

# UNDERSTANDING RED TIDE



Red tide in marine and estuarine waters can discolor water, appearing red, brown or green.



Red tide can cause fish kills that appear offshore, on beaches and in waterways.



Red tide in the Gulf of Mexico was documented by Spanish explorers in the 1600s.

The species that most commonly causes red tides in Florida is the marine alga

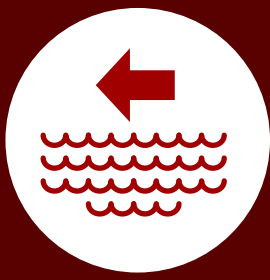
## *Karenia brevis*



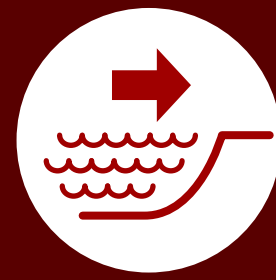
Red tide events and other harmful algal blooms degrade water quality and harm Florida's economy.



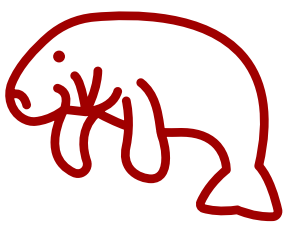
A bloom occurs when elevated concentrations of *Karenia brevis* are present in the water.



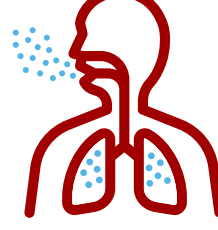
Red tides in Florida are thought to develop 10 - 40 miles offshore, away from the direct influence of human generated sources of nutrients.



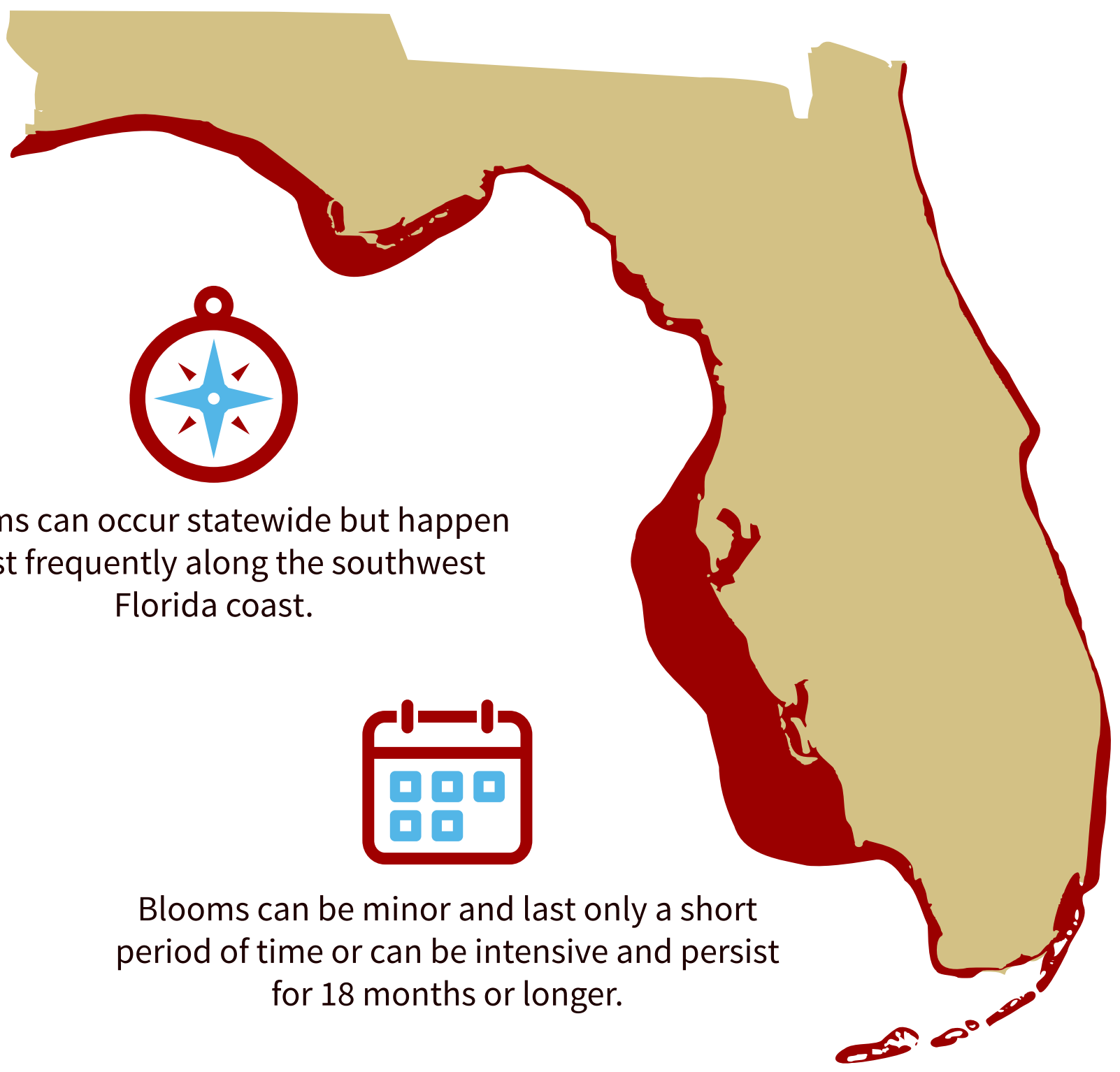
Once red tides are transported to coastal waters, they are capable of using man-made nutrients to sustain their growth.



*Karenia brevis* produces a suite of powerful neurotoxins, collectively referred to as brevetoxins, that can affect the health of both wildlife and humans.



For humans, brevetoxins can cause respiratory irritation or illness if inhaled or neurotoxic shellfish poisoning if contaminated seafood is eaten.



Blooms can occur statewide but happen most frequently along the southwest Florida coast.



Blooms can be minor and last only a short period of time or can be intensive and persist for 18 months or longer.

## WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

To get more information about red tide in your area visit

[MyFWC.com/RedTide](http://MyFWC.com/RedTide)

PROTECTING  TOGETHER

[ProtectingFloridaTogether.gov](http://ProtectingFloridaTogether.gov)