

Keys Survey Field Trip

Grade Level: 7th grade and Above (involves getting on and off the boat multiple times for several snorkel opportunities and if weather is not ideal, young snorkelers will not be safe—can be physically too much for many younger students and/or new snorkelers)

Summary: This field trip gives students a first-hand perspective of all of the habitats that make up Key Largo. The trip begins with a walk into the hardwood hammock off of Transylvania Ave. and includes snorkeling at multiple sites as we take the boat inshore to offshore. The changes in ecology the students observe at each habitat will be discussed.

Program Objectives:

- Give students a first-hand field experience to observe changes in communities as the environmental components change

Concepts Covered:

- Horizontal zonation of the habitats that make up Key Largo
- Changes in ecology of each habitat within the Florida Keys ecosystem

Vocabulary: ecology, biotic, abiotic, horizontal zonation, turbidity, oligotrophic, eutrophic, diversity, hardwood hammock, hardbottom, inshore, offshore

Procedures: Students will be taken on a whirlwind tour of the habitats that make up Key Largo. Trip begins at the hardwood hammock and then will head to the water where students will snorkel: seagrass/mangrove habitat, hardbottom, patch reef, artificial reef (shipwreck), bank reef and the deep blue. Observations will be discussed.

