



Dear Educator,

The Southeast Region Fisheries Program is proud to offer an exciting new program that offers children the opportunity to have meaningful interactions with fish and aquatic habitats. The Biologist-in-Training program is an experiential environmental education curriculum that utilizes National Fish Hatcheries and streams, lakes, ponds and rivers as outdoor classrooms.

An engaging 20-page activity booklet guides children through five interactive explorations of fish and aquatic environments. Each of the activities promotes stewardship and the intrinsic value of aquatic habitats, builds skills of observation, and teaches different methods of acquiring, organizing and assessing biological information. In the final activity, children will link with a mentor in the field of biology. Upon completion of the activities students will receive an official certificate of accomplishment and a sticker or patch. We hope this incentive provides a sense of pride, ownership, and empowerment to act to help conserve and protect aquatic resources.

The BiT program may be accomplished in a day at any National Fish Hatchery in the southeast, but also anywhere that water flows. The activities are aligned with national education standards for upper elementary age students; however, the program is designed to be open-ended and adaptable for lower elementary and middle school students. It is ideal for school groups, home school groups, Scout groups, 4-H groups and many others.

The BiT program also includes extension activities and materials based on nationally recognized environmental education curricula. The extension activities come ready-to-use in BiT bins that contain all the necessary props and materials. They may be used during a visit to the hatchery, or borrowed from the hatchery for use in your classroom or another off-site location.

All of the materials listed above, including BiT activity guides, BiT bins and achievement awards are available for use through 21 Fisheries field stations across the Southeast. There is no charge for any of the program materials.

For more information on the Biologist-in-Training program, please feel free to contact me. I will gladly answer any questions you may have and can provide you with further information on the program.

I look forward to your partnership in launching BiT in your community and helping our youth to make exciting connections with nature!

Sincerely,

Judy Toppins
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