Mr. Ligon’s seventh grade class visited the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in VA at VIMS on June 6th, 2013 for a field experience! Students arrived on campus, and were introduced to oyster reef communities through a lab exercise. Students used dichotomous keys and microscopes to aid in identifying different species. Students had to identify at least four different organisms and then draw a labeled sketch in their science journal.

**Oyster Reef Species List**

- Mud crab
- Oyster flatworm
- Naked goby
- Blood worm
- Blue crab
- Skilletfish
- Amphipod
- Sea squirt
- Freckled paddle worm
- American eel
- Limy tube worm
- Mud snail
- Oyster
- Red gilled mud worm
- Barnacle
- Elgrass
- Polychaete worm
- Lacy crust bryozoan
- Tapered red weed
- White anemone
- Sea lettuce
- Grass shrimp
- Slipper shell
- Salt marsh flea
- Spined back scud
- Spindle shape turret snail
- Green striped anemone
- Skilletfish eggs
Students also explored the shallow water habitats of the York River. Before getting in the water the THMS students tested the water salinity and turbidity to see what the water conditions were for the organisms living there. Students used seine and dip nets to collect a variety of species and studied them in an aquarium before letting them go at the end of the day! This group even identified 50 different species throughout the day!

**Shallow Water Species List**

- Anchovy
- Spot
- Striped killifish
- Pipefish
- Blue fish
- Croaker
- Isopod
- Summer flounder
- Golden star tunicate
- Green bead tunicate
- Atlantic silverside
- Mummichog
- Ribbed mussel
- Skeleton shrimp
- Hermit crab
- Bryozoan
- Widgen grass
- Elongate eelgrass isopod
- Needlefish
- Comb jelly
- Green striped anemone
- Lady bug
- Tomato
- Blue crab
- Skilletfish
- Amphipod
- Sea squirt
- American eel
- Mud snail
- Barnacle
- Eelgrass
- Tapered red weed
- White anemone
- Sea lettuce
- Grass shrimp

**Salinity:** 25ppt  
**Turbidity:** 15cm
Thanks for a great day
Thomas Hunter Middle School
7th graders!