

CAROLINA
OCEAN STUDIES

Carolina Beach Area

FIELD TRIP PLANNING GUIDE



For Additional Information, please call Carolina Ocean Studies at:

(910) 458-7302

www.carolinaoceanstudies.com

reservations@carolinaoceanstudies.com

NORTH CAROLINA AQUARIUM AT FORT FISHER -- 900 Loggerhead Road Kure Beach, NC 28449

The Aquarium displays over 2,500 aquatic species including sharks, stingrays, sea turtles, moray eels, jellyfish, alligators, and hundreds of colorful fishes. The Aquarium's exhibits reveal the remarkable diversity of the Cape Fear River watershed with an emphasis on the ecological connections with the sea. For more information or to schedule your group, contact the Group Scheduling Coordinator at (910) 458-7468. www.ncaquariums.com

FORT FISHER HISTORIC SITE -- 1610 Fort Fisher Blvd S, Kure Beach, NC 28449

Located just 3 miles from the docks used for Carolina Ocean Studies' cruises, Fort Fisher was the last major stronghold of the Confederacy and the site of two major battles. Located here are the remains of the earthen fort, a small museum, and daily guided tours. This facility is free to school groups with pre-registration. For more information call (910) 458-5538. www.nchistoricsites.org/fisher/

CAROLINA OCEAN STUDIES – 100 Carl Winner Ave., Carolina Beach, NC 28428

Carolina Ocean Studies provides 3 hour educational boating cruises to Masonboro Island and to sunken wrecks off the Cape Fear coast. Activities include fishing, clamming, seining in the salt marsh, crabbing, beach exploration, and sorting through catch from shrimp trawls, fish traps, and crab pots. Programs take place on 65' to 80' boats and are for groups of 30 - 140 people. Dolphins are often observed during programs. COS also offers programs departing Beaufort and Harkers Island, NC. For more information, call (910) 458-7302. www.carolinaoceanstudies.com

BATTLESHIP NORTH CAROLINA -- 1 Battleship Rd NE, Wilmington, NC 28401

The USS North Carolina was one of the great battleships of World War II and is preserved today in near mint condition. For information call (910) 251-5797. www.battleshipnc.com

FORT FISHER STATE RECREATION AREA -- 1000 Loggerhead Rd, Kure Beach, NC 28449

Located next to the Aquarium, this site provides the best beach access in the area, numerous picnic tables, and has changing rooms. Rangers can provide programs (pre-registration required) on coastal topics including coastal birds and sea turtles. There are no fees for this site. For more information, call (910) 458-5798. www.ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/fofi/main.php

CAROLINA BEACH STATE PARK -- 1010 B Rd, Carolina Beach, NC 28428

The State Park is also close by and available for nature studies. For more information, call (910) 458-8206. www.ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/cabe/main.php

FORT FISHER - SOUTHPORT FERRY -- 2422 S. Fort Fisher Blvd. Kure Beach, NC 28449

Located just 6 miles from the docks used for Carolina Ocean Studies' cruises, this state-run ferry takes groups on a scenic 30 minute crossing of the Cape Fear River. Three of the states' 8 lighthouses can be viewed during this crossing. No charge for State of North Carolina owned buses, \$10 - 15.00 for charter buses, \$5.00 for automobiles. For information call (910) 458-3329 or (800) 293-3779. www.ncferry.org

Groups usually take approximately 45 minutes to one hour to tour any of the above facilities. Additional programs at these educational attractions (such as films, hands-on activities, and nature walks) can extend the visit by 30 minutes to one hour.

AREA EDUCATIONAL ATTRACTIONS

Battleship North Carolina	910/251-5797	www.battleshipnc.com
Brunswick Town Historic Site	910/371-6613 www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/sections/hs/brunswic/brunswic.htm	
Cape Fear Museum	910/ 341-4350	www.capefearmuseum.com
Carolina Beach State Park	910/458-7770 www.ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/cabe/main.php	
Carolina Ocean Studies	910/458-7302	www.carolinaoceanstudies.com
Fort Fisher Museum & Fort	910/458-5538	www.nchistoricsites.org/fisher
Fort Fisher-Southport Ferry	910/458-3329	www.ncferry.org
NC Aquarium	910/458-7468	www.ncaquariums.com
Cape Fear Serpentarium	910/762-1669	www.capefearserpentarium.com
Wilmington Adventure Walking Tours	910/763-1785 www.wilmingtontoday.com/Tours/Walking.html	

OTHER USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

**Wilmington Visitors Center	800/222-4757	www.cape-fear.nc.us
Chamber of Commerce Carolina Beach	910/458-8434	www.carolinabeach.com/chamber
Tregembo Animal Park	910/392-3604	www.tregemboanimalpark.com
Jungle Rapids Family Fun Park	910/791-0666	www.junglerapids.com

Meal Recommendations for the Carolina Beach Area

I. Picnic Areas

There are three conveniently located and scenic picnic areas in the Carolina Beach area and one in Wilmington. They are all available on a first-come, first-serve basis, but space is usually available. All areas can accommodate groups of 90 or more and have restroom facilities. There are covered tables at all the parks except the State Park and Fort Fisher Rec Area. The recommended picnic areas are:

Snow's Cut Park -- 9420 River Rd., Wilmington, NC 28412: Perched over the Intracoastal Waterway, this is the most attractive picnic area and also has the most tables. Most groups do not reserve the shelters but you can do so by contacting New Hanover County Parks and Recreation (910-798-7620). Otherwise, the shelters are first come – first serve; this is the recommended option for weekday lunch stops. Coming from Carolina Beach, cross the bridge and take the first left onto River Road. Go about 400 yards to a sharp right curve in the road. Just to the left of this curve (and directly underneath the bridge) is one section of the park. This section has several picnic tables including a sheltered picnic area big enough for at least 30 people. Just past the curve another 100 yards the main section of Snow's Cut Park will be on your left. Within this section are numerous picnic tables including a shelter that can accommodate at least 45 people. Restrooms are located within the second section of the park. Parking in the second section: just as you enter the second section of the park you will enter a parking lot. It is recommended that buses park in this section rather than go down the narrow and winding road that loops through the park. It is important that adults be stationed at the stairs leading down to the shore as Snow's Cut is a dangerous body of water. However, the only access to the water is by way of these three sets of stairs, so it is easy to monitor students that might attempt to go near the water. This is a great spot to watch boats travel the waterway!

Fort Fisher State Recreation Area -- 1000 Loggerhead Rd, Kure Beach, NC 28449: This is the best picnic area for groups that would like to eat while near the Aquarium. This is also the only picnic area that offers beach access. An easy to manage itinerary could include visiting the Aquarium, a beach hike at this location, and a picnic here. The 24 picnic tables are adjacent to the beach boardwalk. There are no shelters over any of the tables at this location. See map for location (only 100 yards from Aquarium). For more information call (910) 458-8206 or go to ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/fofi/main.php

Carolina Beach State Park -- 1010 B Rd, Carolina Beach, NC 28428 : This picnic area is located in an attractive wooded area and would be warmer than the above 2 areas on cool and windy days. This park can be buggy on warm days, especially if there is little wind. To get to this area coming from Wilmington, cross the bridge into Carolina Beach. Go to the second stoplight and veer right onto Dow Road. The right turn to the State Park is just past the water tower. The picnic area is on your right about 1/2 mile down this road. The Waterway is about 100 yards from most picnic tables; again, students should be monitored so they do not go near the water. For more information visit www.ncparks.gov/visit/parks/cabe/main.php

Hugh MacRae Park -- 1799 S College Rd, Wilmington, NC 28403: This park is great for anyone staying in Wilmington or traveling via I-40. Hugh McCrae Park is located on College Road, about 2 miles past UNCW campus.

***There are also 15 picnic tables at the Aquarium. In addition, the Battleship offers a nice field next to the Cape Fear River that is good for picnics.

II. Area Restaurants

McDonalds: (910) 458-5918 and Hardees: (910) 458-8400; Located 50 yards from our dock (short walk from our boats – no need to move buses). It is a good idea to call ahead if you have a large group and are on a tight schedule. McDonalds and Hardees are located right next to each other, thereby allowing large groups to go to both restaurants at the same time. This can cut down on the time it takes to serve your group.

Golden Corral: (910) 392-1984; Located at 5130 New Centre Dr, University Centre, Wilmington, NC 28403. (Please note, this is a new location) They offer a wide selection of foods – service is buffet, menu service is not available at this location. www.goldencorral.net

Michael's Seafood: (910) 458-7761; Good seafood and mixed menu. Located in Carolina Beach. Restaurant can accommodate groups of up to 80 people. They also have a catering wagon that can take great meals to the scenic picnic areas close by. www.michaelsCfood.com

Papa John's Pizza: (910) 313-6161; www.papajohns.com.

Michaelangelos Pizza: (910) 458-4100; www.Michaelangelospizza.com

Frank's Pizza: (910) 458-7010; Located on the Carolina Beach Boardwalk, a short walk from our dock. Outstanding pizza. Groups can take their pizza out on the boardwalk overlooking the ocean! *Frank's* is located next to the legendary *Britt's Donuts*.

Big Daddy's Restaurant: (910) 458-8622; Winter phone: (910) 799-5154; This large seafood restaurant also has a mixed menu. Located about 3 miles from our cruising docks, and is directly across the street from our Pier program in Kure Beach. This is the only restaurant on the island that can comfortably accommodate groups larger than 80 people.

Independence Mall: (910) 392-1776 Located in Wilmington, the mall offers a variety of food styles in one food court location. Featured restaurants include Chick-fil-A, Ming Tree, Dairy Queen and many others. There is also a full size Ruby Tuesdays attached to the mall's main entrance on Oleander Drive. Seating is readily available for groups up to 100, and with advanced calling the mall can prepare additional seating reserved for groups up to 300 people.

Recommended Accommodations

The vast majority of our groups do our program as part of a day trip. For groups that are considering an overnight trip, we offer the following list of accommodations. These recommendations are based on positive feedback from our customers.

Microtel Inn and Suites by Wyndham: The Microtel features 58 rooms (most of which can accommodate up to 4 people easily), an outdoor pool, continental breakfast, and all-interior corridors. It is located two blocks from the docks we use in Carolina Beach and is less than 15 minutes from Fort Fisher and the Aquarium. Group rates are typically below \$29 per person. For more information, (910) 458-1300 www.microtelinn.com

Hampton Inn in Carolina Beach: The new Hampton Inn is located one block from the Carolina Beach Marina at the Carolina Beach Boardwalk. They offer continental breakfast along with good rates and an oceanfront location. For more information please call (910) 707-1771. <http://hamptoninn3.hilton.com/en/hotels/north-carolina/hampton-inn-and-suites-carolina-beach-oceanfront-ILMHAHX/index.html>

Golden Sands Hotel: This is an 80 room oceanfront hotel located just five minutes from our dock and ten minutes from the Aquarium. Rates for groups are approximately \$28 per student. Continental breakfast is *not* available. This is based on 4 to a room for Sunday - Thursdays in the Spring and Fall. *The Ocean Grill Restaurant* is next door to the hotel. For more information, contact James Pope at (888) 458-8334. www.goldensandscarolinabeach.com

Seven Seas Hotel: The Seven Seasons Hotel is located on a quaint beachfront site in Kure Beach, about 3 miles from our docks and close to several educational attractions. It is also walking distance from several restaurants, a fishing pier, and an arcade. All rooms have 2 double beds and refrigerators, and every other room is a full efficiency. Rates for groups are approximately \$30.00 per person for Spring and Fall. This is based on 4 people per room. Price is good for Sunday - Thursday nights. Continental breakfast is *not* available. For more information, contact Victor, Bridgette, or Judy at (910) 458-8122. www.sevenseasinn.com

Courtyard Marriott: All rooms feature an oceanfront view, private balcony, mini-fridge, microwave, and wireless Internet. Indoor pool and beach/boardwalk access are key highlights to this hotel. Average rates will be near \$35.00 per person based on four-to-a-room occupancy. (910) 458-2030. <http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/ilmcb-courtyard-carolina-beach/>

North Carolina Baptist Assembly

The NC Baptist Assembly is a remarkably beautiful and peaceful complex located on Long Beach, NC (a one-and-a-half hour drive to our marina). Situated on the eastern tip of Oak Island, the Assembly is bordered by the Intracoastal Waterway, the Cape Fear River, and the Atlantic Ocean. Turn-of-the-century buildings and the remains of a Civil War Fort can be found on the 250-acre grounds. There is over a mile of shoreline around the Assembly. Recreation includes a fishing pier and an indoor basketball court. Dining services are available.

Description of accommodations: Hotels, a Motel, Cottages, Residence Buildings, and Barracks are all available at the Assembly. Rates start at \$20.00/person/night and vary based on the selected accommodations. Meals pricing begins at \$9.00 per person. Please call for details.

For more information, contact: North Carolina Baptist Assembly; 100 Caswell Beach Road; Oak Island, NC 28465 phone: (910) 278-9501. www.fortcaswell.com

Hotels located in Wilmington:

**Wilmington is about a 30 minute drive from our marina in Carolina Beach.

**When getting quotes from hotels keep in mind that quotes for large group should be much better pricing than for a standard single room. Also, most hotel managers are often willing to negotiate a price, especially if you challenge them to beat a competitor's price.

<u>Day's Inn:</u>	(910)799-6300	www.daysinn.com
<u>Fairfield Inn:</u>	(910) 791-8082	www.marriot.com
<u>Hampton Inn:</u>	(910)791-9899	www.hamptoninn.hilton.com
<u>Howard Johnson:</u>	(910)343-1727	www.hojo.com/HowardJohnson
<u>Comfort Inn:</u>	(910)791-4841	www.choicehotels.com

Hotels located in Leland:

**Leland is located just across the Cape Fear River from downtown Wilmington and is an approximately 40 minute drive from our marina in Carolina Beach.

Holiday Inn Express:	(910) 383-3300	http://www.hieleland.com/
Best Western - Westgate Inn:	910-371-2858	http://www.bestwesternleland.com/

MAPS and additional information on this area can be obtained by contacting:

Cape Fear Coast Convention and Visitor's Bureau:	800-222-4757	www.cape-fear.nc.us
Pleasure Island Chamber of Commerce:	(910) 458-8434	www.pleasureislandchambernc.org