral exhibiting signs of thermal stress ranged from 1% to 75%, with most sites reporting between 1% and 10%. Only one site recorded bleaching exceeding 50%. At sites where disease was observed, the percentage of coral showing signs of infection ranged from 1% to 30%, with most reports indicating isolated outbreaks affecting 1% to 10% of the live coral population (**Table 1**).

	0%	1-10%	11-30%	31-50%	51-75%	76-100%
Bleaching	24	61	9	5	1	0
Disease	74	19	1	0	0	0

**Table 1. Number of reports received in 2024 indicating the overall percentage of live coral bleached and diseased across a site.**

SEAFAN BleachWatch observers reported coral bleaching in 2024 primarily affecting brain, branching and boulder coral colonies, with some reports also noting bleaching on plate, fleshy and flowering coral colonies. Bleaching was also observed on gorgonians (soft corals), Palythoa spp. and fire coral. In addition to bleaching, tissue loss disease and growth anomalies were reported on brain, branching, plate and boulder corals.

The 2024 season was highly successful for the SEAFAN BleachWatch Program. This year, 11 new BleachWatch Instructors joined the network and have been working directly with local divers to educate them on monitoring bleaching and disease on coral reefs. With **over 100 reports submitted and 171 new observers**, the [DEP Coral Reef Conservation Program](#) (CRCP) extends its gratitude to the network for its significant contribution to monitoring critical coral reef habitat.



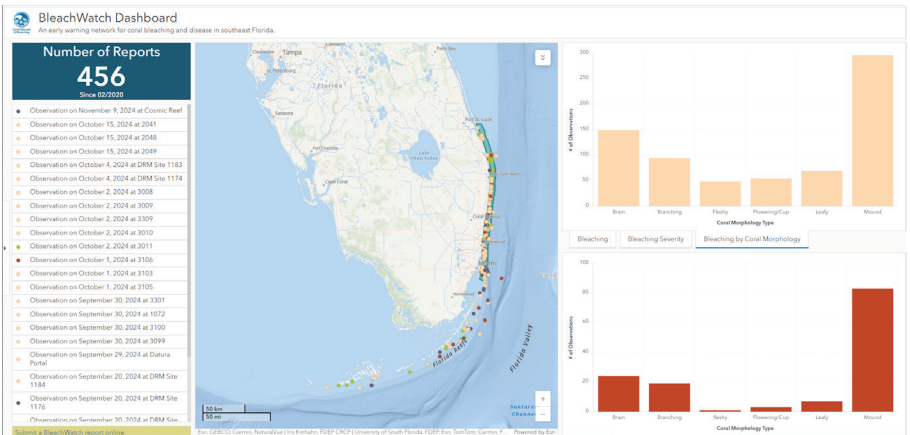


BleachWatch reports have been instrumental in aiding resource management by helping to assess the status of the reef, identifying areas affected by bleaching and disease and providing insights into reef recovery. CRCP has worked in conjunction with the BleachWatch network throughout the summer season to also assess the status of the reef as part of [FCRRP's Disturbance Response Monitoring](#) (DRM) efforts. CRCP staff participated in monitoring from Aug. 1 to Oct. 31 and completed assessments at over 50 sites in Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties as well as Dry Tortugas National Park.

Given current environmental conditions, significant coral bleaching in the Coral AP and surrounding waters is unlikely to continue at this time. Therefore, this will be the final current conditions report for 2024. SEAFAN encourages the BleachWatch network to continue [submitting reports](#) on coral bleaching and disease during the winter season, especially reports of "No Bleaching" and "No Disease." These reports will be crucial in tracking coral recovery from bleaching.

For information about NOAA satellite heat stress products, please visit [NOAA Coral Reef Watch](#) or email [CoralReefWatch@NOAA.gov](mailto:CoralReefWatch@NOAA.gov). For information about [SEAFAN BleachWatch](#), please email [Coral@FloridaDEP.gov](mailto:Coral@FloridaDEP.gov).

A big thank you to all BleachWatch observers for making the 2024 season a success! Be sure to check out the program's new [Coral Bleaching](#) and [Coral Disease](#) Fact Sheets to learn more.



**Figure 1. Map showing the distribution of submitted coral bleaching and disease reports on the BleachWatch Dashboard.**

Offer your feedback on the BleachWatch Program through our [survey](#).

[Learn more about the current conditions on coral reefs in the Florida Keys.](#)

