



HANA AND ARTHUR GINZBARG

nature discovery center

WINTER 24-25

# PROGRAM GUIDE

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## MISSION

To ignite lifelong curiosity, understanding, and respect for nature through education.

## WINTER 2024-25

### DISCOVERY ROOM HOURS

Tuesday through Thursday  
10 am - noon and 4 - 6 pm

## ADMISSION IS FREE

Donations are appreciated. Groups of six or more children call for an appointment.


## PARK & NATURE PLAY AREA HOURS


5 am to 9:30 pm DAILY

Russ Pitman Park is a City of Bellaire Park. Dogs, alcohol, and smoking are prohibited by city ordinance.

## VISIT US ONLINE

[naturediscoverycenter.org](http://naturediscoverycenter.org)

 [NatureDiscoveryCenter](https://www.facebook.com/NatureDiscoveryCenter)

 [naturediscoverycenter](https://www.instagram.com/naturediscoverycenter)

nature discovery center  
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## Ambassador Alligator News

In late October, Head Naturalist Eric Duran traveled down to Brazos Bend State Park to release our Ambassador Alligator Krosis back into the wild. Krosis came to us from Brazos Bend in fall 2023 after hatching from a clutch of eggs laid too close to a trail to remain in the wild safely. Krosis outgrew the Angelo McNulty-Portnoy Alligator Enclosure after just a year in our care, and was healthy, robust, and ready to be released back in nature.



While at Brazos Bend, Eric picked up a cute new 3 month old baby alligator who is already settling in to our alligator enclosure. Our new alligator came from a nest that was flooded out during a fall storm. Some eggs from this nest were successfully rescued by Brazos Bend staff and we are lucky enough to get the honor of raising one of the rescued babies up for eventual release. Come by for a visit soon!



## Say Hello to Cecilia

We're super excited to welcome Cecilia Silva to the NDC family as our new Education Specialist.

Cecilia Silva is a native Houstonian with a proud Central American heritage. She is an experienced naturalist and educator and is passionate about sharing her nature knowledge with others. Cecilia strives to create engaging learning experiences for people of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds. She has recently taken an interest in the beneficial and medicinal properties of the natural world. Come say hi!

## Annual NDC Member Meeting & Holiday Gathering

Tuesday, December 3 from 7-9 pm

Current NDC Members, come join us for news of how the Center fared in 2023 and to hear our plans for the future. Please stay to vote on our 2024 NDC Board of Directors! Festive refreshments will be served at this adult-only event.

Members, you will be receiving an email invite to attend this event. Please RSVP with the link provided in the email. Thanks!

Advance registration required unless otherwise noted.

## Curious Kids (3 - 5 yrs old with adult)

Tuesdays - see class times below

Preschoolers and their adult caregivers learn basic science concepts in hands-on classes that encourage and celebrate natural curiosity! Curious Kids lessons may incorporate live animals, plants, natural objects, crafts, puppets, stories, and nature walks.

### Remaining 2024 Schedule: Tuesdays at 10 am

- 12/03 – Bunny Buddies - 10 am
- 12/10 – Winter Nature - 10 am
- 12/17 – Winter Crafts - 10 am

### Winter/Spring 2025: Tuesdays at 4 pm

- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1/21 – Furry Friends     | 3/18 – Fabulous Fungi     |
| 1/28 – Squeaky Squirrels | 3/25 – Invertebrates      |
| 2/04 – Wild Cats         | 4/01 – In the Garden      |
| 2/11 – Animal Habitats   | 4/08 – Pond Pals          |
| 2/18 – Animal Defenses   | 4/15 – Terrific Turtles   |
| 2/25 – Dinosaurs         | 4/22 – Spring Nature      |
| 3/04 – What Is Alive?    | 4/29 – Spring Wildflowers |
| ~ SPRING BREAK WEEK ~    | 5/06 – Spring Butterflies |
|                          | 5/13 – Reptile Rendezvous |

Cost/Class: \$15 member / \$20 non-member

## Mess Makers (3 - 7 yrs old with adult)

Sundays - 10 am or 1 pm

Messy, sensory play is an important part of child development. Together with NDC staff and volunteers, you will explore and create with messy things like pumpkin guts, paint, and sticks. We will make works of art as well as just good old messy fun. We'll meet at the Pavilions behind the Center and plan to hold class outdoors.

### 2025 Dates & Topics:

- 01/12 - Snow & Ice
- 01/26 - Feathers & Fish\*
- 02/16 - Bubbles & Foam\*
- 03/9 – Painting Nature
- 03/23 – Fairy Fun
- 04/13 – Colorful Messes\*
- 05/04 – Sand & Soil\*



\*= high potential for head to toe mess

Cost/Class: \$22 member / \$27 non-member

## Winter Day Camps (5 - 10 yrs old)

Send the kids with their lunch and a refillable water bottle and we'll do the rest. Your children will be engaged and entertained as they play games, create nature crafts, encounter live animals, explore the park and more in our science and nature themed day camps.

Camps run from 9 am to 3 pm. We do not provide pre or post camp care.

### 2024/2025 Dates & Topics:

- |                       |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 12/23 - Winter Nature | 01/02 - Animal Habitats   |
| 12/26 - Mammals       | 01/03 - Food Webs         |
| 12/27 - Trees         | 01/06 - Animal Coloration |
| 12/30 - Insects       | 01/20 - Texas Animals     |
| 12/31 - Birds         | 02/14 - Reptiles          |
|                       | 02/17 - Amphibians        |

Cost: \$75 member / \$85 non-member per day



## Nature Story Time FREE

Every Wednesday at 4 pm

Stories, simple crafts, specimens and more for preschoolers and their caregivers.

**Note that this program is occasionally canceled due to program conflicts and staffing shortages. Please keep your eye on Facebook or Instagram for schedule updates.**

💧 = Drop in program. Call 713.667.6550 if you are coming in a large group. Meet at the Center unless otherwise noted.

Advance registration required unless otherwise noted.

## Special Winter Nature Story Time

Wednesday, December 11 from 4-5 pm

Come celebrate winter with NDC staff during a special Winter Nature Story Time. We'll share winter nature themed stories, guide you through seasonal crafts, and enjoy festive cookies. As an added treat, we'll serve hot cocoa with fun mix-ins.

This event is intended for preschoolers and their caregivers. **This is not a drop off event. Attendees of all ages must register and pay. All kids must be accompanied by an adult.**

Cost: \$6 member / \$12 non-member

## Winter Nature Hike

Saturday, December 21 at 2 pm

Join Eric at the front door for an exploration of winter nature out in the park. As you walk, you'll look for, identify, and appreciate the diversity of animals that overwinter here or live in the park year-round and the habitat resources that support them through the winter.

Cost: \$5 member / \$10 non-member



## Meet the Animals

Saturday, January 11 at 2 pm - Furry Friends

Get to know our animals with up close and personal animal encounters hosted by Head Naturalist Eric Duran!

Each family-friendly Meet the Animals session includes:

- hands-on exposure to live animals and/or specimens
- an informal talk about the animal's biology and behavior
- a Q/A period with one of our Staff Naturalists.

Cost: \$5 member / \$10 non-member

## Family Campfire Night

Friday, January 24 from 6 – 8:30 pm

Our Campfire Night program hosted by NDC Staff includes hotdogs and s'mores over a camp fire at the Pavilion Patio behind the Center and a guided night hike in the park.

**Age Restrictions:** This program is intended for families. The minimum age is 4 years old. All attending children must be accompanied by an attending adult. All attendees must be registered and must pay for their spots.

Cost: \$35/person



## Bubble Day FREE

Saturday, February 8 from 1 to 3 pm

The Center's front lawn, Pecan Grove, and the sidewalks around the Center will be set up with everything your kids need for a fun filled afternoon of outdoor play! You can feel like a kid again, too as you join them playing with bubbles, hula hoops, jump ropes, and sidewalk chalk.

Kids should bring refillable water bottles.

**Note: This is NOT a drop off event. Adult supervision is required.**



## Tree Identification Walks FREE

Saturdays, December 7, January 4, & February 1 at 10 am

Join Master Naturalist and tree lover Jim McKee, for his monthly Tree Walks to discover more about some of the many species of trees that live in Russ Pitman Park. Jim is always happy to share his knowledge and interesting historical facts about trees as well as help you learn how to identify them.

## Upcoming Bird Walks

Join us for a daytime stroll in the park to enjoy our resident and migrant birds this fall and winter. Call by 10 am to borrow binoculars. We don't stop for lunch, but you can picnic in the park before or after these lunchtime walks.

## Monthly Winter Bird Walks FREE

Wednesdays, December 4, January 8, & February 5 from Noon to 1:15 pm

## Lunch with the Birds (LWTB) FREE

Wednesdays, March 5 - April 30 from Noon to 1:15 pm

## Willow Waterhole Monthly Bird Survey FREE

Saturdays, Jan 18, Feb 15, & Mar 15 at 8 am

The Nature Discovery Center and Houston Audubon partner to conduct the monthly Willow Waterhole bird survey on the 3rd Saturday of each month. We invite you to help out with this survey whether you're a novice or have birding experience!

Meet in the parking lot of the Gathering Place at 5310 South Willow Drive, Houston, TX 77035.



## Homeschool Classes (6 - 12 yr olds)

Scheduled Tuesdays - Saturdays between 10 am and 4 pm

Homeschoolers, are you looking for science and nature programs to enrich your students' semester? Homeschool classes are available for homeschool groups ages 6 to 12 on a variety of topics in the natural or biological sciences. Head Naturalist and Educator Eric Duran is willing to work with your homeschool group to offer programs that meet your science curriculum needs in specific content areas.

These 1.5 hour classes include a mix of classroom time, outside exploration, live animal time, art craft, and nature games. You can choose individual classes a la carte or design a multi-class series that spans the fall semester.

### Homeschool Class Topics:

- Living Things
- Plants
- Trees
- Edible Wild Plants
- Mushrooms & other Fungi
- Animals
- Native Texas Animals
- Vertebrates
- Invertebrates
- Fish
- Aquatic Animals
- Snakes
- Turtles
- Birds
- Mammals
- Seasonal Nature
- Habitats
- Food Webs

### Topics Suggested for Spring / early Fall

- Flowers
- Insects
- Butterflies
- Frogs & other Amphibians
- Reptiles

Other nature topics are available upon request

Cost/Class: \$15/student

Class size: 8 to 15 kids total

Please fill out an [Inquiry Form](#) on our website.

# BOOKABLE PROGRAMS cont'd

Please fill out an Inquiry Form on our website.

## Scout Programs

Scheduled based on staff and program space availability.

We offer a variety of programs to help your Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts complete badge, journey, or achievement requirements. Bring your group of 5 or more scouts for an engaging program in the beautiful setting of our nature park. Each program satisfies all of the requirements for that badge or achievement. Scout program prices include a Nature Discovery Center fun patch for each participating scout!

*Note, however, that we do not provide earned Girl/Cub Scout badges for your scouts. You will need to purchase them at the Scout Shop.*

### Girl Scout Programs

- **Daisy** - 45 to 60 minute programs
  - **Rosie & Clover Petals**
  - **Animal Observer, EcoLearner & Shapes in Nature**
- **Brownie** - 1.5 hour programs
  - **Senses, Outdoor Adventurer, Bugs, Eco Friends, & Hiker**
- **Junior** - 1.5 hour programs
  - **Animal Habitats, Flowers**
- **Cadette** - 1.5 hour programs
  - **Trees**

### Cub Scout Programs

- **Tiger** - 45 to 60 minute programs
  - **Tigers in the Wild**
- **Wolf** - 1.5 hour programs
  - **Paws on the Path**
- **Bear** - 1.5 hour programs
  - **Fur, Feathers, & Ferns**
- **Webelos** - 1.5 hour programs
  - **Into the Wild, Into the Woods**

## Outreach Programs

Can't bring your group to the NDC? We'll come to you!

**Classroom or library audience based programs** last about 45 minutes depending on group size and participation. Topics include: Bunny Buddies, Join the Insect Club, Warm and Fuzzy: Mammals, Scales & Tails, and Back to the Bone.

**Festival style table-top outreaches** are available for Science Nights and other such events.

## Birthday Parties

See website for full details including party policies & pricing.

*Note: You must be a Family Level or higher NDC Member to hold a party at the Center.*

Birthday parties at the Center include reserved use of our outdoor Pavilion Area for a 2 hour party with your guests, as well as one party program option of your choice (see below). Our party programs each last about 45 minutes depending on the age and interest level of party guests.

Your total pavilion reservation time includes 30 minutes before and after your party to allow time for set-up and clean-up. For example, if your party is from 10 am – 12 pm you can arrive to set up at 9:30 am and you can stay to clean up until 12:30 pm.

**Party times are:**

**Fridays 4 - 6 pm**

**Saturdays & Sundays 10 am - 12, 1 - 3 pm, & 4 - 6 pm**

**Animal Themed Programs** - Live animals and specimens from our collection help make our party programs a special experience for your birthday child and their guests. All programs end with a short nature hike.

- **Bunny Buddies** (ages 2 to 6)
- **Join the Insect Club** (ages 4 & up)
- **Scales & Tails** (ages 4 & up)
- **Butterflies & Blooms** (SEASONAL, ages 4 & up)
- **Furry & Fuzzy** (ages 4 & up)

**Mess Makers Programs** - Your birthday child and up to fourteen guests will bubble over with excitement or get covered in color in these parties designed for messy play fun! Best for ages 3 & up with parent participation.

- **Bubble Fun**
- **Color Blast**

**Enchanted Fairyland Birthday Program** - You and your guests will enjoy an enchanting time in the park as you hunt for fairy doors, create fairy themed crafts, and encounter a live animal that could be plucked straight from the setting of a fairy storybook. Best for ages 4 & up with parent participation.

**Discovery Room Tour** - One of our naturalists will guide 15 children and 2 adults through our Discovery Rooms, and will bring out live animals for the children to meet. After the tour, we'll head outside for a fun nature hike.

1 Mess Makers 10a, 1p Snow & Ice	2	3 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Curious Kids 10a Bunny Buddies Annual Member Meeting 7 - 9p	4 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Monthly Winter Bird Walk 12 noon Nature Storytime 4p	5 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p	6	7 Tree ID Walk 10a
8	9	10 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Curious Kids 10a Winter Nature	11 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Special Winter Nature Storytime 4p	12 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p	13	14
15 Mess Makers 10a, 1p Gingerbread Messes	16	17 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Curious Kids 10a Winter Crafts	18 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Nature Storytime 4p	19 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p	20	21 Winter Nature Hike 2p
22	23 Winter Break Day Camp: Winter Nature 9a - 3p	24 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p	25	26 Winter Break Day Camp: Mammals 9a - 3p	27 Winter Break Day Camp: Trees 9a - 3p	28
29	30 Winter Break Day Camp: Insects 9a - 3p	31 Winter Break Day Camp: Birds 9a - 3p	<h1>DECEMBER</h1>			

<h1>JANUARY</h1>			1	2 Winter Break Day Camp: Habitats 9a - 3p	3 Winter Break Day Camp: Food Webs 9a - 3p	4 Tree ID Walk 10a
5	6 Winter Break Day Camp: Animal Colors 9a - 3p	7 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p	8 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Monthly Winter Bird Walks 12n Nature Storytime 4p	9 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p	10	11 Meet the Animals: Furry Friends 2p
12 Mess Makers 10a, 1p Snow & Ice	13	14 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p	15 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Nature Storytime 4p	16 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p	17	18 Willow Waterhole Bird Survey 8a
19	20 Winter Break Day Camp: Texas Animals 9a - 3p	21 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Curious Kids 4p Furry Friends	22 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Nature Storytime 4p	23 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p	24 Family Campfire Night 7 - 9p	25
26 Mess Makers 10a, 1p Feathers & Fish	27	28 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Curious Kids 4p Squeaky Squirrels	29 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Nature Storytime 4p	30 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p	31	

<b>FEBRUARY</b>							1 Tree ID Walk 10a
2	3	4 Curious Kids 4p Wild Cats	5 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Monthly Winter Bird Walk 12 Noon Nature Storytime 4p	6 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p	7	8 Bubble Day 1 - 3p	
9	10	11 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Curious Kids 4p Animal Habitats	12 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Nature Storytime 4p	13 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p	14 Winter Break Day Camp: Reptiles 9a - 3p	15 Willow Waterhole Bird Survey 8a Spring Break Camp Registration Opens for NDC MEMBERS	
16 Mess Makers 10a, 1p Bubbles & Foam	17 Winter Break Day Camp: Amphibians 9a - 3p	18 Curious Kids 4p Animal Defenses	19 Nature Storytime 4p	20	21	22 Spring Break Camp Registration Opens for non members	
23 Summer Program Registration Opens for NDC MEMBERS	24	25 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Curious Kids 4p Dinosaurs	26 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p Nature Storytime 4p	27 Discovery Rooms 10a - 12n, 4 - 6p	28		

# SAVE THE DATES

## Spring Break Day Camps

Spring Break Camps will be offered **March 10 - 14** from 9 am to 3 pm each day. Look for registration to open **February 15** for members and **February 22** for non-members.

## 100th Birthday Bash

Saturday, April 5 from 11 am – 3 pm



The NDC is excited to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the construction of the historic Henshaw House which now serves as our headquarters and indoor program space. Join us for a birthday party like no other with food, refreshments, entertainment, and of course nature crafts and programs for the whole family!

## Spring Fling

Saturday, April 26 from 10 am – 3 pm

Join us for our annual Spring Fling event celebrating nature in the park. Animal encounters, exhibitors, crafts, nature walks and more will make for a fun family outing!

## Summer Program Registration

Registration for our Summer Science Camps and Mess Makers classes will open to members on **February 23** and will open to non-members on **March 1**. Look for dates and topics on our website at <https://naturediscoverycenter.org/kids-programs/>

## Summer Teen Volunteer Position Announcements & Application Deadline

We will announce our Summer Teen Volunteer Positions by **April 1** when the Summer Teen Application Form will become available online. Applicants for our Summer Teen Volunteer Program must submit their online applications by **April 30**. We will then begin reviewing applications, contacting teens for interviews, and scheduling required training sessions. Applicants will be notified whether or not they have been accepted by May 3.



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# nature discovery center

7112 NEWCASTLE ST  
BELLAIRE, TX 77401

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



## WINTER 2024-2025 PROGRAM GUIDE



**Blossom**  
2020-2024

