



2019 Lagoon Days Volunteer Basics

Thank You!

... for being ready and willing to help during Lagoon Days 2019! Thursday, March 7th – Fri, April 26th.

Each year the 4th grade students of Indian River County look forward to coming to the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) for an exciting day of outdoor exploration in and around the Indian River Lagoon. Your role in this annual adventure is essential. As you can imagine, it takes a lot of energy and local talent to pull off an environmental education opportunity of this magnitude. Without people like you, Lagoon Days would not happen! **Again, thank you!**

Lagoon Days Goals

- To teach students about the natural world through experiential learning, building on our 3rd-grade program, SPLASH3.
- To demonstrate the importance of interconnections in the environment – how everything fits together, interacts like the pieces of a puzzle.
- To cultivate an appreciation for the Indian River Lagoon, one of North America's most diverse estuary.
- To develop a sense of stewardship for natural resources and how individual actions directly affect our Planet Earth.

Introduction

When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.

John Muir

The theme for Lagoon Days is **interconnections**. This year students explore three stations, learning about a different component of the Indian River Lagoon ecosystem. Activities take place outside and are designed to illustrate how everything in the natural world interacts and fits together. Just like the pieces in a jigsaw puzzle! When you link the concepts taught at your station with those at the others, you help students put the pieces together and understand the role each component plays in the grand picture.

Lagoon Days Curriculum and Volunteer Guidebook

The ***Lagoon Days Curriculum and Volunteer Guidebook*** provides general information about the program and topics to be taught at each of the stations. If you have never volunteered at Lagoon Days we have complete info on our website: <http://www.discoverelc.org/lagoon-days-4th--5th-graders.html>.

Staff works closely with volunteers – we couldn't do it without you! So, feel free to contact us with questions or suggestions.

Our mission is to educate, inspire and empower all people to be active stewards of the environment and their own well-being.



Training

We constantly tweak the Lagoon Days training process. The best way we have found so far is SHADOWING. It is very difficult to demonstrate what happens without the actual students here. **New**
Lagoon Days volunteers should do the following:

1. Peruse the **Lagoon Days Curriculum and Volunteer Guidebook** found on our website:
<http://www.discoverelc.org/lagoon-days-4th--5th-graders.html>.
2. Arrange to shadow the program. If interested in different stations, plan to spend some time at each one. And, please know that we won't ask you to be the lead instructor until you are comfortable doing so.

Lagoon Days "Veterans" please note: Though there have been a few changes this year (see below), though Seining and Benthic stations will remain quite similar to past years. However, we suggest you shadow our new station the "Water Quality Lab".

No matter what, if you are uncomfortable taking the lead, we will not put you as a lead instructor.

Changes

Due to the needs of the school district, the limitations of transportation, and a few other factors, **we have significantly shortened the day**. The only way to do this is to take out two station. I know this will make many of you sad...it makes US sad too! Looking for the silver-lining, all 4th grade students will still have a super fun experience at ELC while learning about the IRL and strengthening their sense of place and stewardship.

The three stations will be: Benthic Ecology, Seining, and the NEW Water Quality Lab. These three stations were chosen as they most closely align with current Florida curriculum standards.

Due to transportation schedules, students will arrive between 9:45-10:00am. **Volunteers to arrive at 9:15am**

Check-In

Please be at the ELC Caterer's Kitchen at 9:15am. This will give us time before the students arrive to make introductions, go over final program details, distribute hand-held VHF radios, and synchronize watches. If you have a name tag (either ELC or your work) please wear. Otherwise, we are doing away with the nametags – the end up in the water. As our day now ends a few hours earlier, it's up to you if you'd like to bring a lunch. If so, you're welcome to store that in the in the Caterers' Kitchen and enjoy lunch after the students depart. Staff will immediately transition into cleanup after 1:00pm BUT having lunch on campus is a great opportunity to relax and unwind with some personal nature time. ☺ Either way, please bring a reusable water bottle.



Daily Schedule

Generally there will be three schools visiting the ELC campus from March 7th thru April 26th. Each of the county's public schools is assigned to one of these days and we may also host a few local private schools.

Each station is roughly 45 minutes long. Students have 5 minutes to travel between stations. The daily schedule is as follows:

9:15	Volunteers meet	11:00-11:45	Station 2
9:45-10:00	School buses arrive at ELC	11:50-12:30	Station 3
10:00-10:05	Welcome and Introduction	12:35-12:55	Lunch & Wrap-up
10:10-10:55	Station 1	1:00	School buses depart ELC

We must keep careful track of time. There is a lot to cover during each station period, and it is imperative that we finish each station on time. If buses arrive more than 20 minutes late, each group of students may have to miss one station. Please be flexible and ready to make some last minute changes. Also, if changes occur, please keep a positive attitude, as students will follow your lead.

You will receive an email outlining the dates on which you are scheduled to teach and the stations you will be teaching. **Please contact Sara Piotter right away if you are no longer able to come or must leave early during any of your scheduled dates (SaraP@DiscoverELC.org, 589-5050 ext 111). This allows us to try to find a replacement.**