

# Fishing for Success



The University of Florida/ IFAS /School of Forest Resources and Conservation Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences' Fishing For Success (FFS) program conducts informal aquatic educational activities for youth of all ages. Groups come to our off-campus facility to participate in hands-on environmental learning activities and fishing. FFS biologists and Fisheries & Aquatic Sciences graduate students introduce youth to the wonderful world of fish, aquatic invertebrates and plants. Activities are designed not only to stimulate the curiosity of the individuals, but to show them that what they are learning in school applies to the real-world.



**A typical program** generally consists of 2 hands on, educational activities followed by a break for lunch, with fishing as the grand finale of the day. The average time spent on a field trip is 3 to 4 hours. The cost for a typical trip is \$5.00 per child, with no charge for teachers or chaperones. We also host "fishing only" trips which last 1 to 2 hours. Fishing only trips are \$3.00 per angler.

## **Aquatic Invertebrates**

Dip nets are provided to students, who collect aquatic invertebrates from our ponds. After collecting for an allotted time, participants gather with their dishpans of live critters. FFS biologists then provide a brief aquatic ecology lesson to identify what they have caught and to discuss their biology, habits, and importance in the food chain/web of a pond.

## **Introduction to Fish**

An overview of the identification, anatomy, and ecology of some of Florida's common freshwater fish (including exotics) is provided. Students can touch and interact with the live fish that are used in these demonstrations. They also learn how to safely handle fish. Information about fish farming (aquaculture) is also available, if so desired.

## **Aquatic Plants**

Florida's common aquatic and semi-aquatic plants and weeds are emphasized. Participants collect and learn how to identify a variety of plants. There is discussion of the biology and role of plants in aquatic ecosystems, and the methods used to control aquatic plants when they become weeds.

## **Water Quality (Upper Elementary, Middle & High School Students)**

The chemistry of water and its importance to fish survival is highlighted. Using water test kits and meters, participants measure various physical and chemical parameters of the water (e.g., temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, and clarity). Students learn what water quality must be maintained to ensure survival of aquatic life.

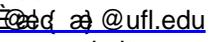
## **Fishing**

As a grand finale to the visit, youth are given the opportunity to fish ponds that are heavily stocked with largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, and channel catfish. Those who have never fished before are taught basic angling skills as well as angler ethics and safety. All equipment is provided by the Program.

## **Off-Site Programs**

FFS personnel can visit schools on a limited basis to give educational presentations on the biology and ecology of aquatic invertebrates and fish found in Florida lakes and ponds. If circumstances permit, FFS staff can take part in your environmental education and ecology days.

**To schedule a visit** and request participation in any or all of these activities, contact:

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For more information go to our website:

 **hd. #** <https://ffgs.ifas.ufl.edu/sites/ffs/>

