



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

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## Call 911 — Feeding, Fishing, Harassing Alligators/Wildlife Anywhere on BHI, Including All Lagoons/Ponds and Wildlife Overlook

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If you see anyone feeding or harassing an alligator/wildlife anywhere on BHI or if you see anyone fishing in a lagoon/pond anywhere on BHI, **call 911** to report it (tell the 911 operator that you are on Bald Head Island). These actions create a potentially hazardous situation for everyone on BHI and are unlawful. Spread the word! If everyone helps to prevent these situations, we lessen the chance of teaching aggressive behavior to alligators and wildlife — which impacts everyone on BHI, including the alligators and wildlife.

Though we have been trained to only call 911 for a medical emergency or fire, BHI is unique. You are urged to **call 911** to report anyone feeding or harassing an alligator/wildlife anywhere on BHI as well as to report anyone fishing in a lagoon/pond anywhere on BHI. 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.

Previous incidents of calling 911 and confusion on the part of the 911 dispatch operators has been addressed. BHA staff met with Public Safety Director Carl Pearson in July to voice this concern of property owners. Pearson immediately worked with Brunswick County to solve this issue.

When property owners have concerns or problems, it's helpful for them to share those with BHA. Knowing about an issue that is important to property owners creates an opportunity for BHA to address concerns with various BHI entities. With property owners' feedback regarding recent confusion in calling 911, BHA worked in partnership with Public Safety to address and correct the issue.

BHA and The Villas 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.

BHA understands that some people are not pleased with the recently installed fencing at the Wildlife Overlook observation deck on Stede Bonnet Wynd. While not ideal, this action is necessary at this time to lessen the risk of a dangerous human/wildlife interaction at that location. For some time, several BHI entities have collaborated on efforts to discourage people from feeding alligators and from fishing in any lagoon/pond anywhere on BHI — especially at the Wildlife Overlook observation deck on Stede Bonnet Wynd — without success.

A recent site visit by NC WRC (Wildlife Resources Commission) showed alligators approaching the observation deck, a learned behavior from humans feeding them. The Bald Head Association board of directors recognized the severity of the situation and examined several options to lessen the risk to people and animals. Options included adding/revising signage, installing a camera security system, providing human monitors, installing fencing and even removal of the alligators. At the recommendation of NC WRC and BHI Public Safety, the board ultimately unanimously voted to install protective fencing, which was installed on June 6, 2018.

It is the belief of Bald Head Association that, while not ideal, this action is necessary at this time to lessen the risk of a dangerous human/wildlife interaction at that location.

BHA received a report of damage in July to the newly installed fence surrounding the Wildlife Overlook observation deck. The damage will be repaired as soon as possible. If you see anyone damaging the fence at the Wildlife Overlook observation deck, **call 911** to report it.