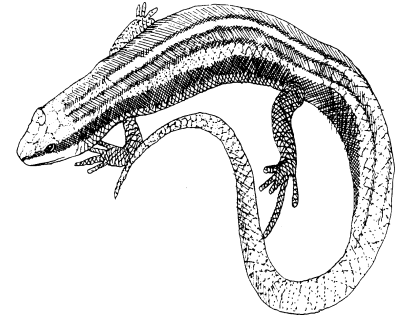


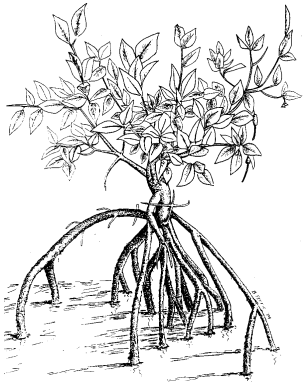


School Visits on Your Own

Everglades National Park is an exciting outdoor laboratory for studying South Florida's natural environment. As it is not always possible to schedule ranger-assisted programs, this brochure is intended to help teachers and other group leaders plan their own guided trips.



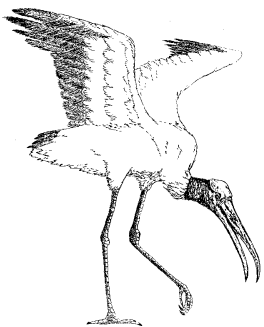
Planning Ahead



Students will learn more and better enjoy their visit to Everglades National Park if they take part in preparatory activities. Check your media center or local library for the video "Kids Explore the Everglades" and the "Everglades Activity Guide for Teachers". They provide easy-to-use background materials and suggested activities.

If you have not been to the park recently, consider making a planning trip. First-hand knowledge of the trail you will walk, or the tour you plan to take, will make your visit more valuable and relaxing. Most group visits take place in March, April and May. Heavily visited areas such as the Anhinga Trail become very crowded during this season, reducing the opportunity for your students to enjoy their visit. If possible, consider scheduling your trip for a fall or winter date.

Comfort & Safety



Groups are encouraged to bring one chaperone for every ten students. Because some visitor areas can become very crowded, it is easier for students and leaders if they are divided into groups of fifteen or less when walking the trails.

All participants will be safer and more comfortable if they wear long pants, shoes, and socks. Proper clothing will help protect students from insect bites, but also come prepared with repellent. Hats, sunscreen, water bottles and rain gear are also recommended.

Vending machines and other food services are extremely limited, so bring bagged lunches and beverages. Picnicking is allowed only in designated areas at the main visitor center, Long Pine Key, Paurotis Pond, Nine Mile Pond, and Flamingo Campground. Royal Palm and Shark Valley do not have picnic areas. After eating, please have students check areas carefully for food scraps and litter. Place all trash in marked receptacles.

Restrooms are located at the Coe, Royal Palm, Flamingo, Shark Valley, and Gulf Coast Visitor Centers and at Long Pine Key and West Lake.

Protecting the Park



Review the following rules and safety precautions so students and chaperones will know what is expected of them.

Respect the wildlife: Loud noises are discouraged. Throwing objects at, or other harassment of park animals is strictly prohibited.

Respect the home and food sources of the wildlife: Please leave all plants, rocks, shells, or other natural objects in the park. Place litter where it belongs.

Respect the right of others to enjoy their national park: Loud noises and other disruptive behavior on the trails can spoil the experience for other visitors. **Buses and other loud motor vehicles are asked to completely turn off their engines when parked at trail heads.**

Respect each other: Running, pushing, or yelling are not allowed on the trails. Stay with your class; always have adults lead and bring up the end of the line.

Places to Visit with Your Group



Shark Valley

Trams tour a 15-mile loop road with adjoining short trails. Food and drink are not allowed on trams, and there is no picnicking available at Shark Valley. Call (305) 221-8455 for tram tour rates and reservations.

Everglades City

Everglades City, on the west coast of Florida is the access point for the coastal mangrove area of the Ten Thousand Islands. Boat tours are offered by concession. Call (239) 695-2591 for reservations.

Flamingo

Approximately an hour's drive from the main entrance station, Flamingo offers boat cruises in Florida Bay, trails, canoeing, camping, a restaurant, and a small store. **Mosquitoes may make trails and camping intolerable during the wetter times of the year.** Call (239) 695-3101 for concession tour rates and reservations.

Pa-hay-okee

This ¼-mile trail leads visitors up a wooden tower that overlooks the heart of the River of Grass. The trail head lies 13 miles south of the main entrance on the right.

Royal Palm

The Royal Palm area, four miles south of the main entrance station, has two nature trails: the Anhinga Trail and the Gumbo Limbo Trail. The Anhinga Trail travels along and over a borrow pit, offering close looks at alligators and birds. Gumbo Limbo is a narrow trail through a hardwood hammock area.

The Pinelands

South Florida pinelands have some plant species found nowhere else on earth. This is also a good area for discovering how fire helps maintain an ecosystem. The half-mile long Pinelands Trail is off the main park road, 7 miles south of the main entrance station.

Mahogany Hammock

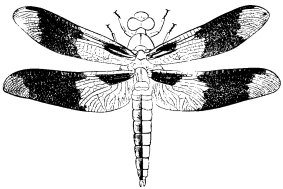
A boardwalk trail enters this dark and shady hammock with some of the rarest trees in the United States.

Park Visitor Centers

Information, exhibits, and sale items can be found at the Coe Visitor Center, Royal Palm, Shark Valley, Flamingo, and the Gulf Coast Visitor Center. Always supervise students in sales areas.

For maps and additional information, visit our website at www.nps.gov/ever.

After Your Visit



Don't let the wonder of the Everglades end with your field trip! In the classroom, be sure to review the adventures your students had in the park.

Many of the concepts to be learned in the Everglades can be incorporated in other aspects of education. Do art projects, math problems, active games or other activities to reinforce lessons the students learned on their field trip.

We hope you find your trip to the Everglades to be both enjoyable and worthwhile. Come back again!



Everglades National Park sponsors on-site education programs for 4th, 5th & 6th graders. Participation in these programs is by advance reservation only, and teachers are required to attend training workshops before bringing their class to the park.

For more information on these opportunities, visit our website at: www.nps.gov/ever/ed

“There are no other Everglades in the World. They are, they have always been, one of the unique regions of the earth...”

-- Marjory Stoneman Douglas,
from *The Everglades: River of Grass*