



Bald Head Association ~ “The voice for BHI property owners”

910-457-4676 • 111 Lighthouse Wynd, Bald Head Island • www.BaldHeadAssociation.com

Who Do I Call?

No Fishing In ANY Bald Head Island Lagoon/Pond — Call 911

The “No Fishing” and “No Feeding” signs at BHI lagoons/ponds are there for a reason. With alligators, turtles and fish populating these fresh-water lagoons, fishing does two things — endangers wildlife from leftover fishing gear and is perceived by alligators as a source of food (they don’t know the difference from a lure to an alluring tasty bite).



Photo by John Henry Harrelson, Coastal Regional Wildlife Biologist, Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC).

See the accompanying photo of an alligator on Bald Head Island that, without human assistance, would not have been able to eat due to discarded fishing gear getting trapped in its mouth. Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) is the agency licensed to handle a situation such as this. WRC’s John Henry Harrelson, along with the BHI Conservancy, helped rescue this alligator.

Fishing is viewed by an alligator as feeding, no matter what lure is used. Feeding any wildlife, including the turtles, is unlawful in North Carolina. Remember, just because you think you can toss bread to the turtles, alligators don’t understand that the bread isn’t meant for them. Here’s the kicker. If alligators perceive humans as a source of food, this increases the chance of teaching negative behavior. WRC’s *Coexist with Alligators* fact sheet (available at BaldHeadAssociation.com. Click on “Life on

BHI,” then “Wildlife.”) states, “Alligators can become a safety issue if they are habituated to being fed by humans. It is unlawful in NC for anyone to intentionally feed an alligator. To ensure alligators keep their secretive and shy behavior, **DO NOT** feed them, no matter where they are seen.”

Too many people ignore these postings, which affects everyone on BHI. You, your guests or renters may only be on BHI for a short stay, but these alligators are on BHI 24/7/365. Think one person ignoring the signs and not obeying the laws doesn’t matter? Multiply one person thinking that the rules don’t apply to them times one hundred — just in one season in one year. For the good of Bald Head Island, property owners are strongly encouraged to educate their guests and renters about NC law and Village ordinances regarding no fishing and no feeding in any lagoons/ponds on BHI.

Now that you understand the importance, here’s what to do if you see anyone fishing in a BHI lagoon/pond — **call 911**. Tell the dispatch operator that you are on Bald Head Island. They will alert BHI’s Public Safety Department. Keep in mind, if the Public Safety Department has personnel handling other emergency calls, your call will be prioritized as required. Calling 911 creates a log and report, from which Public Safety can track, gain better understanding of call types/frequencies/timing and use for training. Do not approach the person who is fishing. Public Safety responders are trained to deal with the situation; you are not.

All lagoons/ponds are located on private property. If you’re fishing, you’re trespassing. BHA, The Villas and the BHI Club have authorized Public Safety to ticket anyone violating the No Fishing/No Feeding/No Boating/No Swimming policy in the lagoons/ponds with a trespassing citation. Public Safety is focused on educating violators, with a possible citation and/or arrest, if warranted.