



South Carolina  
Aquarium



# PROTECT WHAT YOU LOVE

Field Trip Toolkit

# Ignite Passion for Water, Wildlife and Wild Places



Spark enthusiasm for conservation of the natural world in your students with a visit to the South Carolina Aquarium. As a class, take an educational journey through South Carolina's diverse habitats while learning what you can do to protect them. From start to finish, hands-on activities will support and inspire STEM education outside the classroom. It's more than just a field trip – it's an opportunity to discover the wonder of water, wildlife and wild places.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **How do I book a field trip?**

Call our reservations specialists at (843) 577-3474, or complete our online inquiry form at [scaquarium.org/groups/group-inquiry](https://scaquarium.org/groups/group-inquiry).

## **When should I book my field trip?**

Most groups book their reservations anywhere from a month to a year in advance. At least one week's notice is preferred, but we can accommodate groups on shorter notice.

## **How many teachers and chaperones are included with my reservation?**

Certified South Carolina teachers receive free admission. Complimentary admission is given to 1 chaperone per 10 students. Additional chaperones are \$15 each. Please note – we highly recommend 1 chaperone per 5 students elementary age and younger.

## **How can I make changes to the number of attendees on my reservation?**

Call our reservations specialists at (843) 577-3474 to make changes to your reservation details up to one week in advance of your visit.

## **Where can I park my bus or van?**

Free parking is available for buses and motor coaches in the bus lane behind the Aquarium Garage. Vans may park inside the Aquarium Garage. Learn more on page 6.

## **Will my visit be led by a tour guide?**

No, your group's tour will be self-guided at your own pace. Education Interpreters throughout the building can help you learn more about the animals and habitats that interest you most. Our Teacher Resource Kits include Scavenger Hunts (available to print at school) as well as Exhibit Activities and Discovery Bins that can be reserved for the day of your visit.

## **How do I reserve a Teacher Resource Kit for my visit?**

When you book your field trip at (843) 577-3474, let your reservations specialist know you want to use a Teacher Resource Kit during your visit.

## **What time should I arrive?**

Arrive at least 30 minutes before your reservation time for restroom breaks and orientation.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Does the Aquarium offer special programs and shows?**

Yes, we offer at least one educational program every hour, from dive shows to turtle talks. Check out our daily schedule to see what's happening during your visit at [scaquarium.org/calendar](https://scaquarium.org/calendar).

## **Do I need to purchase separate tickets to visit Zucker Family Sea Turtle Recovery™?**

No. Admission to the entire Aquarium, including Zucker Family Sea Turtle Recovery, is included in your reservation.

## **Can my group eat lunch at the Aquarium?**

Although the Aquarium cannot provide lunches for groups, our reservations specialists can offer recommendations for preferred boxed lunch vendors. Your class may eat lunch in Liberty Square, under Fort Sumter Museum's covered pavilions, or in the arrival area of the Aquarium Garage.

## **Can students visit the gift shop?**

Students may peruse the gift shop in small groups with the supervision of a chaperone.

## **Does the Aquarium work with any other attractions to accommodate groups?**

The South Carolina Aquarium has partnered with some of Charleston's top attractions and activities, connecting your students with culture, history and wildlife. Visit [scaquarium.org/preferred-partners](https://scaquarium.org/preferred-partners) for a complete list of options.

## **When will I receive my vouchers for the Comeback Club?**

When you are finalizing payment at the Admissions ticket window upon arrival, you will receive your printed Comeback Club vouchers (one per student).

## **Do you offer sleepover opportunities?**

The South Carolina Aquarium is now offering sleepovers. For more information on sleepovers, visit [scaquarium.org/sleepovers](https://scaquarium.org/sleepovers).

# Field Trip Checklist

## How to Book

- Book your trip and submit full payment by contacting the Customer Service Center at (843) 577-FISH (3474).
- Complete the Signed Agreement and Reservation Changes Confirmation letter and return to the Customer Service Center via fax at (866) 210-1059 or email [reservations@scaquarium.org](mailto:reservations@scaquarium.org).
- Provide a finalized count of students, teachers, and chaperones no later than 21 days prior to your trip to (843) 577-FISH (3474) or [reservations@scaquarium.org](mailto:reservations@scaquarium.org).
- Submit payment for any changes no later than 7 days prior to your trip by contacting the Customer Service Center at (843) 577-FISH (3474).
- Print the Field Trip Toolkit and review it thoroughly. Provide your bus driver with the directions, which are found on page 6.

## Arriving at the Aquarium

- Arrive at least 30 minutes prior to your reservation time for restroom breaks and orientation.
- If you are running late, please call (843) 577-FISH (3474) and inform the Aquarium representative of your estimated time of arrival.
- When you arrive, unload in the bus lane next to the parking garage and walk toward the Aquarium. Group leaders should proceed to the ticket window to finalize group numbers and payment. You will receive your Comeback Club vouchers at this point. An Aquarium Guide will greet the group in front of the building for a brief orientation before leading you inside.
- Note: The Aquarium experience is a self-guided tour. Entertaining and educational shows are held throughout the day. For information on show times, look for signs posted throughout the building, ask an Aquarium staff member, or visit [scaquarium.org/calendar](http://scaquarium.org/calendar). If you have reserved a Teacher Resource Kit, you may pick it up at the Info Desk, located to your left when you enter the Aquarium. ID is required.

## Useful Links

- **Standards-based Curriculum** – Take advantage of teaching opportunities before you visit with our standards-based curriculum. Download grade-specific activities at [curriculum.scaquarium.org](http://curriculum.scaquarium.org).
- **Teacher Resource Kits** – Multiple options are available to enhance your students' experience. Scavenger Hunts can be found and printed at [scaquarium.org/field-trips](http://scaquarium.org/field-trips). Discovery Bins and Exhibit Activities must be reserved in advance by calling our reservations specialists at (843) 577-3474.
- **Aquarium Rovers** – Let the Aquarium come to you with our outreach program, where we bring interactive, hands-on learning to your facility. Each standards-based program includes engaging activities, wildlife artifacts and live animals. For more info, visit [scaquarium.org/rovers](http://scaquarium.org/rovers).
- **Distance Learning** – Our Education staff can connect with your classroom using videoconferencing technology to share knowledge, answer questions and provide an up-close look at our animals and exhibits! For more info or to schedule a program, contact Beth Demas at [bdemas@scaquarium.org](mailto:bdemas@scaquarium.org).

# Directions for Buses and Motor Coaches

These directions have been customized for buses that are restricted in their use of city streets. In order to abide by Charleston tourism laws, it is important that you follow these directions.

## From I-26 East

1. Take I-26 to the end and follow the signs to Exit 221B (Meeting Street/Visitors Center/Downtown).
2. Merge right onto Meeting Street approximately 10 blocks to Calhoun Street.
3. Turn left onto Calhoun Street and continue to Washington Street.
4. Turn left onto Washington Street and follow the signs for motor coach and bus pick-up and drop-off area.

## From Highway 17 North (West Ashley)

1. Take Highway 17 North across the Ashley River Bridge, and follow the signs to Calhoun Street.
2. Turn left onto Calhoun Street.
3. Stay on Calhoun Street approximately 15 blocks to Washington Street.
4. Turn left onto Washington Street and follow the signs for motor coach and bus pick-up and drop-off area.

## From Highway 17 South (Mount Pleasant)

1. Follow Highway 17 South across the Cooper River.
2. Take the East Bay Street / South Carolina Aquarium exit.
3. At the light, turn left onto East Bay Street and follow to Calhoun Street.
4. Turn left onto Calhoun Street and continue to Washington Street.
5. Turn left onto Washington Street, and follow the signs for the motor coach and bus pick-up and drop-off area.

Please be prepared for inclement weather. Your group will walk approximately 100 yards from the drop-off area to the Aquarium.

Buses and motor coaches may park in the bus lane.  
Vans may park in the Aquarium Garage.

Visiting tour vehicles must secure a permit from the City of Charleston. Permit applications are available at [charleston-sc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/469](http://charleston-sc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/469).



## Map Key

★ - Lunch areas

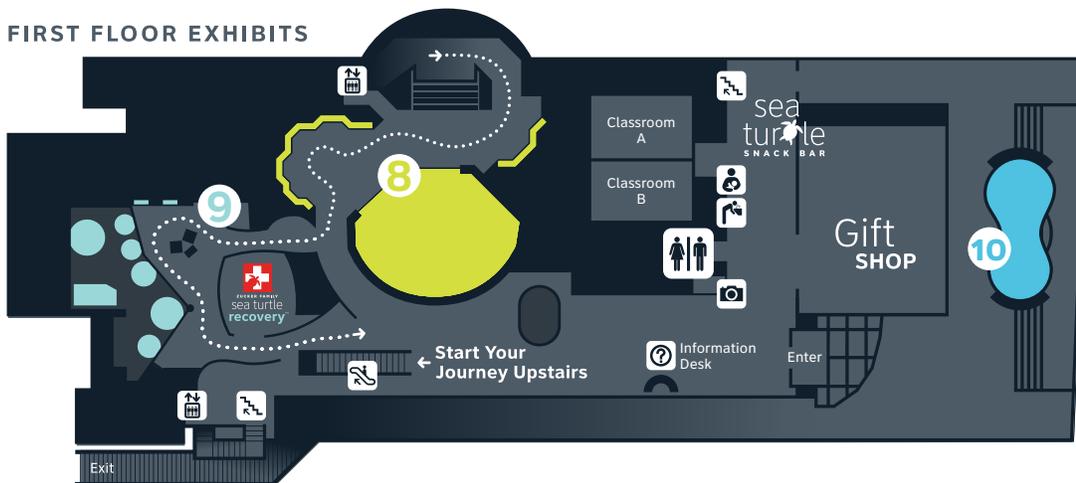
# Aquarium Floor Map

## SECOND FLOOR EXHIBITS



**Gift Shop**  
Don't miss your chance to grab the perfect gift or purchase Aquarium gear. A portion of proceeds benefit the conservation work of the Aquarium.

## FIRST FLOOR EXHIBITS



**Sea Turtle Snack Bar**  
From hot lunches to cool treats, the snack bar serves up something to satisfy everyone in your family.



Restrooms are located on the first floor across from the Gift Shop. Need assistance? Stop by the Information Desk for help. The Nursing Room is located on the first floor adjacent to the Classrooms.



Smoking (including e-cigarettes), heels, balloons and concealed weapons are prohibited throughout the South Carolina Aquarium.

### 1 Mountain Forest

Begin your journey from the mountains to the sea with a bald eagle and playful river otters.

### 2 Piedmont

Visit our American kestrel and see the rich and varied aquatic life supported by streams, rivers and man-made reservoirs.

### 3 Coastal Plain

NEED NEW COPY FOR THIS SECTION

### 4 Kids Coast

Kids Coast supports play, exploration and discovery of the natural world among the next generation of environmental stewards.

### 5 Saltmarsh Aviary

See coastal birds up close and observe terrapins and stingrays in their natural habitat.

### 6 Touch Tank

Visit our touch tank and encounter stingrays, sea urchins and more.

### 7 Coast

From seahorses to lionfish, meet the creatures that inhabit our coastal waters and discover how you can make a Good Catch with sustainable seafood.

### 8 Ocean

Pretend you're a scuba diver in the 42-foot-deep Great Ocean Tank. See a loggerhead sea turtle, sharks and more than 500 fish!

### Zucker Family

### 9 Sea Turtle Recovery™

Experience the rescue, rehabilitation and release of sea turtles. Visit our current patients and practice caring for sick and injured turtles through augmented reality.

### 10 The Shallows

Come fingers to fins with rays at this 20,000-gallon outdoor touch tank overlooking the Charleston Harbor.

# Support the South Carolina Aquarium

- **Host an “I Protect Sea Turtles” Read-A-Thon**  
Support sea turtles in rehabilitation at the South Carolina Aquarium while encouraging students to read! We can provide a complete guide with worksheets, reading logs and recommended timelines to make it easy. Contact Nick Mercer at [nmerc@scaquarium.org](mailto:nmerc@scaquarium.org) to get your Read-a-thon toolkit.
- **Adopt a Loggerhead as a Class**  
Raise funds as a class to symbolically adopt a loggerhead. Your donation will help provide exceptional care for animals here at the Aquarium as well as help protect water, wildlife and wild places.  
Learn more at [scaquarium.org/adopt](http://scaquarium.org/adopt).
- **Become Citizen Scientists**  
Learn about science and make a positive environmental impact by removing litter from your favorite places. Download the South Carolina Aquarium Citizen Science app (available on the App Store or Google Play) to learn how to conduct a litter sweep and how to contribute data on the debris your class observes in your local environment. Then, explore the app’s database and graphing tools to analyze your class’ conservation impact!

