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Episode: "Succulent Sandwiches" DV2407H

In Key Largo, Florida, a seafood staple servin' up a sandwich that's become a local legend.



More info: www.PilotHouseMarina.com/blog

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Cinnamon

















Goliath Grouper attack in Jupiter, FL.



Due to the quick thinking of a local boat mechanic and a fast-acting county commissioner, Key Largo escaped a potential tragedy.

I received a phone call from Tom Jeanquenat, Dr. Tom to his friends, is a boat doctor. Dr. Tom worked for many years as a master mechanic at Rowell's Marina, which was purchased a few years ago by Monroe County and is now being used as a park. Dr. Tom was aghast because he drove by the park and there were people swimming in the basin. He explained that there was a 20-foot-long 1,000-lb Jewfish/Goliath Grouper that has been living in the basin for many years. "The outlet is only 4 feet from the surface of the water, the basin is 60 feet deep and the humongous fish can't get out, they are trapped." he explained, "And people are swimming in there!" he added.

The first thing I did was go check it out. Beautiful new sandy beach and signs that said "Swim at Your Own Risk," and people were, indeed, swimming. Next I called the former owners, Char and Charlie Rowell, who



The Legend of the Key Largo Sea Monster confirmed the mammoth whale-of-a-tale was true, and in fact Charlie said there were about

four Goliath Groupers in there, all 800 pounds

I then called Sylvia Murphy, our Monroe County Commissioner, and explained it to her. Commissioner Murphy gasped. She knew a lot more about Goliath Groupers than I do, and she was shocked. She said she wanted to speak to Dr. Tom immediately and explained to me that " If a goliath grouper opens its mouth near a swimmer it can suck in their whole arm!"

Murphy called in Assistant County Administrator Kevin Wilson and within 48 hours, new signs were posted around the basin of the property, "Absolutely No Swimming!."

This happened a few weeks ago, before the tragedy at Disney World

where a small child was killed by an alligator where no warning signs were posted.

Thank you, Sylvia Murphy and Kevin Wilson of Monroe County for your quick response!

As of this writing they were waiting for Captain Spencer Slate and his dive team to explore the basin with special equipment. Perhaps he may be able to photograph the Key Largo Sea Monster. It is a darn shame people won't be able to swim there as long as those gargantuan groupers are there.

Just for the halibut I suggested we catch them and have a big fish fry party for the whole county but Goliath Groupers are "protected" even the they are not on the endangered list so they didn't flounder, they filleted the heck out of that

Maybe we should glass in the basin and turn it into an aguarium? Call Gunky of Keys Crane Service and have him haul them out? Then get Captain Mark of Tow Boat US to tow them out to sea? Perhaps one of our readers can come up with a more so-fish-ticated idea.

Charlie Rowell said that



ABSOLUTELY

NO SWIMMING

Goliath Grouper: Epinephelus itajara



County Commissioner Sylvia Murphy & Asst. County Administrator Kevin Wilson.

he used to swim in the basin often and did not think the giant fish would hurt anyone. He said he and the family are thrilled that people are able to enjoy the property, and to say hello to everyone.

Originally called Jewfish, the name was changed several years ago because one woman wrote that the name was offensive. Bullshit, I say! Let's change it back. Whatever name you call them by, they conjure up thoughts of a huge lumbering gentle fish to those who haven't encountered one. In one video, a Goliath Grouper swipes a 4-ft. shark from a fisherman and swallows it whole. In another, one attacks a diver's leg. When we think of fish attacks, we naturally blame sharks, but according



The new sign is posted prominantly at Rowell's Waterfront Park.

to research the Goliath Grouper gives sharks a run for their money. They are territorial and defend their territory. They have 2 sets of sharp teeth and generally reach the size of a motorcycle. The largest caught on a rod and reel was 680 lbs! The oldest recorded from analyzing bone rings was 37 years old. Their growth rate slows as they age, but they only stop growing when they

In 1895 the New York Times reported that a fisherman caught a 1,500-lb. one in the Gulf of Mexico and in the 1950s, 2 children jumped off a bridge in the Keys and one was eaten by a Goliath Grouper. The legend of the Key Largo Sea Monster lives