

Introduction to Keys Habitats Discussion

Grade Level: All (but this class is meant for groups that are doing more than our basic 3 day/2night program).

Timing: 1 hour

Summary: MarineLab offers a more thorough marine ecology program for groups who stay longer than our basic 3 day/2night program. The Keys Habitats discussion is an introductory class that includes an introduction to ecology as it pertains to the field trips they will be participating in and an overview of the marine habitats the students will be visiting. The class is meant to paint a larger picture of our waters and the interconnection of our marine habitats before students begin studying and observing each habitat individually.

Program Objectives:

After completion, students will be able to:

- Explain the interconnection of Florida Keys habitats to one another, to the South Florida watershed, to the Caribbean and to the Gulf of Mexico
- Explain geological, geographical and other environmental reasons for the ecological uniqueness of the FL Keys marine habitats

Concepts Covered:

- MarineLab program overview
- Ecology and the overall effects of the environment on observed communities
- Holistic management of interdependent resources
- Introduction of threats/solution to marine habitats

Vocabulary: ecology, chart, salinity, multiple compatible use, abiotic, biotic, salinity, terrigenous, biogenous, photic zone, salinity, fetch, turbidity, tropical/subtropical, multiple compatible use, oolite, obligate halophyte, cultural eutrophication, oceanic, hyper/hyposaline, limiting factor, euphotic/dysphotic/aphotic, neritic, pelagic, benthic

Procedure: Students will discuss concepts and vocabulary listed above with a MarineLab instructor upon arrival to MarineLab.

Extensions: This introductory class is most often taught in conjunction with a “summary” class at the end of the program.

Resources:



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