

Emerald Bay Outdoor Academy

5-Day Program Planner – 2026

Please complete all of the group information below and select your courses. This will be used to create your Program Schedule which will be sent to you by email prior to your arrival. The student and adult numbers will also help us pre-plan housing.

Program Planners are due 2 weeks prior to your arrival day. If your Program Planner is not received by the Monday of the week prior to your arrival, **your courses will be selected for you** as the staff and program schedules require advanced planning.

School Information

School Name: _____

Number of female youth: _____

Grade Level: _____

Number of male youth: _____

Please advise of any non-binary youth or any gender related housing needs.

Trip Coordinator: _____

Number of female adults: _____

Trip Coordinator Email: _____

Trip Coordinator Cell Phone Number: _____

Number of male adults: _____

Course Selections (see below for course descriptions and guidance)

Core Courses (Students will do all 4)	
Island Biogeography	
Environmental Stewardship	
Kelp Forest Exploration (One land-based "dry" session and one activity-based "wet" session)	
Choose your Kelp Forest Exploration Activity: ___Snorkel ___Kayak ___Paddleboard	
All-School Hike to Parson's Beach	

Choose 1 or 2 Labs		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ichthyology Lab (Fish Dissection)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Plankton Lab	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>		Oil Spills Cleanup Lab

Additional Daytime Courses			
Choose 6 (If 1 lab is selected) or 5 (If 2 labs are selected)			
	Arrow Point Hike		Teambuilding
	StewARTship Studio Workshop		Just Beach!
	Intertidal Zonation		Additional Water Activity: ___Snorkel ___Kayak ___Paddleboard
	Archery		Additional Water Activity: ___Snorkel ___Kayak ___Paddleboard
	Do It Yourself Course (Chapel, School Time, Etc):		

Choose 4 Night Courses & Activities			
1 night water course only			
	Movie Night		Campfire and S'mores
	Astronomy		Nocturnal Wonderland
	Dance Party		Night Snorkel
	Night Kayak		

Is there any additional information we should know about your group?

Notes from the field (guidance on course selection)

- Snorkeling involves gearing up in wetsuits which takes a considerable amount of time. When snorkeling is selected as the Kelp Forest Exploration activity, the “dry” portion of the course is slightly abbreviated to give extra time to put on snorkeling equipment. Visibility in the water cannot be guaranteed but many local marine species will also be seen during the trip to the Pennington Marine Science Center during the dry session of the course.
- Kayaking is a great activity selection for schools with a majority of students that are new to experiencing the ocean or that may not be experienced swimmers.
- Water shoes or sandals with a back strap must be worn for all water activities. Crocs may be worn if the back strap is engaged. Flip-flops and slides are not permitted.
- We recommend at least one or two “fun” night course such as Campfire, Movie Night or Dance Party. These activities allow for important social time and help balance the otherwise packed schedule!
- The overall program schedule offers a small amount of free time but is generally full to maximize your time at camp. For schools wanting more free time or beach time, *Just Beach!* is a great option.

Trip Coordinator Responsibilities & Expectations

- Follow all Chaperone Expectations listed on the Adult Waiver Form, as well as the additional items below.
- Assign students into Cabin Groups of 8 (male/female separate) and Animal Groups of two combined cabins. Assign each Animal Group a Catalina Native Animal from the list provided [here](#).
- Complete course selection via the Program Planner and submit at least two weeks prior to arrival day.
- Provide originals of all Youth and Adult Waivers to Program Director on Arrival Day.
- Coordinate adult supervision coverage of cabin, campsite, or other housing areas during passing periods and free time.
- Ensure that one adult chaperone is present with each animal group for all courses and sessions.
- Document which students passed the Float Test and ensure only those who passed the float test participate in wet courses.
- Emerald Bay will respect and adopt the school's policy regarding use of electronic devices. However, Emerald Bay does not assume responsibility for lost, damaged, or stolen property.
- Alcoholic beverages and/or their consumption are not permitted at any time while staying at Camp Emerald Bay.
- Smoking is only permitted in designated areas and only by adult chaperones.
- Taking photographs should not interfere with courses. During courses, candid photos are permitted however courses should not be interrupted for posed photographs. Posed photos can be arranged outside of course time and the staff will be happy to help facilitate.
- Communicate any needs or potential issues to the Program Director. These may include but are not limited to: youth health or behavioral issues, youth conflicts, schedule or program issues, and staff concerns.
- Fill out the [Special Request form](#) for dietary or medical needs.

Trip Coordinator Signature

Date

Course Descriptions

Core Courses

Island Biogeography

Catalina Island provides the perfect backdrop to explore the unique and isolated ecosystems of islands. Students will examine how and why species ended up on the island and how they have adapted to living in their new homes. Island Biogeography also includes a hiking orientation with a 1.5 mile scenic "island stroll" to enjoy the views.

Kelp Forest Exploration

One of the world's most productive and diverse habitats, kelp forests are home to diverse and thriving communities of fish, invertebrates, and understory algae. This half-day course allows students to explore kelp from the land and sea. The dry portion of the course includes a visit to the Pennington Marine Science Center touch tanks as well as a land-based lesson on the structure and functions of kelp. The wet portion is an exploration of the kelp forest from a kayak, paddleboard, or with a mask and snorkel. Trip Coordinators will choose their "Exploration Activity" on the Program Planner.

Environmental Stewardship

The mission of the Outdoor Academy is to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards. During the Stewardship course, students experience stewardship on both a small and large scale. Students learn about Marine Protected Areas as a big-picture conservation method and visit the Emerald Garden to learn about small-scale composting while studying decomposers. In addition, students engage in a workshop session to identify environmental threats in their home communities and brainstorm both large- and small-scale potential solutions.

Additional Daytime Courses

Ichthyology Lab

Globally, fish provide food for more than 1.5 billion people each year, but many people have never seen a fish in the wild. In the course, students will work in small groups to identify features and adaptations during a sketching and dissection session of a Pacific Mackerel.

Plankton Lab

They may be microscopic, but phytoplankton are responsible for producing up to 50% of Earth's oxygen. Students will learn how scientists collect plankton from the ocean, will examine and identify plankton under a microscope, and will build their own plankton in a neutral buoyancy competition.

Oil Spills Cleanup Lab

Oil is one of the most widely used fossil fuels. But what happens when oil accidentally spills into the ocean? In this lab, students explore the effects of oil spills on marine environments and work in teams to test various methods used to clean it up and help ocean ecosystems recover.

Arrow Point Hike

Enjoy incredible views of the land and sea on a 1.5 mile round-trip hike to Arrow Point. The Arrow Point hike offers students a manageable challenge while practicing growth mindset. Student curiosity is sparked as we observe plants, birds, animals, and more!

Intertidal Zonation

When land meets sea, the changing tide creates dynamic intertidal zones, one of the harshest environments. Taught on the beach and in the Pennington Marine Science Center, students observe first-hand how ocean invertebrates have adapted to survive life on the edge.

Team Building

In their Animal Groups, students will be challenged to communicate and collaborate with each other in increasingly difficult activities.

StewARTship Studio Workshop

A passion for environmental stewardship comes from a strong connection with nature, and what better way to connect with nature than through art? In StewARTship, students will use the natural inspiration of Catalina Island and create an art project with basic instruction from our staff.

Archery

Archery is about focus and concentration. At the archery range students will exercise their growth mindset while practicing and improving skills under the supervision of the range commander.

Just Beach!

The typical itinerary at the Emerald Bay Outdoor Academy is packed in order to maximize your time at camp. For schools that wish to opt for more unstructured time, you can Just Beach on arrival day! After your float test, you will have all-school free time on the beach supervised by a Naturalist.

Students can wade with a life jacket, beachcomb, read, or play games. During inclement weather, a sheltered location will be utilized such as the Dining Hall Porch. **Note:** Schools should plan to have their students spend the full time on the beach and any student leaving the waterfront will need to have a youth buddy as well as an adult chaperone.

DIY Course

Schools have the option to use a session to create their own curriculum and lead their own course. This can be used for chapel or other school-specific content. Facilities that may be available for a DIY course include the outdoor chapel, dining hall porch, the Helm classroom, or other picnic table areas around camp. Please note: Staff are not provided for a DIY course.

2-Session All-School hike to Parsons Beach (Core Course for 5-Day Programs, Optional for 4-Day Programs)

Longer programs offer the ability to explore more of Catalina's interior. During this 2-session course, Naturalists will lead students in a 2 ¼ mile round trip hike to Parson's Beach to learn more about the native ecosystems of Catalina Island, build kelp forests on the beach out of found natural materials, and participate in a guided reflection.

Additional Water Activities (Snorkel, Kayak, Paddleboard)

Students will apply growth mindset with their friends as they learn a new skill of snorkeling, paddleboarding, or kayaking in and around Emerald Bay while observing local wildlife above and below the surface of our crystal-clear water.

Night Courses & Activities

Astronomy

Since the dawn of mankind, humans have been captivated by the vast unknown that fills the night sky. Students will model the phases of the moon, learn how to use a planisphere to identify constellations, and take a short hike to observe the night sky.

Nocturnal Wonderland

Catalina Island leads a double life. Students will investigate why some animals wait for sundown to emerge and will go on the hunt to locate some of our nocturnal neighbors around camp while participating in activities that help them learn about nocturnal adaptations.

Campfire & S'mores

Our staff will build your campfire and provide the ingredients for S'mores. From there, your campfire is your time to enjoy with your school however you would like - performing skits, singing songs, or reflecting on your time at Emerald Bay.

Movie Night

After a long day of exploring Catalina Island, allow your students to kick back and enjoy a movie. We will provide a family-friendly DVD or feel free to bring your own.

Dance Party

For those schools with students that still have extra energy at the end of the day, we will set up a dance party with lights and student-appropriate music.

Night Kayak

What is better than paddling underneath the moon and stars? Students will enjoy a tranquil and memorable kayak trip around Emerald Bay while searching for bioluminescence and other nighttime sights.

Night Snorkel

For groups that have completed a daytime snorkel, make a return trip to Doctor's Cove but this time - at night! In addition to the standard snorkel gear, students will also don a glow stick and a dive light for this unforgettable experience. For those students who may not be comfortable with a night snorkel, we will set up a beach campfire so they can enjoy the ambiance with their group!