

Nest Key Field Trip

Grade Level: All

Timing: 3 hours

**** Due to heat, insects, etc., we recommend avoiding this trip during the hottest summer months ****

Summary: The Nest Key field trip is a boat trip into true backcountry waters. While walking on Nest Key, a mangrove island, students will observe the island habitat mangroves create. A seining activity in the waters adjacent to the island will provide students a hands on look at some of the unique organisms we have in our backcountry waters.

Program Objectives:

After completion, students will be able to:

- Describe what a mangrove island looks like from on the island
- Describe how to use a seine net
- Name 5 invertebrates found within the waters surrounding a mangrove island in Florida Bay

Concepts Covered:

- Mangrove island zonation
- Mangrove island as a habitat
- Seine net fishing

Vocabulary: seine, backcountry, island zonation, salt tolerant vegetation

Procedures: Students will board boats to go to Next Key, a mangrove island in Florida Bay, within the Everglades. Once at the island, we will discuss mangrove island growth and development. Students will walk a short trail from the edge to the middle of the island to observe island zonation and the shift from mangroves to salt tolerant trees. Afterwards, seine net fishing will be discussed and students taught the proper techniques for using a seine net. The discussion will be put into practice as students work as a group to seine. Any organisms “caught” will be passed around, discussed and returned to the water.

Extensions: We can shorten the Nest Key activity/lesson in order to accommodate a brief mangrove/seagrass snorkel

Resources:



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Standards Addressed:

Next Generation Sunshine State Standards

SC.912.L.17.2: Explain the general distribution of life in aquatic systems as a function of chemistry, geography, light, depth, salinity, and temperature.

SC.912.L.17.4: Describe changes in ecosystems resulting from seasonal variations, climate change and succession.

Ocean Literacy Principles

Principle 5. The ocean supports a great diversity of life and ecosystems.

e. The ocean provides a vast living space with diverse and unique ecosystems from the surface through the water column and down to, and below, the seafloor. Most of the living space on Earth is in the ocean.



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