

North Carolina Maritime Museum
in Beaufort

Group Planning Guide

2026



Thank you for considering the North Carolina Maritime Museum in Beaufort for your next group outing. The North Carolina Maritime Museum hosts over 200 groups every year and we look forward to your group's visit.

The mission of the North Carolina Maritime Museum's Education Department is to offer visitors the opportunity to learn about the natural and maritime history of coastal North Carolina through creative, hands-on experiences.

Our FREE programs are offered year-round, with some limited to specific ocean tides or days of the week. **We offer on-site, outreach, field, and off-site programming.**

For more information or to arrange a field trip or outreach, please call 252-504-7741, email anna.kellner@dncr.nc.gov, or complete the inquiry form on our website.

Thank You!



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Scheduling a Group Program/Visit

On-site visits are available and we are happy to come to you or lead a program at an off-site location.

We ask that you make a reservation even if your group is not participating in a museum program to ensure that we do not have multiple groups visiting simultaneously.

To make a group reservation, please contact the Group Program Coordinator at 252-504-7741 or through email at anna.kellner@dncr.nc.gov. Let the coordinator know what date and time you would like to visit and, if applicable, what program you would prefer.

If you are unsure of what program your group wants or if your chosen program is unavailable, the group coordinator will be able to assist you in creating the best plan for your group.

QUESTIONS?

ncmaritimemuseumbeaufort.com

Group Program Coordinator: 252-504-7741

Email: anna.kellner@dncr.nc.gov

Outreach

Can't come to us? We'll come to you!

The museum offers interactive programs featuring artifacts, activities, and experiences that connect participants with North Carolina's culture, history, and environment at your location.

Programs are flexible and can be taught at many locations, including but not limited to schools, camps, libraries, community festivals, and early childhood or senior centers. Presentations can be adapted for all ages and abilities.

Scheduling Information

If you have questions or would like to schedule a program, contact Anna Kellner-McColl at anna.kellner@dnrc.nc.gov. Scheduling requests must be made at least 3 weeks before the program date.

Cancellations: A minimum of two weeks' notice (in writing) is required for a refund.

Cancellations due to weather: If Carteret County Schools are canceled or delayed due to weather, programs will be rescheduled as the museum's calendar permits.

Small Group Programs

We can offer any of our current onsite group programs as an outreach.

Group Size: Minimum of 6; Maximum of 30. For more than 30 participants, you must schedule additional programs.

Note: An adult from your organization must be present during the program

Program Length: 45-60 minutes

Fee: Free

Festival Programs

Museum educators will bring a variety of materials to provide an interactive, educational experience at your event. We offer a variety of themes including marine mammals, beach finds, marine archaeology, and more! Availability will depend on conditions at the time of the event.

Fee: Free

Lectures

Museum staff can come to your facility and offer lectures related to many maritime topics.

These include but are not limited to lighthouses and the US Lifesaving service, boating, shipwrecks, fishing, North Carolina wildlife, and more.

Fee: Free

Infant-Preschool Programs

The infant-preschool age programs are designed to be 30-45 minutes long. Each program includes an age-appropriate craft, interactive items, and a guided song or story time.

Beach Finds

During this program, children will interact with shells, bones, and other items found on the beaches of North Carolina. We will be discussing the different items and how they feel in our hands regarding textures. Depending on the ages of the children we may also discuss patterns.

Boats that Float

Children will set sail to discover if various objects sink or float! Students will be introduced to boats through a story about a toy boat, before making their own toy boats.

Fintastic Fish

What makes a fish a fish? How do they move? What do they eat? What do they feel like? We will answer all these questions and more in this program that has children interacting with fish models and reading a story about our local fish.

A Sailor's Life for Me

During this program children will interact with spyglasses, sailor's hats, and a sailor's chest associated with the Golden Age of Sail. We will be discussing finding hidden items and making our own spyglasses.

Shark Tales

Are sharks scary? Are sharks helpful? Are all sharks big? During this program, we will be diving into to take a closer look at sharks and learn all about their role in their environment. Children will get the chance to touch the jaws of a real shark, learn what sharks feel like, and learn how their senses compare to a sharks'.

Terrific Turtles

Explore the world of sea turtles by interacting with turtle bones. We will discover what they eat, what challenges they face, and how we can help them by reading a short story and playing a game.

Whales, Dolphins, & Porpoise, Oh My

During this program, children will interact with bones from whales and dolphins. We will be discussing how whales and dolphins move, eat, and make noise.



Kindergarten-2nd Grade Programs

K-2nd Grade Programs are designed to be 45-60 minutes long.
There are no fees associated with the programs.

Beach Finds

Maximum Capacity of 30 students

Join us to dig into the beach and ocean habitats through riddles, props, and biofacts. Students will learn all about plants and animals and how they make their living in their habitats.

Boats that Float

Maximum Capacity of 30 students

"Will it float or will it sink?" Students will learn to judge different items (cannonballs, toy boats, spoons, etc.) and decide if they float or sink before testing their 'hypothesis.' Following their experimentation with floating items, the students will be treated to a story about a very special toy boat. After learning about different types of boats students will make their own boats.

Ocean Animals

Maximum Capacity of 50 students

Does a dolphin bark? Can a whale sing? Is a shark a fish? Can sea turtles leave their shells? Students will learn about different marine life, how they make their living, and more. Classes can pick from any of the following animal topics: fish, sea turtles, sharks, or whales and dolphins.

A Pirate's Life for Me

Maximum Capacity of 50 students

Students are invited to the museum to explore the world of pirates! Following a story about being a pirate. Students will explore what it was like to live on a boat, interact with navigation tools, and discover what was in a pirate's chest.

Tidal Flat Beach Exploration

Maximum of 30 students

Time to complete: 60-90 minutes

Investigate a sand flat and adjacent salt marsh to study intertidal organisms and their adaptations, food chains, productivity, and the estuarine nursery area. A seine net is pulled in shallow water to view a sample of marine animals.



***K-2nd grade programs
can be adapted for
3rd-5th grade***

3rd-5th Grade Programs

3rd-5th Grade Programs are designed to be 45-60 minutes long.
There are no fees associated with the programs.

Barrier Island Ecology

Maximum Capacity of 30 students

North Carolina is home to many amazing habitats, but none as interesting and unique as barrier islands. This program will introduce students to the habitats, plants, and animals that can be found on a barrier island. Topics that can be covered include food chains and webs, plant and animal adaptations, and lifecycles.

Boats that Float

Maximum Capacity of 30 students

We take the traditional "Will it Float?" lesson a step further, asking why it floats or sinks. This program includes discussions on different boat designs. Students are challenged to create a boat, out of tin foil and other supplies, that floats and can hold weight.

A Pirate's Life for Me

Maximum Capacity of 100 students

This educator-led program will introduce students to the life of a pirate using replica and prop items similar to those used in the 1700s. This program will discuss navigation, the trials and tribulations of life at sea, and more!

Tidal Flat Beach Exploration

Maximum of 30 students

Time to complete: 60-90 minutes

Investigate a sand flat and adjacent salt marsh to study intertidal organisms and their adaptations, food chains, productivity, and the estuarine nursery area. A seine net is pulled in shallow water to view a sample of marine animals.

**3RD-5TH PROGRAMS
CAN BE ADAPTED FOR
K-2ND GRADE**



6th-8th Grade Programs

6th-8th Grade Programs are designed to be 45-60 minutes long.
There are no fees associated with the programs.

Barrier Island Ecology

Maximum Capacity of 30 students

North Carolina is home to many amazing habitats, but none as interesting and unique as barrier islands. This program will introduce students to the habitats, plants, and animals that can be found on a barrier island. Topics that can be covered include energy flow through the ecosystem, predator-prey relationships, abiotic and biotic factors, and more.

Cookie Archaeology

Maximum Capacity of 30 Students

Following a presentation about shipwrecks and maritime archaeology, students will try their hand at being conservators. Using chocolate chip cookies as fake concretions, the students will be asked to excavate artifacts (chocolate chips) with a follow-up discussion connecting this exercise to the work being done by maritime archaeologists.

Mystery Marine Mammal

Maximum Capacity of 30 Students

Students will rotate between different stations containing information about a specific whale stranding. The students will be expected to use the information at each station to ultimately determine what species of whale beached itself, possibly why, and come up with solutions.

Oceanography

Maximum Capacity of 30 Students

In this interactive lesson, students will discover the four branches of oceanography through hands-on experiments and activities. This lesson ends with a tie into plankton, whales, and the movement of nutrients through our oceans.

Navigation

Maximum Capacity of 30 Students

How did ancient mariners know their speed? How did they keep track of their location? Students will answer these questions and more while learning about navigation during the "Age of Discovery". Students will get to practice their hand at navigating while using compasses, backstaffs, astrolabes, and more.

Underwater Discovery

Maximum Capacity of 30 students

In this hands-on lesson, learn how scientists study North Carolina shipwrecks and the technology used to remove artifacts. Students will "dive in" and create a scale model of a wreck site and hypothesize how various parts of the ship were used.

Programs can be adapted for high school

9th-12th Grade Programs

9th-12th Grade Programs are designed to be 45-60 minutes long.
There are no fees associated with the programs.

Barrier Island Ecology

Maximum Capacity of 30 students

North Carolina is home to many amazing habitats, but none as interesting and unique as barrier islands. This program will introduce students to the habitats, plants, and animals that can be found on a barrier island. Topics that can be covered include energy flow through the ecosystem, predator-prey relationships, abiotic and biotic factors, and more.

Cookie Archaeology

Maximum Capacity of 30 Students

Following a presentation about shipwrecks and maritime archaeology, students will try their hands at being conservators. Using chocolate chip cookies as fake concretions, the students will be asked to excavate artifacts (chocolate chips) with a follow up discussion connecting this exercise to the work being done by maritime archaeologists.

Museum Careers

Maximum Capacity of 50 Students

What does a museum curator do? How about a conservator? How do you get a job in a museum? Learn about the varied careers available in the museum field and what skills and interests are needed for different positions.

Mystery Marine Mammal

Maximum Capacity of 30 Students

Students will rotate between different stations containing information about a specific whale stranding. The students will be expected to use the information at each station to ultimately determine what species of whale beached itself, possibly why, and come up with solutions.

Sustainable Fisheries

Maximum Capacity of 30 students

What does it mean to fish sustainably? How do scientists determine fishery limits? How can you be a responsible fisher? Students will learn all of this information and more during this interactive fisheries-based lesson.

Underwater Discovery

Maximum Capacity of 30 students

In this hands-on lesson, learn how scientists study North Carolina shipwrecks and the technology used to remove artifacts. Students will "dive in" and create models of how side-scanning sonar and remotely operated vehicles work.

***Programs can be adapted
for middle school***

Scavenger Hunts

*The North Carolina Maritime Museum offers two levels of scavenger hunts: one for grades K-4th and two for grades 5th-12th that can be **added to any visit at no cost**. These are designed to guide the students through the museum exhibits. Additionally, we have specialty scavenger hunts available on various maritime topics. The specialty scavenger hunts can be added to any visit with at least 2 weeks' notice.*

*Each student is supplied with a clipboard, pencil, and paper scavenger hunt.
Maximum Capacity of 50 students at one time*

Sea Hunt

Grade Level: K-4th

Time to Complete: 20-30 minutes

This is a seek-and-find scavenger hunt consisting of roughly 24 items hidden in the museum for the students to locate. Items range from large to small and are located at many different heights. Once completed each child will be rewarded with a sticker and may choose to take the scavenger hunt home with them.

Mariner's Map (Short Form)

Grade Level: 5th-8th

Time to Complete: 30-45 minutes

This scavenger hunt consists of items they must find in an exhibit area and then a question they must answer by reading the signage. The short-form hunt consists of 15 questions. Once completed each child will be rewarded with a sticker and may choose to take the scavenger hunt home with them.

Mariner's Map (Long Form)

Grade Level: 5th - 12th

Time to Complete: 30-45 minutes

This scavenger hunt consists of items they must find in an exhibit area and then a question they must answer by reading the signage. The long-form hunt consists of roughly 30 questions. Once completed each child will be rewarded with a sticker and may choose to take the scavenger hunt home with them.

Specialty Scavenger Hunts

Grade Level: Variable

Time to Complete: 30-45 minutes

Fishing: This scavenger hunt focuses on the commercial and recreational fisheries of North Carolina. It can be either a seek-and-find or a clue-based hunt.

Boating: This hunt focuses on the various boats that can be found throughout our exhibits. It comes in two forms either a seek-and-find or a clue-based hunt.

Additional Options: Navigation, Marine Life, Crossword

Museum Exploration

These facilitated experiences are offered to all age groups, but are specifically designed for groups of interested adults.

There are no fees associated with the programs.

Museum Introduction

Maximum Capacity of 100 Participants

Time to Complete: 5-10 minutes

Brief introduction and overview of the museum supplied by a museum staff member either in the museum's auditorium or lobby.

Curator's Highlights

Maximum Capacity of 15 Participants

Time to Complete: 45-60 minutes

Museum staff member highlights their top ten favorite artifacts and/or exhibits in the museum. This experience can be adapted to focus on a theme the group may be interested in.

Exhibit Exploration

Maximum Capacity of 15 Participants

Time to Complete: 45-60 minutes

This experience will focus on one specific exhibit of the museum such as the Whales and Whaling exhibit featuring the preserved heart of a sperm whale or our boat building exhibit.



NC Standards Alignment

K-5

Barrier Island Ecology

- NC Science Kindergarten: LS.K.1.2, ESS.K.1.1
- NC Science 1st: LS.1.1.1, LS.1.1.2, ESS.1.3.2
- NC Science 2nd: LS.2.1.1, LS.2.1.2
- NC Science 3rd: LS.3.2.1, LS.3.2.2, LS.3.3.1
- NC Science 4th: LS.4.1.1, LS.4.1.2, ESS.4.3.1, ESS.4.3.3
- NC Science 5th: LS.5.2.3, LS.5.2.2, LS.5.2.3

Beach Finds

- NC Science Kindergarten: LS.K.1.2
- NC Science 1st: LS.1.1.1, ESS.1.3.2
- NC Science 2nd: LS.2.1.1

Boats that Float

- NC Science Kindergarten: PS.K.1.1, PS.K.1.2, PS.K.2.1, PS.K.2.2
- NC Science 1st: PS.1.1.2, ESS.1.3.1
- NC Science 3rd: PS.3.2.1, PS.3.3.2
- NC Science 4th:
- NC Science 5th: PS.5.1.1, PS.5.2.1

Ocean Animals

- NC Science Kindergarten: LS.K.1.2
- NC Science 1st: LS.1.1.1, LS.1.1.2, ESS.1.3.2
- NC Science 2nd: LS.2.1.1, LS.2.1.2

A Pirate's Life for Me

- NC Social Studies Kindergarten: K.B.1.1, K.C&G.1.1, K.C&G.1.3, K.E.1.1, K.H.1.3
- NC Social Studies 1st: 1.C&G.1.1, 1.C&G.1.2, 1.E.1.2,
- NC Social Studies 2nd: 2.E.1.1
- NC Social Studies 3rd: 3.E.1.2, 3.H.1.2
- NC Social Studies 4th: 4.H.1.3
- NC Social Studies 5th: 5.G.1.1, 5.H.1.3

Tidal Flat Beach Exploration

- NC Science Kindergarten: LS.K.1.1, LS.K.1.2, LS.K.2.1
- NC Science 1st: LS.1.1.1, ESS.1.3.1
- NC Science 2nd: LS.2.1.1, LS.2.1.2
- NC Science 3rd: LS.3.2.1, LS.3.2.2, LS.3.3.1
- NC Science 4th: LS.4.1.1, LS.4.1.2, ESS.4.3.1, ESS.4.3.3
- NC Science 5th: LS.5.2.3, LS.5.2.2, LS.5.2.3

NC Standards Alignment

6-12

Barrier Island Ecology

- NC Science 6th: LS.6.1.1, LS.6.1.3, LS.6.2.1, LS.6.2.2, ESS.6.3.1, ESS.6.3.2
- NC Science 7th: ESS.7.2.1, ESS.7.2.3
- NC Science 8th: LS.8.2.1, LS.8.2.2, LS.8.2.3, ESS.8.3.2
- NC Biology: LS.Bio.5.1, LS.Bio.5.2, LS.Bio.10.1, LS.Bio.10.2
- NC Environmental Studies: ESS.ESS.4.1, ESS.ESS.4.4, ESS.ESS.4.5, ESS.ESS.5.6

Cookie Archaeology

- NC Math 6th: NC.6.RP.4, NC.6.NS.6
- NC Math 7th: NC.7.RP.2

Mystery Marine Mammal

- NC Science 6th: LS.6.2.1, ESS.6.3.2
- NC Science 7th: LS.7.1.4
- NC Science 8th: LS.8.2.1, LS.8.2.2, LS.8.2.3, ESS.8.3.2
- NC Biology: LS.Bio.5.1, LS.Bio.5.2, LS.Bio.10.1, LS.Bio.10.2
- NC Earth and Environmental Studies: ESS.EES.4.1, ESS.EES.4.4, ESS.EES.4.5, ESS.EES.5.6

Navigation

- NC Social Studies 6th: 6.G.1.3
- NC Social Studies 8th: 8.G.1.3

Oceanography

- NC Science 6th: LS.6.2.1, ESS.6.1.1
- NC Science 8th: LS.8.2.1, ESS.8.2.1, ESS.8.2.2
- NC Earth and Environmental Studies: ESS.EES.3, ESS.EES.4.4

A Pirate's Life for Me

- NC Social Studies 6th: 6.H.1.1
- NC Social Studies 7th: 7.B.1.2, 7.E.1.4,
- NC Social Studies 8th: 8.G.1.5, 8.E.1.2, 8.H.1.1

Sustainable Fisheries

- NC Science 8th: LS.8.2.1, ESS.8.3.2
- NC Biology: LS.Bio.5.1, LS.Bio.5.2
- NC Earth and Environmental Studies: ESS.EES.5.5

Underwater Discovery

- NC Science 6th: PS.6.3.4, ESS.6.2.2
- NC Science 7th: PS.7.2.3, PS.7.2.4,
- NC Science 8th: ESS.8.2.2, ESS.8.4.2
- NC Environmental Studies: ESS.ESS.2.2, ESS.ESS.3.1,
- NC Physical Science : PS.PSC.8.4

FAQ

Is there anywhere to store my belongings at the museum?

We do not have a secure area to store your belongings while visiting the Museum.

Can my group eat lunch in the museum?

Food and drinks are not allowed in the Museum. Groups are invited to eat lunch on either the Museum's front porch or the Harborside Park waterfront deck across the street. Please note seating is limited.

Do you have bathrooms?

In addition to the general Men's and Women's four stall restrooms, the Museum offers a family style and handicap accessible restroom.

The Museum's Harborside Park waterfront desk also includes bathroom accommodations.

How long does it take to explore the NC Maritime Museum in Beaufort?

Without participating in any programs, the average visitor will spend 30-45 minutes exploring the Museum.

Is there a museum store?

The Museum store, "Port of Call," is located in the Museum's lobby and features a variety of merchandise, including items specifically chosen for school age children. All students must be accompanied by a chaperone, and we have a limit of ten students in the store at a time.

Do you have parking?

Street parking is available. Please note that from May 1 - October 1, 2026, street parking is subject to metered fees. More information and maps can be found at: <https://www.beaufortnc.org/parking>

Buses may ONLY load/unload students in front of the museum. NO PARKING ALLOWED for school, charter, or activity buses.

Public parking for buses and all oversized vehicles is available at one of the shopping centers in Beaufort between the 1500 & 1700 blocks of Live Oak Street (Hwy 70). If this doesn't work with your situation, please call the Group Programs Coordinator at 252-504-7741.

