



SEAFAN BleachWatch Program

CURRENT CONDITIONS REPORT #20250630

JUNE 30, 2025



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

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING



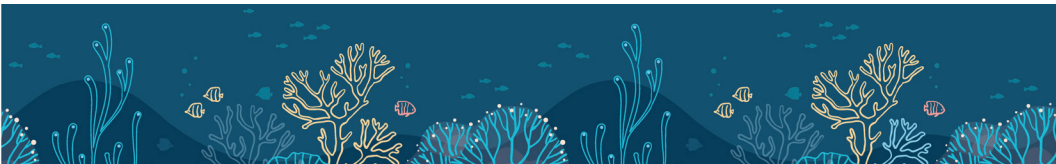
Pulse corals, members of the *Xeniidae* family, are native to the Indo-Pacific and Red Sea. These hardy, visually striking soft corals are popular in the aquarium industry. Their introduction to non-native regions is believed to occur primarily through releases by marine hobbyists. Once established, colonies can spread unintentionally through recreational boating and commercial shipping.

Three species have been identified as invasive in the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean

Sea: *Unomia stolonifera*, *Xenia umbellata* and *Xenia elongata*. The first recorded colony in the Atlantic Basin appeared in Venezuela. **Since then, these corals have spread to other areas, including Puerto Rico and Cuba, but have not yet been observed on Florida's Coral Reef.**

Xeniids are stalked soft corals with branching structures. Their eight-tentacled polyps pulse rhythmically in a “grabbing” motion — giving them the name “pulse coral.” As colonies grow, they can form dense mats that smother and outcompete native benthic organisms. Pulse corals reproduce both sexually and asexually, including through fragmentation, where small polyps break off and establish new colonies elsewhere. This makes removal difficult, as disturbed colonies can release fragments into the water column, allowing ocean currents to carry them to new locations.

If you spot a pulse coral on Florida's Coral Reef, please report it at www.SEAFAN.net. If possible, include GPS coordinates, clear photos and a detailed description of the colony. Additional information is available at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and UF/IFAS websites.





OBSERVER NETWORK

BleachWatch received 20 reports between Jan. 1 and May 19, 2025. Of these, 15 reports indicated that coral colonies were exhibiting signs of paling or partial bleaching. Geographically, there were two reports from Palm Beach County, four from Broward County and 14 from Miami-Dade County.

At those sites within the Coral AP where paling or partial bleaching was observed, the overall percentage of coral exhibiting signs of thermal stress ranged from 1% to 10%. Coral bleaching was observed on colonies representing all coral morphology types: brain, branching, fleshy, flowering/cup, leaf/plate/sheet and mound/boulder.

Of the 20 reports received so far this year, six noted observations of coral disease in Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties. At those sites where disease was observed, the overall percentage of coral exhibiting signs of disease ranged from 1%-10%. Tissue loss was observed on colonies of branching, brain and mound/boulder corals. Dark spot disease was also observed on one mound/boulder coral colony in Miami-Dade County.

The next Current Conditions Report will be issued in July. Given the increasing temperatures, SEAFAN encourages the BleachWatch network to [submit reports](#) on coral bleaching and disease after every dive on the reef. This includes reports of "No Bleaching" and "No Disease." **Frequent observer reports will be critical for determining where coral bleaching is most severe this warm season.**

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

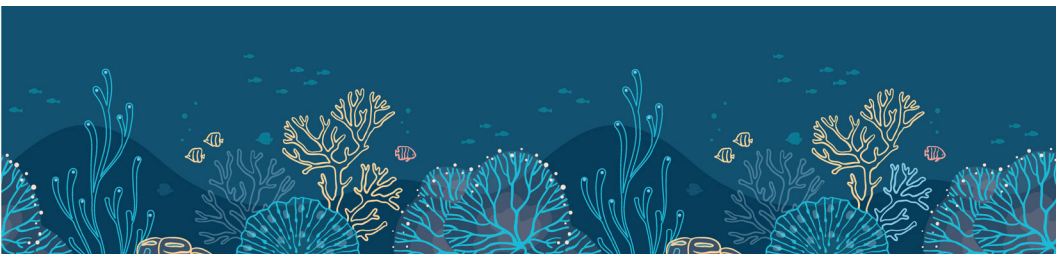




Figure 1. BleachWatch Observers from the Rescue a Reef Lab at the University of Miami found a healthy Mountainous Star Coral and Grooved Brain Coral in Miami-Dade County.

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

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

Program Partners

