

Marine Ecology Program

At Fort Ross
Conservancy's
Coastal Academy!



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ON THE SONOMA COAST

The Marine Ecology Program (MEP) is an incredible way to experience and enrich your knowledge of the Sonoma coast and its diverse coastal fauna and flora.

This outdoor STEM program is suitable for groups of all ages including school and university students, families, and professional groups.

FRC acknowledges that the land on which we operate is the occupied ancestral land of the Kashia Pomo, Metini.

FORT ROSS

Built in the early the 1800s, Fort Ross is a unique location to see how coastal ecosystems have been changed over the past 250 years by human activity including:

- The local extinction of sea otters
- Kelp Forest loss and restoration



Metini/Fort Ross State Historic Park



Coastal Academy Mission Statement

To steward important coastal habitats through education, collaboration, and community engagement

ABOUT US

Fort Ross Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and California State Park Cooperating Association. FRC specializes in educational and interpretive activities on natural and cultural history at Fort Ross State Historic park and Salt Point State Park.

Our marine ecology instructors are experienced working with students of all ages and are knowledgeable in the natural and cultural history of Fort Ross and wildlife biology.



Visitor Center: (707) 847-3437
(10 am – 4:30 pm)



19005 Coast Highway One,
Jenner, 95450



Program Activities

MARINE INVERTEBRATES AND KELP

Helping kelp

Why have kelp forests declined by >90% in California? Learn about kelp forest restoration in Sonoma by NOAA, kelp species, and the purple sea urchin (hold or dissect live sea urchins)



Search for mole crabs*

Mole crabs are indicators for toxins, important herbivores in beach ecosystems, and food for birds, fish, and sea otters. Learn about mole crab biology and ecology, find mole crabs at the beach, and do a dissection class (age dependent).



Tide pool treasures*

Find crabs, abalone, sea stars, anemones and more along the incredibly diverse rocky shore. Curriculum (by LiMPETS*) is available for high school students to do an in-depth invertebrate survey.



CUSTOMIZE YOUR PROGRAM

Day Program: 1 - 5 hours,
\$10/student/hour*

Overnight Program: Spend the night on the coast in a restored, historic Fort! ~6 h activities, \$75/student*, \$20/chaperone* (camping equipment and dinner excluded)

*Financial assistance is available.

Marine Scientist at your school
Inquire about an in-class program!



For an all-inclusive camping experience for school groups, book an **overnight camping MEP** with Fieldguides Outdoor Education! Fieldguides instructors will provide camping equipment, dinner, and evening activities. Cost: an additional \$100 per student, \$25 per adult.

WINGED WILDLIFE

Plants and pollinators

Birds, bats, butterflies and bees - learn about the amazing winged wildlife on the coast and the native plants that support them. Help plant natives to restore habitat for endangered species!



*LiMPETS community science curricula for middle and high schoolers is available upon request

LiMPETS
Long-term Monitoring Program and
Experiential Training for Students

MARINE MAMMALS

Harbor seal survey

How many harbor seals call Fort Ross home? Do a seal survey and learn about seal biology and ecology. See pups in April and May!



Hike to the sea lion islands viewpoint

Walk across the bluffs to see Steller and California sea lions through telescopes. Learn about upwelling, species ID, and marine mammal monitoring.



1800s Fur trade

Explore the historic buildings in the Fort including the fur warehouse and learn about the sea otter fur trade and its lasting impacts on the coast.



COME AND SEE WHY SO MANY STUDENTS LOVE OUR PROGRAMS!

PROGRAM REVIEWS

Student Feedback

It was really amazing and I loved the Sea lions, touching the urchins, and seeing many amazing historical buildings in Fort Ross.

It was extremely fun to learn about everything in Fort Ross! I may even go urchin diving someday!

I enjoyed the program very much. I loved seeing the humpback [whale], seals and [the] hike was very pretty.

Teacher feedback

Our class very much enjoyed the entire experience. The instructors were knowledgeable and interesting. The students really enjoyed their time on the beach and learning about the seals

HOW TO BOOK

Visit our website:

<https://programs.fortross.org/mep>

CLICK HERE

for the google form application

Email: mep@fortross.org



BOOK TODAY!



Do the MEP as part of The Marine Mammal Center's Ocean Ambassadors program for middle school students!