Life in the Bahamian Mangrove Creek

Benefits

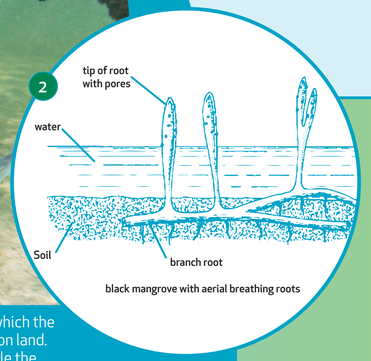
- High biodiversity
- Nursery for fish, crustaceans and other invertebrates – sustains fisheries
- Protects islands from coastal erosion due to storm surge and hurricanes
- Carbon storage
- Roots filter and trap land-based pollutants and sediments
- Popular sites for recreation, eco-tourism and education

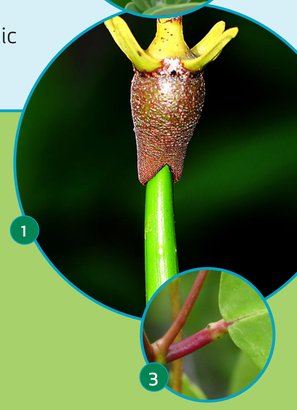
Threats

- Climate change
- Pollution
- Coastal development
- Invasive species
- Illegal and over-fishing

Mangrove Conservation

- ***Laws –*** The Bahamas is a signatory of the Ramsar Convention, has a National Wetlands Policy and is developing local laws to protect mangrove plants and wetlands.
- ***Protection of Connected Habitats –*** Mangrove creeks and wetlands can be included in Marine Protected Areas and the National Forest Estate
- ***Restoration –*** Mangroves can be replanted and tidal flow restored where it has been blocked
- ***Education –*** BREEF works to educate the public about conserving mangroves





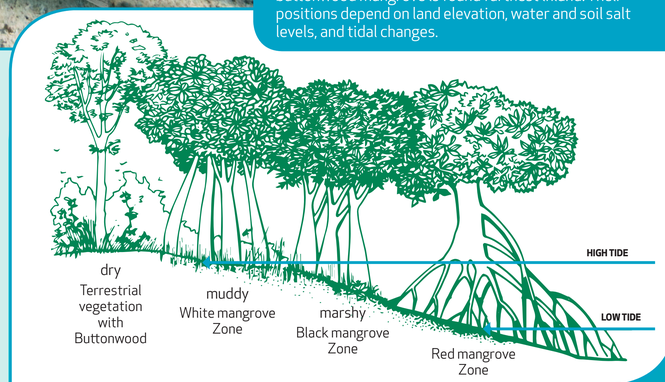
Characteristics

- Hydric (muddy) and oxygen-poor soil
- Fluctuation in temperature and salinity

Adaptations

- Prop roots anchor plants against waves
- Halophytic leaves secrete or store salt
- Waxy leaves prevent excessive water loss
- Aerial roots absorb oxygen from the air
- Buoyant propagules allow dispersal by water

"Mangrove zonation" describes the order in which the four different types of mangroves are found on land. The red mangrove is closest to the water, while the buttonwood mangrove is found furthest inland. Their positions depend on land elevation, water and soil salt levels, and tidal changes.



Key Species

1. Red mangrove
2. Black mangrove
3. White mangrove
4. Buttonwood
5. Fuzzy finger algae
6. Turtle grass
7. Laurencia algae
8. Heron
9. Osprey
10. Egret
11. Flamingo
12. Bahama duck
13. Yellow warbler
14. Gray snapper
15. School master snapper
16. Bonefish
17. Tarpon
18. Nassau grouper
19. Barracuda
20. Nurse shark
21. Lemon shark
22. Land crab
23. Spiny lobster
24. Conch
25. Sponges

● Plants ● Birds ● Fish ● Invertebrates

Four Types of Mangrove Plants

1 Red

2 Black

3 White

4 Buttonwood

Mangrove Facts

1/3 Over a third of the world's mangroves have disappeared.

40% Wetlands comprise 40% of the land area in The Bahamas.

4x Mangrove forests hold up to four times more carbon than other tropical rainforests.

80 Species There are 80 species of mangrove plants. Four species are found in The Bahamas.

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Blue Project Foundation · Atlantis

BREEF promotes the conservation of the Bahamian marine environment that sustains our way of life

• Images courtesy of: Shane Gross (split image above/below water view and Lemon sharks)