

Vocabulary

- **Archaeological Site** – A place where human activity occurred and cultural material was deposited.
- **Archaeology** – The scientific study of past human cultures by analyzing material remains (sites and artifacts) that people left behind.
- **Barrier Island** – An island off the coast that protects the mainland from storms and erosion.
- **Blue Ridge** – South Carolina's smallest landform region located in the northwestern corner of state. It is characterized by its rugged, mountainous topography featuring steep slopes, narrow valleys, and waterfalls.
- **Brevard Zone** – A fault line that runs through South Carolina, separating the Piedmont from the Blue Ridge.
- **Carolina Bay** – Oval-shaped depressions that appear like isolated swamps found in the Coastal Plain. Oriented northwest to southeast, the origin of these mysterious features is unknown.
- **Coastal Plain** – South Carolina's largest landform region, covering nearly two-thirds of the state's total area. Subdivided into the Inner Coastal Plain and the Outer Coastal Plain, the region is characterized by rivers, floodplains, and swamps, and features a very flat topography before transitioning to gently rolling hills near the Sandhills.

- **Coastal Zone** – A landform region that extends from the coastline to about ten miles inland. Characterized by maritime forests, barrier islands, and salt marshes, it is constantly affected by tides, currents, and coastal storms.
- **Cultural Landscape** – A geographic area including both natural and cultural resources created by culture operating through time, in the form of new people groups or technology imprinting itself on the natural environment.
- **Cultural Resources** – Evidence of past human activity. They include archaeological sites, historic homes, battlefields, burial grounds, shipwrecks, and historic and precontact artifacts.
- **Culture** – A set of learned beliefs, values and behaviors or way of life shared by members of a society.
- **Ecosystem** – A system formed by the interaction between and among organisms and the physical environment.
- **Fall Line (Fall Zone)** – a narrow zone that marks the geological boundary between an upland region and a plain, distinguished by the occurrence of waterfalls and rapids where streams and rivers cross it.
- **Glacier** – a large, slow moving mass of ice.
- **Heritage Preserve** – a property protected for its cultural and/or natural features.
- **Landscape** – A part of the Earth’s surface. Consists of the geographic features that mark, or are characteristic of, a particular place.
- **Monadnock** – An isolated hill or mountain made of erosion resistant rock that rises above the lesser-resistant surrounding landscape.
- **Piedmont** – Meaning “foot of the mountain” in French, the Piedmont is the second largest landform region in South Carolina, covering around one-third of the state’s total area. It is characterized by its hilly topography and gently sloped river valleys.
- **Place** – The physical and human characteristics of a location. A space or location with meaning.
- **Pleistocene** – The first epoch of the Quaternary Period, which lasted from 2.6 million years ago to 11,700 years ago. This time period includes the most recent ice age.
- **Sandhills** – A narrow region that runs southwest to northeast across the state. Characterized by its sandy soil and gentle, hilly topography, it was created by the remnants of ancient beaches and sand dunes.
- **Sassafras Mountain** – The highest point in South Carolina, located on the North Carolina border in Pickens County.
- **Shell Rings** – Large circular or semi-circular deposits of shell. In the southeastern United States these structures date to the Late Archaic period (5,000 to 3,000 years ago) and are found along the coasts of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.
- **Topography** – the arrangement of the natural and artificial physical features of an area.
- **Xeric** – An environment containing little moisture.