



Natural Selections

BIRDING, WILDLIFE, AND PHOTO TOURS



Meso-American Barrier Reef

Exploring South Water Caye over three days offers a profound appreciation for the beauty and ecological importance of Belize's marine environments. South Water Caye, located within the South Water Caye Marine Reserve, is part of the largest marine protected area in Belize and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Spanning 117,878 acres, the reserve encompasses a variety of marine and coastal habitats, supporting a rich diversity of species.

South Water Caye Sketching Extension with Catherine Hamilton and Debby Kaspari

Habitats at South Water Caye includes Coral Reefs, Seagrass Beds, Mangroves, Open water and Sandy Shores and guests will enjoy all this, as well as the personal sketching instruction and guidance of Catherine Hamilton and Debby Kaspari.

3 Nights/4 Days

3 Night/4 Day Itinerary

Tour Overview

Day 1: Transfer to South Water Caye

Day 2: Sunrise sketching, mangrove tour, afternoon snorkeling

Day 3: Beach walk sketching and snorkeling

Day 4: Early morning departure for BZE and departure flights.

Day 1, Arrival and Initial Exploration:

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The habitat at South Water Caye includes coral reefs, seagrass beds, mangroves, open water and sandy shores. This extension should be both relaxing and invigorating. Snorkeling, beach time, and sketching palms, architecture, waves, and water, are all open for exploring. We can also try a jump into snorkel sketching!

Early Afternoon:

Arrival: Arrive at South Water Caye via boat.

Accommodation Check-in: We will check into our accommodations at a relaxed pace.

Initial Exploration: We will leisurely walk around the island to scout potential sketching spots, bringing small sketchbooks for quick thumbnail sketches and notes.

Light Sketching Session: Choosing a spot on the beach to do some warm-up sketches of the shoreline, we will focus on water, sand, palm trees, and bright white cottages. Think Winslow Homer in his Bahama days!

Late afternoon:

Sunset Sketching: Capturing the dramatic colors and changing light as the sun sets over the water, sketch or relax.

Evening:

We will finish the day with some stargazing on the beach. The remote location offers minimal light pollution, providing a clear view of the night sky.

Dinner: Relax with a nice dinner.

Before or after dinner, it's always fun to review sketches from the day and plan spots and subjects for the next day.

Day 2, Sunrise Sketching, Snorkeling and Mangroves:

Early Morning:

Sunrise Sketching: We will plan to wake up early to capture the sunrise, and to focus on the changing colors and the calmness of the early

morning sea. Flocks of seabirds can often be seen fishing over the calm sea, adding dimension to our sketches.

Bird Watching: we will always keep our eye out for birds or other wildlife around the island to sketch during the quiet morning hours.

Beach and Shoreline: Choosing a new spot along the beach to capture different perspectives of the shoreline, we will pay attention to textures and patterns in the sand and water. From atop a pier, we should glean new ideas and angles from the marine wildlife exploring the shallow waters.

Mangrove Exploration: Mangroves are perfect for sketching intricate root systems as well as their shadows and reflections in the water. As a bonus, they also often shelter a lot of bird and marine life. Opportunities for great underwater photos can arise!

Birds to Lookout for this morning include; Brown Pelican, Magnificent Frigatebird, Royal Tern, Sandwich Tern, Laughing Gull, Black-necked Stilt, Mangrove Warbler, Green Heron, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Great Egret, Tricolored Heron, Osprey, and more.

Afternoon:

Snorkeling Trip: For participants who would like to, we will head out for a snorkeling session to observe the vibrant marine life. We can practice making mental notes and quick sketches if possible, or use an underwater camera for reference. If

conditions are calm, we will even try sketching underwater! We will provide the materials for this.

Sketching Marine Life: Back on land, we will find a shaded spot and add color to the sketches of marine life you observed, or sketch from your underwater photos.

Late Afternoon Botanical Sketching: As long as you are still awake, we will explore the island's vegetation and sketch the local flora, to focus on capturing the unique shapes, textures and details of the plants. If there are any interesting buildings or structures on the island, maybe some distant islands above the water, or even the landscape beyond the coast, we can always spend some time sketching them.

Species to look out for on snorkeling tour include; Parrotfish, Queen Angelfish, Nurse Shark, Southern Stingray, Hawksbill Turtle, Manatee, Snapper, Barracuda, Spotted Eagle Ray, Sea Cucumbers, Starfish and others.

Day 3, Beach, Snorkeling, Sketching:

Morning:

Beach Walk and Sketching: Peacefully walking along the beach, we will sketch scenes that catch our eye, focusing on movement and light. We can gather shells and driftwood for sketching (but will be sure to leave them where they belong when we are done).

Later, a boat trip to a nearby reef will provide opportunities to sketch or photograph the vibrant underwater

scenes from the boat or while snorkeling.

Afternoon:

Focused Sketching Session: we can dedicate time to your favorite sketching spot and work on a more detailed piece, incorporating elements from your previous sketches and notes.

Wrap-up Session: We will find a quiet place to review all your sketches from the trip and finishing touches to any pieces that need it.!

Day 4, Early morning departure for BZE airport

Included in this itinerary:

Included for the duration of this itinerary:

Price includes accommodations and meals, guide and entrance fees to parks, ground transportation and all tours described within.

Not Included:

Personal items such as tips, international airfare, alcoholic beverages, gift shop, laundry, etc. are not included.

Travel insurance:

We highly recommend purchasing travel insurance. In the event that you need to cancel your trip due to medical or other reasons, this insurance will protect you. Please see:

<https://www.naturalselectionstours.com/travel-insurance/> for details.



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