HANA AND ARTHUR GINZBARG

nature discovery center

FALL 2026

PROGRAM GUIDE

IN THIS GUIDE

2 Kid Programs
3 Family Fun
4 Enchanted Woods Update
5 Adult Programs
6 Activity Calendar
7 Volunteer Needs & Winter Save the Dates

FALL 2026
DISCOVERY ROOM HOURS

Tuesday through Friday
1 - 5:30 pm
Saturday & Sunday
10 am - 3 pm

ADMISSION IS FREE

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

PARK & NATURE PLAY HRS

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

naturediscoverycenter.org
NatureDiscoveryCenter
naturediscoverycenter

nature discovery center
7112 NEWCASTLE
BELLAIRE, TX 77401
T 713.667.6550

nature discovery center
FALL FESTIVAL
& PUMPKIN PATCH
EST 1993

2 days of fall family fun benefitting the Nature Discovery Center!

Pumpkins • Games • Crafts
Vendors • Food Trucks
• Animal Encounters •
Inflatables • Face Painting
Costume Contest & More!

Saturday & Sunday, October 17 & 18 | 11 am - 4 pm

Celebrate the fall season at the Nature Discovery Center's annual Fall Festival and Pumpkin Patch! This beloved community event welcomes families for a weekend of festive fun while raising critical funds to support nature education programs and experiences for children, families, and adults.

Early Bird Ticket Sales begin September 1.

Scan this QR code to make your ticket purchases.

Sponsor the Pumpkin Patch and receive recognition on event signage and the Pumpkin Patch website landing page while helping advance our 501(c)(3) mission.

For more information about sponsorship opportunities, contact Darenda Dorsey at development@naturediscoverycenter.org





KIDS

Register at: naturediscoverycenter.org/kids-programs

Advance registration required unless otherwise noted.

Pollywogs (0 - 2 yrs old with adult)

Select Mondays & Thursdays | 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.
See our website for additional program description.

9/14 & 9/17 Animals in Groups
10/12 & 10/15 Nocturnal Animals
11/16 & 11/19 Fall Nature Fun

Cost/Class: $8 member / $12 nonmember



Mess Makers (3 - 7 yrs old with adult)

Sundays | 10 am or 1 pm

Join us for messy sensory play and crafts! This program lets kids get dirty while they create concoctions and make art messes that parents would rather not have in their house!



2026 Dates & Topics:

9/20 Berry Juice & Grass Stains
10/25 Squash Soup
11/22 Land Art & Loose Parts

Cost/Class: $22 member / $27 nonmember

Fall 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.

2026 Dates & Topics:

09/21 Texas Animals
10/09 Owls & Other Birds
11/06 Sneaky Snakes
11/23 Hide & Seek: Camouflage
11/24 Fall Nature

Cost: $70 member / $90 nonmember per day

Naturally Messy
(3 - 7 yrs old with adult)

Select Sundays | 10 am

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 natural messes serve as inspiration for the messes we will make together.



2026 Dates & Topics

10/4 Seed Dispersal
11/8 Leaf Litter

Cost/Class: $22 member / $27 nonmember

NEW

Nature Club **Tuesdays | 3:15 to 4:30 pm**

Kinder - 5th. Register online by the semester.

Nature Story Time FREE

Wednesdays* | 4 pm *check website for cancellations

Stories, specimens, & more for preschoolers and caregivers.

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

FAMILIES

Register at: naturediscoverycenter.org/families-programs

These are not drop off programs. Unless otherwise noted, all children must be registered and must be accompanied by a registered adult.

Edible Wildscapes

BLACKWOOD
EDUCATIONAL LAND INSTITUTE

Thursday, September 17 | 6:30 to 8 pm

Join **Blackwood Educational Land Institute** at the **Nature Discovery Center** for a walk in the wild where we will learn about edible plants growing right in our backyard. We will offer a sample of yaupon tea as well as some herbal infused water. There are so many plants and herbs growing all around us that have medicinal benefits, come learn with us. This is part of Blackwood's Food as Medicine Series.

Ages: All ages are welcome. Children must be accompanied.

Cost: $10/adult, kids free.

Visit our wesbite to register and to see additional notes about what to wear and bring to this program.

Sprinkler Day at the Center FREE

Saturday, September 19 | 1 to 3 pm

School may have started, but here in Texas our summer heat is not quite over yet. Come cool off at the Center with a favorite summer pastime - running through sprinklers! The Center's front lawn will be set up with sprinklers, kiddie pools, and water toys for a refreshing afternoon of water play.

Kids should wear their bathing suit and should bring a towel and a change of clothes. Some kids may prefer wearing water shoes on wet grass. Bring water bottles to stay hydrated!



Meet the Animals



Select Saturdays | 2 pm

9/26 Furry & Fuzzy: Mammals
11/14 Scales & Tails: Reptiles

Get to know our animals with up close and personal animal encounters! Each family-friendly Meet the Animals session includes: hands-on exposure to live animals and/or specimens, an informal talk about the animal's basic biology, a Q/A period with one of our Staff Naturalists.

Cost: $5 member / $10 non-member

'Swift Night Out' FREE

Join us for an upcoming family-friendly 'Swift Night Out' (SNO) event co-sponsored by Houston Audubon. At each SNO event, we will watch Chimney Swifts swoop and soar over their roosts and count them as they enter their chimneys. We often count over 500 Chimney Swifts in some locations this time of year!

HOUSTON AUDUBON



Rice University
Tudor Field House Chimney
September 30 at 7 pm

See website for parking details closer to the event.

Note that there are some nearby spots for widlife watching that may also be of interest. You might plan to walk over to the retention pond and Owl Deck before the Chimney Swift count.

FAMILIES

Register at: naturediscoverycenter.org/families-programs

Fall Nature Hike

Saturday, October 10 | 2 pm

Fall is a wonderful time to explore the outdoors in Houston. Birds are migrating. Fall wildflowers are blooming. Butterflies are on the wing in huge numbers. Join NDC Head Naturalist Eric Duran for a guided nature walk through our gorgeous park to learn about the wildlife that surrounds us in the Fall.

Cost: $5 member / $10 nonmember



Family Night Hike: Nocturnal Animals

for adults & kids ages 4 & up with an adult caregiver

Friday, October 23 | 8 - 9:30 pm

Join us for a fun family outing in the park... at night. Eric Duran, Head Naturalist, will introduce you to the night life of Russ Pitman Park on a guided night hike. Together, you will explore the park to seek out all kinds of nocturnal animals from creepy crawlies, to curious mammals, and flying friends.

Bug spray will be available. Please bring your own flashlights for adult use only.

Cost: $10 member / $12 nonmember







ENCHANTED WOODS

Enchanted Woods Nature Play Space & Cottage Classroom Groundbreaking Event

October 7 | 5 pm

Join us for light bites, guest speakers, and photo opportunities as we celebrate the groundbreaking of the Enchanted Woods project. Please RSVP using the QR code below.

Last Chance to Leave Your Legacy in the Enchanted Woods

The Enchanted Woods Nature Play Space & Classroom Project is over **84% funded**. Naming opportunities are selling quickly.

This is your final opportunity to leave a lasting legacy in Enchanted Woods through a naming opportunity. To be included in the initial installation, pavers must be purchased by Labor Day and planks by November 1. Commemorative medallions will remain available for a limited time.

To learn more, sponsor the event, or to ask about naming opportunities, email Darenda at development@naturediscoverycenter.org.

Scan to RSVP for the Enchanted Woods Groundbreaking



Scan to purchase Enchanted Woods naming opportunities

ADULTS



31st Annual Twilight Gala

Friday, November 20 | 6 - 10 pm
at the Junior League of Houston

Join us for ***Where Wonder Takes Wing***, an unforgettable evening benefiting the Nature Discovery Center. Enjoy dinner, dancing, and entertainment by **Password** while supporting nature education and environmental stewardship.

The evening will honor Brenda and Tom Koch and recognize Gala Chairs Kim and Ken Jones. Guests will also receive an exciting update on the Enchanted Woods Nature Play Space & Classroom Project.

Scan to purchase tables, sponsorships, and tickets today.

Volunteer at the Twilight Gala

Help make the Gala a success! Volunteers are needed from 4 - 11 pm to assist with check-in, raffle sales, auction, photobooth, games, setup, cleanup, and more.

To volunteer for Twilight, please contact Darenda Dorsey at development@naturediscoverycenter.org.

Park Workday Volunteers Needed

Thursdays | 10 - 11:30 am

Help us plant natives, remove invasives, water new plants, 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!

Scan this QR code to sign up. Contact Elzora, our Park Steward, with any questions: erobinson@naturediscoverycenter.org

Tree Identification Walks FREE

First Saturdays | 10 am
September 5, October 3, November 7, & December 5

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. In addition to helping you learn how to identify trees, Jim is always happy to share his knowledge about trees and some interesting historical facts about the trees in our park.



Birding After Breakfast FREE

Weekly Wednesday Bird Walks

September 30 - December 2 | 8:30 - 10 am

Join us for a morning stroll in the park to enjoy our resident and migrant birds this fall. You are welcome to bring a picnic breakfast to enjoy at the pavilions before these morning walks. Meet us on the front porch or out in the park. These walks typically last 1 - 1.5 hours.

NEW

Programs for Seniors & Senior Living Facilities

Scan for details about our **Seasonal Senior Strolls: Field Trips to the Center** and our **Senior Outreach Programs.**

		1 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	2 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Storytime 4p	3 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	4 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	5 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p **Tree ID Walk 10a**
6 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p	7	8 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	9 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Storytime 4p	10 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	11 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	12 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p
13 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p	14 **Pollywogs: Animals in Groups 10:30a**	15 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Club 3:15p	16 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Storytime 4p	17 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p **Pollywogs: Animals in Groups 10:30a** **Edible Wildscapes 6:30 - 9p**	18 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	19 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p **Sprinkler Day 1 - 3p**
20 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p **MM: Berry Juice & Grass Stains 10a, 1p**	21 **Fall Day Camp Texas Animals 9a - 3p**	22 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Club 3:15p	23 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Storytime 4p	24 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	25 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	26 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p **Meet the Animals 2p** 
27	28	29 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Club 3:15p	30 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p **Birdwalk (BAB) 8a** Nature Storytime 4p **SNO at Rice 7p**	**SEPT**		

OCTOBER				1 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	2 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	3 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p **Tree ID Walk 10a**
4 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p **NM: Seed Dispersal 10a**	5	6 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Club 3:15p	7 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p **Birdwalk (BAB) 8a** **Enchanted Woods Groundbreaking 5p**	8 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	9 Discovery Rooms CLOSED **Fall Day Camp Owls & Other Birds 9a - 3p**	10 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p **Fall Nature Hike 2p**
11 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p	12 **Pollywogs: Nocturnal Animals 10:30a**	13 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Club 3:15p	14 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p **Birdwalk (BAB) 8a** Nature Storytime 4p	15 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p **Pollywogs: Nocturnal Animals 10:30a**	16 Discovery Rooms CLOSED	17 
18 	19	20 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Club 3:15p	21 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p **Birdwalk (BAB) 8a** Nature Storytime 4p	22 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	23 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p **Family Night Hike: Nocturnal Animals 8p**	24 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p
25 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p **MM: Pumpkin Guts Paint 10a, 1p**	26	27 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Club 3:15p	28 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p **Birdwalk (BAB) 8a** Nature Storytime 4p	29 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	30 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	31 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p

1 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p Daylight Savings Time Ends 2a	2	3 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Club 3:15p	4 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p **Birdwalk (BAB) 8a** Nature Storytime 4p	5 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	6 Discovery Rooms CLOSED **Fall Day Camp Sneaky Snakes 9a - 3p**	7 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p **Tree ID Walk 10a**
8 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p **NM: Leaf Litter 10a**	9	10 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Club 3:15p	11 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p **Birdwalk (BAB) 8a** Nature Storytime 4p	12 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	13 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p	14 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p **Meet the Animals 2p**
15 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p	16 **Pollywogs: Fall Nature Fun 10:30a**	17 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p Nature Club 3:15p	18 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p **Birdwalk (BAB) 8a** Nature Storytime 4p	19 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p **Pollywogs: Fall Nature Fun 10:30a**	20 Discovery Rooms CLOSED **31st Annual Twilight Gala 6 - 10p at Junior League**	21 Discovery Rooms CLOSED
22 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p **MM: Land Art & Loose Parts 10a, 1p**	23 **Fall Break Camp Camouflage 9a - 3p**	24 Discovery Rooms CLOSED **Fall Break Camp Fall Nature 9a - 3p**	25 Discovery Rooms 1 - 5:30p **Birdwalk (BAB) 8a** Nature Storytime 4p	26 Thanksgiving Holiday CENTER CLOSED	27 Discovery Rooms CLOSED	28 Discovery Rooms 10a - 3p
29	30					

NOVEMBER

VOLUNTEER NEEDS

Pumpkin Patch Fall Festival Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to work shifts for our annual fall festival on **Saturday, October 17 and Sunday, October 18. Shifts run 9:30 am - 12:30 pm, 12 - 3 pm, and 2:30 - 5:30 pm.** We are accepting individuals and groups of volunteers to set up and run festival games, crafts, and other event activities as well as help us break down and clean up all event areas.

To volunteer as an individual, sign up through our Volunteer Site: naturediscoverycenter.org/volunteer/

To sign up a group of volunteers, please contact NDC Executive Director Meredith Wheeler directly via email at mwheeler@naturediscoverycenter.org. Please mention Pumpkin Patch Volunteers in the subject line.

Volunteers are expected to arrive on time for volunteer check-in before their shift, and to work their entire shifts.

Animal Care Assistants

Volunteers ages 15+ are needed to work **weekly Animal Care shifts.** Trained volunteers tend to the dietary and enrichment needs of our Animal Ambassadors and help keep enclosures clean. Interested? email eduran@naturediscoverycenter.org.

SPECIAL WINTER DATES

Special Winter Nature Story Time

Wednesday, December 9 | 4 to 5 pm

Cocoa and cookies, stories, live animals, and winter crafts!

Winter Holiday Market

Saturday, December 5 | 9 am to 3 pm

Browse vendor stalls for the perfect holiday gifts for nature lovers while your kids make winter nature crafts.

Gingerbread Habitats

Saturday, December 5 | 10 am & 2 pm

Come learn about woodland animal habitats as you create an edible winter wonderland for gingerbread animals.

HANA AND ARTHUR GINZBARG

nature discovery center

7112 NEWCASTLE ST
BELLAIRE, TX 77401

The Nature Discovery Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Every contribution to our mission makes a meaningful difference in the lives of the children, families, and adults who visit the Nature Discovery Center and Russ Pitman Park, our nature park and outdoor classroom.

Become an NDC Member

Donate to support our programs











