



Inspection Report

Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park
4150 S. Suncoast Blvd.
Homosassa, FL 34446

Customer ID: **3116**

Certificate: **58-C-0412**

Site: 001

Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs
Wildlife

Type: FOCUSED INSPECTION

Date: 25-JUN-2025

3.101(a)(1) **Direct** **Repeat**

Facilities, general.

The current housing facility for the three manatees "Betsy", "Ariel", and "Heinz" continues to not restrict the entrance of unwanted animals or protect the manatees from injury. Following the previous inspection, the facility added additional fish exclusion fencing where gaps existed and relocated most of the sheepshead and other larger fish from the manatee enclosures. The facility stated that three smaller sheepshead fish were still left in the manatee paddock. During the inspection, APHIS officials witnessed one of these approximately 4" sheepshead fish continuing to pick at the tail wounds on Betsy and Heinz, along with a different species of fish that was seen picking at the manatees' wounds and other surfaces on their bodies. The manatees were seen elevating their tails out of the water in reaction to the fish biting the wounds located there. The facility also started feeding the manatees in the in-ground ("medical") pool to help mitigate the fish presence around the manatees; however, a ~4" grey fish was seen picking at Ariel's side and tail wounds while she was in the pool, with resultant hemorrhage. The wounds on the manatees appear largely unchanged since the previous inspection. While the facility has implemented multiple mitigation measures to reduce the fish burden on the manatees, there are still fish negatively impacting the manatees at this time.

Allowing unwanted animals access to animal enclosures can lead to pain, discomfort, and ongoing injury. Housing facilities for marine mammals must be structurally sound and must be maintained in good repair to protect the animals from injury, to contain the animals within the facility, and to restrict the entrance of unwanted animals.

This inspection and exit interview were conducted with a facility representative.

Additional Inspectors:

Jessica Siegal-Willott

Prepared By: KATIE PRICE

USDA, APHIS, Animal Care

Date:

25-JUN-2025

Title: VETERINARY MEDICAL
OFFICER

Received by Title: Facility Representative

Date:

25-JUN-2025



Species Inspected

Cust No	Cert No	Site	Site Name	Inspection
3116	58-C-0412	001	Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs Wildlife	25-JUN-2025

Count	Scientific Name	Common Name
000003	<i>Trichechus manatus</i>	CARIBBEAN MANATEE
000001	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	TURKEY VULTURE
000001	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>	WHITE-TAILED DEER
000005	Total	