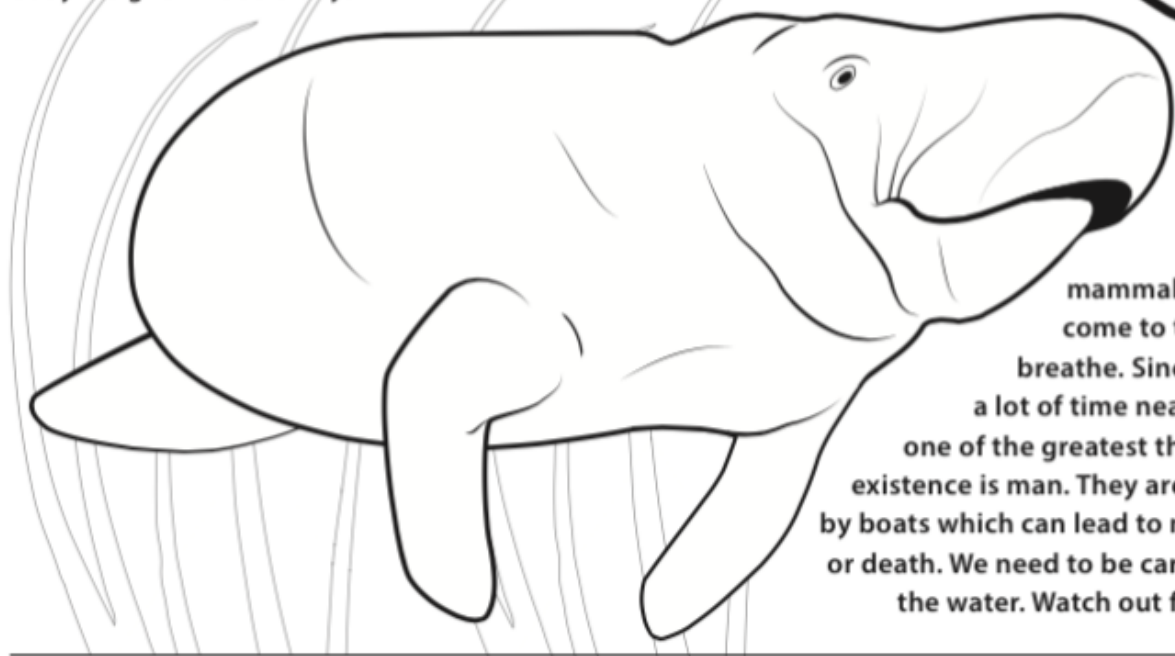


THE FRIENDLY MANATEE

There are three species of manatees: the West Indian Manatee (which is the largest), the West African Manatee and the Amazonian Manatee.

Manatees have a peaceful manner and large blimplike shaped bodies. A manatees lips are covered with sensitive bristles that allow them to find plants underwater. They eat about one quarter of their body weight in food a day!



Manatees are mammals and need to come to the surface to breathe. Since they spend a lot of time near the surface, one of the greatest threats to their existence is man. They are often struck by boats which can lead to major injuries or death. We need to be careful while on the water. Watch out for manatees!