

Palm Beach County
**FISHING
FOUNDATION**

*The charitable affiliate
of the West Palm Beach Fishing Club
- Est. 1934 -*



*“Creating a Legacy
of Education,
Marine
Conservation
& Historic
Preservation for
Future Generations”*



INTRODUCTION

The Palm Beach County Fishing Foundation (PBCFF) was established to serve as the charitable affiliate of the West Palm Beach Fishing Club (WPBFC). For much of its storied history the WPBFC, founded in 1934, has fulfilled many important roles in the sport fishing community and has been a tireless voice for conservation. However, the WPBFC's tax status limited the organization's ability to raise funds for its educational and conservation initiatives. In 1990, the board of directors took action to solve this dilemma by establishing a tax qualified 501 (c) 3 charitable affiliate. As an extension of the fishing club, the PBCFF was created to address specific educational outreach needs and issues related to fishing and the health of our resources. There are few privately funded, locally based and focused, organizations which address these issues. To accomplish its mission, the PBCFF conducts a variety of marine related programs and has achieved many significant conservation and educational milestones since its inception. The following is a description of current programs.



**THE MISSION OF THE
PALM BEACH COUNTY
FISHING FOUNDATION IS TO
FILL CRITICAL COMMUNITY
NEEDS THROUGH FISHING
RELATED EDUCATION,
CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC
PRESERVATION THAT HAVE A
LASTING BENEFICIAL IMPACT
ON THE YOUTH, MARINE
RESOURCES AND HISTORY
OF PALM BEACH COUNTY
AND BEYOND.**

JOHN RYBOVICH ENDOWMENT



In 1992, the PBCFF Board of Directors approved the creation of the John Rybovich Endowment. This special fund was established to help ensure the financial stability and growth of the institution. The principal is invested with a long-term balanced strategy. Funds are professionally managed and regularly audited. Only interest & dividend earnings are used to help support board approved projects. To date the balance is over \$2,000,000. A new goal of \$4,000,000 has been set. This financial milestone will help perpetuate educational and conservation initiatives and will give the foundation the ability to launch new programs in response to community needs as they arise.

You can help by becoming a member of the Rybovich Fellowship. Individuals or businesses can become a 'Rybovich Fellow' by making a contribution of \$2,500 or more specifically earmarked for the John Rybovich Endowment. We are honored to continue the Rybovich legacy of conservation and education through this endowment.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION



Founded in 1934, the venerable and award winning WPBFC is one of the oldest and largest institutions of its kind. Our facility was added to the West Palm Beach Register of Historic Places in 1998. The U.S. Department of Interior listed the WPBFC on the National Register of Historic Places in 2016. The building has become a repository of sport fishing memorabilia, trophy game fish mounts and historical photographs documenting the evolution of fishing in the region. As curator of archives, the PBCFF is taking steps to preserve the history of sport fishing and our unique role in Florida's history.

Palm Beach County **FISHING FOUNDATION**

SCHOLARSHIPS



Each year, the PBCFF awards scholarships at area universities and high schools. We have been presenting a marine biology scholarship to deserving undergraduate students at Palm Beach Atlantic University (PBAU) since 1995. The foundation continues to enjoy this longstanding and positive relationship with PBAU's Biology Department

faculty members.

In 2003, the PBCFF established the Capt. Al Nathan Memorial Scholarship for a marine biology graduate student enrolled in Florida Atlantic University's (FAU) Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. Capt. Nathan was a lifetime member of the WPBFC and supported many of the club's initiatives. In 2019, the PBCFF further expanded its scholarship program with support from the Dennis G. Punches Charitable Foundation. These awards embody Mr. Punches spirit of helping students pursue their educational goals and expanding knowledge of the marine environment he loved so much.

In addition to scholarships at area universities, the PBCFF also contributes annually to the Jupiter High School Environmental Research & Field Studies Academy and the Forest Hill High School – Friends of the Gale Academy of Environmental Science and Technology program in memory of Leah Schad.

RODS & REELS FOR KIDS

In memory of Jim Ewing

The PBCFF's *Rods & Reels for Kids* program was developed in 2001. The goal of this program is simply to place fishing tackle into the hands of kids and local youth groups that do not have adequate resources to obtain their own gear. To date, over 3,000 rod and reel outfits have been donated throughout the region including Boys & Girls Clubs, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and municipal recreation departments. Aside from purchasing new rods and reels to outfit these groups, the PBCFF collects used tackle year-round from the public which fishing club volunteers refurbish to support the program.

Palm Beach County **FISHING FOUNDATION**

ADVOCACY & SUPPORT

The PBCFF/WPBFC is an active advocate for issues relating to fair and sustainable fishery management practices and habitat protection. We frequently submit comments to fishery managers and government agencies on a variety of issues. We also host meetings with various resource managing agencies and other marine related organizations and businesses to further encourage communication and cooperation. Additionally, the PBCFF supports other organizations like the Florida Wildlife Federation, Wild Oceans, The Billfish Foundation, the Dolphin Tagging Program, The Reef Institute & Captain's For Clean Water. Members continue to serve on various local, state and federal boards and advisory panels.

GAME FISH RESEARCH

The WPBFC and PBCFF has a long history of collaboration with the scientific community and game fish research efforts. In fact, a state operated marine laboratory was



once housed inside our historic facility. Our ties with the marine science community remain strong. Through the years the WPBFC/PBCFF has supported various cooperative game fish tagging efforts for snook, dolphin, sailfish and more. In 2019, the PBCFF embarked on a new game fish research partnership with the FWC's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) lab in Tequesta, Florida. The PBCFF supports ongoing game fish research by purchasing acoustic telemetry receivers and transmitter tags which are donated to the lab. The PBCFF is helping expand an acoustic array that monitors the movements and behavior of tagged species of fish and other marine animals like sea turtles. Some receivers are stationed at our Reef Dart locations to assist with the monitoring of these artificial reefs. Our support is contributing to a coast-wide data collection effort being conducted by numerous researchers along the Atlantic seaboard. We continue to collaborate with the FWRI lab to increase the number of acoustic receivers stationed off our coast and the number of fish tagged with transmitter tags. Such efforts help gather important data that is used to sustainably manage marine species.

Palm Beach County FISHING FOUNDATION



Produced in Memory of Don A. 'Hap' Wilson

The PBCFF is cultivating the next generation of knowledgeable and responsible saltwater anglers through a hands on instructional fishing experience called S.A.L.T.Y. (Saltwater Angling Lessons & Techniques for Youth). The program targets area youth, ages 12 to 15, who participate with an adult chaperone or a parent in the two-day course.



Recognizing that there was a community need, the PBCFF developed this program for kids who have the desire to get into saltwater fishing, but their parents just don't know how to get started. The S.A.L.T.Y. program was created to fill that void.

The two-day course consists of a Friday evening introduction and hands-on rigging session at the historic

WPBFC, followed the next day with on the water instruction and fishing aboard a chartered drift boat offshore. The program includes

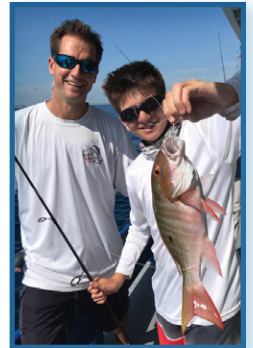


Palm Beach County FISHING FOUNDATION



"I could not wait to express our gratitude. Our grandson came home so excited to share all that he learned and enjoyed during the S.A.L.T.Y. program. His dad also has an interest in fishing but does not know much about it, so this was an awesome experience for both of them"

*– S.A.L.T.Y. participant
grandparent*



personalized instruction, various supplies & tackle, a t-shirt, meals, snacks, drinks and a new Penn rod and reel. The S.A.L.T.Y. program helps strengthen the bonds between parent and child by teaching them valuable skills they can use in the life-long activity of fishing.



FISHING FOUNDATION



KID'S FISHING DAY

This is all about introducing kids to fishing and our marine environment! Since 1988, the Palm Beach County Fishing Foundation, along with the assistance of volunteers and important community partners like the Marine Industries Association of Palm Beach County, has conducted an annual Kid's Fishing Day program. Each year, hundreds of less fortunate, at-risk and special needs children from throughout Palm Beach County experience what most of us take for granted, a day of boating and fishing on the ocean. It takes six days spanning a two week period to get all the kids on the water. During the trips offshore the kids learn all about our marine environment and why we need to protect it. To date, over 15,000 area youth have participated in this heartwarming

community outreach event. The program is free of charge to those who participate and is made possible each year through the generosity of many sponsors and volunteers. Each child receives an event t-shirt, lunch, drinks and personalized fishing instruction from knowledgeable volunteers. If that wasn't enough, every kid goes home with a brand new fishing rod and reel. Of course, each child walks away with special memories of a fun day on the water and a better understanding of our unique marine environment.

For many, this ocean adventure is a first time experience. Seeing flying fish, sea turtles and large oceanic

predators like sharks and barracuda is a thrill not soon forgotten! We believe programs like our Kid's Fishing Day help build well rounded citizens and responsible environmental stewards for the future.

"Our kids truly enjoy the experience. For many of them it was their first time on the water, and it was a memorable one. AWESOME!"

– David Brown, Director of Operations at Orthodox Zion Child Development Center



HABITAT INITIATIVES



Palm Beach County has experienced tremendous coastal growth over the last seventy-five years. As a result, loss of natural marine and estuarine habitat, diminished water quality, increased fishing pressure and other environmental stressors have all contributed to a depletion of biodiversity and abundance. The PBCFF has identified and helped initiate specific projects designed to improve our marine environment. In the 1960s, under the leadership of John Rybovich, the WPBFC created Palm Beach County's first artificial reef. Through the years the PBCFF has partnered with Palm Beach County's Department of Environmental Resources Management on numerous reef building projects. Another area of focus has been habitat enhancement in the Lake Worth Lagoon. Over 85% of this area's mangrove fringe, mud flats, and oyster & sea grass beds have been destroyed or altered due to bulkhead development, dredge and fill operations, sedimentation loading and degraded water quality. The PBCFF regularly assists with mangrove and oyster enhancement projects. This program aiding local governmental efforts to improve the Lake Worth Lagoon represents cooperation with the private sector to benefit all taxpayers. The potential to mitigate environmental damage and increase healthy habitat is significant. The PBCFF continues to play an important role.

Rybovich Endowment Reef

OYSTER SHELL RECYCLING
& RESTORATION

In 2025 the PBCFF initiated an oyster shell recycling and restoration program. While recycling programs exist in other regions, no such program was in place in Palm Beach County. The reasons for

recycling oyster shells are many. Most restaurants throw their oyster shells away. The shells have a far better use than to end up in a landfill. Recycled oyster shells provide an ideal substrate for the recruitment of new oysters. Oysters are considered a keystone species and provide valuable ecosystem services. They are filter-feeders and can clean large volumes of water over a relatively short period of time, helping rid estuaries of excess nutrients and fine sediment. Oyster reefs provide critical habitat for a wide variety of fish, invertebrates and other wildlife. Additionally, oyster reefs can help stabilize shorelines and minimize coastal erosion.



There is a need to enhance oyster habitat in the Lake Worth Lagoon and its adjacent waters in Palm Beach County. Our oyster shell recycling and restoration program intends to reduce the number of shells going into the landfill and increase oyster habitat. Improving water quality and clarity is our goal.

REEF DARTS

In 2017, the PBCFF initiated its *Reef Dart* program, an innovative reef building effort using repurposed concrete utility poles and culverts that might otherwise end up in landfills. Materials were donated by local contractors, utility companies and municipalities. Financial donations from the private sector covered engineering, construction, monitoring and other costs. Palm Beach County, a project partner, handled the permitting and deployment. When deployed, *Reef Darts* settle in a vertical orientation on the sea floor creating high profile marine habitat where none previously existed. Each *Reef Dart* weighs 8 to 10 tons, some measuring nearly 50 feet in height. Baitfish, amberjack, barracuda, snapper and grouper, along with a wide variety of invertebrates, are among the species benefitting from our *Reef Dart* deployments.

A total of 181 *Reef Darts* have been deployed offshore Palm Beach County. Concluded in 2024, the underwater forest the PBCFF has developed will be providing beneficial habitat for many decades to come.



EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS

The PBCFF conducts specialized fishing seminars that promote new conservation techniques, such as proper catch and release methodology and the use of circle hooks. Promoting ethical angling practices is one of the PBCFF's priorities. The development of our snook sling, which enables anglers to ethically weigh and release fish, is one example.

A variety of youth groups regularly visit our historic facility to learn about the marine environment. Grade schoolers to college students use our facility as a field trip destination because of the impressive collection of fish mounts and historical memorabilia.



TUPPEN YOUTH FISHING FUND

The PBCFF provides funding of up to \$2,000 to Palm Beach County based High School and University Fishing Clubs, as well as other organized youth fishing clubs & programs. The award can be used to assist with organizational or club expenses, such as the purchase of fishing tackle for awards, fishing gear for participants, charter fees, club t-shirts and other related expenses that they may incur. Applicants who demonstrate they are promoting ethical angling, supporting resource conservation, and who are producing angling

programs that engage their members are more likely to receive a grant.

Each year, up to three \$2,000 grants are awarded.

Administered by the PBCFF and made possible thanks to the Bud & Marilyn Tuppen Foundation, these fishing grants are being provided in their memory, and are intended to support the next generation of responsible anglers.



METHODS OF GIVING:

Your support is needed. The Palm Beach County Fishing Foundation (PBCFF) depends upon donations to fulfill its mission. Contributions can be specified to fund current programs & projects, or can be earmarked to support the endowment fund. Charitable gifts can be made through several methods:

Cash Donations

This form of donating is the most popular and familiar. Simply write a check made payable to the PBCFF or donate online at www.westpalmbeachfishingclub.org. This is the most popular form of giving for programs like *Kid's Fishing Day*.

Memorial Contributions

Create a lasting legacy in memory of a friend or family member by making charitable contributions on their behalf. Donations can be earmarked to support specific programs.

Bequests of Wills & Living Trusts

By naming the PBCFF as a recipient in a Will or Living Trust, estate tax exposure may be reduced. The PBCFF has a standard Codicil to Will form that can be furnished to donors who are interested in amending their Will to support the PBCFF.

Stocks, Bonds & Mutual Funds

Donations of securities are an excellent way to support the PBCFF. This form of giving can be particularly beneficial for donors if they have stocks that have appreciated in value. The full current market value of the stock is tax deductible, not just the original investment. Thus donors can avoid capital gains taxes. Consult your tax advisor and broker regarding this type of contribution.

Property (including unwanted fishing gear)

Both real estate and personal property qualify. Year-round donations of unwanted fishing tackle and marine related items support the annual *Marine Yard Sale*, a PBCFF fund raising event. Donations of old fish mounts, antique tackle & other fishing memorabilia support ongoing historic preservation efforts.

Palm Beach County

Matching Gifts

Life Insurance

The Palm Beach County Fishing Foundation is a tax qualified 501(c) 3 charitable organization. Before considering any donation, please review all tax and financial implications with a professional advisor. The responsibility to determine any tax advantages and to insure compliance with all laws remains that of the donor. A copy of the organization's Internal Revenue Service Letter of Determination can be furnished to donors who require such documentation. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you need additional information. Your generous support will continue to help the PBCFF play a unique educational & conservation role in our community. Thank you.



brochure photos courtesy of Leonard Bryant & the WPBFC archives

Palm Beach County

Name of Donor

Address _____

City/State _____

Zip: _____ Ph.: _____

email:

(make checks payable to: Palm Beach County Fishing Foundation)

cash ☐ check ☐ M/C ☐ Visa ☐ AmEx ☐

card number

exp. date

CCV: _____ signature
of cardholder: _____

DONATION AMOUNT: \$

Donation to be applied to:

Kid's Fishing Day ☐ *Rods & Reels For Kids* ☐

Rybovich Endowment ☐ Historic Preservation ☐

Habitat Initiatives ☐ Game Fish Research ☐

S.A.L.T.Y. Program ☐ Other PBCFF Programs ☐

- OR -

DONATE ONLINE AT:

westpalmbeachfishingclub.org

SEE SOME OF OUR INITIATIVES IN ACTION



@ WEST PALM BEACH FISHING CLUB

Thank You For Your Support!

To contact us for further information, or to mail your donation,
clip and send this form to:

PALM BEACH COUNTY FISHING FOUNDATION
201 5TH STREET
WEST PALM BEACH, FL. 33401
PH: 561.832.6780

PALM BEACH COUNTY FISHING FOUNDATION

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