

LIFE ON THE LINES: VERTICAL OYSTER GARDENS



2024-2025 Oyster Garden
Monitoring in St. Andrew Bay



ABOUT THE PROJECT:

A vertical oyster garden (VOG) is a simple and effective way our citizens can help to restore oyster populations in St. Andrew Bay. VOGs consist of cured oyster shells strung together and hung vertically from docks or piers. As the garden hangs in the water, young oysters, called spat, attach to the shells and begin to grow. Beyond increasing the number of oysters working together to filter our water, the data we collect can also provide information on recruitment and survival. Here, we highlight results from level 3 monitoring.

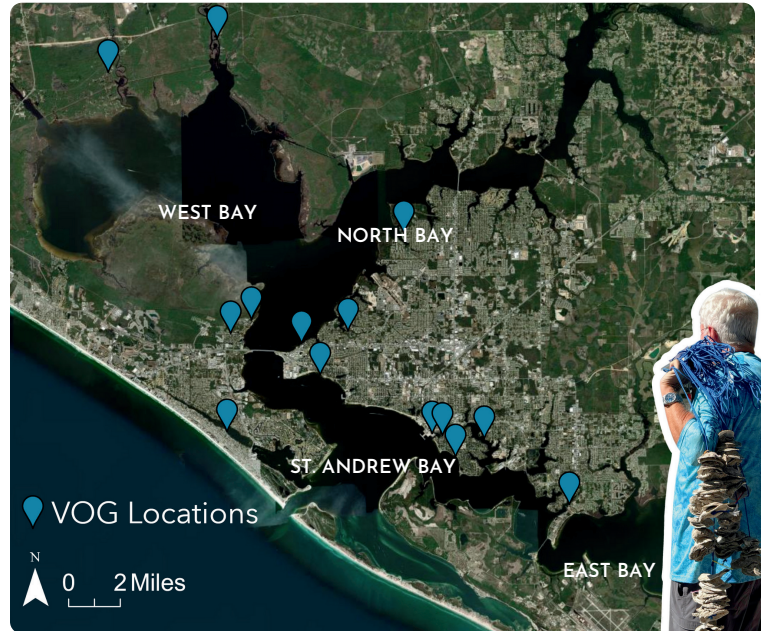


TOTAL VOGS DEPLOYED*: 51



NUMBER OF HOSTS: 14

Bay	# of Hosts	# of VOGs*
East Bay	3	12
North Bay	1	2
St. Andrew Bay	9	25
West Bay	2	12



VOG Locations throughout St. Andrew Bay.

*Number of confirmed deployed oyster gardens by hosts.



A newly assembled VOG.



VOG 6 months after deployment.

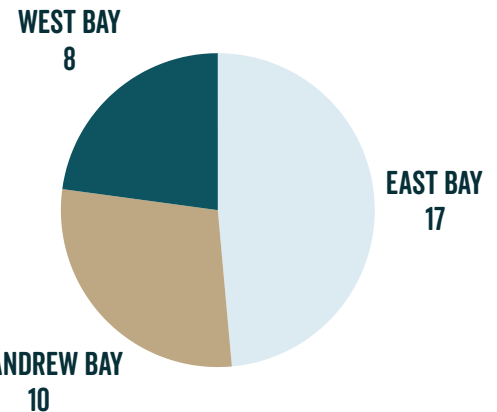


VOG over 1 year after deployment.

OYSTER PRESENCE:

SASJBEP staff and volunteers collect data 4x a year (quarterly) to monitor the recruitment (how many spat settle), growth, and survival as well as the other critters that are seen on the VOG. Over the past year, there were more spat found on the VOGs in East Bay than other bays with an average of 17 oysters per VOG. The largest oyster recorded was also in East Bay with a length of 97 millimeters. While there were 2 VOGs deployed in North Bay, neither VOG had documented oyster growth.

AVERAGE # OF OYSTERS PER VOG

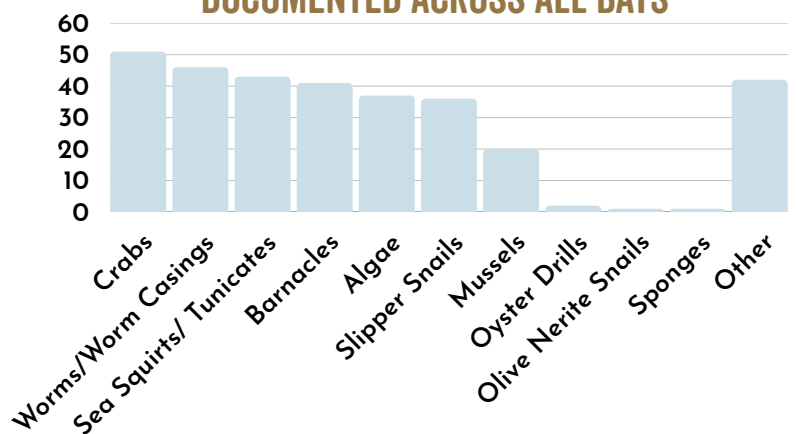


CRITTERS OF THE VOGS:

VOGs not only support oyster recruitment and growth but also make excellent habitat for many other animals. Invertebrates, algae, fish, and other bivalves are often found on vertical oyster gardens. The following chart highlights the most frequently documented critters across all bays.

Note: we only record presence and not the number of individuals present.

FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCES DOCUMENTED ACROSS ALL BAYS



PREDATORS



PARTNERS



COOL CRITTER

Lined Seahorse
(*Hippocampus erectus*)

Presence on VOG noted in St. Andrew Bay.



BECOME A HOST!

Do you want to contribute to citizen science and host your own vertical oyster gardens? Go to <https://sasjbep.org/vogs> to get started.

