

# Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia, Inc.

## Coastal Georgia

### Try-It, Badge, IPP Program

**Brownies:** Complete 4 activities including the starred “Discover” activity and 1 “Take Action” activity.

**Juniors:** Complete 6 activities including the starred “Discover” activity and 1 “Take Action” activity.

**Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors:** Complete 8 activities including the starred “Discover” activity and 2 “Take Action” activities.

#### Discover:

1)\* Discover the wonderful wetlands along our coast; where Georgia meets the Atlantic. Visit or arrange to take a tour along one of Georgia’s beaches or through a salt marsh to learn about these fascinating and important environments. *(Make sure that you follow all posted rules for the area and, for your own safety and the safety of these protected areas, listen closely to the instructions of your Leader(s) and Guides(s)!!)*

2) Discover the meanings of the following words & how they relate to the Georgia coast. What purpose(s) do they serve & why are they necessary:

Salt Marsh

Tidal Pool

Brackish Water

Barrier Island

Wildlife Refuge

Beach

Sand Dune

marine Animal

Low Country

Tidal Chart

Hammock (not the porch kind)

Sea Oats

Estuary

Rookery

Maritime Forrest

3) A chain of sixteen barrier islands form a necklace along the gently arc of the Georgia coastline. List these islands and tell which contain Coastal Refuges. Tell why these islands are important to Georgia and how they protect the coastline.

4) Discover the names and identifying characteristics of (at least) five fish-eating birds that feed along the coast. What is the difference between a heron and an egret? Name five shore birds that migrate through this island area. Compare their beaks and see how the birds are suited for seaside foraging.

5) Explore the web sites for the five National Wildlife Refuges in Coastal Georgia; Savannah, Wassaw, Harris Neck, Blackbeard Island, and Wolf Island to learn why these are special places for wildlife and habitat.

[www.fws.gov/savannah](http://www.fws.gov/savannah)  
[www.fws.gov/blackbeardisland](http://www.fws.gov/blackbeardisland)

[www.fws.gov/wassaw](http://www.fws.gov/wassaw)

[www.fws.gov/harrisneck](http://www.fws.gov/harrisneck)  
[www.fws.gov/wolfisland](http://www.fws.gov/wolfisland)

6) Research tides and moon phases. How do the tides and the phases of the moon interact? Study which of the endangered turtles uses the Georgia shore to lay its eggs. When do they lay their eggs and how many do they lay? How long does it take for the eggs to hatch? How is this event tied to the full moon and high tide? Why are landowners on the shore asked to turn the lights out at night while the turtle eggs are hatching?

7) Periwinkles, crabs, marsh wrens, clapper rails, great blue herons, osprey, raccoons, deer, and marsh rats all find food in the marsh. Choose one of these animals and tell what it eats, how it gets its food, and where near the marsh it lives. Find a periwinkle on the stalk of one of the grasses. Observe the fiddler crabs (with their unique claws) scurrying on the muddy marsh.

## Connect:

- 1) Make a list of delicious foods we eat that are found along the Georgia Coast. Think of a favorite recipe or dish that is popular in the Low Country. Find a recipe for a Low Country Boil, Oyster Stew, or Brunswick Stew and tell why these dishes are popular in the Low Country. Make one of these recipes for your troop, group, or family.
- 2) Name three barrier islands that are developed into residential area. What challenges and dangers do the residents of these islands face? Visit one if possible or talk to a resident of one of these islands and ask them about some of the more interesting things they've noticed while living there. Name three barrier islands that are designated as Coastal Refuges. Name three that can be visited only by boat. What plants and trees grow in barrier islands?
- 3) Make a list of the animals and plants that you see as you walk along the beach or marsh. How did you observe it interacting with the ecology or food chain of the area?
- 4) Find two of the following plants on a marsh walk; for what can they be used?

Yucca	Glasswort	Sandwort
Smooth Cordgrass	Sea Oxeye	Needlerush
- 5) Collect some EMPTY shells. Look up the shells in a shell field guide and try to identify the animal that grew that shell as a home. How did the creature in the shell feed and what did it eat? How did the animal in the shell protect itself? (If there are animals living in the shell, it is important to put them back into the sea. The State of Georgia has laws to protect all living sea animals. DO NOT PICK UP JELLY FISH OR ANY CREATURE YOUR LEADERS FINDS TO BE QUESTIONABLE.)

## Take Action:

- 1) Participate in an activity sponsored by an organization dedicated to preserving Georgia's marshes and beaches and write a brief description of your experience.
- 2) Clean Coast is a non-profit organization of concerned individuals who come together to combat Georgia's coastal trash problem. Learn about their activities and how you can keep the coast clean. Plan and / or participate in a coastal cleanup.
- 3) Volunteer at a facility dedicated to helping Georgia marine wildlife, such as the Georgia Sea Turtle Center.
- 4) Create a display for your school, library or community center about coastal Georgia ecology. Emphasize what we can all do to help save and protect these special animals and environments.