

# ECO Journeys

exploration - culture - ocean



In response to the current state of America's oceans, the time is now for cross-disciplinary programs that expose students directly to our marine ecosystems and the factors that impact their very existence. Our ECO Journeys field programs enhance the curriculum in a way that is both educational and adventurous. Each discovery program and immersion workshop is a life changing and awe-inspiring experience for students and teachers alike!



## ECO Journeys are....

Holding a sea urchin in the palm of your hand...  
photographing puffins from a bird blind...learning to  
snorkel...kissing a dolphin...identifying more tropical fish  
than you can count...dancing with the rhythm and beat of  
the Garifuna...looking at the world through the eyes of a  
fisherman...snorkeling under the stars...kayaking with seals  
and porpoises...seeing a Humpback Whale breach...hiking  
along pristine coastline trails...counting thousands of  
horseshoe crabs on the beach...meeting your local pen pal  
and learning about their life in the Caribbean...solo time  
spent writing in your journal...canoeing in the  
rainforest...working alongside a marine biologist...getting  
your passport stamped for the first time...

### ***Program: Bay Islands Marine Ecology***

#### ***Location: Roatan Island, Honduras***

Roatan Island provides the backdrop for an in-depth study of tropical marine ecology. At the Roatan Institute for Marine Science (RIMS), students study marine biology at the world's second largest reef tract by literally immersing themselves into the ocean. Each day students snorkel, observe, and study the tropical ecosystem, paying particular attention to the shallow bay, mangrove forest, and coral reef ecosystems. A focus of our workshop is on human impacts on the reef and marine protected areas. Discussions about fishing, runoff, economics, tourism, local culture, resource management, and conservation will challenge students to look at the coral reef ecosystem from multiple perspectives. In addition, students can take a marine mammal biology mini-course.

### ***Program: Grand Manan Island Ecology***

#### ***Location: Grand Manan Island, New Brunswick, Canada***

Grand Manan Island, located in the Bay of Fundy between Maine and Nova Scotia, is one of the most unique environments on earth. Here, the highest tides in the world help to create a rich food web to sustain several rare and endangered species. It is the abundance and diversity of life in this area that provides the basis of our exploration on foot, in kayaks, on sailboats, and in fishing vessels. Students have the opportunity to see Humpback Whales, North Atlantic Right Whales, Atlantic Puffins, Bald Eagles, carnivorous plants, pristine wetlands, traditional herring weirs, amazing geologic formations, thriving tidepools, as well as interact with local marine biologists and fishermen. Through a series of interactive lessons, team building exercises, and exploration of island life and ecology, students break down preconceived notions and learn about the interdependence between tides, plants, animals, and humans.



**Program: Bahamas Tropical Marine Ecology**

**Location: Lee Stocking Island, Bahamas**

Through a unique partnership with the Perry Institute for Marine Science (PIMS), our home base on Lee Stocking Island enables us to be fully immersed in science and ecology alongside the researchers at PIMS. Students will hike the island exploring beaches and mangroves and snorkel at a variety of reefs and over rare stromatolites that are 2.8 billion years old! Students will work on a research project together with marine scientists and interview local fishermen. A focus of the program is on spiny lobster resource management. The opportunity for interaction with scientists while on the island offers students a valuable first-hand glimpse at what is involved with being a field researcher. Students will walk away with an enhanced appreciation for the diversity of marine habitats and the interdependence of the organisms living within them.



*This trip has changed quite a few of my important environmental perspectives. I just hope my Marine Biology class next year can hold its own, because I just don't think any other experience in the world could be as educational, yet relaxed, amazing, and fun at the same time.*

*~ Rebecca Koontz, Bahamas 2004*

**Program: Belize Tropical Ecology**

**Location: Rainforests & Reefs of Belize**

The diversity and proximity of habitats in Belize makes it a perfect place to study tropical ecology. Students compare different ecosystems from the high pine ridge forest to the brilliant coastal zone and barrier reef ecosystem. During field exploration, adventure activities, presentations by experts, and team building initiatives, participants gain awareness of the environment around them and of themselves. A focus along our journey will be on the natural resources and issues that Belizean communities face within the local watershed. Students will meet with biologists, conservationists, local villagers, and developers, and speak to them about their perspective on conservation and management, especially during this time of shifting global economic and development pressures.

**Program: Green Eggs & Sand: Horseshoe Crab and Shorebird Resource Management**

**Location: Delaware Bay, USA**



Each year, at the high lunar tides of spring and early summer, thousands of horseshoe crabs come ashore to spawn. Horseshoe crab spawning occurs about the same time that migrating shorebirds stop in the Delaware Bay region to rest and feed. It is the complex ecological interaction between horseshoe crabs, shorebirds, and humans that forms the basis for our exploration in the Delaware Bay. Using the Green Eggs & Sand four module curriculum as a guide, students experience a day in the life of "Thumper", a conch fisherman who reduced his use of horseshoe crabs as bait by as much as 75%. During their days and nights students are challenged to identify banded shorebirds and accurately count spawning crabs. This field immersion program is set up to compliment the existing Green Eggs & Sand curriculum. Only teachers trained in this curriculum may participate.

*Seeing the coral reefs in Honduras was one of the most significant and interesting things I have ever done. I returned home from a week in a country with so much natural beauty, that I was homesick, although it was only my home for a week. I left with the realization that in twenty years, the reefs may not still be there.... My goal is to make a difference, to change how the world views the coral reefs, to let them know how important they are to us, and to help preserve them.*

*~ Jeremy Koslow, Bay Islands 2004*