

HB 1171

2026

A bill to be entitled
An act relating to endangered or threatened marine
animals; providing a short title; creating s.
379.24312, F.S.; providing definitions; prohibiting
the collection and transportation of endangered or
threatened marine animals from state waters;
prohibiting the Fish and Wildlife Conservation
Commission from issuing, renewing, or approving
certain licenses; providing penalties; providing
construction; amending s. 379.401, F.S.; conforming a
provision to changes made by the act; providing an
effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Marine At-Risk Native Endangered or Threatened Animal Protection Act."

Section 2. Section 379.24312, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

379.24312 Protections for endangered or threatened marine animals.—

(1) As used in this section, the term:

(a) "Collect" means to physically capture, catch, remove, or possess a marine animal species, or attempt to engage in any such conduct.

26 (b) "Endangered or threatened species" means any species
27 listed as endangered or threatened pursuant to the federal
28 Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. s. 1531 et seq., under 50
29 C.F.R. ss. 223.102 and 224.101, or designated as endangered or
30 threatened by commission rule pursuant to s. 379.2291.

31 (c) "Educational or exhibition purposes" means the
32 holding, displaying, transporting, or maintaining of specimens
33 for public display, exhibition, or education, including
34 activities authorized under a special activity license issued by
35 the commission.

36 (d) "Marine animal" means any vertebrate or invertebrate
37 animal species, subspecies, or distinct population segment that
38 inhabits state waters, including, but not limited to, marine
39 mammals, sea turtles, fish, sharks, rays, crustaceans, mollusks
40 and corals, and any part thereof, including eggs, embryos,
41 tissue, cartilage, shells, or derivatives.

42 (e) "Transport" means to convey a marine animal species
43 from one location to another location on any street, road,
44 highway, waterway, or air space.

45 (2) A person may not collect or transport any endangered
46 or threatened marine animal from state waters for educational or
47 exhibition purposes.

48 (3) The commission may not issue, renew, or approve an
49 education-exhibition special activity license or other
50 authorization that would allow a person to collect or transport

51 any endangered or threatened marine animal from state waters for
52 purposes prohibited in subsection (2).

53 (4) A person who violates this section commits a Level
54 Four violation under s. 379.401. Each endangered or threatened
55 marine animal collected or transported in violation of this
56 section constitutes a separate offense.

57 (5) (a) This section does not prohibit or restrict the
58 rescue, rehabilitation, or scientific study of marine animals
59 when such activities are conducted under state or federal
60 authorization consistent with the Endangered Species Act and
61 applicable commission rules.

62 (b) This section does not limit federal authority under
63 the Endangered Species Act, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery
64 Conservation and Management Act, or the Convention on
65 International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and
66 Flora.

67 **Section 3. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) of section**
68 **379.401, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

69 379.401 Penalties and violations; civil penalties for
70 noncriminal infractions; criminal penalties; suspension and
71 forfeiture of licenses and permits.—

72 (4) LEVEL FOUR VIOLATIONS.—

73 (a) A person commits a Level Four violation if he or she
74 violates any of the following provisions:

75 1. Section 379.24312, prohibiting the collection or

76 transportation of endangered or threatened marine animals for
77 educational or exhibition purposes.

78 2.1. Section 379.354(16), prohibiting the making, forging,
79 counterfeiting, or reproduction of a recreational license or the
80 possession of same without authorization from the commission.

81 3.2. Section 379.365(2)(c), prohibiting criminal
82 activities relating to the taking of stone crabs.

83 4.3. Section 379.366(4)(c), prohibiting criminal
84 activities relating to the taking and harvesting of blue crabs.

85 5.4. Section 379.367(4), prohibiting the willful
86 molestation of spiny lobster gear.

87 6.5. Section 379.3671(2)(c)5., prohibiting the unlawful
88 reproduction, possession, sale, trade, or barter of spiny
89 lobster trap tags or certificates.

90 7.6. Section 379.404(5), prohibiting the sale of illegally
91 taken deer or wild turkey.

92 8.7. Section 379.4041(2), prohibiting the sale of
93 illegally taken bears.

94 9.8. Section 379.405, prohibiting the molestation or theft
95 of freshwater fishing gear.

96 10.9. Section 379.409, prohibiting the unlawful killing,
97 injuring, possessing, or capturing of alligators or other
98 crocodilia or their eggs.

99 11.10. Section 379.411, prohibiting the intentional
100 killing or wounding of any species designated as endangered,

HB 1171

2026

101 threatened, or of special concern.

102 12.11. Section 379.4115, prohibiting the killing of any
103 Florida or wild panther.

104 **Section 4.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.