

## Protecting the Wetlands—A Matter of Survival

We anticipate the trip to run between 30 to 40 minutes. The trip will include approximately 17 minutes of video. The remainder of time will be for students to pose questions for the three experts to answer. Photos, models and live plants are on hand to demonstrate as needed.

Students will be able to:

- See the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary/ Louisiana wetlands and hear about the value of resources from the wetlands i.e. seafood, oil/gas, shipping, hunting/fishing, recreation, habitats, the culture and people who live in the area.
- Hear how our use of the wetlands can damage the wetlands, so the challenge is to balance benefits and risks and preserve the wetlands for future generations, too.
- See an animation that shows the wetland loss over time and how far north the coastline of Louisiana may move if it is not protected
- Some of the impact from the loss of the wetlands
- Damage to South Louisiana from Katrina that is attributable to the loss of the wetlands
- Walk the boardwalk at the Jean Lafitte Marrero Preserve and see some wildlife e.g. alligators, banana spider and see about activities that students can do at the Preserve.
- See invasive plants i.e. small and giant salvinia and water hyacinths from the wetlands and weevils use to fight the salvinia.
- See the invasive animals that are doing more damage than humans. The most damage is done by nutria. Zebra mussels are clogging waterways.
- Walk inside the Acadian Wetlands Cultural Center and learn about the lifestyle, language, homes etc. of the people who live in the Wetlands.
- Hear a Cajun man talk about how he was punished for speaking French at school. This was before the advent of immersion schools and encouraging students to learn French.
- See two types of boat models: pirogue and oyster lugger, some old cooking utensils and perhaps some other implements used by previous generations in the wetlands.
- See and hear about some types of houses found in the wetland area. Dr. Jay Edwards of the Kniffen Cultural Resource Laboratory has provided photos of houses for the field trip. Additional house pictures and resources can be found at <http://www.laheritage.org/TheAcadians/Color.html> courtesy of the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation.
- See an Acadian house made with bousillage (a mixture of Spanish moss and mud) and close-ups of the bousillage (Pronounced in Louisiana as boo' sill aje. In France it would be pronounced as boo zee' aje). Note the steps up to the second floor of the house. The second floor was where the boys slept and is called a garconniere (pronounced: gar-son-yeah) from the French word for boy.
- Listen to the Cajun music that opens and closes the trip because it is played by the famous Cajun musician, Michael Doucet. He says he learned these songs listening to other musicians play when he was a boy.