



**MARINE DISCOVERY CENTER**

Field Trip Programs for Schools and  
Community Groups

Marine Discovery Center

520 Barracuda Blvd.

New Smyrna Beach, FL 32169

386-428-4828

[www.marinediscoverycenter.org](http://www.marinediscoverycenter.org)

Dear Educator/Group Leader,

Thank you for inquiring about a field trip program at the Marine Discovery Center! We are a non-profit organization established with the goal to protect and restore the Florida coastal and Indian River Lagoon ecosystems through education, research and community stewardship. Marine Discovery Center is located at 520 Barracuda Blvd, New Smyrna Beach, Florida, the former site of New Smyrna Beach High School. Our facility houses a variety of exhibits and aquariums that showcase local flora and fauna, classroom space, a laboratory, a covered pavilion, a kayak launch, a nearly 5-acre restored salt marsh, an amphitheater, and paved as well as natural walking trails. We also have a 40-passenger Discovery pontoon boat and fleet of kayaks that we use to explore the Indian River Lagoon.

Marine Discovery Center (MDC) welcomes you and your students to “Discover Amazing” through our hands-on, feet-wet programs. The following packet is filled with information to make your Discovery program an enjoyable and memorable experience.

Once you have read through the field trip packet, please return the reservation form via mail, fax, or email. Payment can be made prior to or on the day of your visit, or your school can be invoiced for your visit. We accept cash, credit cards, or checks payable to Marine Discovery Center.

If you need further assistance, please contact me by email or phone.

Thank you,

Michelle West  
Education Coordinator  
Marine Discovery Center  
520 Barracuda Blvd.  
New Smyrna Beach, FL 32169  
Email - [michelle@marinediscoverycenter.org](mailto:michelle@marinediscoverycenter.org)  
Welcome Center – (386) 428-4828  
Education Office – (386) 428-3310  
Fax – (386) 428-4825

### Indian River Lagoon Experience Field Trip

Our most popular program offers the students a chance to participate in land-based activities as well as taking a tour on our boat. Dolphins, manatees, birds and other marine life may be encountered as the naturalist describes the lagoon and its inhabitants. The Indian River Lagoon Experience can be presented to a minimum of 25 participants (students, teachers and chaperones) and a maximum of 120 participants (students, teachers and chaperones).

Please read the information below for more details.

All times are approximate.

Total Number of Participants: 25-40

Length of Program: 3 hours (3 activities)

Fee: \$18.00/participant

- This program includes two land-based activities lasting 30 minutes each, a 30-minute time period for lunch under our picnic pavilion, and a 90-minute Discovery Eco-Adventure tour on our 40-passenger pontoon boat.
- Please divide your students into 2 equal groups.

Total Number of Participants: 41-80

Length of Program: 3 hours (3 activities)

Fee: \$18.00/participant

- This program includes two land-based activities lasting 30 minutes each, a 30-minute time period for lunch under our picnic pavilion, and a 90-minute Discovery Eco-Adventure tour on our 40-passenger pontoon boat.
- Please divide your students into 4 equal groups. Two of the groups will begin with the estuary exploration by boat, and the other groups will rotate between the land-based activities.

Total Number of Participants: 81-120

Length of Program: 3 1/2 hours (5 activities)

Fee: \$18.00/participant

- This program involves four land-based activities lasting 30 minutes each, a 30-minute time period for lunch under our picnic pavilion, and a 60-minute Discovery Eco-Adventure tour on our 40-passenger pontoon boat.
- Please divide your students into 6 equal groups. Two of the groups will begin with the estuary exploration by boat, and the other groups will rotate between the land-based activities.

Indian River Lagoon Experience  
Land-Based Activity Descriptions

**Habitat Hike**

Habitat Hike allows students to explore our property through a nature hike led by one of our educators. Participants will be guided through a coastal hammock and up Mount Morgan for a beautiful view of surrounding waters, mangrove forests, oyster reefs, and our restored salt marsh. Students will learn about these important habitats and why they are crucial for our ecosystem.

\*Participants must wear closed toed shoes for this activity.

**Plethora of Plankton**

Plethora of Plankton peers into the fascinating world of marine plankton – the drifters of the sea. Students will watch a brief presentation on plankton and check out a live sample of plankton through our discovery scopes. If time allows, students will be able to build their own plankton and experiment the concept of neutral buoyancy.

**Feeding Frenzy**

Step into the fascinating life of the shark and what separates these magnificent creatures from other fish. Our instructors will present a variety of shark artifacts including shark teeth, sharkskin, shark fins and preserved shark specimens for a hands-on investigation into the lives of these fascinating creatures!

**Spineless Specimens**

Take a look into the world of animals without spines - invertebrates. Our instructors will use a variety of models and live specimens to explain the fascinating invertebrate phylums.

**Marine Matters**

Measure and compare objects and materials based on their physical properties. Students will explore the physical properties of matter for various marine specimens.

**Wonderful World of Water**

Learn about the important natural resource of water and what we need to do to protect it. Students will use scientific tools to learn about various aspects of water quality. Discussion of the water cycle, weather patterns, and climate may also be included.

### Kayaking Adventure Field Trips

Participants will explore the lagoon up close while leisurely paddling in a kayak. The journey will be led by an experienced kayak naturalist who will guide the students through an ecological lesson on the importance of the lagoon.

Please read below for more details.

All times are approximate.

Total Number of Participants: 10 or less

Length of Program: 2 hours

Fee: \$20.00/participant

- This program includes around a 90-minute paddle adventure and a 30-minute time period for lunch under our picnic pavilion.
- There must be one adult for every four students while kayaking.

Total Number of Participants: 11-20

Length of Program: 2 ½ hours

Fee: \$20.00/participant

- This program includes around a 60-minute paddle adventure, a 60-minute salt marsh adventure as well as a 30-minute time period for lunch under our picnic pavilion.
- Please divide your students, teachers, and chaperones into two equal groups (no more than 10 in a group). There must be one adult for every four students while kayaking.

Total Number of Participants: 21-30

Length of Program: 3 ½ hours

Fee: \$25.00/participant

- This program includes around a 60-minute paddle adventure, a 60-minute salt marsh adventure, a 60-minute plankton lab as well as a 30-minute time period for lunch under our picnic pavilion.
- Please divide your students, teachers, and chaperones into three equal groups (no more than 10 in a group). There must be one adult for every four students while kayaking.

*Participants must wear closed toe water shoes and are encouraged to wear clothes that can get wet, sunglasses, a hat, sunscreen, and bring a reusable water bottle. All students, chaperones, and teachers must have a signed kayak release form to participate. The minimum age of participants for this field trip is 12 years old.*

### Discovery Eco-Adventure Tour Field Trip

What could be better than cruising the lagoon while learning about the wildlife that inhabits the area? Perhaps dolphins will be playing or birds will be diving to capture prey. A naturalist will be along to stimulate students' curiosities about the most biologically diverse estuary in North America.

Total Number of Participants: 25-40

Length of Program: 2 hours

Fee: \$12.00/participant

- This program includes a 90-minute boat tour on our 40-passenger pontoon boat and a 30-minute time period for lunch under our picnic pavilion.
- Participants are encouraged to arrive early to check in and use the restroom before they head over to the boat dock.

### Total Immersion Field Trip

A ride on the Discovery boat takes participants to an island for an extreme exploration experience.

A naturalist will be onboard to share their knowledge of the most biologically diverse estuary in North America. Explorers will use seine nets and dip nets to discover and identify the animals found in the Indian River Lagoon.

Total Number of Participants: 25-38

Length of Program: 3-4 hours

Fee: \$24.00/participant

- This program includes a boat tour to Disappearing Island for exploration on our 40-passenger pontoon boat and a 30-minute time period for lunch under our picnic pavilion.
- Participants must wear closed toe water shoes, clothes that can get wet, and bring a reusable water bottle. Participants are encouraged to bring sunglasses, a hat, sunscreen, a towel and a change of clothes.

Total Number of Participants: 39-78

Length of Program: 3-4 hours

Fee: \$24.00/participant

- This program includes a boat tour to an island for exploration on our 40-passenger pontoon boat and two land based activities (see descriptions under the Indian River Lagoon field trip). One group will explore an island while the other group participates in two land based activities at MDC. Both groups will then have a 30-minute time period for lunch under our picnic pavilion.
- Participants must wear closed toe water shoes, clothes that can get wet, and bring a reusable water bottle. Participants are encouraged to bring sunglasses, a hat, sunscreen, a towel and a change of clothes.
- Due to the need to access a sand bar, this field trip is tide permitting.

## Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

- How do I reserve an education program with the Marine Discovery Center?  
Select a program and several dates that fit your schedule. Complete a field trip reservation request. Please email the completed form to [michelle@marinediscoverycenter.org](mailto:michelle@marinediscoverycenter.org).
- When are the education programs offered?  
The education programs are typically offered Monday-Friday from 9AM-2PM. However, field trips may be offered at another time if staff is available.
- What items should we bring with us to have a safe and enjoyable experience?  
Sunscreen, sneakers (some activities require closed toe water shoes), a hat, a reusable water bottle, a waste-free lunch (see [www.wastefreelunches.org](http://www.wastefreelunches.org) for suggestions) and a sense of discovery.
- Do we bring our lunch to the Marine Discovery Center?  
Yes - since our programs run through the lunch hour, we suggest you bring a waste-free lunch with plenty to drink. We will have recycling bins available and request that your students use them to dispose of their single use plastics. Marine Discovery Center does not have a facility to provide food and beverages.
- What happens if there is bad weather?  
Depending upon the severity of the weather, the staff of Marine Discovery Center has the right to cancel or alter any programs due to inclement weather. We will make the call approximately one hour before your scheduled program. In the case of a cancellation, we will reschedule your program or refund your money.
- Do teachers and/or chaperones have to pay for the field trip?  
Teachers are free of charge but we ask that chaperones pay. If you are not a school then there is no charge for the lead chaperone; however, we ask that the other chaperones pay.
- What is the cost of your field trips?  
Prices for our programs vary but range from \$12/person - \$24/person. Scholarships are available for Title One schools. In order to apply for a scholarship, please write a letter on your school's letterhead requesting financial assistance for your field trip.
- Do we have to pay for our field trip in advance?  
Payment can be made prior to or on the day of your visit, or your school can be invoiced for your visit. We accept cash, credit cards or checks payable to Marine Discovery Center. Please have all participants pay in advance and make one payment to MDC. A detailed invoice will be provided for you upon departure or emailed to you the following business day.

- Can we visit the gift shop during our field trip?  
Of course! Please indicate on your reservation form if you would like to have time to shop during your field trip. We need to incorporate this time into your schedule so that everyone has adequate time to shop and check out.
- How many participants can come on a field trip in one day?  
The total number of students, teachers, and chaperones varies according to the program you choose. There is a minimum number of 25 participants and a maximum of 120 participants. Please see the descriptions for each program for the minimum and maximum number of participants.
- Do you usually have only one school at a time or will there be other schools there?  
We usually only book one school field trip program a day. However, there are other activities going on at our center throughout the day in which members of the public may be participating.

### Field Trip To-Do List

1. Contact Michelle West to make a reservation for your field trip. Please fill out the reservation request and return it via email, fax, or mail. Once your date is scheduled on the calendar, you will receive a confirmation form via email.
2. If you are participating in the *Indian River Lagoon Experience*, please pick the land-based activities in which you would like to participate during your field trip and email your requests to Michelle – michelle@marinediscoverycenter.org.
3. If you are participating in a *Kayaking Adventure*, please be sure you print out a kayak release form (which will be emailed to you) for each participant and have it signed by a parent/guardian. Please bring these forms with you on the day of your field trip.
4. If you are participating in a *Kayaking Adventure* or *Total Immersion*, please be sure all participants have the proper attire for the day. This includes closed toe water shoes, sunscreen, and a reusable water bottle. Participants are encouraged to bring a hat, sunglasses, change of clothes, and a towel.
5. Please divide your students into the appropriate number of groups for your program. It is helpful if they are divided as evenly as possible. For some programs there is a limit to the maximum number of participants in a group.
6. When you receive your schedule, please review it to confirm the arrival and departure times are correct and that all activities you requested are included. Please contact Michelle West with any concerns as soon as possible so that your schedule may be altered.
7. Please contact Michelle West approximately one week before your field trip to confirm the number of students, chaperones, and teachers who will be participating and the number of buses you will be bringing.
8. Please be sure you have printed directions to Marine Discovery Center for your bus driver. We do not recommend using Barracuda Blvd. to get to MDC. The weight of a school bus exceeds the weight limit of the bridge. Please use Quay Assisi instead of Barracuda Blvd. We will need to use the buses to transport students from MDC to the boat dock.



9. Please call MDC (386) 428-4828 or (386) 428-3310 the morning of your field trip if you are running late so we can alter your schedule.
10. Please have students use the restroom before heading to MDC. We have a limited number of restrooms and it can get quite congested if everyone has to go at once.
11. Upon arrival at MDC, please have the bus pull into the loop and the lead teacher come inside for further instructions. The students going on the boat tour first do not need to unload unless they need to use the restroom. The students participating in land-based activities should unload and wait with their assigned group for further instruction from MDC staff. The lunches may be unloaded, brought inside our building, and stored in the hallway near the restrooms.
12. Payment can be taken care of during lunch time. We accept all major credit cards, checks made payable to Marine Discovery Center, and cash. Please have all participants pay in advance and make one payment to MDC. A detailed invoice will be provided for you upon departure or emailed to you the following business day.

### Student & Chaperone Expectations

- All students and chaperones need to wear comfortable clothing and closed toe shoes (water shoes for some programs). Our field trip programs are a combination of indoor and outdoor activities. We encourage participants to come dressed accordingly.
- Students are expected to follow directions given by MDC instructors and behave properly at all times. If a student is disrupting the learning of other students, he/she may be asked to sit out of an activity and not participate. Discipline, if needed, is to be handled by the teacher or a designated chaperone.
- Please do not tap on or touch the glass of our aquariums. The vibrations caused by this action have a negative effect on the animals. Also, please do not put your hands in any tanks unless given permission to do so by an MDC instructor.
- Teachers and chaperones are encouraged to participate in the education programs while at MDC; however, please do not take away from the students' learning experience. We ask that chaperones allow students to answer questions and that they do not interrupt during a presentation. Please set a good example for the students by exhibiting good listening skills and limiting side conversations.

## Directions to Marine Discovery Center

### Directions from Interstate 4:

1. From I-4, take Exit 118 A-B for Florida 44 toward New Smyrna Beach, Keep right at the fork and merge onto FL 44 East.
2. Once you travel under I-95, travel about 5 more miles on FL 44 East.
3. Turn left on Live Oak Rd (it is at a traffic light). Go 2 blocks to the end.
4. Turn right on Canal St. Go 2 blocks to end.
5. Turn left on Riverside Dr. Go to 1<sup>st</sup> traffic light.
6. Turn right on Washington St (North Causeway).
7. At the BB&T bank, turn left onto Quay Assisi.
8. Turn left at the stop sign onto Barracuda Blvd. Marine Discovery Center is on the left.

### Directions from I-95:

1. From the north, take Exit 249A (Route 44) East to New Smyrna Beach. From the south, take Exit 249 (Route 44) and travel east to New Smyrna Beach.
2. Go about 5 miles on Route 44.
3. Turn left on Live Oak Rd (it is at a traffic light). Go 2 blocks to the end.
4. Turn right on Canal St. Go 2 blocks to end.
5. Turn left on Riverside Dr. Go to 1<sup>st</sup> traffic light.
6. Turn right on Washington St (North Causeway).
7. At the BB&T bank, turn left onto Quay Assisi.
8. Turn left at the stop sign onto Barracuda Blvd. Marine Discovery Center is on the left.

### Directions from Daytona/Port Orange on US 1:

1. Go South on US 1 to New Smyrna Beach.
2. Turn left on Washington St. (North Causeway) at traffic light.
3. Cross over Riverside Drive and the small canal to continue straight onto North Causeway.
4. At the BB&T bank, turn left onto Quay Assisi.
5. Turn left at the stop sign onto Barracuda Blvd. Marine Discovery Center is on the left.

### Directions to the boat dock from the Marine Discovery Center:

1. Turn right out of our parking lot.
2. Turn right at the stop sign onto Quay Assisi.
3. Turn left at the stop sign onto North Causeway.
4. Turn right into the driveway directly across from the BB&T bank.
5. Drop students off by the big white fence and the boat dock is down by the water.

PLEASE NOTE THE BRIDGE ON BARRACUDA BOULEVARD HAS A WEIGHT LIMIT OF 12 TONS. WE DO NOT RECOMMEND BUSES USING THIS ROUTE TO GET TO AND FROM THE MARINE DISCOVERY CENTER.