



Ocean Explorers Virtual Field Trips Implementation Guide & FAQ

What is the Virtual Field Trip Program?

REEF's Ocean Explorers Field Trips include interactive and engaging lesson plans and activities in three themes—Citizen Science, Invasive Species, and Endangered Species. The program employs an interdisciplinary and an applied approach to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) curricula. It includes classroom lessons and an in-school "research field trips" to perform and create research trials and complete field journals as citizen scientists.

Sessions are adaptable and can be accommodated to be taught in-person at school, off-site in the field, or entirely online in a virtual format. The program curriculum follows the 5E lesson structure: Engagement, Exploration, Explanation, Elaboration, Evaluation. The programs are designed to easily supplement a teacher's classroom curriculum by following this structure.

What is included in the Virtual Field Trip Program?

Each Virtual Field Trip Program will include the following:

- Printable Research Field Journals for students to document their exploration activities
Educator's guide for teachers and instructors to easily explain and demonstrate each program
- Pre-recorded footage and lesson slides to present the field trip.
- Live session with a REEF Scientist at the conclusion of each field trip

Once you have signed up for a Virtual Field Trip, a REEF team member will contact you to ensure you have received all of your materials and the resources are clear and comprehensive. If needed, a meeting can be scheduled to discuss questions, concerns, clarifications, or any general inquiries regarding the facilitation of a Virtual Field Trip.

How do Virtual Field Trips work?

After signing up for a Virtual Field Trip, educators will be sent an electronic packet containing the educator's guide to leading the trip, the student's research field journals and will be given access to the pre-recorded videos and slides. While signing up for a Virtual Field Trip, the contact person will be directed to schedule a live Zoom session with a REEF Scientist to speak with their class.

The Virtual Field Trip time and date may be selected by the educator, keeping in mind that the class will generally need *insert amount of time* to complete the field trip before speaking with the REEF Scientist. The live session must be scheduled ahead of time and confirmed one week before the event.

Educators can use the pre-recorded videos and lesson slides throughout the entire field trip. Each session will begin with an introduction to REEF and the Virtual Field Trips Program, followed by the student's main activities as citizen scientists. Each program has been made with stopping students' points to think critically about what they are discovering, using their field journals to guide them along. Students will talk with a REEF Scientist about their research trip at the end of their program, what they have discovered, and ask any remaining questions they may have.

What is required of the classroom teacher to lead the program?

Each Virtual Field Trip is standards-based, allowing for easy participation on the teacher's end. REEF Scientists will guide your students through the field trip with pre-recorded videos and presentation slides with the student's field journal tasks.

For the Virtual Field Trip lessons, there will be minimal to no preparation for the teacher to facilitate the engaging activities.

Is there a fee to participate in the Virtual Field Trips Program?

Thanks to the generosity of REEF members and donors, at this time, groups can participate in the program at no cost. Expenses associated with the program are supported through REEF's Oceans for All Fund. The Ocean for All Fund is a pooled scholarship fund supported by businesses, foundations, and individuals committed to investing in a more equitable future for marine conservation. This fund promotes inclusive opportunities for people to connect with, enjoy, and learn about the underwater world. REEF uses the fund in partnership with established organizations. It directly provides both in-person and online programs, ensuring that cultivating connections with the ocean is not limited by zip code. The Oceans for All Fund reduces barriers that limit participation in REEF's programs.

Can any group participate or only school classroom groups?

Though the Virtual Field Trips program is designed to fit into school classrooms, groups of any kind may participate. We recommend groups are comprised of participants of similar ages.

Is there a minimum number of participants required in a group?

Nope! Each activity within the Virtual Field Trips can be completed individually within the group, in pairs or small groups, or as an entire group.

Can individuals participate?

REEF occasionally hosts webinar open house sessions of the Virtual Field Trips Program. These sessions are an excellent way for teachers to get more familiar with the program and serve as a first-hand sample of the full Virtual Field Trips Program experience. These open house webinars are available to everyone, including individuals and families.

Participating in the Virtual Field Trips Program

Before signing up for a Virtual Field Trip:

- Plan to schedule your program at least two weeks in advance
- Confirm permission for the program with your school administration
- Determine three potential dates for your program and which Field Trip you would like to participate in

To sign up for a Virtual Field Trip:

- Visit our Registration Page to begin filling out your request to participate in a Virtual Field Trip.
- After you have submitted a request, a REEF team member will follow up to confirm a date and time for your live session and send the contact person listed the included materials for your program.
- If you would like to sign up for multiple Virtual Field Trips, a REEF team member will discuss participation in back-to-back programs to allow for smooth facilitation.

Additional Information

If you would like additional information or have questions regarding the Virtual Field Trips Programs, the Ocean Explorers Education Programs, or REEF please email explorers@REEF.org or call our office at 305-852-0030.