

Caloosahatchee algae causing turtle, fish kills

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By Sarah Hollenbeck

The toxic algae in the Caloosahatchee is killing more wildlife. We found fish and turtles choked out due to a lack of oxygen. People who live near the water are praying for the only thing that can help - rain.

When you compare video from last Friday to this Thursday, it appears that a little rain went a long way.

On Friday, the toxic blue green algae at Franklin Lock was spread in massive chunks across the Caloosahatchee's banks.

Thursday, the water is still tinted emerald green, but the algae seems to have dissipated.

But if you take a closer look, the shores littered with dead sea creatures.

The algae is still there, but now it is resting on the bottom of the river - sucking up any available oxygen.

And the fish aren't the only ones who can't escape. Deana Schuler lives on the water in her sailboat and her hull is covered in green slime.

"Slimy, streaky, stinky stuff on your boat," she described. "And dead fish stinking - not good stuff."

The Lee County Health Department has warned people to steer clear of these waters - no swimming and no fishing - if you plan to eat your catch.

Julie Jeffords, owner of the Riverside Marina, says it's a shame because the fishing couldn't be better.

"Blue gill, shell cracker are really good and the bass are seeing a great improvement," she said.

Wednesday's rain still brought hope because the more we get, the quicker this toxic slime will wash out to the Gulf before it can claim any additional victims.

"I just hope it rains buckets right now," said Schuler.

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