

Mission

The National Wildlife Refuge System is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service operates the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge Complex (ANWRC). ANWRC is comprised of 5 units totaling 115,000 acres, this includes; Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, Matagorda Island National Wildlife Refuge, Tatton Unit, Lamar Unit, and Myrtle-Foester Whitmire Division.

- Resources and programs for teachers and students are available
- Focus area: wildlife, wildlife habitat management, history, and local ecology

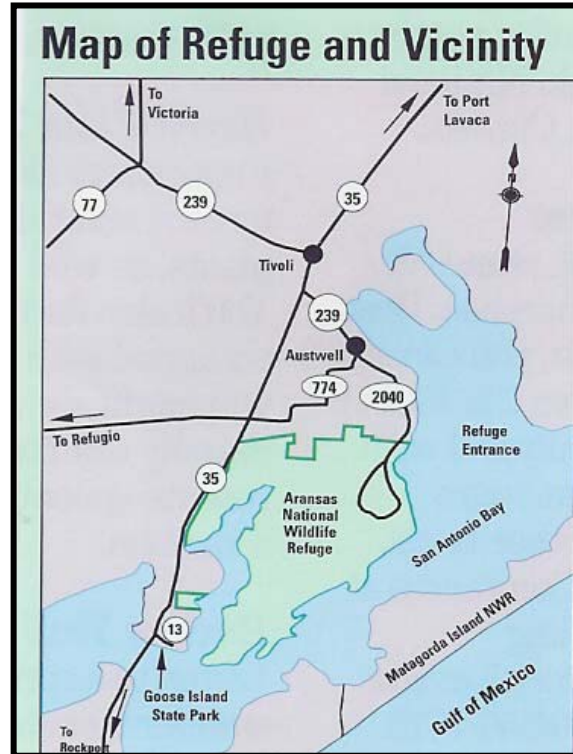
Target groups: school groups of all ages, high school and university students, environmental education groups, elder hostels, and the general public.

Educational Resources

- On-site presentations, including Refuge orientation and videos.
- Outreach available for schools, organizations, and community groups
- Van tours sponsored by "Friends of Aransas and Matagorda Island (FAMI)" offered seasonally-during winter months
- Print materials and resources available: brochures; mammal, wildflower, reptile, amphibian, bird lists and general ANWRC information.
- Wildlife and nature books available in the Visitor's Center Book/Gift Store operated by Friends of Aransas and Matagorda Island (FAMI)
- Matagorda Island Environmental Education Center offers 8th grade to Adult beach, bay, upland, and marsh ecology classes.
- Aransas National Wildlife Refuge offers classes in biodiversity, bay ecology, beginning birding, track identification, fish and wildlife management, and food chain relationships.
- Youth Environmental Training Area for use by groups participating in the environmental education program.
- Service projects available upon request, mail request to above address.
- [official website @ http://www.fws.gov/southwest/](http://www.fws.gov/southwest/)

ARANSAS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE COMPLEX

Lying along the Texas Coastal Bend and consisting of a barrier island, wetlands, grasslands and woodlands, Aransas National Wildlife Refuge Complex (ANWRC) offers one of the best outdoor classrooms available. The ANWRC Environmental Education Program is designed to take advantage of nature's classroom to help students develop an integral understanding of the environment and our role in it. Outdoor classroom experiences give students the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors while promoting an understanding of conservation.



Aransas National Wildlife Refuge Complex
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 100
Austwell, Texas 77950
361-286-3559 (Phone)
361-286-3722 (Fax)

Office Hours: 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Visitor Center Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

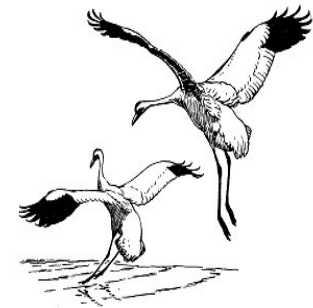
ARANSAS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE COMPLEX



Telephone: 361-286-3559



Environmental Education and Field Trip Information



Opportunities

- Environmental Education Classes
- Youth Environmental Training Center
- Matagorda Island Education Center
- Field Trips
- TEKS Alignment

ARANSAS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE COMPLEX

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CLASSES

TEKS AVAILABLE BY REQUEST CALL: 361-286-3559

Environmental Education Courses Are Limited To 25 Students. Reservations must be made three weeks prior to planned visit for Aransas National Wildlife Refuge and five weeks prior to visit for Matagorda Island National Wildlife Refuge. Field trips and environmental education are free and require a reservation.

Aransas National Wildlife Refuge

Environmental Education Courses

Limited to 25 Students.

Introduction and Orientation

Learn about the mission of a National Wildlife Refuge System to preserve a national network of lands and waters for the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, and plant resources for the benefit of present and future generations. How did Aransas become a Refuge? Tour the Visitor's Center. Learn about various management problems and solutions. What does it take to operate a National Wildlife Refuge?

Recommended Age: Grades K-12, Adult

Beginning Birding Nature Trek

Experience the significance of ANWR as a major birding site located along the Central Flyway. Participants will learn how to use a field guide, binoculars, and range maps while birding. Boy Scouts will have the opportunity to complete all of the requirements for the Boy Scouts Bird Study Merit Badge.

Recommended Age: Grades 4 - 12, Adult

Fish and Wildlife Management

Be a biologist for a day. Experience the ANWR by conducting field investigations using biological equipment. Participants will learn the importance of fish and wildlife management to ensure the future existence of many animals and their habitats. Gain an understanding of conservation efforts and current practices at ANWR. Boy Scouts will have the opportunity to complete all the requirements for the Boy Scout Fish and Wildlife Management Merit Badge.

Recommended Age: Grades 5 - 12, Adult

What's Eating You

Get a first hand look at a food chain. Participants will experience the vital role of green plants as the basic building blocks in food chain relationships while touring the Refuge. Be ready to look at the world around you in a different way.

Recommended Age: Grades K - 6th

Who Goes There?

Tracks serve as evidence that someone or something has been here, they also give insight into the number of species that inhabit an area. Participants will learn how to identify tracks of some common mammals, reptiles, birds, and insects that inhabit ANWR. Through biological field investigations participants will learn how to make a mold of a track. Look for clues as you venture through the refuge, maybe you'll spot the animal that left that track behind!

Recommended Age: Grades K- 6th

Bio-Discovery

A biologist can monitor biodiversity to measure the health of an environment. What does biodiversity mean? Participants will gain an understanding of how biodiversity includes all life forms and their interactions with one another to form the basic building blocks of an ecosystem. Through hands-on field investigations participants will develop an understanding of the many organisms at ANWR. Wow ! Did you know that was in the water? What is it? Come and find out!

Recommended age: Grades K-6th

What's in the Seine!

Seine the bay! Conduct a biological field investigation to determine the biodiversity of the bay. Participants will gain knowledge of the aquatic habitat as a unique environment teaming with an astounding diversity of organisms. Participants will catch and release aquatic organisms while developing an awareness of the need for conservation of aquatic habitats. How many did we catch? I have never seen that before! Go aquatic at ANWR.

Recommended Age: Grades K-6th

Matagorda Island National Wildlife Refuge

Environmental Education Courses

Recommended Age: High School, College, Adult.

Groups must secure transportation to and from Matagorda Island from a private carrier. Overnight accommodations available.

Introduction and Orientation

Learn about the mission of a National Wildlife Refuge System to preserve a national network of lands and waters for the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, and plant resources for the benefit of present and future generations. Why is Matagorda National Wildlife Refuge important? How did Matagorda Island become a Refuge? Tour the headquarters. Go into the field and see various management problem and solutions.

Beach Habitat

Matagorda Beach is where the island meets the sea. Learn to recognize the several zones that make up the beach, then use shovels, sieves and seines to get a hands-on introduction to the array of specialized creatures that live on the beach. Identify and classify your specimens. Discuss adaptations, food chains, survival strategies. Appreciate how humans interfere with the natural cycles on a beach. Participants must be prepared to get wet to the knees; no bare feet; adequate clothing and sun block required.

Tidal Flat Habitat

The Tidal Flat is where the island meets the bay. Visit an estuary, the nursery ground and food basket for much of the island's fauna. Watch and identify birds. Identify the salt tolerant plants. Muck through the muddy shallows, sampling the fishes, crustaceans, worms and mollusks that call this brackish wetland home. Speculate why this is a bountiful habitat; what threatens its existence. Participants must be prepared to get wet to the knees; no bare feet; adequate clothing and sun block required.

Beach Scavenger Hunt

Visit the Gulf Beach of Matagorda Island. Go on a scavenger hunt. Identify the types of waste on the beach. Learn what different types of plastic find their way to Matagorda Island. Discuss the problem; where does all this come from? Why? What can we do? Are we part of the problem or part of the solution? How can litter be a danger to animals? Are there any endangered animals that are affected by the litter? What will you do with your litter? Do you think beach clean-up programs do any good? Participants must be prepared to get wet to the knees; no bare feet; adequate clothing and sun block required.

What's in the Seine!

Seine the bay! Conduct a biological field investigation to determine the biodiversity of the bay. Participants will gain knowledge of the aquatic habitat as a unique environment teaming with an astounding diversity of organisms. Participants will catch and release aquatic organisms while developing an awareness of the need for conservation of aquatic habitats. How many did we catch? I have never seen that before! Go aquatic at Matagorda Island. Participants must be prepared to get wet to the knees; no bare feet; adequate clothing and sun block required.

Sea Turtles

What does endangered and threatened mean? Spend one hour learning about sea turtles in the laboratory classroom at Matagorda Island. Experience an interactive hands-on learning environment. Learn how turtle patrol uses tracks and other signs to identify a turtle nest. What are some human factors that affect sea turtles? Learn what to do if you find an injured sea turtle. What are we doing at Matagorda Island to help sea turtles? Have any sea turtles nests ever been found on Matagorda Island National Wildlife Refuge? What other endangered or threatened species occur on Matagorda Island. What can you do to help save endangered species?

Matagorda Island National Wildlife Refuge Tour

Tour Matagorda Island National Wildlife Refuge on the Conestoga wagon. Walk a trail. Visit the fresh water ponds and view the animals that live there, you may see an alligator or two. Visit the observation platforms and keep your binoculars ready to spot birds, mammals, reptiles, insects, plants, and amphibians. Matagorda Island is located along the Central Flyway and is a critical staging area for many flocks of migrating birds. The Island offers a wonderful wildlife viewing opportunity. This environmental education experience offers an outdoor excursion in a unique remote habitat that has had limited human interaction.

Explore and Learn More Through Interactions With The Outdoors!

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- **Aransas National Wildlife Refuge** □
- **Complex** □
- **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** □
- **P.O. Box 100** □
- **Austwell, Texas 77950** □
- **361-286-3559 (Phone)** □
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