



nature discovery center WINDER



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WINTER 2025/2026 DISCOVERY ROOM HOURS

Tuesday through Saturday 1 - 5:30 pm

ADMISSION IS FREE

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

YEARROUND PARK & NATURE PLAY AREA HOURS

Daily 5 am - 9:30 pm

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

MISSION

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

Nature Discovery Center, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization funded by charitable contributions, memberships, and program fees.

VISIT US ONLINE







nature discovery center 7112 NEWCASTLE BELLAIRE, TX 77401 T 713.667.6550

Holiday Market

December 6 | 10a - 3p

Sip a cup of hot chocolate with decadent mix-ins or snack on food truck fare, popcorn, and other snacks as you stroll through a festive holiday market filled with goods from local vendors that are sure to make great gifts.

Kids can make a winter nature craft, enjoy up close animal encounters, or register ahead to participate in our Gingerbread Habitats event (for ages 3 to 8). Don't miss a cute holiday photo op to share with family and friends!

Admission to the Holiday Market is FREE. In the holiday spirit, we will have a giving tree for our beloved animal ambassadors. Please consider making a gift of hay for Clover, crickets for Blaze, bananas for Buttercup, or something special for any of our other hard-working animal friends!

Come prepared to be merry rain or shine!

Gingerbread Habitats

December 6 | 10a & 2p

Ages: 3 to 8 with adult caregiver

Come learn about animal habitats and then construct and decorate edible habitats for a trio of woodland gingerbread cookie animals using frosting, sprinkles, pretzel twists, sugar cones, gingerbread cake pops, a sprinkling of powdered sugar "snow" and more! After snapping some pictures of your sweet scenes, you'll take home your winter wonderland habitats in cake boxes we'll provide as part of our Gingerbread Habitat Kit.

Cost: Member \$25 / Nonmember \$30

Advance Registration Required. Limit 15 kids per session.

Note: This event will involve unavoidable exposure to wheat, milk, soy, nuts, and other potential allergens.



Advance registration required unless otherwise noted.

Pollywogs (0 - 2 yrs old with adult)

Select Tuesdays | 10:30 am

Experience nature with your little one! Through a mix of stories, live animal encounters, sensory play, trail exploration, and more we hope to ignite a lifelong love of the outdoors in your little pollywogs! While some activities will be structured, our sessions will also incorporate time for unstructured experiences that are critical in developing curious kids.

2026 Dates & Topics:

01/22 – Littles in the Leaves

02/26 - Critters that Crawl

03/26 - Feeling It! Barefoot Babes, Tactile Trails, Furry Friends

04/23 – Color in Nature

Cost: Member FREE / Nonmember \$5

Naturally Messy (3 - 7 yrs old with adult)

Select Sundays | 10 am or 1 pm

This program highlights nature's mess makers with classroom lessons about the biology and behavior of animals (and sometimes plants) that are known to make messes. These messes found in nature will serve as inspiration for the messes we make together outside at the pavilions after our lesson.

2026 Dates & Topics:

01/11- So Slimy 03/08 – Plants Make Paint? 02/08 – Making Tracks 04/12 – Foamy Friends

Cost: Member \$22 / Nonmember \$27

Mess Makers (3 - 7 yrs old with adult)

Select 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 materials, making works of ephemeral and take-home art as well as just making good old messy fun. After we make messes together, you'll go home *relatively* clean!

2026 Dates & Topics:

01/25 – Clay Play 03/22 – All the Feels 02/22 – Colorful Messes* 04/26 – Messes in Motion*

*= highest potential for head-to-toe mess

Campfire Night Kids Night Out

(6 to 12 years old)

Friday, December 12 | 6 – 9 pm

Drop the kids off for a night of fun in the great outdoors! There will be a naturalist craft, night hike, animal encounters, outdoor games, hot dogs*, & s'mores*!

Cost: Member \$40 / Nonmember \$50

Special Notes: *GF/V options available upon advance request. This program is subject to cancellation due to inclement weather.



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.

2025/2026 Dates & Topics:

12/22 - Furry Friends 01/02 - Animal Extravaganza!

12/23 - Winter Nature 01/19 – Habitats

12/29 - Feathered Friends 02/13 – Incredible Insects 12/30 - Tree Life 02/16 – Scaly & Slimy

Cost per day: Member \$70 / Nonmember \$90





Advance registration required unless otherwise noted.



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

Special Winter Nature Story Time

Wednesday, December 10 | 4 - 5 pm

Celebrate winter with NDC staff during a special Winter Nature Story Time. We'll share winter nature themed stories, guide you through a seasonal craft, and enjoy festive cookies and 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/person: Member \$6 / Nonmember \$12

Meet the Animals

Select Saturdays | 2 pm

January 24 - Creepy Crawlies (Insects & Spiders) March 21 - Reptile Rendezvous May 16 – Furry & Fuzzy (Mammals)

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/person: Member \$5 / Nonmember \$10



Family Campfire Night

Friday, February 6 | 6 - 8:30 pm

Come enjoy a night out in the park with hotdogs* and s'mores* over the campfire and a guided night hike.

Age Restrictions: This program is intended for families with kids ages 4+. All children must be accompanied by an adult. All attendees must be registered and must pay for their spots.

Cost/person: Member \$20 / Nonmember \$25

Special Notes: Please advise us of any vegans/vegetarians in your group. This program is subject to cancellation due to inclement weather.



Great Backyard Bird Count • FREE



Saturday, February 14 | 9 - 10:30 am

Ages: All ages are welcome as long as kids are supervised.

Participants in the free local event will join tens of thousands of volunteers of all levels of birding experience all around the world who will be counting birds in their own backyards, local parks, or wildlife refuges. Bring a pair of binoculars or call or e-mail the Center (713.667.6550) at least a day ahead of time if you need to borrow a pair.

Bubble Day • FREE





Saturday, February 14 | 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.

IADULTS

Annual NDC Member Meeting & Holiday Gathering

Tuesday, December 2 | 6 - 8 pm

Current NDC Members, come join us for news of how the Center fared in 2025, hear our plans for the future, and vote on our Executive slate for our 2026 NDC Board of Directors! Festive refreshments will be served at this adult-only event. Members, please RSVP to the link in your email invite. Thanks!

Upcoming Bird Walks

Join us for a morning stroll in the park to enjoy our resident birds this winter and visiting migrants this spring.

Monthly Winter Bird Walks • FREE



Select Wednesdays December 3, January 7, & February 4 | 8:30 am

Birding After Breakfast

Wednesdays, February 25 - May 6 | 8:30 am



Tree Identification Walks • FREE



First Saturdays | 10 am

December 6, January 3, & February 7

Any season is a great season to learn about trees! Jim McKee, a Master Naturalist, tree lover, and bird watcher will be leading more walks throughout the year to teach us how to identify the trees that live here in Russ Pitman Park. You'll learn how to use leaf, bark, twig characteristics, and more to identify local trees.



Willow Waterhole Bird Survey • FREE



Saturdays | January 18, February 15, & March 15 | 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.

Park Workday Volunteers Needed

Thursdays | December 4 - March 5 | 10 to 11:30 am

Help us plant natives, remove invasives, cut back foliage, maintain park trails, and more! No experience necessary. Elzora will guide you. Bring a refillable water bottle, dress for the weather, and expect to get a little dirty!

Individuals and groups are welcome!

Contact Elzora, our Park Steward, if you'd like to help: erobinson@naturediscoverycenter.org



BOOKABLE PROGRAMS



Homeschool Classes (6 - 12 yr olds)

Scheduled Tuesdays - Saturdays | between 10 am & 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
- Frogs & other Amphibians
- Insects
- Reptiles
- Butterflies

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.

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.

Visit our website to register today!

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	1	2 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	3 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	4 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	5 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	6 Discovery Rooms
		Curious Kids Furry Friends 4p	Monthly Winter Bird Walk 8:30a	Park Work Day 10a		Holiday Market 10a - 3p Gingerbread Habitats
		Annual Member Meeting 6 - 8p	Nature Storytime 4p			10a & 2p Tree ID Walk 10a
7	8	9 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	10 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	11 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	12 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	13 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p
		Curious Kids Winter Nature 4p		Park Work Day 10a		
		Winter Nature 4p	Special Winter Nature Storytime 4p		Campfire Kids Night Out 6 - 9p	
14	15	16 Discovery Rooms	17 Discovery Rooms	18 Discovery Rooms	19 Discovery Rooms	20 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p
		Curious Kids Winter Crafts 4p		Park Work Day 10a		
			Nature Storytime 4p			
21	22	23 DR CLOSED	24 DR CLOSED	25 DR CLOSED	26 DR CLOSED	27 Discovery Rooms
	Winter Break Day Camp: Furry Friends 9a - 3p	Winter Break Day Camp: Winter Nature 9a - 3p				
28	29	30 DR CLOSED	31 DR CLOSED			32
	Winter Break Day Camp: Feathered Friends 9a - 3p	Winter Break Day Camp: Tree Life 9a - 3p		DE	EC	**

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4	5	6	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	7 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	8	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	9	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	10	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p
				Monthly Winter Bird Walks 8:30a	Park	Work Day 10a				
				Nature Storytime 4p						
11	12	13	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	14 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	15	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	16	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	17	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p
Naturally Messy					Park	Work Day 10a				w Waterhole
So Slimy 10a, 1p				Nature Storytime 4p	Reg	nmer Program istration Opens NDC MEMBERS			Bird	Survey 8a
18	19	20	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	21 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	22	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	23	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	24	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p
	Winter Break					Work Day 10a				the Animals:
	Day Camp: Habitats 9a - 3p			Nature Storytime 4p	,	wogs es in the Leaves Da		ly Campfire t 7 - 9p	Cree	oy Crawlies 2p
25	26	27	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	28 Discovery Rooms	29	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	30	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	31	Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p
Mess Makers				,	Park	Work Day 10a		· 		·
Clay Play 10a, 1p				Nature Storytime 4p			Regi	mer Program stration Opens IONMEMBERS		

FEBRUARY						
1	2	3 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	4 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Monthly Winter Bird	5 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Park Work Day 10a	6 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	7 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Tree ID Walk 10a
			Walk 8:30a Nature Storytime 4p	,	Family Campfire Night 6 - 8:30p	
8	9	10 Discovery Rooms	11 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	12 Discovery Rooms	13 DR CLOSED	14 Discovery Rooms
Naturally Messy Making Tracks				Park Work Day 10a	Winter Break Day Camp: Incredible Insects	Great Backyard Bird Count 9 - 10:30a
10a, 1p			Nature Storytime 4p		9a - 3p	Bubble Day 1 - 3p
15	16	17 Discovery Rooms	18 Discovery Rooms	19 Discovery Rooms	20 Discovery Rooms	21 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p
	Winter Break			Park Work Day 10a		
	Day Camp: Scaly & Slimy 9a - 3p		Nature Storytime 4p	Pollywogs Critters that Crawl 10:30a		
22	23	24 Discovery Rooms	25 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	26 Discovery Rooms	27 Discovery Rooms	28 Discovery Rooms
Mess Makers Colorful Messes 10a, 1p			Birding After Breakfast 8:30a	Park Work Day 10a		
			Nature Storytime 4p			

SAVE THE DATES

Spring Break Day Camps

Spring Break Camps will be offered **March 9 - 13** from 9 am to 3 pm each day. Look for registration to open **January 15** for NDC Members and **January 30** for Nonmembers.

Spring Fling

Saturday, April 18 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 Teen Volunteer Positions & Application Deadline

Our Summer Teen Application Form for camp counselors and other summer positions will be available online by **February 15**. Applicants for our Summer Teen Volunteer Program must submit their online applications by **March 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 **April 15**.

Summer Program Registration

Registration for our summer programs will open to NDC Members on **January 15** and to Nonmembers on **January 30**. Look for camp topics to be posted on our website by January 5th.

2026 Camp Dates

Mini Camps | 4 to 7 year olds | 9 am to 12 noon Cost per day: Member \$50 / Nonmember \$65 Registration is by the day and topics will change daily.

May 26 – 29 August 25 – 28

Summer Science Camps | 5 to 10 year olds | 9 am - 3 pm Cost per week: Member \$350 / Nonmember \$400

June 1 – 5	July 13 – 17	August 3 – 7
June 8 – 12	July 20 – 24	August 10 – 14
June 15 – 19	July 27 – 31	August 17 - 21
June 22 – 26		
June 29 – Jul 3		



7112 NEWCASTLE ST BELLAIRE, TX 77401

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

WINTER
2025-2026
PROGRAM GUIDE

Donate to our End of Year campaign!



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