NOAA - White Shoal, Dry Tortugas

Florida reef tract · surveyed 2021-06-26



0 — 5

Coral Health Index: TBD

What was done. Method: point-count survey (FWC-FWRI CREMP). For comparison only: CoralSCOP run on the author's own photographs (35 frames) gives 22%. That figure is a mask-area index, not a point count, and is not this site's cover. The written account of the site is a review of its photographs and of the author's dive notes, not a second survey.

HARD CORAL COVER

3.3%

Point-count survey (FWC-FWRI CREMP)

↘ 84%, 2021–2024

MOST RECENT HEAT LOAD RECORD

28.5°C **13.7°C-weeks**

26 Oct 2026 · +0.4°C vs the past-365-day mean (28.1°C) · NOAA alert that day: no stress (water now below the bleaching threshold; 13.7°C-weeks built up over the last 12 weeks)

HEAT STRESS (5-YR MEAN ANNUAL MAX. DHW)

12.5°C-weeks

NOAA annual peaks averaging 12–16°C-weeks

MAX. DEPTH

14.3 m

WATER TEMP. (SURVEY)

28.8°C

+2.3°C vs the 2021 mean sea temperature (26.5°C)

Note: NOAA's regional station series averages 1.1°C warmer than the satellite pixel nearest this site (2.9 km away), which is used here instead.

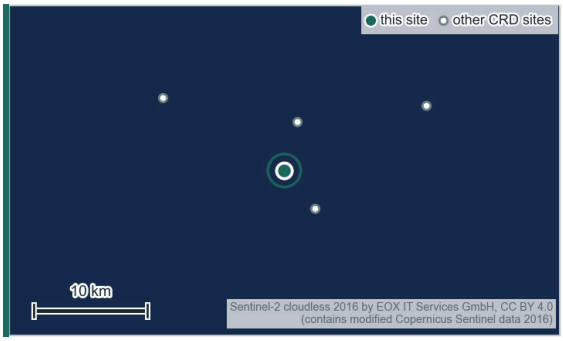
PHOTOGRAPHS

24 in the gallery · 82 on file

POSITION

24.6418, -82.8966

Site coordinate from the monitoring program's records.





White Shoal's shallow sea floor is carpeted in dense stands of staghorn coral, with mounding heads and brain corals filling the gaps, despite thin published hard coral cover at the four CREMP stations (3.3% in 2021, 0.5% in 2024). Anderson photographed algal fouling on some staghorn branches and an old rope coiled on the reef.





CV model comparison (hard coral cover, %): Transect (published) 3.3 · CoralSCOP unedited 21.7 · Claude (edited photos) 25.5 The two computer-vision methods agree within 3.8 pp (21.7–25.5%) and read 18.4–22.2 pp above the in-water transect (3.3%); the headline is the in-water transect because a diver transect is independent of the photographs.

Photographs: Anderson Mayfield/Coral Reef Diagnostics — 3 on this card; 24 in the gallery · 82 on file; watermarked · Full site record: https://api.coralreefdiagnostics.com/site-pages/noaa-white-shoal-dry-tortugas.html · Heat stress is the mean of the latest five annual maxima of NOAA Coral Reef Watch degree-heating weeks for this reef's NOAA CRW virtual station (Florida Keys) — a five-year heat history for the station's waters, not a measurement at this site on the dive date.