

Sapelo Island National Estuarine Research Reserve Education is Change on the Ground

2017

Connect



6,100 acres of habitat protected
11,322 visitors to the Sapelo Island Visitor Center
1,789 public tour participants
530 adult learners educated



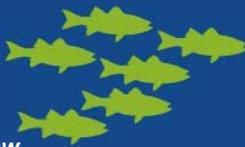
Prepare

136 teachers trained
1,811 students engaged
5,732 student contact hours

Improve



585 citizen scientists activated
2,695 volunteer hours
108 volunteer projects



"In our standardized test-driven culture, there are few opportunities for students to participate in real-world scientific activities that are meaningful and provide tangible benefits for our community. Most students don't develop a passion for environmental stewardship through reading or media. They develop it through doing."

Bob Hogdon

Richmond Hill Schools
Field Study Program."

"What a power packed day of activities! The students enjoyed every minute of the day, and according to parents are still raving about their experiences."

Maria Williams

Independent Learning
Network



Learning without Walls

In 2017, Sapelo Island National Estuarine Research Reserve's (SINERR) Education Program took more than 1,800 students where classrooms can't—outdoors and into the remarkable places that make coastal Georgia such a wonderful place to live. With Reserve educators as their guides, students journeyed into saltmarshes, maritime forests, and along the Atlantic seashore. They returned to the Reserve's laboratory facility to examine the myriad life forms they encountered, using techniques that have been employed by hundreds of scientists who have worked on Sapelo. Students also toured the University of Georgia Marine Institute, where the field of modern ecology was born, and explored the 4,500 years of human history on the island, from the original Native Americans settlements to the present day.

Educators Go Into the Field, Too

The Sapelo Island Reserve's Sea Turtle Conservation Workshop provided professional development and skill building for 14 educators in 2017. Not only did these teachers receive in-depth knowledge about these remarkable creatures by the very experts who study them, they also enjoyed a unique field experience. They were able to see these gentle giants come ashore on Sapelo's remote beaches and watch as they carefully crafted their nests and laid their eggs. Experiences like these reinvigorate the teachers' excitement for science and help them feel a connection to the environment, one they can pass on to their students. The Sapelo Island Reserve offers between four and six professional training opportunities for educators each year.

Educating the Public

The Sapelo Island Reserve's public education program offers many types of activities, and one of the most popular is Crab and Shrimp Day. In 2017, 58 state residents and visitors visited the Reserve and learned about the connection between locally caught seafood and the estuaries that enable this bounty. Participants learned about the life histories of Georgia crab and shrimp and the fishery industry that is vital to many small communities along the coast. The economic impact of these two fisheries to the state of Georgia was \$12,994,231 in 2016. Participants were able to pull nets in the Atlantic and see these unique animals for themselves, and also enjoyed a good ole' fashioned crab and shrimp boil — a sea-to-table approach that helps solidify understanding of this valuable resource and encourages the stewardship of ocean resources.

Sapelo Island NERR is one of 29 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.



GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

National Estuarine Research Reserve Education Change on the Ground in 2017

Connects

People to Estuaries

1 million+
ACRES

of natural classrooms & living laboratories with



28 INTERPRETIVE CENTERS



650,340 VISITORS

learn about estuaries through Research Reserve outreach & education



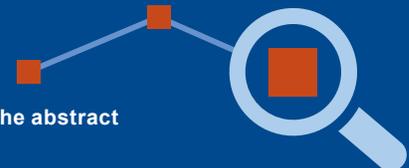
Aloha to our Hawai'i Reserve, designated in 2017!

Prepares

the Next Generation

87,899 STUDENTS

take learning out of the abstract & into the outdoors



3,079 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

12,849 CITIZENS

are trained & inspired to protect their coasts & estuaries



VOLUNTEER ACTIONS

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

28 RESEARCH RESERVE EDUCATORS

lead programs that foster coastal stewardship in communities in 23 states



Creating value through education
39,035 volunteer hours = \$942,305*