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A Legacy Journey: Little St. Simons Island

DATES

May 5–11, 2023
May 11–17, 2023

PRICE

Double Occupancy: \$3,538
Single Occupancy: \$5,925

DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

The Nature Conservancy is working with the owners and staff of Little St. Simons Island (LSSI) 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 Conservancy holds a conservation easement on LSSI and works closely with the LSSI ecological manager and other staff to recommend best management practices and to determine research and monitoring priorities, putting conservation of the island’s habitats and species first.

The Conservancy long ago made the Altamaha River a focus of its freshwater and coastal conservation work, purchasing its first parcels in the watershed in the late 1960s – two small islands that are formed from the sediment and sand the river washes downstream. The Conservancy’s long commitment to

the Altamaha and coast has become a testing ground for a bold new conservation strategy of protecting entire landscapes and ecosystems. The Conservancy has protected more than 280 miles of ecologically important lands within the watershed, including creating a more than 50-mile contiguous corridor of conserved lands all the way out to coastal barrier islands. By increasing coastal resilience, The Nature Conservancy aims to reduce the current and growing risks to coastal communities from natural hazards and climate change using natural solutions and smart development.

Please join us for a special week exploring this pristine, protected area. Thank you for your interest travelling with The Nature Conservancy.

TNC TRAVEL VALUES

ACCESS:

Travel with renowned TNC experts and local partners for an exclusive, behind-the-scenes experience. You won't just see amazing places, you'll witness how you are helping save them.

IMPACT:

See how your commitment to our planet and your passion for conservation are making a difference. You will see the wild places and the communities you are impacting.

KNOWLEDGE:

Learn how we are applying the latest cutting-edge science to affect global change and drive conservation.

INSPIRATION:

Immerse yourself in local cultures and awe-inspiring landscapes to foster your own connection to our world.

GLOBALLY MINDED:

Elevate your understanding of our work by seeing first-hand how TNC and our partners act locally and how we turn local results in to global impact by scaling solutions that work.

TRAVELER EXPECTATIONS & CODE OF CONDUCT:

Please read [TNC's Traveler Expectations](#), our guide for ensuring that we treat each other with respect, fairness and integrity beyond reproach during travel in accordance with [TNC's Code of Conduct](#). Following the Code is an expectation and responsibility for everyone in the larger TNC community, including our staff, partners, vendors and supporters. To that end, when registering for a TNC trip, you are agreeing to uphold the Code.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

NATURALISTS

Spend your days learning from the naturalists who live and work on Little St. Simons Island.

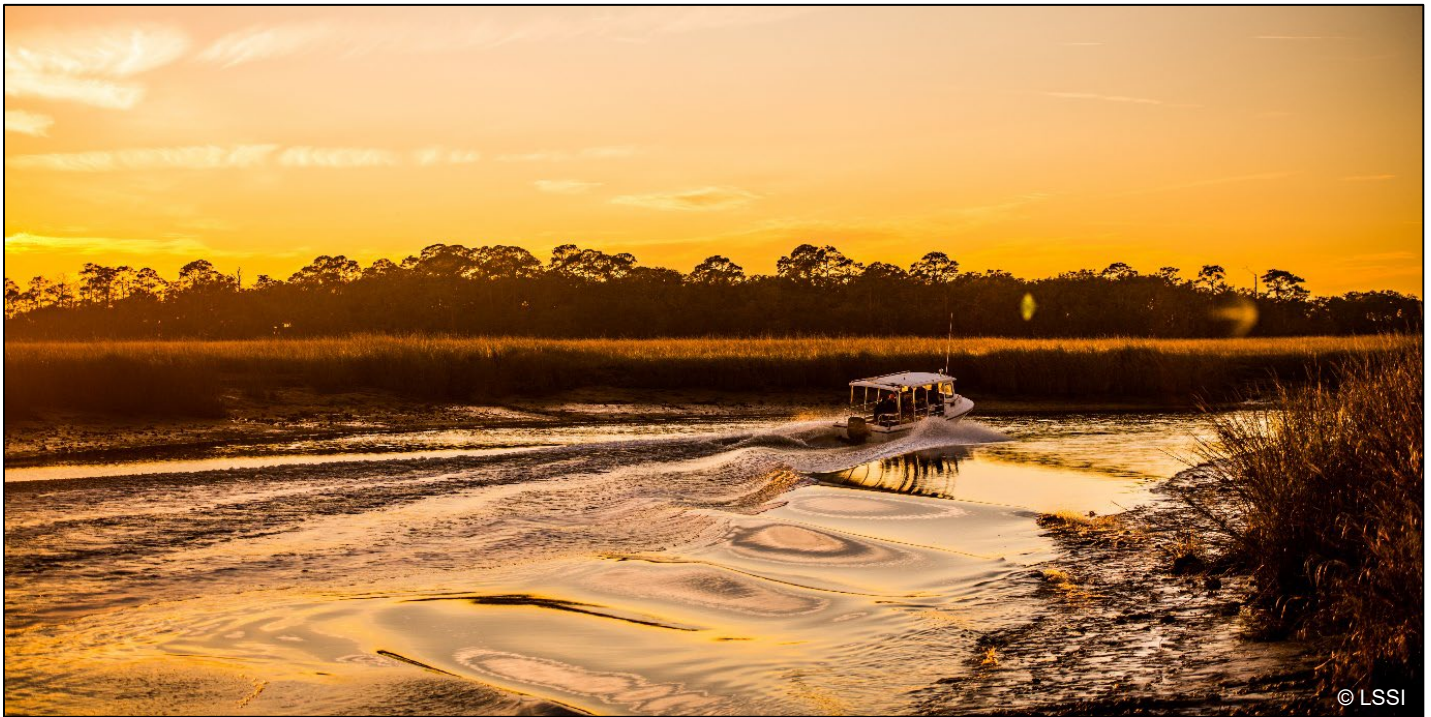
PRISTINE BEACHES

Whether you're walking, biking, or birding, enjoy the miles of untouched coastline, populated by only you and your fellow travelers.

BIRDING

Little St. Simons Island has both viewing towers and blinds from which to watch egrets, herons, roseate spoonbills, and more!

Your trip supports the local communities you're traveling in and The Nature Conservancy's efforts locally and globally. This trip has been planned specifically by The Nature Conservancy's team of scientific experts and travel liaisons to immerse you in the work the Conservancy is doing on the ground that has global consequences.



THE CONSERVATION LANDSCAPE

THE ALTAMAHA RIVER

With more than 7,400 miles of shoreline, the Georgia coast is among the world's most naturally diverse and intact coastal habitats. With sandy beaches, acres of maritime forests, and nearly one-third of all the salt marshes in the eastern United States, more than 55,000 resident and migratory shorebirds and seabirds use the Georgia coast each year.

The Altamaha River Delta – a 135-square mile area beginning at the Southern tip of Sapelo Island and extending south to encompass Wolf, Egg, Little Egg, and Little St. Simons islands in McIntosh and Glynn counties – is among the most noted Georgia habitats for seabirds and shorebirds, including the American oystercatcher. From the loggerhead sea turtle to the shortnose sturgeon, from the northern right whale to the blue crab, species of all shapes and sizes benefit from Georgia's robust coastal estuaries.

In 1999, the Mexico-based Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network recognized the Altamaha River Delta as the 40th major reserve for shorebirds. The National Audubon Society has designated the delta as one of the country's top 500 Important Birding Areas.

Our work in this region is contributing to our global goal of safeguarding 60,000 miles of the world's most precious sources of fresh water. As the global population soars, demands for food, energy, and shelter are putting unprecedented pressure on our planet – and water is at the heart of this crisis. The Nature Conservancy's plan is to fundamentally change the way our most precious resource – water – is used and managed so that nature and people can thrive together.

ITINERARY

DAY 1 | Please plan to arrive at the Jacksonville International Airport by 2:00 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 will depart at 4:00pm. On the boat ride, you will get the chance to cruise through coastal Georgia salt marshes; keep an eye out for wildlife! Please be aware that accessing the island ferry includes a floating ramp at both the marina and the island that can be rather steep during low tide, as well as a few stairs up onto the boat.

After settling into your rooms, we will congregate at 6:00 pm for a social half 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 mossdraped oaks. The Lodge's chef will have dinner prepared by 6:30 pm and we will move to the dining room. At 7:45 pm, you will learn more about the ecology of the surrounding area and what you can expect for the week ahead.

OVERNIGHT AT LSSI

DAY 2 | Early 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 a.m., a morning birding excursion will be available and will return to the Lodge in time for breakfast with the group. At the 9:00 a.m. group breakfast, a naturalist will explain the activity options for the day and will be available to answer any questions you may have. We will hold a social half hour at 6:00 pm, and dinner at 6:30 pm.

OVERNIGHT AT LSSI

DAYS 3, 4, 5, 6 | Each of these days will mirror day 2, with a morning and an afternoon activity and all meals together with the group. Examples of possible activities are below.

POSSIBLE ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

- North End Adventure: Enjoy a guided informative truck 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. Island hiking is mostly flat terrain, with shorter hikes of about a mile and longer hikes of two to three miles.
- Creek Paddling: Explore the tidal salt marshes surrounding Little St. Simons Island by kayak. 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. Please note guests with mobility issues may not be able to kayak during their visit.

LODGING



THE LODGE AT LITTLE ST. SIMONS

The Lodge is a collection of cabins with shared-living room spaces, plus rooms in the main lodge itself. Everything is within easy walking distance of the main lodge where you'll have meals.

Most building are historic and have a short flight of stairs at the entrance. The two main Lodge rooms include a ramp.



ITINERARY, CONT.

- **Creek Fishing:** See what's biting in the tidal creeks; the Lodge provides spin gear and fly rods, bait, and artificial lures for a variety of species including redfish, flounder, or seatrout. While the tidal creeks are not nearly as productive as in the winter, the occasional catch can still be made.
- **Reptile-Amphibian Safari:** Enjoy a guided truck excursion to a variety of habitats in search of native reptiles and amphibians.
- **South End Adventure:** Go on a truck 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 a truck excursion to the viewing towers and blinds at Myrtle Pond. We will expect to see least bitterns, glossy ibis, black necked stilts, and yellowlegs to name a few. Viewing blinds are ground level, but towers do require climbing stairs.
- **Shorebirding:** Join one of our naturalists for a shorebirding excursion out at our 7 miles of pristine beach habitat.
- **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. Please note that guests with mobility issues will be unlikely to enjoy a bike tour of the island due to road conditions.
- **Boat Tour on Nearby Waterways:** Join Island naturalists on a boat-based excursion through tidal creeks and salt marsh habitat.
- **Garden Walk:** Enjoy a guided walk through our Organic Garden and learn about the herbs, vegetables, flowers, fruits, cover crops, and compost.
- **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.
- If you are seeking a quieter afternoon, simply relax on the banks of Mosquito Creek under a live oak with a good book.
- Please note: All truck-based activities and shuttles require the mobility to be able to get up via a small set of stairs and ride in the back of a modified 4x4 truck.

DAY 7 | We hope that you have enjoyed your stay on Little St. Simons Island and will return home with many memories! After breakfast, the boat between the island and the marina will depart at 10:00 a.m. 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.



PRICE DETAIL

Double Occupancy \$3,538
Single Occupancy: \$5,925

Price is based on a minimum of 24 travelers. Trip size not to exceed 30 travelers.

Price **includes** all lodging, transportation to and from the Lodge at LSSI, activities, tips, meals, TNC expert staff, and local guides. Price does **not include** your roundtrip flight to Jacksonville.

PLEASE NOTE: This itinerary is representative of your trip, and like all-natural history excursions, activities are subject to modification based on weather, tides and unforeseen events and the Lodge will be working to confirm the exact itinerary much closer to departure when some of the unknown factors can be estimated. We will do our best to keep you informed on any necessary changes.

The Lodge on Little St Simons Island is a small operation and a historic property, and guests attending events here should be prepared for a rustic experience. A certain amount of mobility is required to enjoy a visit here. The ecolodge is situated on the creek and visiting the beach on your own does require a two-mile bike ride. As well, the Island is a haven for all sorts of wildlife, including mosquitoes. Due to our conservation efforts, we do not spray, and they are abundant.

For more information on what to expect during a stay, please see the FAQ page on the website:

www.littlestsimonsisland.com/faq