



PREP GUIDE FOR SEABIRD ECOLOGY AND CONSERVATION PARTICIPANTS attending the Shoals Marine Laboratory on Appledore Island, Maine.

Life on Appledore Island, home of the Shoals Marine Laboratory

HOUSING: Participants will be housed in either 2-person or 4-person dormitory rooms. Simple but comfortable, each two-person room has two twin beds, desks and closets. Each 4-person room has two bunk beds, and desks/bureaus. Shared bathrooms (flush toilets, hot/cold water) are located in the dormitory; showers (hot) are located in Kiggins Commons. Due to water limitations on the island, everyone is asked to limit their showers to 2-3 per week. Participants need to bring their own linens and towels (sleeping bags are recommended for the time during *Seabird Ecology and Conservation*); blankets and pillows are provided. Electricity is available in all buildings. Laundry facilities are not available.

INTERNET: Wireless “hotspots” are located in various common areas of the Appledore Island campus. Personal laptops should have a wireless card installed prior to coming to the Appledore. A small computer library is located in Lighton House. While the island’s Internet service is stable most of the time, regular interruptions can occur due to storms, power outages, etc.

DINING: All meals are served cafeteria-style in the main dining hall in Kiggins Commons. Participants with special dietary needs are encouraged to provide detailed information to SML in advance (part of the registration form). Further details can be given directly to the kitchen staff when on the island— instructions will be given upon arrival during welcome and orientation. Monday – Saturday, meals are: Breakfast at 7:30am, Lunch at 12:30pm and Dinner at 6:00pm. Sunday meals are Brunch at 10:00am and Dinner at 5:00pm.

General Conditions at the Isles of Shoals

Appledore Island is 0.6 mi (1 km) in length and composed of granitic rock. The shoreline, which we will traverse frequently, is composed of rock ledges, steep cliffs and boulders, and partially covered with lush algal growth. The highest point of the island is 76 ft (25 m) above sea level; thus, most roads and trails involve only slight changes in elevation. However, several trails descend steeply and include flights of stairs. All roads and trails are gravel or rock. Poison ivy has been removed from roads and trails but is abundant elsewhere on the islands.

Typical conditions at the Isles of Shoals in June:

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|-----|-------------|
| Humidity | 50% | to | 75% |
| Temperature Range: | 48°F/8.9°C | to | 74°F/23.3°C |
| Altitude | Sea level | | |
| Rainfall | 3.0 in/7.6 cm | per | month |

Physical Demands

Participants will walk 1-3 mi/1.6-4.8 km per day carrying 5-15 lbs/2.3-6.8 kg of field equipment plus water and personal gear. Reaching field sites will require some off-trail boulder scrambling and crossing slippery algal-covered rocks in the intertidal. Therefore, participants should have, at minimum, a moderate level of agility, balance, and physical fitness.

We will be entering and exiting small boats in order to land on several islands. Persons with very weak knees will likely have trouble with this activity.

Participants helping to census water birds will need to walk long distances, and may be need to walk for several hours each day.

Essential Items

CLOTHING AND FOOT GEAR: The weather on Appledore Island can go from one extreme to another very quickly; therefore it is *critical* that all participants bring multiple layers of clothing and rain gear. Participants should also bring well worn in and comfortable close-toed walking shoes or hiking boots for walking around the islands. Participants must bring old athletic shoes with good tread or waterproof boots (rubber “Wellies” or waterproof hiking boots) for wet boat landings. Wearing a hat, sunscreen, and protective clothing is important.

SUPPLIES: Participants bring their own sleeping bags and linens. SML provides pillows and blankets. We strongly recommend that all participants bring a water bottle. A backpack or rucksack is also very useful. Small waterproof bags are handy, although not mandatory for taking personal gear (e.g. cameras) onto boats. Flashlights or headlamps are recommended for walking between buildings after dark because of the uneven terrain. Cameras are important for capturing the famous Appledore sunsets! Finally, a personal first aid kit is highly recommended (anti-diarrhea pills, antibiotics, antiseptic, itch-relief, pain reliever, bandages, moleskin, anti-histamines, etc.).

Clothing/Footwear for Fieldwork

- Lightweight, quick drying, long-sleeved shirts and pants/trousers
- Light weight, quick drying, short-sleeved shirts and shorts
- Well worn in and comfortable close-toed walking shoes or hiking boots
- Old athletic shoes or waterproof boots for wet landings
- Waterproof parka
- Fleece jacket, vest, and/or sweatshirt
- Hat or visor (for sun protection)

- A jacket or shirt that can get pooped on (by gulls) and is easily washed.

Clothing/Footwear for Leisure

- One set of clothing to keep clean for end of expedition; clean set of clothes for evening data entry and bedtime (especially in case of exposure to poison ivy)
- Comfortable sweats

Field Supplies

- Small daypack/rucksack
- Dry bag or plastic sealable bags (good for protecting equipment such as camera from dust, humidity, and water)
- Insect repellent spray
- Water bottles (minimum 2, 1-liter bottles)
- Binoculars
- Spotting scope (if you own one)
- Hat or visor

Bedding and Bathing

- Linens and/or sleeping bag
- Towels
- Warm sleepwear (including socks)
- The project will provide a blanket and a pillow.

Personal Supplies

- Personal toiletries (we recommend bringing biodegradable soaps and shampoos)
- Roll of toilet paper
- Antibacterial wipes or lotion (good for “washing” hands while in the field)
- Personal first-aid kit (e.g. anti-diarrhea pills, antibiotics, antiseptic, itch-relief, pain reliever, bandages, blister covers, etc.) and personal medications
- Sunscreen lotion with SPF 30 or higher
- Watch and/or small travel clock

Miscellaneous

- Spending money. Field guides, local history books, T-shirts, fleece jackets, hats, mugs, postcards, stationary, and stamps are available in the SML gift shop.
- Camera, extra camera battery and charger
- Flashlight/torch or headlamp with extra batteries and extra bulb.
- Earplugs (for blocking out noisy gulls)
- Laptop computer with wireless card
- Radio/CD (or cassette) players with headphones – for news and music (not to be used in the field)
- Field guides (birds, plants, butterflies, marine organisms) – some guides are available for sale at SML
- Pleasure reading
- Cards and small games for rainy days
- Sewing (knitting, cross-stitch, etc.)

Potential Hazards and Medical Issues

Those with severe allergies to poison ivy or birds should not participate in this project. Individual reactions range from mild to severe. **All participants regardless of the level of allergic reaction need to carefully follow instructions given during island welcome and orientation, AND those given by your core faculty member.**

Individuals with suppressed immune systems or chronic health problems should seek medical advice prior to participation in this project. Individuals with joint instability or pain, brittle bones, uncorrected visual, or hearing impairment, or night blindness would find participation in this program difficult.

Potential hazards that may be encountered during this program:

- (1) Strikes (usually on the top of the head) by the feet or beaks of gulls defending their young.
- (2) Exposure to gull (and other bird) fecal material or regurgitated stomach contents carries a small risk of infection with salmonella.
- (3) Biting insects.

Taking proper precautions such as washing hands regularly, wearing long-sleeved shirts, and long pants will help minimize the potential risks associated with this fieldwork. With common sense and guidance from SML staff, we are sure that participants will have a rewarding experience!

