

# Adopt-A-Manatee®

## Official Biography



**CASE HISTORY:** NICK  
**First Identified:** 1977  
**Sex:** Male

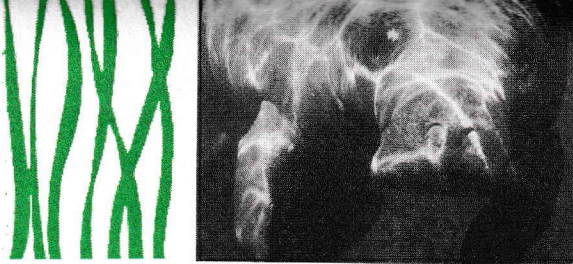
Nick's movements have been followed on and off through the years by radio or satellite telemetry — a process which can become quite involved. The animal must first be captured. This is not always as easy as it sounds! Once the animal is caught, he or she is weighed, blood samples are taken, and a belt is attached around the base of the tail and connected to a flexible tether and floating transmitter (don't worry, it is designed to break free if it gets entangled in debris). Once the manatee is released, radio signals from the transmitter are received by satellites and analyzed to yield locational data. The resulting information, when compiled, gives us a fairly accurate idea of where the manatees go, and their habits, and enables us to more accurately pinpoint the areas that need increased protective measures.

Researchers have been able to record some interesting manatee movements because of the telemetry program. In fact, researchers nicknamed Nick "Crazy Nick" because of the unpredictability of his actions. He has been known to take two weeks traveling from Blue Spring to Jacksonville (going north) in the middle of the winter! Nick also seems to like to sleep for long periods of time in Mud Lake rather than the spring area.

**1997-1998:** Nick made his first appearance this season on November 10. Ranger Wayne described Nick as being "shy, but dependable" this year, as he made regular visits to the spring. However, we don't know if we're buying into this "shy thing." The previous April, Nick, along with Paddy Doyle and Philip, were seen escorting Phyllis. And, in May, he was checking out the "new girl on the dock," Georgia, along with Tithonus and Doc. Nick was also seen in an estrous (mating) herd in March of 1998, pursuing the lovely Hera, a bodacious babe from Brevard County. So, shy? No. Exhausted? Probably! Even though Nick has taken up Howie's trait of dodging roll call, Ranger Wayne logged 39 visits to Nick's credit this season. On March 15, the exodus began. Nick, along with fellow travelers Brutus, Dana, Flash, Floyd, Paddy Doyle, and Success, headed out for a summer sojourn.

**1996-1997:** The manatee season at Blue Spring began on November 11 and ended on February 27 this year. It was a warm winter in Florida, so many manatees left early for the season. Nick was no exception, leaving on February 17 in the company of 13 other manatees. He arrived with Elaine on November 23, just before Thanksgiving, so it was a short season for him. Nick was seen 26 times this year, but Elaine one-upped him by coming in 27 times. Ranger Wayne reported that both Nick and Doc were playing the "Bobbsey Twins" this year as each one was sporting a new fungus square on the left side of their tails in exactly the same location. Remember how we commented last year that Nick had not exhibited any unusual behavior for awhile? We even speculated he might be settling down. Never fear, he's still earning his nickname! Despite the warm weather in Florida, four manatees made a visit to Blue Spring in April. One of them was Crazy Nick, who appeared on the 16th to say howdy





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**1995-1996:** Nick was the only adoptee to come in to Blue Spring State Park on November 14 this year. Ranger Wayne says he was glad Nick and most of the adoptees showed up in November so he didn't have to worry about them. We are happy to report that Nick did not show up with any new scars again this year — this now makes two years in a row. No significantly crazy behavior was noted from Nick this year; maybe he is settling down as he gets older! Nick was in 30 times this year, a nice showing that is fairly normal for him. He left in the company of seven other manatees on March 23, the second to the last day of the season.

(over)



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## **NICK (continued)**

**1994-1995:** "Crazy Nick" was acting, well, crazy again this year. Ranger Wayne reported that he observed Nick "rushing" Julie and her calf last fall. Ranger Wayne said that he knows Nick didn't mean any harm, he just finds nursing mothers especially attractive! However, Julie reacted as if it was her calf that Nick was after. Ranger Wayne said it was the first time he had ever seen a female manatee wrap her flipper around her calf and hold it to her. This year, Nick showed up during a brief cold front at the end of November. He came into the spring with his pal Lily. The weather was cool, but not particularly cold this season, but Nick managed to hang around Blue Spring State Park until March 14. He made 31 visits altogether — not bad!

**1993-1994:** Nick came in with his buddy Brutus on November 5 this year — considerably earlier than last year. Ranger Wayne reported that both manatees looked fine. Nick did pick up a multi-prop injury during the season, but the cuts were very short and shallow so the injury was not serious. He headed out for the summer on March 7 after a very healthy showing — 34 visits!

**1992-1993:** Nick came in on November 30 in the company of other adoptees Brutus, Philip, Deep Dent, Lenny, Luna and Troy. It was a regular manatee party! He looks good but has a light skeg cut near his head which was noticed around January 18. He also has fungus on his tail, something he has had problems with in the past. Nick was present and accounted for 28 times this year.

**1991-1992:** Nick came in from November 9 through April 5 and made an outstanding 42 visits. He suffered several new prop slashes from three boat strikes near the beginning of April, but none were very bad. He spent the season single-mindedly pursuing any female in his area!

**1990-1991:** This year the official manatee season at Blue Spring was from November 13, 1990 to March 21, 1991. Nick wandered in on November 20 with Lily and Luna and stuck around until March 12 with 41 roll calls (morning nose counts) to his credit. He appears to be doing fine.

**1989-1990:** Nick was one of the first manatees in on October 23 and the very last out on March 12. He ran a close second to Boomer and Lucille with 31 visits. He spent his time helping Brutus chase the lovely new girl on the block, Hortense.

**1988-1989:** Because of the mild winter, many of the manatees who frequent Blue Spring were not observed as often as in past years. Nick was identified 34 times and was even spotted between cold snaps. He left on March 16. He looked healthy but suffered two new skeg cuts. Nick and his friend Tithonus spent a good deal of time hanging out together.

**1987-1988:** Crazy Nick put in 39 appearances this year. He survived a small boat hit on his back. On March 15, he was spotted nursing from Success. This is unusual behavior for an older manatee, and Ranger Hartley hardly believes that he saw this event taking place. Nick departed on March 23.

**1986-1987:** Nick came in on December 15 bearing a ragged, but healed white scar on his peduncle. Interestingly enough, the four-inch square hole made by the fungus on his tail is now shaped like the emblem designating the rank of a Specialist Four stripe from the army. Nick put in 31 appearances, leaving the spring on April 10.

**1985-1986:** Nick had a three to four inch square hole in his tail and researchers think he might have picked up a fungus from Lily. He arrived for the season on December 10 and departed March 4. During that time he made 25 appearances.