



Shores to Shallows is a coastal education program held at the Gulf State Park Saltwater Pier. Led by knowledgeable Naturalists, students will explore the Pier's rich history, learn about local marine life and bird species, and discover ongoing conservation efforts. Down on the beach, students will dive into the world of sea turtles—exploring nesting behavior, threats to survival, and the role of Share the Beach volunteers. The program also includes a discussion of dune ecosystems and their importance to coastal protection, offering a hands-on look at the dynamic environment from pier to shoreline.

Grades: 4th – 12th grade

Group Size Limit: 30 students

Length of Field Trip: 3 hours with 30 minute break for lunch

Standards covered: SC23.4.FMO, SC23.4.IP, SC23.4.EHA, SC23.5.E, SC23.5.ES, SC23.6ESEW, SC23.7.E, SC23.7.UD, SC23.BIO.E, SC23.BIO.UD, SC23.ES.UD, SC23.ES.ES, SC23.ES.EHA

Activities:

- Guided Pier Walk
- Sea Turtle Survival Activity on the Beach
- Dune Ecosystems Discussion

Optional Activity – Saltwater Fishing

Saltwater fishing is available as an optional add-on for an additional \$16 per student. This activity is only offered to high school groups with 20 or fewer participants. If students fishing are 16 years of age or older, they will need to purchase a Saltwater Pier Licenses (approximately \$7.50).

Additional Information:

Students are encouraged to wear sunscreen and protective clothing. They should bring a water bottle and wear comfortable shoes, as they will be walking and may get sandy during the field trip.

Sample Itinerary

This is a sample itinerary. A customized itinerary will be created for your group based on your length of stay, students' ages, and your arrival and departure times.

Title: **Shores to Shallows**

Location: Saltwater Pier

Time: 9 am -12 pm

Maximum Group Size: 30

9:00 – 9:15 AM: Arrive at the Saltwater Pier / Unload Lunch / Bathroom Break

9:15 – 10:00 AM: Guided Pier Walk

10:00 – 10:30 AM: Bathroom break / Snack or free time

10:30 – 11:00 AM: Dune Ecosystems Discussion (under the pier)

11:00 – 11:30 AM: Sea Turtle Survival Talk

- Group 1: Sea Turtle Nesting
- Group 2: Sea Turtle Species and Fun Facts
- Then Groups swap

11:30 – 11:45 AM: Drive to Lake Shelby for Lunch

11:45 – 12:15 PM: Lunch at Lake Shelby Pavilion

12:15 – 12:30 PM: Free time / Bathroom Break / Load Bus

Optional Self-led Activity

12:30 – 1:00 PM: Explore the Nature Center or Walk on a trail

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