Welcome to Little St. Simons Island! The Nature Conservancy is working with the owners and staff of Little St. Simons to ensure the beaches, forests and salt marshes remain healthy and continue to flourish as an important part of the South Atlantic coastal region—an area that supports one of the East Coast’s most prosperous commercial and recreational fisheries. The Nature Conservancy is able to help Little St. Simons Island staff connect with researchers and experts in various ecological fields, further advancing their ability to make sound decisions—based in science—about the future management of the island’s resources. Please join us for a special week exploring this pristine, protected area. Thank you for your interest travelling with The Nature Conservancy.
Day 1

SATURDAY, MAY 6

Midday Jacksonville, FL arrival; shuttle service to Hampton River Marina

2:00 pm  Departure from Hampton River Marina
or 3:30 pm

Afternoon  Check in to The Lodge on Little St. Simons Island
6:00 pm  Social Hour on The Lodge porch
7:00 pm  Group Dinner
8:15 pm  Evening naturalist program
Overnight  The Lodge on Little St. Simons Island
http://www.littlestsimonsisland.com/

Please plan to arrive at the Jacksonville International Airport by 12:00 pm. You will be driven as a group to the Hampton River Marina, which is approximately 1.5 hours away. The boat from the marina to Little St. Simons Island has a capacity of 18 people, so it will make 2 trips; some guests will depart at 2:00 pm, while others will depart at 3:30 pm. On the boat ride, you will get the chance to cruise through coastal Georgia salt marshes; keep an eye out for wildlife!

After settling into your rooms, we will congregate at 6:00 pm for Social Hour, during which you can meet your fellow travelers and your hosts. Enjoy local Georgia shrimp on the Lodge’s patio and relax in the shade of ancient moss-draped oaks. The Lodge’s chef will have dinner prepared by 7:00 pm and we will move to the dining room. At 8:15 pm, you can learn more about the ecology of the surrounding area and what you can expect for the week ahead.

Day 2

SUNDAY, MAY 7

7:00 am  Continental Breakfast at Lodge (optional)
7:15 am  Morning Birding (optional)
9:00 am  Group Breakfast at Lodge; Activity Options presentation
9:45 am  Boat Class
10:15 am  Choice between 2 Morning Activities
1:00 pm  Lunch at Lodge
2:15 pm  Choice between 2 Afternoon Activities
6:00 pm  Social Hour
7:00 pm  Group Dinner
8:15 pm  Evening naturalist program
Overnight  The Lodge at Little St. Simons Island

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Earlier in the morning, a continental breakfast will be available for those who wish to grab a quick bite and head out on their own. At 7:15 am, a morning birding excursion will be available. At the 9:00 am group breakfast, a naturalist will explain the activity options for the day, so that you may decide which you prefer. You will also have the opportunity to ask any questions about the day.

Please note that anyone who wishes to use a skiff MUST attend the 9:45 am boat class.

We will hold Social Hour at 6:00 pm, and dinner at 7:00 pm. A fine meal will again be followed by an evening presentation.

Below is a list of possible activities for the next few days. You will notice that the agendas for Days 3-6 will follow a similar format, with slight variations.

Activity Options may include the following:

- **North End Adventure**: Enjoy a guided informative trip up island to learn about the island's cultural and natural history.

- **Hikes**: Embark on a guided hike from the lodge along the trails and see the flora and fauna with an island naturalist.

- **Creek Paddling**: Explore the tidal salt marshes surrounding Little St. Simons Island by kayak (or canoe). After a quick refresher on paddling technique, your naturalist will guide you on a leisurely trip through this remarkable habitat. You'll see birds and other wildlife you wouldn't be able to see from the trails.

- **Creek Fishing**: See what's biting in the tidal creeks or in the surf; the Lodge provides spin reel and surf rods, bait and artificial lures for a variety of species: redfish, flounder or black drum to name a few.

- **Reptile-Amphibian Safari**: Enjoy a guided excursion in search of native reptiles and amphibians, in a variety of island habitats.

- **South End Adventure**: Go on an adventure to Little St. Simons Island’s south end, where Slash and Loblolly pine trees tower. You will learn why the pine forest habitat exists and how fires play an important role in plant succession on the island.

- **Birding at Myrtle Pond**: Join a naturalist on an excursion to the viewing towers of Myrtle Pond. We will expect to see least bitterns, glossy ibis, black necked stilts and yellowlegs to name a few.

- **Explore Sancho Panza Beach**: Join one of our naturalists for a shorebirding excursion, beachcombing on the northeast reaches of Little St. Simons Island. Or join a guided hike from the Lodge along the trails and see the flora and fauna with an island naturalist.

- **Botany excursion**: An Island naturalist will take you on a fascinating tour of the island’s various botanical communities, describing the ecological importance and historical significance of the plants. Did you know that Spanish Moss is neither Spanish in origin or a moss? It’s actually a relative of the pineapple family and was once used to stuff mattresses.

- **Tugboat bike trip**: Bike the beach to see the stranded tugboat at Rainbow Beach, learning about tide line treasures and beach ecology along the way.

- **Pond adventure**: Take a tour of the natural freshwater ponds around the island that harbor an abundance of American alligators and wading birds such as herons and egrets.

- **Bike adventure**: Learn more of the flora and fauna on a guided bike adventure with an Island naturalist. You might spot armadillos or a variety of resident and migratory birds along the way. Or join a naturalist for a perspective of how the cultural history has shaped the natural history of Little St. Simons Island.
- **Morning birding:** Early risers enjoy a naturalist-led sunrise walk on the beach in search of migrating shorebirds. You’ve not seen a sunrise until you’ve seen a southern sunrise on the east coast. The pinks and oranges in the sky provide a perfect backlighting for the birds that frolic in the shallows at this time of morning. Join a Lodge naturalist for a sunrise beach walk in search of migrating and resident shorebirds. Bring your binoculars or use the guide’s scope to get a close up view of the bills and beaks that have their breakfast here on these shores.

- **Boat tour up the Altamaha River:** Join a few local experts on a boat-based tour of the lower Altamaha, home to rare species and rare habitats. See bald eagles and migrating waterbirds. Cruise creeks flanked by ancient cypress. Walk some of the 37,000 acres of conservation lands that stretch for 42 miles along this river corridor. Most of the expanse is property that the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and key partners, like The Nature Conservancy and the US Fish and Wildlife Services helped protect.

- **Seining:** Join a naturalist in dragging a net along the ocean bottom to explore your findings up close.

- **Garden Walk:** Guided walk of our ½ acre USDA Certified Organic Garden. Come visit to learn about the herbs, vegetables, flowers, fruits, cover crops and compost that we have growing.

- If you are seeking a quieter afternoon, simply relax on the banks of Mosquito Creek under a live oak with a good book.

### Day 3

**MONDAY, MAY 8**

9:00 am  Group Breakfast at Lodge  
10:15 am  Choice between 2 Morning Activities  
12:45 pm  Truck shuttle departs for South End Launch  
1:00 pm  Picnic at South End Launch  
2:15 pm  Choice between 2 Afternoon Activities  
6:00 pm  Social Hour  
7:00 pm  Group Dinner  
8:15 pm  Evening naturalist program  

Overnight  The Lodge at Little St. Simons Island

Today you will have another opportunity to participate in activities that are most interesting to you. We will convene for a picnic lunch at the South End Launch, and will meet again at Social Hour and Dinner.
Day 4
TUESDAY, MAY 9

7:00 am  Continental Breakfast at Lodge (optional)
7:15 am  Morning birding (optional)
9:00 am  Group Breakfast at Lodge
10:15 am  Choice between 2 Morning Activities
1:00 pm  Lunch at Lodge
2:15 pm  Choice between 2 Afternoon Activities
6:00 pm  Social Hour
7:00 pm  Group Dinner
8:15 pm  Evening naturalist program
Overnight  The Lodge at Little St. Simons Island

Day 5
WEDNESDAY, MAY 10

9:00 am  Group Breakfast at Lodge
10:15 am  Choice between 2 Morning Activities
12:45 pm  Truck shuttle departs for main beach
1:00 pm  Lunch on the beach
2:15 pm  Choice between 2 Afternoon Activities
6:00 pm  Social Hour
7:00 pm  Group Dinner
8:15 pm  Evening naturalist program
Overnight  The Lodge at Little St. Simons Island

Day 6
THURSDAY, MAY 11

7:00 am  Continental Breakfast at Lodge (optional)
7:15 am  Morning birding (optional)
9:00 am  Group Breakfast at Lodge
10:15 am  Choice between 2 Morning Activities
1:00 pm  Lunch at Lodge
2:15 pm  Choice between 2 Afternoon Activities
6:00 pm  Social Hour
7:00 pm  Farewell Group Dinner
8:15 pm  Evening naturalist program
Overnight  The Lodge at Little St. Simons Island
Day 7

FRIDAY, MAY 12

9:00 am   Group Breakfast at Lodge
          Pack up; check out
10:00 am  Departure from Little St. Simons Island
          or 11:30 am
10:30 am  Arrival Hampton River Marina
          or 12:00 pm
TBD       Shuttle to Jacksonville International Airport

We hope that you will have enjoyed your stay on Little St. Simons Island, and will return home with many memories! After breakfast, the boat between the marina and the island will make 2 trips: one at 10:00 am and one at 11:30 am. As a group, you will be driven from the marina to the Jacksonville International Airport to catch your flight home, or to your next destination.

THANK YOU FOR TRAVELING WITH THE NATURE CONSERVANCY!

Contact Information

Please do not hesitate to contact Shana Love if you have any questions or needs regarding trip logistics.

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