

COASTAL ECOLOGY - INTRODUCTION

Professor: Teresa Greely, Ph.D

Welcome. Here we are today. Our goal is to have a virtual field trip of a really important habitat and a park actually that's a county park here in St. Petersburg, Florida called Fort De Soto. So not only does it provide just outstanding recreational activities, but it's very important ecologically.

There's a lot of really great habitats that support marine life here and support the chemistry, and biology, geology, and the physics that kind of describe and define the ocean. So we've been talking about these concepts. Now we actually get to virtually experience what these things look like in a natural setting.

So the different habitats that we're going to study today, we're going to go to three different communities. The first of which will be a mangrove forest. Mangroves are really important, a very unique tree. It isn't a full fledged tree, but it has the unique ability to be able to survive in saltwater. So we'll explore the mangrove community and its importance in Tampa Bay. Then we'll move up from this location to a little further south down the peninsula here to a seagrass community. And we'll close out the day by actually going to the beach and looking at the beach front community.

But again, we're looking at all of these things from we enjoy these habitats as part of our recreation. I have a great time at Fort De Soto myself. It's one of my favorite parks. But we want to put a lens on as kind of the ocean scientist today and understand how these habitats are important and to maintain the beautiful setting that we get to enjoy.