



## WELCOME TO FORFAR GUIDE

This document will serve as an introduction to the International Field Studies, Inc. field study program located at [Forfar Field Station](#) on Andros Island in The Bahamas.

Most educators agree, immersion experiences are among the most lasting, meaningful types of education. International Field Studies offers an ideal program for exploring the full benefits of experiential learning. We service secondary schools, university groups, scientific researchers, and other special-interest organizations as a base from which to study the environmental features of Andros including coral reefs, off-shore cays, sea grass beds, sandbars, blue holes, subtropical terrestrial habitats, Bahamian settlements, and more. Visit our website for [more details on Andros](#).

This guide covers the basics you'll need to plan the typical Saturday-Saturday week-long trip to Forfar Field Station including information about the station, day-to-day schedules while on the island, health and safety, working with IFS, and specific IFS policies. Our [Sites and Sights](#) guide is frequently referenced and is a useful guide for planning on-site instruction.

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## **IFS PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

International Field Studies, Inc. (IFS) is an educational and scientific non-profit organization established to promote and assist educators with field study programs. Established in 1970, IFS grew out of the increasing teacher interest in implementing field study experiences for their students with minimal organizational difficulty and expense. In response to this interest, IFS began by supporting field studies throughout the United States with administrative assistance, financial coordination, and transportation. Today, IFS continues to promote the concept of field studies as an important educational method. We stand by our mission:

*“International Field Studies is a non-profit organization providing environmental education, scientific research, and cultural awareness through experiential learning.”*

These experiential, outside of the classroom learning experiences are successful in almost every discipline, including the natural sciences, creative arts, history, and physical education. IFS believes an interdisciplinary approach to learning is especially well suited to the field studies environment. IFS functions as a facilitator for educational groups seeking expertise and logistical support. Staff members, experienced field instructors, and resource materials are available to assist educators and group leaders with educational development, site planning, and budgeting for a successful comprehensive field program. By working with IFS to develop a proposed field study, teachers are able to offer their students high quality field study opportunities.

IFS offers field studies in four program areas: 1) [Forfar Field Station](#), 2) [Forfar Marine Science Program](#) 3) [Continental & International Trips](#), and 4) [Guided Tours](#)

## **FORFAR FIELD STATION**

Forfar Field Station is a rustic former dive resort nestled in a beachfront coconut grove on the east coast of Andros. Forfar Field Station is named after Archie Forfar who originally built the field station as a dive resort in the 1960's. Since its debut, Forfar has served as an educational and field studies resource to over 50,000 students and group leaders that range from elementary/middle/high school level to college and graduate students and researchers. Check out our [History Page](#) to learn more about Forfar Field Station's past!

### **Lodging**

Forfar provides rustic cabin-style lodging along the beach. The field station is perfect for hosting student, family, or research groups with its 56-bed capacity divided among 8 cabins. Each cabin has 3-4 sets of bunk beds, electricity, fans, and a private bathroom with hot water and a shower. The Forfar Lodge houses our Dining Hall, Classroom, Recreation room, and an open living area.

The classroom accommodates lecture seating for 32 people. A chalkboard and marker board, LCD projector with a viewing screen, TV and DVD are available for classroom use. A variety of displays can be observed including preserved marine specimens, coral, sponge, and shell display cases, terrarium and aquariums, which may contain live specimens.

When groups aren't out exploring, they can relax with an enjoyable game of beach volleyball, basketball, ping pong, or lounge on the beach with a good book. The relaxing ocean sounds pair nicely with the field station's design to make a peaceful learning environment for students.

## Food

Breakfast and dinner are served in the dining room and most lunches are eaten picnic style at study sites. IFS ships most food in from Fort Lauderdale, FL and supplements with local food from the Mennonite farm and BAMSI (Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute) which are both located in North Andros. Menus are set, and usually offer a mix of standard American fare (lasagna, chicken) and a touch of Bahamian cuisine (pigeon peas and rice). Reasonable dietary needs, such as vegetarian, vegan, dairy-free, soy-free, nut-free, or gluten-free diets, can be accommodated if you notify us before the trip. For more information, you can view our [sample menu](#).

Thursday night is Cooks' Night Off and groups typically go out to a local restaurant. Dinner runs from \$18 to \$25 per person and is cash only. Ice cream, snack foods, and soft drinks can be purchased at several locations on the island.

## Transportation

Transportation to land-based sites is provided via trucks, vans, cars, and buses. We have two skiffs and a V-hull that provide water transportation. Only Forfar Field Station Staff may operate field station vehicles and equipment, unless there is an emergency or advance permission has been granted. Certain study sites require additional transportation and therefore incur extra costs. These are noted in the [Sites and Sights](#) guide and require advance planning. In order to support the local community, transportation to and from the airport will be provided by local Taxi drivers.

## Staff

The staff at Forfar consist of local Bahamian staff and the resident staff. The resident staff consisting of a Station Director and up to 7 Educational Staff. The Educational Staff are available to assist instructors in developing site itineraries, act as guides on field trips, provide information on local culture and history, and identify plant and animal species of interest. In addition, the Educational Staff offer a series of evening lectures. These are provided free of charge and the visiting group leader need only request a particular [lecture or lectures](#) if they wish to augment their course. [Current staff profiles](#) can be viewed on our website.

## Internet and Wi-Fi

Forfar has Wi-Fi that can be used by group leaders throughout the lodge, but there is no internet connection available in the cabins. Although group leaders will have access to our internet, they should not expect to have access at all times. The internet connection on Andros is inconsistent and usually slows down in the evenings. Due to the already slow speeds, we do not provide students with access to the Wi-Fi network.

## Travel

Information regarding flights from Nassau to Andros and ground transportation will be discussed in further detail as you move through the trip planning process with the IFS office staff. **Flights must arrive in Nassau by 1pm on arrival and depart Nassau any time after 12pm on departure** in order to make sure you can catch the connecting flights from Nassau-Andros, Andros-Nassau we schedule for you. Make sure to contact the IFS office before purchasing flights into Nassau.

## Arrival

Based on your flight times and group size, you should expect to arrive at the Field Station between 4:30PM and 6PM. Upon your arrival, you will be given a ~40-minute orientation to cover the policies and daily routine of the field station, participants will be shown their cabin assignments, and dinner will be served at 6pm. Orientation may be moved to after dinner depending on arrival time. At a convenient time, the Field Station Director will meet with the group leaders to review their itinerary and create a plan for the week (this usually takes 15-30 minutes). This is the time to ask questions and bring up any special arrangements or concerns. It is also a good time to request and arrange lectures.

Then, the rest of the night is yours to explore and investigate your new home. If there are divers in your group, there may be a short meeting after orientation to arrange dives and take care of paperwork. Please do not snorkel or swim without speaking to a Forfar staff member first.

### **Departure**

On Saturday morning, guests clean up their cabins and bring luggage to the vans for transport to the airport. A cold breakfast is available before you leave. At your scheduled time, usually around 6:00 AM, taxis will arrive to take guests to the airport for return flights to Nassau.

### **Why must I schedule my flights to arrive in Nassau by 1pm and depart any time after 12pm?**

Due to the remoteness of Andros, there are only two flights on and off the island each day. The morning flight leaves around 7:30/8:00 AM and the afternoon flights depart around 3:00/4:00 PM. In order for flight times to be conducive to your connecting flights in Nassau and per potential delays from weather, airport traffic, and immigration, we restrict flights to the above-mentioned time frame.

### **WHAT TO EXPECT**

Prior to your trip, you should plan an itinerary with IFS. Since we are at the mercy of weather and tides, please be flexible about doing specific activities on specific days. For example, if it's raining on Sunday, we may postpone the planned boat trip for later in the week with hopes the weather clears. When multiple groups share the field station, we may have to work around vehicle or boat availability. Please remember the key words: flexibility and cooperation.

### **Daily Routine**

At the beginning of each week, duty groups are assigned usually by cabin, to assist with the daily general duties. Group duties include serving food and helping with clean-up (wiping tables and sweeping the dining room), loading the lunch coolers on and off the vans or boats, setting up and cleaning up of lunch, and being responsible for items left behind on vans or boats.

Daily trips and activities can be planned as follows: full day at Forfar; full day boat trips; full day land trips; or combinations of half Forfar, half boat, and half land days. Most days fall into a similar pattern based on the itinerary or field study plan. For specific information about site options and sample itineraries, refer to the [Sites and Sights](#) guide. On Thursday evenings or 'Cooks Night Off', dinner is not served at the field station, and guests go out for dinner at an island restaurant. Ask for available menus when discussing scheduling with the Station Director. On Friday night, many groups enjoy a campfire and listen to the Archie Forfar story (which can be told as a ghost story if preferred). This is also a good time to fill out, and return, trip evaluation forms. Completed trip evaluation forms are very valuable to us and we appreciate your feedback and comments!

### **Lecture and Activities**

A variety of evening presentations are available and listed in our [Sites and Sights](#). In the evening, students can have class or lab time, play volleyball or ping pong, read or relax on the beach, or learn basket weaving from a local artist. Remember, each day is yours. Feel free to use the time as you see fit and to call on the expertise of our Educational Staff. The schedule for a typical day is as follows:

|         |             |
|---------|-------------|
| 7:00 am | Lodge Opens |
| 8:00 am | Breakfast   |

|          |                                                            |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:00 am  | Departure for a full day on boat or van                    |
| 12:00 pm | Lunch in the field                                         |
| 4:00 pm  | Return to Forfar                                           |
| 6:00 pm  | Dinner                                                     |
| 7:00 pm  | Evening lecture in classroom, group activity, or free time |
| 10:00 pm | Lodge closes. Quiet time commences until 7:00 am.          |

### **Snorkeling**

Water safety practices are of great importance. Forfar Educational Staff have experience in leading snorkeling trips and should be present for all snorkeling activities. We strongly recommend group leaders conduct a pre-trip pool session to assess student swimming ability and provide snorkeling instruction. Passing on information from this assessment to Forfar Staff will help us serve your group needs better. At the very least, make sure each student tries out their equipment to ensure proper fit and to check for leaks. These problems are very difficult to fix once on the island.

**Required Equipment** includes a mask, snorkel, and fins. Recommended Equipment includes an underwater camera and a mesh bag for your snorkeling gear. Participants can view our [Packing List](#) for all suggested items for their stay at Forfar.

A brief snorkel orientation will be conducted the first boat day with your group. Upon arrival at Forfar, you will be provided with a buoyancy control (BC) snorkel vest. Anytime guests are snorkeling or swimming in the open ocean from our boats, they must wear their BC. This policy is non-negotiable and includes group leaders/chaperones. This policy is in place to keep everyone safe and visible in the open ocean should any unforeseen events take place.

Snorkeling is not required, and guests may opt to swim with only the vest, stay on the boat or cay, or remain at the field station. All guests must swim with a buddy. However, our waters are so beautiful we encourage all guests to explore them.

### **Visibility & Currents**

The clear waters off the windward (East) coast of Andros seldom offer less than 80 feet of horizontal visibility and 150 feet is often exceeded. Violent squalls and winter winds occasionally stir up bottom sediments and may cause temporary visibility problems. These occasions are the exception rather than the rule. The currents generated by tidal changes are important to consider, especially at the mouth of creeks, through passes in the reef, and in oceanic blue holes. The Station Director will judge conditions and determine the safety of a snorkel.

### **Water Temperature**

In the summertime, the water temperature surrounding the reef is in the low 80's (°F). In the shallow waters near shore, water temperature can get as warm as 90 (°F). In the winter, the reef stays in the mid to upper 70's (°F), and inshore temperatures can drop to the low 70's (°F).

While normal exposure to the lower end of these temperatures is quite comfortable and safe, prolonged or repeated exposure will induce the initial symptoms of hypothermia. In the winter, we encourage visitors to wear at least 3mm neoprene shorties. In the months of January and February, we strongly recommend that divers wear a full wetsuit. We also recommend a dry towel, long-sleeve shirt, or rain jacket for the boat ride back to the field station.

## Scuba Diving at Forfar

Scuba Diving is available for those who are SCUBA certified. Diving certifications may be offered with advanced planning. We operate a certified PADI Dive shop and recommend taking advantage of the early morning dive option for those who are interested. The boat typically leaves at 6:00 am and returns to the field station by 8:00 am in time for breakfast. For more information, please review our [Forfar Diving Guide](#) or [contact](#) the office.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

**The safety of our guests is the number one priority of IFS and our staff.** The Educational Staff are trained in CPR and wilderness first aid, and many have advanced training for dive related accidents. The remote location dictates some of our policies concerning safety. We ask group leaders to fully cooperate regarding general safety and accident-prevention procedures.

We recommend group leaders, diving instructors, and other counselors or chaperones, be versed in CPR, first aid, bleeding control, and shock treatment. They should also have a familiarity with the signs and symptoms of dehydration and allergic reactions. If there are SCUBA divers, all leaders should be familiar with the signs and symptoms of decompression sickness and related barotraumas. We request information regarding group leader and chaperone level of training in CPR and/or first aid on paperwork prior to your trip. You may be asked about this again when you arrive at the Field Station during your initial meeting with staff upon arrival. This will allow us to better coordinate efforts in case of an emergency.

There are first aid supplies at Forfar, but each group should bring its own first aid kit. Kit supplies should include but not be limited to the following items: anti-diarrheal medicine, Neosporin, band aids, instant ice packs, Aspirin/Ibuprofen/Acetaminophen, alcohol wipes, rubber gloves, motion sickness medication, Aloe vera gel, and Tecnu for poisonwood. Supplies to treat minor encounters with stinging coral, jellyfish, and sea urchins should be included. Be sure the kit does not include drugs considered illegal for international transport. If possible, your first aid kit should be in a reasonably watertight, non-corrosive container so it can be carried aboard a boat.

There is not a hospital on Andros. In the event of an accident or illness, we have access to a medical doctor at either of the two large clinics on the island. Each clinic is about a 30-minute drive from the station. Because legal permission may be required before emergency treatment can be administered, it is imperative each guest completes the [Medical Consent Form](#) and that these forms are readily available in the unlikely event of an accident. Group Leaders must carry these forms at all times throughout the trip, including on field trips. Forfar has created emergency plans in the event of an accident or illness and can be provided to group leaders upon request.

## Common Medical Problems

In most cases, medical problems result from situations that can be prevented. The staff will help you identify ways to be safe on the island and activities to avoid. Please bring medical problems to a staff member's attention immediately.

- **Sunburn and sun poisoning** can be serious. The sun in the Bahamas is more intense than in most regions of the United States, precautions are necessary. Sunscreen may not be sufficient protection and we encourage all participants to wear rash guards, hats, and sunglasses to help with sun exposure. [Sunscreen must be reef safe.](#)
- **Dehydration and heat exhaustion** are also serious. Be sure to drink plenty of water and rest in the shade periodically.
- **Poisonwood** is an abundant woody plant on Andros. It has an oil-based toxin similar to poison ivy/poison oak and it causes a similar, itchy rash. Reactions can be severe and may affect people normally unaffected by poison

ivy. Wash the affected area as soon as possible with soap and water. Then cleanse with Tecnu Cleanser or another commercially available product for the removal of toxic oils. Treat the rash with Calamine Lotion, or other ointments used to treat poison ivy. Local remedies include the use of black earth and Gumbo Limbo (aka Tourist Tree).

- **Insects** such as sand flies, mosquitoes, and doctor flies (horse flies) can make guests miserable. Use bug spray or lotion. Reapply after showering or swimming. Mosquito nets are a nice luxury at night, especially during the summer. Bring long pants, shirts and socks to help prevent bug bites on still days.
- **Cuts** and open wounds may be slow to heal with continuous exposure to salt water. Consider every cut important since infections occur easily. If a wound is not healing, remain out of the water for a day or two and monitor it carefully. Wear footwear at all times since urchins, limestone, glass, metal, and other sharp objects may be in the sand.
- **Fire Coral** inflicts a sting that may last for 30 minutes and an itchy lingering rash. Isopropyl alcohol or vinegar will help neutralize the stinging cells.
- **Sea urchins**, especially *Diadema*, have brittle spines, which can stick in your skin. The spines are very difficult to remove and the area will remain painful until they dissolve. This can take several months.
- **Sharks, barracuda, and rays** have never caused a problem for Forfar guests. If you encounter any of them, remain calm. If a shark shows more than casual interest, notify those around you and swim slowly and calmly back to the boat or shore with your buddy. Avoid stepping on rays when walking in shallow water by shuffling your feet.
- **Bats** inhabit the caves at certain times of the year. If you find any, just observe. Do not handle the bats and do not shine your flashlight directly at them.
- **Centipedes and scorpions** are rare, but large ones can bite and the injected toxin can cause excruciating pain. As long as these creatures are left alone, they will not be a problem.
- **Snakes** are found on Andros but are non-venomous and harmless to humans.

## **PLANNING YOUR FIELD STUDY**

The first step is contacting the IFS Ohio office ([office@intfieldstudies.org](mailto:office@intfieldstudies.org) or 614-268-9930) to schedule trip dates. Having an idea of available dates for your group and the total number of participants is key. Prime dates are usually filled a year or more in advance. If you can be flexible with your dates, we have a better chance of meeting your needs. Trips usually run from Saturday to Saturday, although we can occasionally be flexible in accommodating alternate schedules. We [offer scouting trips](#) for potential group leaders to visit the island for an evaluation, see the study sites, meet the staff, and see other groups in action.

### **Administrative Support**

If your school doesn't have a history of field studies, you may need to begin by researching such things as administrative or board support, handling of finances, scheduling, and course credit. To receive school board approval, you may want to create an information packet that includes instructional justification for the trip, proposed curriculum, financial outline, and information about IFS and its programs. Colleges and universities will also be concerned with course listings and financial support. IFS can assist you with preparing the necessary paperwork in advance of your trip.

Many groups who visit Forfar have pre and post trip coursework or are visiting Forfar as part of a high school or college credit course. Marine biology, oceanography, botany, ornithology, herpetology, tropical/island ecology, geology, ichthyology, invertebrate biology, climate change science, and sociology can be studied in a broad overview, or broken into discrete topics. We try to facilitate the group leader's ability to prepare a course suited to student needs and educational objectives. We provide the [Sites and Sights](#) guide to aid in preparing educational objectives and activities. It outlines current lectures offered, topics suitable for study, the land and sea sites available, and sample trip itineraries. If

you haven't visited Andros previously, you may wish to identify your main content interests and trip objectives and let the Forfar staff help you decide the details for you.

### Planning Tips

- **Resources:** A detailed overview of the trip planning process, including more information on flights, is found in our [IFS Planning Timeline](#). Please read this document carefully to review important elements of planning a trip. This is especially helpful for first time group leaders. Group leaders always have access to the [Group Leader Page](#) for all IFS trip planning resources.
- **Participants:** We understand you'll be estimating participant numbers when we first talk. However, a \$300.00 per person deposit is due three months in advance of the trip to hold spots. Remember, other groups may be trying to fill trips for the same date. Using realistic numbers will help us to avoid over or under-booking and allows us to keep costs low. Please be sure to contact our office if students drop or if you find students who wish to join the trip last minute.
- **Forms:** All students and chaperones will need to fill out four forms, all due one month prior to arrival. The IFS office will email the group leader a link to a google document showing who has completed the online forms. Group leaders will be responsible for scanning and emailing the paper Medical Consent form to the IFS office. All participant forms can be found here: [www.intlfieldstudies.org/register](http://www.intlfieldstudies.org/register)
  - 1) Medical History (online)
  - 2) Medical Consent (paper, notary required for all US citizens)
  - 3) Travel and Excursions (online)
  - 4) COVID-19 Travel & Liability Waiver (online)

### Payment Structure

All payments must be completed by wire transfer or mailing a check to the IFS office. We ask group leaders to send payment for all participants together as one payment, we do not handle individual trip payments. We expect timely payments on all trip fees as outlined by the Group Leader Agreement and listed below:

- a. \$200 non-refundable **Trip Hold Deposit** is required to hold your dates upon registration
- b. \$300 non-refundable **Participant Hold Deposit** per person due three months prior to trip
- c. **Final payment** is required one month before trip dates and includes the total trip cost per student and chaperone minus the Trip Hold and Participant Hold deposits.

### IFS POLICIES

IFS has established policies that need to be followed by all guests to Forfar. It is the responsibility of group leaders to inform students of these policies and see they are enforced. Everyone must adhere to these guidelines, regardless of past policies.

### Guests in a Foreign Land

Forfar guests are visitors in a foreign country. IFS expects an awareness of, and respect for, the Bahamian people and culture. Our guests must understand their behavior reflects on themselves, their school, IFS, and their Country. The Forfar Station Director reserves the right to send home, at his or her own expense, any guest whose behavior is offensive, or could adversely affect the friendly atmosphere enjoyed by IFS, its guests, and the local community.

### Manner and Dress

IFS guests are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the rules established by sponsoring groups. Dress is casual, but please be aware that shirts and shorts are required in the lodge. If the Forfar Station Director feels



dress, or behavior, are inappropriate, he or she will discuss the issue with the group leader and they will reach a joint decision.

### **IFS Water Safety Policy**

Upon arrival at Forfar, you will be provided with a buoyancy control (BC) snorkel vest. Anytime guests are snorkeling or swimming in the open ocean from our boats, they must wear their BC. This policy is non-negotiable and includes group leaders/chaperones. This policy is in place to keep everyone safe and visible in the open ocean should any unforeseen events take place. BCs are required for swimming in freshwater inland blue holes. Guests are not permitted to do any flips or dives into the blue holes. Only feet-first jumps are allowed when swimming in the blue holes. BCs are not required while swimming off the beach in front of Forfar Field Station but are required for creek snorkeling. These rules are in place per liability and risk management protocol and apply to all guests staying at Forfar Field Station.

If the BC is lost or seriously damaged, the guest will be charged the cost to repair or replace the vest (\$30.00). SCUBA divers will be charged for damage or loss to equipment supplied by IFS.

### **Alcohol Policy**

No alcohol is to be brought to or consumed on Forfar Field Station property by guests, including researchers and group leaders. Evening outings involving the legal consumption of alcohol by guests are permitted at the discretion of the group leader. Group leaders are responsible for the group's actions during the outing. At no time will a group be dropped off or picked up from an outing.

### **Drug Policy**

IFS has a zero tolerance policy for non-prescription drugs. If a student is found in possession of, or under the influence of any drug illegal in the United States or Bahamas, that student will be sent home immediately at his or her own expense. This is a requirement of Bahamian and U.S. Customs as well. Prescription drugs may be taken only by the person listed on the label, and only in the manner directed by the label. IFS will not be responsible for, nor can we predict, random searches from the Bahamian or U.S. Customs officers.

### **Conservation Policies**

Hundreds of visitors come to Andros with IFS every year. One of the special aspects of the IFS program is the amount of experiential field experiences the students have in both the marine and terrestrial environments. These environments are very sensitive, requiring careful examination with the utmost restraint. In order to maintain the most pristine environment possible, the IFS attitude toward conservation is very strict. Below is a list of general guidelines. Please keep in mind if students are unable to follow these guidelines, their privileges may be limited or revoked.

#### **Conservation at Sea**

**We enforce a strict “look but do not touch” policy.** Privileges may be revoked if groups are causing damage to the coral and marine animals. Coral and many other marine animals are extremely sensitive and can be negatively impacted even by minimal levels of human contact. In addition, there are several defensive animals that can inflict very painful stings. Some areas cannot endure 40 pairs of fins. Please be cooperative with the staff if they limit groups or pull aside snorkelers for a snorkel review.

We want everyone to wear sunscreen while in the water, however, [chemicals in sunscreens](#) have been shown to be detrimental to coral reefs. For more information about sunscreens damage to marine environments and which types of sunscreens are approved for use at Forfar, [please read this blog post](#).

### **Fishing Policy**

Fishing must be pre-approved, by the Station Director, and appropriate permits must be arranged prior to your group's arrival. Fishing is allowed with minimum impact to the environment or Bahamian economy. Any person fishing while staying at Forfar Field Station must comply with all Bahamian fishing regulations. Guests may not spear fish. Fishing cannot be conducted as a means of feeding guests staying at Forfar. Fishing is not allowed in areas that are used for diving, snorkeling, or areas used by Bahamian Guides. Fishing is not allowed at the same time or place as diving or snorkeling.

### **Conservation on Land**

Feel free to collect shells on the beaches, but make sure there is nothing living on or inside of them.

- Please do not buy shells from locals. We do not want to encourage a shell trade.
- If you need to use the restroom, the woods are okay, but please do not use trails or privately-owned property as a toilet. And remember to watch out for poisonwood.
- Pack out what you pack in. Everything from napkins to apple cores to toilet paper needs to be put in the trash bag and returned for proper disposal.
- Some areas cannot be subject to 40 pairs of feet. Please be cooperative with the staff if they limit groups or give directions for walking through a site.
- Do not order turtle in restaurants or purchase turtle shells. Many Sea Turtles species are endangered and there is a possibility that what is available has been caught illegally.
- “Conchervation” in the Bahamas, there is an increasing concern for conch (a popular marine snail that is consumed widely throughout the Bahamas). Due to poor harvesting regulations and over-fishing of this resource, Queen Conch has been placed on the Threatened/Endangered list. We ask our guests to consider this when choosing dining options whilst in the Bahamas.

### **Research Policy**

International Field Studies enforces all laws and restrictions set by the Bahamas Government in relation to scientific research being conducted on Andros. Any research involving collection requires a permit. Please be sure to carefully read our [blog post on research permits](#) for more information. Colleges, universities, and researchers are expected to send copies of research papers, and/or thesis, researched on Andros. This is in addition to the requirements by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries indicated in your research permit.

### **Additional Forfar Field Station Policies**

The field station phone and internet are intended for the express use of IFS Staff only. The field station phones are available to guests for emergencies only. Group leaders will have limited access to the internet and should not expect to have access at all times. Keeping a group blog is a great way to keep those back home informed of your group's adventures. For guests bringing cell phones, please consult your service provider about international rates for data and phone calls.

Guests are expected to keep their cabins clean and orderly at all times. At the end of their stay, they are expected to sweep their rooms and be certain that sheets, all personal items, and trash are removed. Damage and cleaning fees will be assessed if necessary.

IFS tries to accommodate the return of items left behind, but is not responsible for doing so. The cost of shipping or mailing an item is the responsibility of the owner.

Bringing a **drone** to the country requires an additional permit from the Bahamas Civil Aviation and that can be found on <http://apps.bcaa.gov.bs/>. You have to create an account, and register the drone, otherwise it may be held at customs during entrance into the country until you leave again.

### **Group Leader Expectations**

IFS views your position as a group leader while on Andros as a liaison between IFS Educational Staff and your students/group. As such, we expect you will be involved in all activities and incidents that occur during your stay. Your acceptance of the following responsibilities will help our staff ensure your group has the best field experience possible.

Group leaders are expected to:

- Be responsible for all actions of group behavior. Be present for all group activities, including on-site orientations. Help Forfar Educational Staff ensure safety and appropriate behavior, and bring problems to the attention of the staff members present. Ensure students participate in activities such as meal serving/clean up, lunch in the field, post-trip clean up, etc.
- Carry medical forms for all participants on all outings, in case of emergency. Depending on the situation, one chaperone may need to accompany any students who are unable to participate in-group activities for reasons such as illness, etc. Forfar staff can watch the student depending on their age/illness.
- Enforce a curfew if you choose to have one (especially for guests under 18). Quiet hours are from 10:00 pm to 7:00 am.
- Ensure students treat accommodations properly, ensure cabins have been cleaned, and beds stripped before departure, etc.
- Ensure proper respect for and treatment of natural resources at study sites. Forfar Educational Staff reserve the right to limit group access to sensitive areas in order to minimize the impact on natural resources.
- Address any concerns or questions to the Station Director.

## **TERMS & CONDITIONS**

- International Field Studies will not be responsible for loss, or costs, incurred as a result of a guests' failure to supply proper identification for entry or participation requirements. It is the guests' responsibility to comply with all customs and immigration laws.
- Groups are not guaranteed exclusive use of the field station. International Field Studies reserves the right to fill Forfar to capacity.
- Neither International Field Studies, nor the air services commissioned by International Field Studies, will be responsible for, nor issue refunds or credits for, the following: early departure by customers' choice; damages or costs resulting from postponed flight times, including, but not limited to, missed transportation connections; nor for errors herein. Flight departure and arrival times cannot be guaranteed, as weather conditions may affect operation conditions. Maximum emphasis will be on safety.
- International Field Studies shall not, at any time or in any way, be responsible for loss, injury, or damage arising from an Act of God, act of government or de facto authority, war, civil unrest, any kind of hostilities, strikes, thefts, sickness, quarantine, immigration or customs regulations, hijacking, breakdown, delay, cancellations, error, omissions, or any other cause beyond its control.
- International Field Studies suggests travel insurance for groups visiting the field station. The Department of State has provided a [comprehensive list](#) we encourage you to review. Additional information can be found in our [International Medical and Travel Insurance blog post](#).
- International Field Studies reserves the right, without notice, to make changes or cancellations, in part or in whole, as circumstances dictate. In the event of such a cancellation, all unused trip fees will be refunded. Furthermore, International Field Studies will not be responsible for, and will not issue refunds or credits for snorkeling trips or SCUBA dives canceled as a result of inclement weather and/or Acts of God.
- International Field Studies accepts no liability for the consequences of the personal activities of any guest who is deemed personally responsible for the decisions concerning conditions of health, safety, or fitness for diving or any other activities, or any other circumstance beyond its control.
- The International Field Studies field study experience exposes participants to certain dangers and risks, including, but not limited to, hazards of accidents or illness in remote places without medical facilities, the forces of nature, travel by airplane, automobile, bus, train, boat, or other consequences and actions, lawful and unlawful, of third persons. Each participant assumes all risks of this field study experience, including all activities whether or not engaged in field study activities, and shall hold International Field Studies, its employees, staff, directors, and trustees, harmless from any and all damages, injuries, claims, and demands whatsoever which arise from, or in connection with, the field-study experience and related activities.
- Please review the [Group Leader Agreement](#) for all additional terms and conditions.

**Still have questions? Check our [FAQ](#) for more information.**