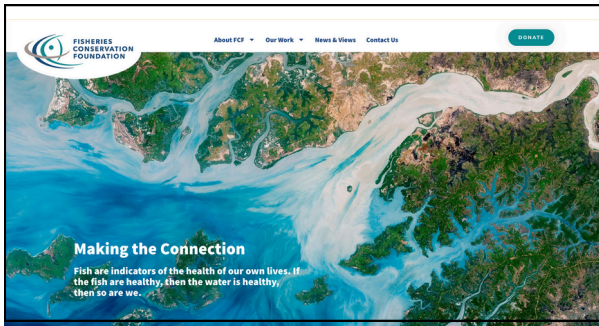


WHAT'S NEW



A NEW LOOK: We've revamped our website to offer a more streamlined and user-friendly experience. On our homepage, we highlight the importance of connection, a theme reflected in our logo, which symbolizes the bond between fish, water, and people. We invite you to take a look at our new layout, and, as always, we'd love to hear your comments! www.fishconserve.org



NEW BOARD MEMBERS: This was the year we updated the organization's bylaws, which included expanding our Board of Directors. A huge thank you to Dr. Ellen Marsden for her years of service on our board. We are lucky that Ellen will continue to be a part of our family as an Advisory Council member. Two of our advisory team members, Drs. Steven Cooke and Dr. Marlis Douglas, have moved over to the board this coming year. In addition, the positions of Office Manager and Director of Operations have officially joined the board. You can read about all board and advisory council members on our website.

NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS: A big welcome to Katka Svagrova, Carolyn Hall, Robert Arlinghaus, and Doug Austen who joined our advisory council in 2024!

A NEW SKY: The social media landscape is an ever-evolving one. When Twitter went away, people floundered for a go-to place for the science community to network, share information, and provide feedback. Recently, there was a large migration by the science community to the social network Bluesky, including #teamfish folks. FCF has made the change, and we are rebuilding our community there. Find us at [@fishconserve.bsky.social](https://bsky.social/@fishconserve).



FISH • WATER • PEOPLE

Our belief is that if the fish are healthy, then the water and the habitat are healthy, and then so are the people that live there.



Scan here to
support our work



INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT FOR RECREATIONAL FISHING

BASS SPAWNING SANCTUARIES: This year brought about an exciting development for protecting nesting largemouth and smallmouth bass in Ontario. FCF and our partners have spent decades evaluating how angling during the reproductive period affects recruitment. That research and evidence resulted in the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources establishing two experimental Bass Spawning Sanctuaries in 2024. A spawning sanctuary is a designated area where all fishing for any species is prohibited during the spawning and nesting period. FCF and the Fisheries lab at Carleton University took on the task of educating area anglers and developed the outreach materials that describe the new sanctuaries. This included printing no-fishing signs and displaying them around the sanctuary boundaries, as well as making presentations to lake associations and speaking with anglers out on the water. In addition, we are working to form a Coalition for Innovative Fish Conservation to expand the sanctuary concept. We want to give a deserving shout-out to the Charleston Lake Association the Rideau Lakes Environmental Fund, and the Kenauk Institute for their continual support in this work and to Rick and Shauna Williams for their assistance in the field with tracking fish movement in the experimental lakes.



Our research group will continue monitoring bass reproduction both inside and outside the spawning sanctuaries, including snorkel surveys and tracking fish movements using acoustic telemetry.

Learn more about the Ontario Bass Spawning Sanctuaries by scanning this QR code.



SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS • AUGUST 10-14, 2025

Scan this code to go to the BB2025 website.



Black Bass 2025: We are well into the planning for the Black Bass Symposium (BB2025), to be held in San Antonio, TX, August 10-14, 2025, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Fisheries Society. The BB2025 will assemble stakeholders from science, management, angling groups and the angling industry to:

- assess the state of the bass fisheries in North America,
- identify current and future challenges, and
- form new partnerships among the stakeholder groups to plan for a sustainable future for bass angling.

BB2025 will offer excellent opportunities for education and outreach activities to connect all constituents, including anglers and industry leaders.

Your support makes this work possible!

MAHSEER RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION

MAHSEER MIGRATION TRACKING PROJECT: Bhutan is a small country undergoing big changes, including new hydropower projects. Examining how these developments may influence migratory fish species will be an important part of their nature-based philosophy. Our work to understand the annual migration patterns and spawning behaviors of Golden Mahseer and other migratory fish species continues to play an important role in both building capacity for fisheries management and understanding meaningful mitigation strategies for the planned development. In partnership with Bhutan's Nature Conservation Division, we continue to assist in the Punatsangchhu radio-telemetry tracking project (download a flier here: <http://bit.ly/4gEQeyd>). We are also working on projects that will identify key spawning tributaries and nursery areas using both traditional sampling methods and eDNA techniques.



Left: Wildlife rangers play a key role in the data collection and monitoring of the telemetry array. We provide support through continual training, telemetry equipment, and troubleshooting.

Below: Wildlife rangers, Lungten Dorji and Deo Kumar Gurung on their fellowship in Canada, where they learned new sampling and monitoring techniques that they can bring back to Bhutan.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP 2024: Over the years, we have been able to provide opportunities to our partners that have expanded their knowledge of fish and fisheries research. This past year, FCF sponsored an international research fellowship for two Bhutanese rangers, Lungten Dorji and Deo Kumar Gurung, providing support for travel to Canada and to live at the Queen's University Biological Station. This award was designed as part of a capacity-building program to expose the Fellows to an array of fisheries and aquatic conservation and management approaches, providing them with expertise that they could then bring back to Bhutan's Department of Forests and Park Services. The Fellows worked alongside American and Canadian scientists on a variety of projects focusing on fisheries management, behavior, reproductive ecology, recruitment dynamics, and conservation, including assessing the impacts of angling on largemouth and smallmouth bass. A special thank you to Dr. Steven Cooke, Carleton University, and to Liane Nowell at the Kenauk Institute for their assistance in making the fellowship a success!



FCF 2024 REVIEW

MAHSEER RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION



FCF Board member Bryant Dunn shows off a beautiful Chocolate Mahseer, one of the species that helps drive the recreational fishing program.

RECREATIONAL FISHING IN BHUTAN: Recreational fishing in Bhutan was introduced in 2023, and FCF played a pivotal role in developing the program and providing in-country guide training. We remain actively engaged in educational efforts supporting local community conservation initiatives and promoting sustainable fisheries management. We'd like to recognize our Board member, Bryant Dunn, who continues to work diligently with local residents, fishing guides, and international anglers to expand fishing tourism in the country.

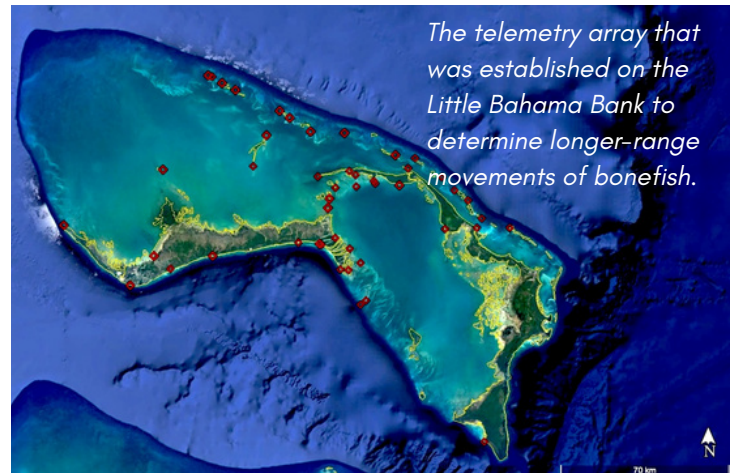
Scan here to learn more about the recreational fishing program in Bhutan (green QR code) and on Mahseer Best Fishing Practices (orange QR code).



ADVISORY PARTNERSHIPS: FCF continues to work with our colleagues and partners in Nepal and Pakistan on their efforts to understand the migration patterns and status of their golden mahseer populations.

FLATS ECOLOGY AND CONSERVATION PROGRAM

For over 15 years, FCF has supported telemetry research in the saltwater flats ecosystem, looking at migration patterns, uncovering reproductive behaviors, and assessing spawning aggregation sites of bonefish. FCF is now summarizing the results of that work, as well as submitting our most recent work for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. These documents include a series of recommendations for more effective conservation actions for The Bahamas and elsewhere across the Caribbean.



The telemetry array that was established on the Little Bahama Bank to determine longer-range movements of bonefish.

100% of your donation goes toward our work in promoting science-based solutions for healthy fisheries.

FCF 2024 REVIEW

COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAM

TRAINING PROGRAMS: How can fisheries scientists best communicate their science so it is both understood and inspires change? Since 2020, FCF has partnered with the American Fisheries Society to establish and lead a communications training program. The team works to equip natural resource professionals with the skills necessary to make their science accessible and for them to engage effectively with a diversity of stakeholders. In 2024, the program offered a range of training opportunities, including:

- **Climate Ambassador Program:** A two-year initiative focused on climate communication
- **Delta Fellows Training:** Hands-on, in-person workshop
- **Scientists Promoting Policy, Access, Research, and Knowledge (SP2ARK):** A six-month program emphasizing science-driven policy engagement
- **Capstone Train-the-Trainer Program:** Designed to prepare participants to lead communication training sessions
- **Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society:** Hands-on, in-person workshop
- **Kenauk Institute Internship Training:** Hands-on, in-person workshop
- **World Fisheries Congress:** Hands-on, in-person workshop



Scan the QR code to learn more about this program.



WORLD FISHERIES CONGRESS: The congress was held in March of 2024 and FCF was involved in several engagement activities, including:

- a) an assessment on the attitudes of sustainable fisheries by attendees of the conference,
- b) involvement in the symposium, *Assessing the Status of Inland Fisheries for Policy*,
- c) co-organizers of the symposium, *Status of Fish and Fisheries in the Himalayan Region*.



Help Support FCF in 2024



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Learn how you can donate at: <https://fishconserve.org/donate/>