The West Indian Manatee



Read the passage. Then answer the questions in full sentences.

Name _____ Date _____

The West Indian manatee is a big animal that lives in the water. It is also called the sea cow. Many manatees live in Florida.

A grown one is about 10 feet long. It weighs 800 to 1,200 pounds. It eats seagrass and other plants. It spends a lot of its time eating.

A mom has one calf at a time. A calf is a baby manatee. It drinks its mom's milk until it is one or two years old.

A manatee must come up to breathe. When it is at rest, it comes up about every four minutes.

In the cold months, manatees leave to find warmer water.

Most of them have scars from boats. People who study them take photos of the scars. The marks help them tell one from another.

1. **What is another name for the manatee?**

2. **What do manatees eat?**

3. **Why do manatees leave in the cold months?**

4. **Boats can hurt manatees. What could people in boats do to keep manatees safe?**

Answer key

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1. What is another name for the manatee?
   The sea cow.

2. What do manatees eat?
   Seagrass and other plants.

3. Why do manatees leave in the cold months?
   To find warmer water.

4. Boats can hurt manatees. What could people in boats do to keep manatees safe?
   Sample answer: they could go slowly and look out for manatees in the water.