

EDUCATOR NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the back-to-school edition of the **REEF Ocean Explorers Educator Newsletter!** We're excited to share ocean education resources, professional development opportunities, upcoming events, and more.

REEF Ocean Explorers Education Programs include immersive, hands-on learning and exploration for groups and individuals of all ages. We offer in-person and online programs that center on marine ecosystems, with focuses in biology, ecology, citizen science, invasive species, and service learning. We look forward to partnering with you to make learning an adventure!

FREE WEBINAR: EDUCATOR WORKSHOP FOR REEF PROGRAMS

Thanks to the Coastal Partnership Initiative (CPI) grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, REEF is offering a variety of free educational resources to classroom teachers for the 2023-2024 school year, including Virtual Field Trips, Colorful Fish ID photo cards, and a marine life curriculum! All educators are invited to join us for a webinar on **Thursday, August 17 at 7pm EDT** to learn more about these resources and how to incorporate them into your classroom. [Click here to register.](#)



REEF OCEAN EXPLORERS EXPEDITIONS: CUSTOM, EDUCATIONAL GROUP TRIPS

REEF Ocean Explorers Expeditions are customized group travel programs that build meaningful connections through real-world learning. Program length and content are designed to fit each group's interests, so every experience is unique and personalized. Destinations include the Florida Keys, Bonaire, Cozumel, Hawaii, and more. Schools, colleges, and universities incorporate REEF Expeditions into their learning experiences, and you can plan your Expedition today! Visit www.REEF.org/explorers/expeditions to learn more and see sample itineraries.



VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS

Designed for 3rd-8th grade, REEF Virtual Field Trips are interactive field trip simulations that include lesson plans and engaging activities to help students build connections to the ocean without leaving the classroom. Each session is adaptable and can be modified to be taught in person, offsite in the field, or entirely online. Plus, your students get a live session to meet with an ocean scientist and ask questions!



FEATURED LESSON: INVASIVE SPECIES, GRADES 6-8

This Virtual Field Trip session includes hands-on activities like CFI - Crime Fish Investigation, in which students analyze anatomy, adaptations, and lionfish feeding methods to identify their prey species. This lesson is the perfect addition to ecology and natural selection units. Students will:

- Understand and explain why lionfish have become an invasive species and the problems they are causing to their non-native environments
- Observe and compare similarities and differences among various lionfish prey species
- Evaluate possible impacts of invasive species on ecosystems

NGSS aligned, Cross Cutting Concepts include: Patterns, Structure and Function, Cause and Effect, Stability and Change.

Virtual Field Trips are aligned with educational standards and are easily incorporated into existing curriculum. Thanks to the generosity of REEF supporters, Virtual Field Trips are available online at no cost. Visit www.REEF.org/virtualfieldtrips for more information. Looking for resources for

grades 9-12? Check out our [Ocean Explorers Virtual Case Studies!](#)

MEET MAKI AND JEN, 2023 REEF EDUCATOR IN THE FIELD FELLOWS

We're excited to introduce Maki Kasai and Jennifer Donahue, 2023 REEF Educator in the Field Fellowship recipients! As partial scholarship recipients, last month Maki and Jen joined the REEF Field Survey Trip to the Red Sea. During the trip, they participated in ocean citizen science and



data collection, and are now exploring how to incorporate REEF programs into her classroom. They are also part of REEF's newly-formed Education Advisory Panel.

Maki Kasai is a high school teacher in Oakland, CA. She has always been drawn to the underwater world and its unique biodiversity. After graduating from UCSB with a B.S. in Aquatic Biology, she took to the skies as a flight attendant and traveled the world, and has now been a high school science teacher for the past 19 years. She loves adventuring to warm water destinations with her husband and three children, and has most enjoyed diving Providencia in the Caribbean and Cabo Pulmo in the Sea of Cortez.

Jennifer Donahue has worked in libraries since 1998 - as a public librarian, and for the past 17 years as a librarian at St. Xavier High School in Cincinnati, Ohio. She is co-founder and co-moderator of St. Xavier's first Marine Biology Club. Jennifer has been a member of Newport Aquarium's Dive Team since 2004, and a volunteer diver for the Cincinnati Zoo since 2015. She has logged over 1,000 hours as a volunteer, cleaning and maintaining habitats for sharks, hippos, manatees and penguins.

Stay tuned to hear more from our Educators in the Field, and visit <https://www.REEF.org/educatorinfield> for more information about the REEF Educator in the Field Fellowship. **Be sure to save the date - 2024 REEF Educator in the Field Fellowship applications will open in October!**

For more information about REEF Ocean Explorers Education Programs, visit www.REEF.org/explorers.

Know a fellow educator who is interested in ocean education? Please feel free to forward this message to them, and email us at explorers@REEF.org if you know any educators who should be added to our REEF Ocean Explorers email list.

