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Exploring Nature on the Treasure Coast

WABASSO ISLAND, Fla. Every Saturday morning at 9:30 am, every Wednesday morning at 10:30 am and every Sunday afternoon at 2 pm, Nature Guides at the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) lead tours of the uplands and wetlands of the large nature preserve near the Wabasso causeway. Many of these same guides also help teach almost 4000 first, third and fourth grade

children in the Indian River School District about our local environment every school year as they visit the campus.

The tours are free and reservations are needed only for groups.

Other land adventures include a Captain Forster's tour and hiking the St. Sebastian River Preserve. The former, on the 110 acre ocean to river preserve which is one of the few remaining coastal hammocks in the area, will be guided by an ELC Master Naturalist. The next visit is from 9 until 11 am on Wednesday, February 3. The cost is \$3 per person (\$2 for members), and reservations can be made by calling 770-589-5050.

The easy two-mile hike in the St. Sebastian Preserve will also be guided by an ELC Master Naturalist. This state park preserves the charm and romance—and challenging homesteads—of the fast vanishing Old Florida. The next hike is from 9 until 11 am on Saturday, February 6. Ticket prices and reservations as for Captain Forster, above.

The Environmental Learning Center is located north of Vero Beach off County Road 510 at the western edge of the Wabasso Bridge. Its 64-acre island campus includes exhibit areas, native plant gardens, picnic facilities, gift shop and visitor center. A list of its many field excursions including hikes, boat excursions, nature walks and bird watching can be found at www.DiscoverELC.org.

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