

WELCOME TO THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM AND GARDENS!

The Hermitage Museum & Gardens, formerly home to the Sloane family, is an early 20th century Arts-and-Crafts estate located on the shore of the Lafayette River in Norfolk, Virginia. Featuring a nationally recognized art collection spanning 5,000 years, the Hermitage is home to the arts. In 1908, when the Sloane family began construction on the home, Florence Sloane began to beautify the grounds, determined to incorporate the design of the house into her gardens. For the next thirty years, she created a picturesque landscape, extending her artistic vision into the design of the gardens.

Today the Hermitage is known for its twelve acres of semi-formal gardens, natural woodlands, and educational wetlands. The Lafayette River, a tributary of the tidal estuary that threads throughout Hampton Roads, wraps around the property on three sides, providing a natural habitat for hundreds of plants and animals, including a variety of waterfowl and migrating birds.

Mission:

The Hermitage Museum and Gardens preserves the distinct beauty of its natural environment; conserves and shares its multi-cultural collection; promotes and educates to inspire an appreciation for art and nature; and cultivates a spirit of stewardship while paying tribute to its rich legacy.

Teachers Guide:

The Wetlands Enrichment Tour, or WET, is a hands-on outdoor education program aimed at bringing the Hermitage's living shoreline restoration to life for students. The activity based program teaches the importance of wetlands as a Virginia natural resource, the structure, reproduction, and adaptation of plants, plant and animal interaction in natural habitats, and key vocabulary associated with the following 4th grade SOLs:

Science 4.1-investigation; 4.4-plants structure; 4.5-habitats; 4.8-Virginia natural resources.

Visual Arts 4.1-thumbnailed sketching; 4.5-craftsmanship; 4.5-color, texture, pattern; 4.9-observational drawing.

An overview of the Hermitage's Wetlands Enrichment Tour:

In 2006, a large-scale wetlands restoration began. Over 5,000 native marsh grasses were planted to create a living shoreline through the joint effort of the Hermitage, NOAA Restoration Center, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Elizabeth River Project, the City of Norfolk, and scores of community volunteers. Since then, a significant wetlands reclamation effort has reclaimed much of the shoreline.

Students will be immersed in the surroundings of living shorelines, gardens providing safe habitats for native plants and animals, and a 180-foot boardwalk that allows closer observation of the river with its plants and creatures. They will learn about wetlands in very exciting ways—by creating, by experimenting, by playing games, and, most importantly, by being outside to learn about nature first hand!

Students will create their own Field Guide as they use scientific investigation throughout the three components of the tour:

1. *Lively Living Shoreline* has students creating a rainstorm on two shoreline models, predicting the outcomes, and drawing conclusions about why wetlands are important to the environment.
2. *Art and Science in the Buffer Garden* invites students to use their powers of observation as they examine, sketch, and make rubbings of native plants while learning about the parts and reproduction of plants.
3. *Winning Wetlands and Land, Water, or Both?* divides students into two activities where they observe the wetlands and its living creatures up close from the boardwalk and play a game where they team up to predict the natural habitats of Virginia living creatures.

PLANNING A TRIP TO THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM AND GARDENS

Registration and Information

When you're ready to schedule a field trip please provide us with the following:

Name of school and contact, school address, phone number, email address, number of students, grade level, and arrival date/time.

To reserve your trip contact Lil Acosta at lacosta@thehermitagemuseum.org or at 757-423-2052 x211

Cost of field trip is \$4 per student.

This program is approximately 90 minutes. All groups are welcome to enjoy a picnic lunch in the gardens following the tour.