

Coastal Georgia Ecosystems Class

Date: June 6-8, 2016

Location: Ft. MacCallister State Park, Richmond Hill, GA

Based out of Red Bird Creek

Course Objective: The purpose of this course is to educate and familiarize teachers with the ecosystems and habitats of Georgia's coastal community which are often overlooked when teaching Wildlife and Natural Resources Curriculum. Georgia's coastline is full of many unique and distinguishing characteristics and traits that separate it from other states with coastal communities. It will be taught utilizing State Park Rangers, Federal DNR Rangers, and local charter boat Captains. Class participants will be engaged with Rangers to learn about management practices and research projects being it conducted on Georgia's barrier islands, as well as wildlife identification and population counts of both terrestrial and aquatic species.

General Course Overview: Day one will be on land at Ft. MacCallister State Park with State Park Rangers conducting multiple activities and classes ranging from park history to marsh ecosystems. Day two will be on Ossabaw Island at the Department of Natural Resources Research Station with Federal DNR Rangers teaching about the research studies they are conducting and coastal wildlife identification. Day three will be a community service based day with the class taking part in Adopt an Island program to help keep Georgia's islands clean.

Lodging for the class: Cabins will be available for a discounted rate at Fort MacCallister State Park for class participants who would like to stay near the home base of the class. Campsites are also available for class participants who would like to bring their camper or tent. There are also many hotel choices in Richmond Hill if class participants would rather not stay at the state park. We are currently still negotiating rates with park rangers.

Meals for the Class: Meals will be the responsibility of the class participants. On the first day, numerous restaurants are minutes from Fort MacCallister State Park. On days two and three, participants will be expected to pack and bring their own lunch and snacks (including waters, Gatorade, cokes, etc). Once departed from the dock, we will be on the islands all day long. Boat Captains will only return to the dock if there is an emergency.

COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS CLASS

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Monday, June 6: Fort MacCallister State Park, Ranger Sarah Saunders

- Park History and Tour
- Wildlife and Nature Trails
- Nocturnal Wildlife

Tuesday, June 7: Ossabaw Island, DNR Ranger Ed Vanotteran

- Maritime Forests
- Sea Turtle Nesting Project
- Feral Swine Control
- Inner Coastal Waterway Tour

Wednesday, June 8: Raccoon Key, Mark Smith and Jon Milligan

- Community Service Project : Adopt an island
- Clean up of trash on Raccoon Key
- Islands and Creeks Tour