



Course Brochure

Marine Ecology Course

(MEC)

Contact:

education@reefresearch.org

www.reefresearch.org



Overview



CCMI's 3-day, 2-night Marine Ecology Course is open to both primary and secondary schools. The team at CCMI tailors course content to complement the curriculum and makes the most of the students' time with CCMI. The course introduces students to tropical marine biology, ecology, and conservation on one of the world's most beautiful coral reefs. CCMI's aim is to change students' attitudes and behaviors about the ocean whilst having fun exploring Little Cayman. Activities typically include snorkelling, species identification, beach cleanups, field trips to the National Trust Booby Pond, guided iguana tours, lionfish dissections, and a range of interactive lessons.

During the course students spend their days in the water and on the beach, applying the knowledge they learn in the classroom and undertaking challenges - all while making friendships and memories for life!

Programme cost: CI \$400 per student
CI \$275 per teacher/chaperone

Programme fee covers:

- All room and board
- Instructor fees
- All classroom and field equipment
- Education modules of your choice

Programme fee does not cover:

- Flights to and from Little Cayman
- Students' personal equipment (snorkel gear, field notebook and stationery)



Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
7:40am Airport Pickup Cars: N.van, Kia BE and CC Settling Students in	7:00 - 7:30 BREAKFAST	7:00 - 7:30 BREAKFAST
8:30 - 9:30 Station Tour Welcome Talk & Pledge	8:30 - 9:30 Talk - Fish ID Lecture	7:30 - 8:30 Pack + Clean Dorms
9:30 - 12:00 Snorkel @ front of CCMI	9:30 - 12:00 Snorkel @ Cumbers Fish ID challenge	9:00 - 11:30 Snorkel and beach games at Point of Sand
LUNCH 12:00	LUNCH 12:00	LUNCH 12:00
Clean up lunch and get ready for the next activity.	Clean up lunch and get ready for the next activity	Clean up lunch and get ready for the next activity
13:30 - 15:00 Talk - Threats to Coral Reefs	13:30 - 14:30 Talk - Ocean Plastic and Pollution Lecture	13:00 - 14:00 Lionfish Dissection
15:00 - 17:30 Iguana Talk @ Little Cayman Museum, National Trust Booby Pond	15:00 - 17:00 Beach Clean Up & Mangrove Walk @ Tarpon Lake	Leave station @ 3:00 pm 4:00pm Flight Depart
	17:00 - 18:00 Pack & Clean rooms/ Games on the deck	
DINNER 18:00	DINNER 18:00	
19:00 - 20:00 Movie Night	19:00 - 20:00 Camp Fire	
20:00 Shower and get ready for bed	20:00 Shower and get ready for bed	
Lights out 9pm Night Duty	Lights out 9pm Night Duty	



Why CCMI?

CCMI's vision is a world with vibrant oceans and healthy coral reefs.

Since our formation in 1998 we have been making this vision a reality by undertaking cutting edge, impactful research and transforming this into conservation and education initiatives which serve to bridge the gap between knowledge and action.

CCMI currently hosts upwards of 25 education groups every year with visits from primary schools, secondary schools, university groups, and citizen scientists from all over the world. Staff are well trained and experienced in teaching students of all ages, both in the classroom and out in the field, with our specially developed curriculum.

Our fully operational research station can house up to 24 students in dormitories and has additional rooms for accompanying staff. The classroom can comfortably seat 24 at desks and contains an extensive marine library, computer, projector screen, and a beautiful view of the Caribbean Sea!

Why Little Cayman?

Little Cayman is the smallest and least populated of the three Cayman Islands (Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac, and Little Cayman). The island is 10 miles long and 1 mile wide, with around 160 full-time residents. Though Little Cayman is a tropical paradise with limited human development, it is only a short, 30-minute plane ride from Grand Cayman.

The coral reefs of Little Cayman are arguably the best in the Caribbean, with diverse coral and fish species and large populations of megafauna including spotted eagle rays, Nassau grouper, turtles, and sharks.

A Mission Blue Hope Spot, Little Cayman is one of the top diving destinations in the Caribbean!

What will students gain?

This once in a lifetime trip will not only allow students to gain exposure to new cultures and a fully operational research institute, but it will also give them key skills to take away:

- An understanding of the current threats facing our environment and how they can act against them
- Marine animal identification
- Scientific fieldwork techniques
- Improved snorkeling experience
- Communication and teamwork skills
- Experience of communal living
- And so much more....



Available Activities



Snorkelling

Little Cayman was designated a Mission Blue Hope Spot (2020), with some of the healthiest reefs in the Caribbean. Open students' eyes to the wonders under the ocean, accompanied by our education team who are experts of the reef as well as professional level divers.

Night snorkel

Night snorkels are an amazing opportunity for students to see the reef come alive with different species and behaviours at night.

Tour of Little Cayman Museum, the National Trust

These tours will give your students the chance to learn more about the terrestrial ecology and history of Little Cayman. The National Trust provides a talk on the fascinating array of bird species seen here at Booby Pond Nature Reserve.

Beach clean-up

An essential component for any marine camp is to take part in a beach clean-up, this activity helps students visualize the scale of the plastic pollution problem.

Lionfish dissection

We can arrange to cull invasive lionfish leading up to the course, allowing for a live dissection to be demonstrated to the students, alongside a discussion about why this invasive species is a problem in the Caribbean.

Nature Trail

Have students explore the unique landscape of Little Cayman by walking the Nature Trail, which cuts across the island. On this trail, students explore some of Little Cayman's endemic terrestrial species.

Beach bonfire

A beach bonfire is an essential camp tradition for the last night. Students gather around a beach campfire playing games, singing songs, and making s'mores under the incredible starry sky.



Available Lectures

All Levels - Primary, Secondary & University



Fish ID

Identification of prevalent fish families using common (non-scientific) names

Threats to Coral Reefs

Identification of the key global and local threats currently faced by coral reefs

Marine Plastic & Pollution

Introduction to plastics in the marine ecosystem and their environmental impact

Mangroves, Seagrasses & Coral Reefs

Introduction to three highly productive ecosystems that provide significant biological and economic services

Secondary School & University levels only

Benthic ID

Identification of benthic biota using common names

Invertebrate ID

Identification of prevalent invertebrate species using common names

Coral ID

Identification of dominant hermatypic corals to species level

Algae ID

Identification of dominant algae species to genus level

Invasive Lionfish in the Caribbean

Introduction to invasive species using the lionfish as a key marine example

Coral Restoration at CCMI

Introduction to the coral restoration project at CCMI, with updates on our latest research projects

Reefs at Night

Introducing the nocturnal organisms present on the reef, their adaptations, and behaviours

Deep Sea

Introduction to the zones of the deep and the adaptations of the creatures living there



Testimonials



“A once in a lifetime trip to the most inspiring place on Earth”

- Andrew Merrick, Head of Biology, Malvern College

“I’m always impressed with the level of engagement of students at all learning levels and the way the presenters improve the content and activities each year.”

-Karlene Buckle, Grade 6 Teacher, Cayman Prep

“A fun-filled, educational week, spent leaning about the beauty surrounding Little Cayman”

- Emily Stookey, High School Science Teacher, Triple C School

“The best school trip I have ever been on in 25 years of teaching”

- Giles Hopkirk, Geography Teacher, Malvern College

“The trip was reaffirming and reminded me of the point of teaching, diving, and learning... to leave this planet better than how I found it!”

- Kathleen Corkey, High School Science Teacher, Cayman Prep School

“The activities were varied, and covered many of our curriculum outcomes. The variety of unique research opportunities was excellent.”

-James McGill, Grade 12 Teacher, St Ignatius

I loved staying at CCMI and hope to come back. Best school trip ever :)

- Gail Jacques, Student, Cayman Prep

“My CCMI trip was both entertaining and educational, I can’t wait to come back. Thank you for a wonderful time! I’ll remember it forever”

-Chloe Simms, Student, Triple C School

“A fulfilling and rewarding experience in which we saw amazing marine wildlife helped by amazing passionate people”

- Kitty Holroyd, Student, Malvern College



“An amazing, once in a lifetime experience that I will remember forever.”

- Morgann McGee, Student, Malvern College