

Apalachicola Research Reserve Education is Change on the Ground



2022

Connect



22,506 visitors to the Nature Center learned about Estuaries

3,342 participants in public education programs



Prepare

Every local student in grades pre-K, 1st, 5th and 7th participated in field programs about Estuaries

Improve

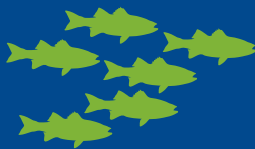


Nature Center up from 20% to now 90% hosted by volunteers

"I have never heard the message delivered so well and understood so quickly. Because of this program I heard our students express concern and motivation to act to and care for their own estuary in Bay County."

Paula Weaver -

Local Science Teacher



"Who knew how much water I use in Atlanta affects the life of oysters in Apalachicola Bay? Well now I know!"

Georgia Visitor - on Trip Advisor

Pre-K to High School and Beyond

Empowering local students. Every student in the local district participates in Reserve led programs every other year (pre-K, 1, 3, 5, 7, high school) to become stewards of their own neighborhood. By the time students graduate, they will have a broad perspective on the ecology of the estuary beginning in pre-K with an exploration of the interactions between snails and hermit crabs. In first grade, they canvas the shoreline for marsh stories and learn about the value of estuaries. In third grade, the students study the estuary's function as a nursery and oysters as a keystone species. The marsh protecting the Reserve is a living shoreline legacy planted by fifth graders who extend the marsh every year and then return as seventh graders to assess the health of a food web they grew. Over the course of the last decade, middle school students have grown marsh to protect the entire Reserve Center shoreline and tagged more than 20,000 monarch butterflies as part of these field trips.

Watershed Wonder

Over the last three years, the entire watershed has become a classroom for high school students from the Westminster School in Atlanta, Georgia. After traveling from the headwaters of the Apalachicola River system to the reserve, with stops along the way to talk to farmers, urban water treatment experts and recreational users, these students gain a thorough understanding of the impact of water on humans and wildlife. With reserve staff, the students test water from the river, bay, and ocean. They document their travels fusing art, science and literature in their nature and video journals. Local high school students, who have also taken the same trip from the river to Little St. George Island, are able to learn from their Georgia peers and see their familiar natural world through a fresh and powerful perspective.



Apalachicola Reserve is one of 30 sites in the National Estuarine Research Reserve System. Each site is a state federal partnership that combines research, monitoring, and education to advance the understanding and management of estuarine environments.



National Estuarine Research Reserve Education Change on the Ground in 2022

Connects

People to Estuaries

1 million+
ACRES

of natural classrooms & living laboratories with



26 INTERPRETIVE CENTERS



Hello to the Connecticut Reserve, designated in 2022!



296,131 VISITORS

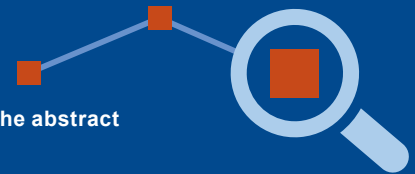
learn about estuaries through Research Reserve outreach & education

Prepares

the Next Generation

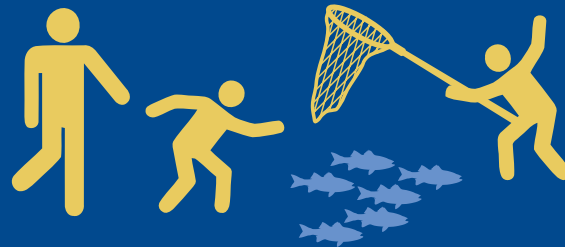
54,773 STUDENTS

take learning out of the abstract & into the outdoors



4,347 TEACHERS

are trained in the estuary & supported in the classroom



SKILLS BUILT

- ✓ Observation
- ✓ Asking research questions
- ✓ Problem solving
- ✓ Data driven decision making

ESTUARY SCIENCE

LOCAL DATA

LAB WORK

FIELD INVESTIGATION

Improves

the Environment

10,570 CITIZENS

are trained & inspired to protect their coasts & estuaries



VOLUNTEER ACTIONS

- ✓ Protect wildlife
- ✓ Monitor water quality
- ✓ Plant native species
- ✓ Clean up the coasts

30 RESEARCH RESERVE EDUCATORS

lead programs that foster coastal stewardship in communities in 25 states



Creating value through education
37,371 volunteer hours = \$1,119,261*