Marine and Aquatic Field Trip Guide to New York State

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edited by Robert Jaeger
MARINE AND AQUATIC FIELD TRIP GUIDE
TO NEW YORK STATE

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CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS, BY SITE LOCATIONS

Suffolk County

Montauk Point
Hither Hills State Park
Orient State Park
Mount Sinai Harbor
Nissequogue Harbor
Sunken Meadow
Sunken Forest
Captree State Park
Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum

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Bayville
Jones Beach State Park
Loop Bridge
Garvies Point
Oceanside Nature Study Area
Long Beach
Manhasset Bay Marshlands
Silver Point Beach
Little Neck Bay

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Gateway National Recreation Area
Dead Horse Bay
Plum Beach
New York Aquarium
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INTRODUCTION

The Marine and Aquatic Field Trip Guide to New York State incorporates marine and aquatic education into existing elementary, intermediate, and secondary curricula. In its simplest form, it is a guide written by educators throughout the state who have found a particular field site suitable to their needs. With each trip the author-educator attempts to extend the classroom, to broaden the scope and impact of the lesson, and to develop an awareness of the environment that only 'being there' can establish.

The guide is more than a mere listing of good places to visit. It was written by teachers for teachers, using a format that concisely tells the educator where to go, whom to contact, cost of the trip, how best to use the area, and some suggested activities for the field site. The guide does not purport to include all possible field sites in New York State, nor does the guide pretend to present the only way to study or use a particular field site. However, by including all types of aquatic environments, it can be a model for any teacher interested in taking a similar trip.

Teachers using the guide are encouraged to visit the site before taking their students there. Taking advantage of the uniqueness of the area, specific activities can be planned to suit the particular needs of the teacher and student. Take care in collecting specimens (if permitted) to ensure that the site is not disrupted. Take only what is needed for the lesson.

The sites are listed by county, starting from Montauk Pt. and moving upstate. Individual field trip guides were written by educators familiar with the sites. A list of the author-educators is on page v. Reference materials were compiled from the recommendations of the field-site authors. The appendices supplement the information presented throughout the guide.

Questions and suggestions are welcome, and should be directed to Robert Jaeger, Mineola Public Schools, 200 Emory Road, Mineola, NY 11501.
NOTES ON TAKING A FIELD TRIP

A field trip is an educational experience and not a day off from school. The first job of a teacher is to convey this fact to his students. Students should also realize that the field trip will be both fun and an unique opportunity for hands-on learning. These goals can be accomplished through simple preparation and common sense. Granted, there can be many aggravating problems that accompany a field trip, but most of these problems can be solved before they occur.

Some suggestions for making this trip an exciting and rewarding experience both for you and your students are:

Prior to trip:

1. Always visit a field site prior to taking your class there. This will enable you to realize how best the field site can be adapted to your curriculum, what you can expect the students to accomplish, and any expenses which might be incurred.

2. Plan trips to a field site during an appropriate season.

3. Contact the transportation office of your school or call your local bus company to find out costs (if any) of the bus, tolls, etc.

4. Submit to your supervisor the appropriate field trip forms.

5. Distribute and collect permission slips from students. Encourage parents, fellow teachers, and administrators to accompany your class - a well run field trip does more for you and your program that any classroom visit.

6. Prepare a set of 2 attendance lists - one for you, one for another supervising adult that will be accompanying you.

7. Be sure to know the best route for the bus to take from school to the field site.

8. Materials generally needed by the teacher:

   - first-aid kit
   - whistle
   - sun glasses
   - clip board, paper, & pencil
   - reference materials
   - plastic garbage bags
   - pocket knife
   - hand lens
   - nets, buckets, etc. where appropriate

9. Discuss with the students the appropriate conduct for the trip; materials needed (clothing, cameras, jars, notebook, etc.); avoidance of hazards, lunch time, etc.

10. All students must wear sneakers or shoes at all times (even in water).

11. Prepare students for trip by discussing the problems to be investigated at the field site, and by actively getting them involved in the preparation. For example, the obtaining of simple materials, construction of home made sampling equipment, researching the physical characteristics of the area, its history, names of organisms found at the site, etc.
12. If your trip is to a field site and not an institution, limit the number of students, when possible, to 1 bus load.

On the trip:

1. Remind students on the bus of the purpose of the trip, the appropriate conduct, and distribute worksheets.

2. Warn students of any possible hazards at the site.

3. Allow students to work at their own speed. Listen, observe, and ask pertinent questions and this will ensure adequate progress.

4. Institute changes in the assigned procedures as these are deemed necessary.

5. Suggest, when appropriate, additional projects for investigation for students who demonstrate high interest and ability levels.

6. Remove living flora and fauna from the beach only if permission has been obtained and if a suitable environment for them can be provided in the classroom.

7. Leave the area in a better state than you found it, if feasible.

8. Appoint one student in each group to check on the equipment to assure its safe arrival and return to the class.

Remember: There is a fine line between constructive permissiveness and chaos. Allow students a degree of freedom while pursuing YOUR prescribed course of 'discovery learning'.

After the trip:

1. Have the students discuss their investigations and prepare a written/oral report.

2. Permit the class to analyze and question the data collected by the students.

3. Collate information gained on the trip and relate it to generalizations or concepts in the area of study. This will result in an ongoing process which will continue throughout the term.

4. Share your experiences and enthusiasm with other classes in the school in order to stimulate interest among other teachers and students.