



Mote Marine Laboratory / Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Coral Bleaching Early Warning Network

Current Conditions Report #20260811



Updated August 11, 2026

Summary: Based on climate predictions, current conditions, and field observations, the threat for mass coral bleaching within the FKNMS is currently **ALERT LEVEL 2**.

NOAA Coral Reef Watch Current and 60% Probability Coral Bleaching Alert Outlook August 11, 2026 (experimental)

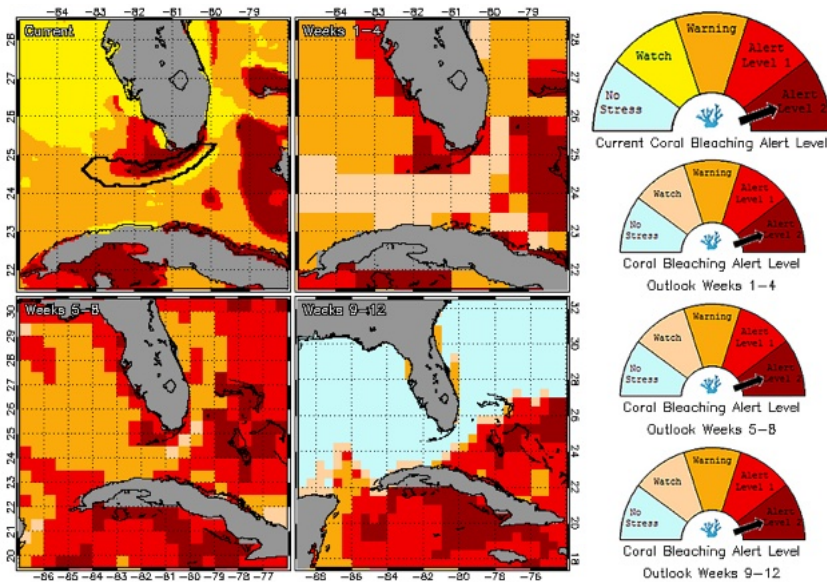


Figure 1. NOAA's 5 km Experimental Current and 60% Probability Coral Bleaching Alert Outlook Areas through November 2026. Updated August 11, 2026.

Weather and Sea Temperatures

According to the current NOAA Coral Reef Watch (CRW) experimental 5-kilometer (km) Satellite Current and 60% Probability Coral Bleaching Alert Area, most areas of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary are under a "Bleaching Alert Level 2", which means there is a reef-wide risk of bleaching with mortality of heat sensitive corals (Fig. 1).

Recent remote sensing analysis by NOAA's CRW program indicates that all areas of the Florida Keys region are currently experiencing thermal stress. NOAA's new experimental 5 km Coral Bleaching HotSpot Map (Fig.2), which illustrates current sea surface temperatures compared to the average temperature for the warmest month, shows sea surface temperatures are currently elevated above normal in the Florida Keys. Similarly, NOAA's experimental 5 km Degree Heating Weeks (DHW) map (Fig.3), which illustrates how much heat stress has built up over the past 12 weeks, indicates accumulating temperature stress in the Florida Keys region. Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) Aqualink, which provides near real time in-situ wind data at Eastern Dry Rocks, as well as Aqualink in-situ temperature data confirm that temperatures remain above historical maximums, with all areas remaining above 30°C (Fig.4). Mote Marine Laboratory will continue to monitor the NOAA HotSpot maps, DHW maps, and Aqualink sea temperature data from FKNMS monitoring stations on a weekly basis for the remainder of the bleaching season.

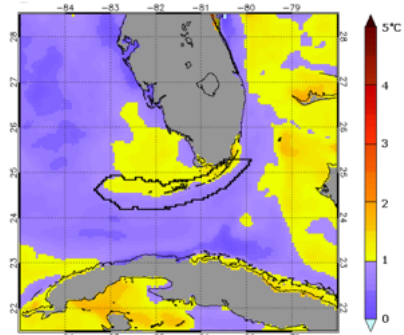


Figure 2. NOAA's Experimental 5km Coral Bleaching HotSpot Map for Florida, August 11, 2026.

[NOAA Coral Reef Watch Website](https://coralreefwatch.noaa.gov/)

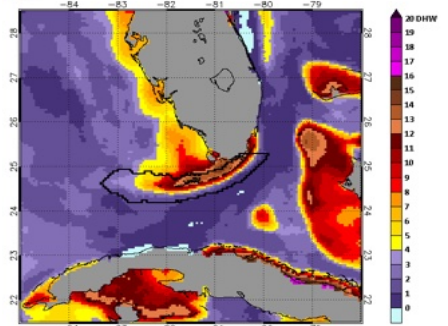


Figure 3. NOAA's Experimental 5km Degree Heating Weeks Map for Florida, August 11, 2026.

[NOAA Coral Reef Watch Website](https://coralreefwatch.noaa.gov/)

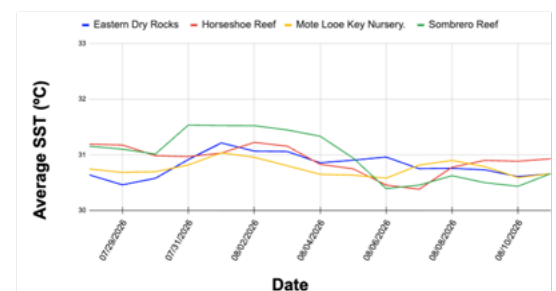


Figure 4. *in-situ* sea temperature from Aqualink monitoring stations (July 28 – August 11, 2026).



Figure 5. Wind speed data from Aqualink's Eastern Dry monitoring station (July 28 – August 11, 2026).



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Current Coral Conditions

A total of 24 BleachWatch observer reports have been received since July 28, 2026, 21 of which reported some level of bleaching and 3 which reported no bleaching observed (Fig. 6). At sites with bleaching reported, the overall percentage of corals exhibiting signs of stress was averaging 51-75%, with three reports indicating 76-100% of the live coral cover exhibiting bleaching. Paling/partial bleaching observations were reported for all coral categories, including Spiny Flower Coral (*Mussa angulosa*) (Fig. 7) and Low Relief Lettuce (*Agaricia humilis*) (Fig 8). Other observations included paling and bleaching of *gorgonians*, *fire coral*, and *palythoa*, and 16 reports of disease, all of which reported on mound/bouldering species and including black band disease and tissue loss.



Photo: William Carroll, I.CARE

Figure 7. Bleached *Mussa angulosa* (MANG), Hens & Chickens Reef



Photo: William Carroll, I.CARE

Figure 8. Bleached *Agaricia humilis* (AHUM), Hens & Chickens Reef

As we continue through this bleaching season, BleachWatch observers are encouraged to continue submitting your coral reef observations after every visit to the reef, **even if NO bleaching was observed**. Frequent coral condition observations from throughout the Florida Keys are needed for the remainder of the summer season.

If you know of anyone interested in becoming an observer, an online training is available year-round on www.mote.org/bleachwatch.

BleachWatch reports for July 28 – August 11, 2026

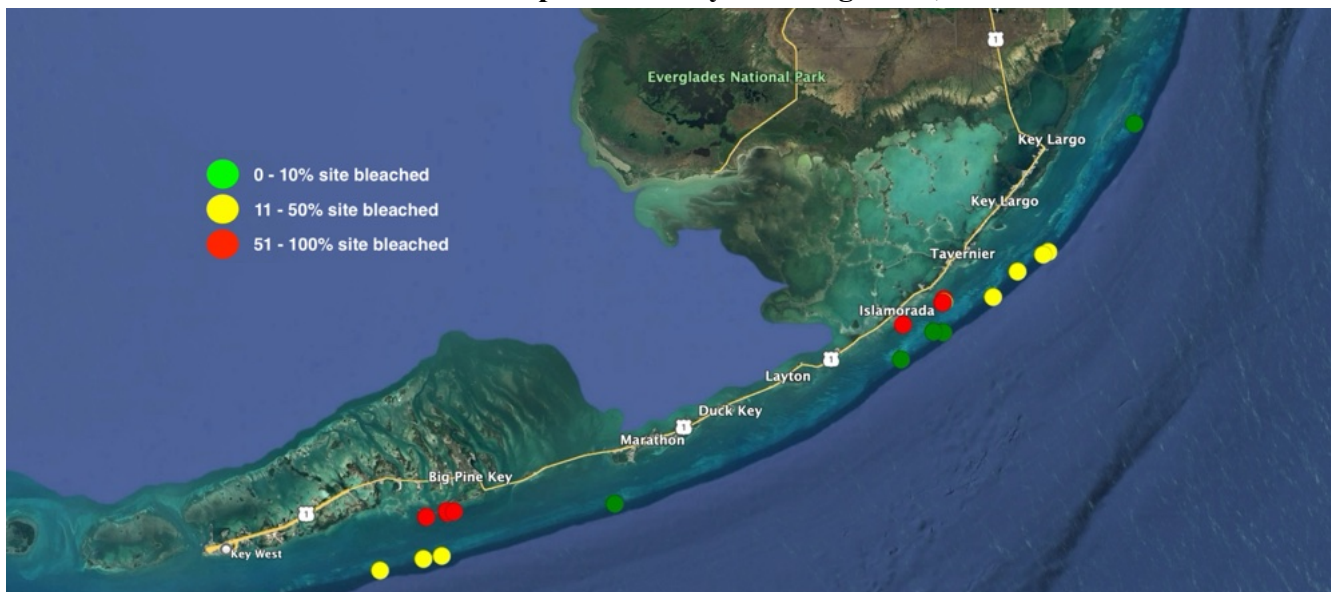


Figure 6. Overview of BleachWatch reports from July 28 – August 11, 2026.

**For more information about the BleachWatch program,
or to submit a bleaching observation, contact:**

Email: bleachwatch@mote.org
<http://www.mote.org/bleachwatch>



Funding Provided By:

