



MCKINNEY ROUGHS NATURE PARK

Turtle Camp (Ages 5-6) | **Buffalo Camp** (Ages 7-8) | **Eagle Camp** (Ages 9-12)

Each week, Turtle, Buffalo and Eagle campers will swim at Bastrop State Park pool. Turtle campers climb a rock wall and participate in a camp-wide field day. Buffalo and Eagle campers brave heights on the challenge course and go rafting on the Colorado River or Lake Bastrop. All campers explore the week's theme through a combination of structured and unstructured activities, such as guided hikes, presentations, field studies or experiments, nature play and games. Instruction and content are adjusted for each age group.

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POLLINATOR POWER (*Week 1: June 13-17*)

Learn about the amazing adaptations of bees, butterflies, bats and hummingbirds and the critical role they play in an ecosystem. We will observe bats up close during a live animal presentation and dive into the insect world through field exploration and direct observation. Campers learn the importance of native plants on a field trip to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and contribute to citizen science by conducting a pollinator bioblitz. Campers will also build a bee habitat and create a beeswax item to take home.

WATER WONDERS (*Week 2: June 20-24*)

Dip into the aquatic world and experience its macro and micro wonders. Campers will tinker with water-related science experiments to understand water's properties, dip nets in a pond to understand water quality and peer through microscopes to view water teeming with life. Turtle and Buffalo campers will view live aquatic animals with underwater viewers to understand their unique adaptations and create an artistic memento of their observations. Eagle campers will explore Lake Bastrop from kayaks and stand-up paddle boards.

MAKING THE MARK (*Week 3: June 27-July 1*)

Navigate like an intrepid explorer using wayfinding tools, and sharpen your archery skills on the range. Campers will take aim at various targets on our newly-constructed paintball range and participate in a paintball splatter art project. We will attempt to create our own arrowheads through flintknapping. Turtle and Buffalo campers will find hidden caches while geocaching and letterboxing. Buffalo campers will practice shooting a compass bearing and use GPS to find a waypoint. Eagle campers will practice advanced orienteering techniques using a map and compass then create a treasure hunt for others to follow.

LCRA Parks summer camps will operate in accordance with Texas Department of State Health Services and CDC guidelines.



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WILDERNESS SKILLS *(Week 4: July 11-15)*

Build shelters using natural materials, purify water, create emergency signals, start fire without matches, identify edible and medicinal plants, and learn how to stand out in an outdoor emergency. Turtle and Buffalo campers will take part in an adventure race for survival resources. Eagle campers will participate in a capture-the-flag scavenger hunt while “zombies” attempt to steal resources.

NATURE ART NEWCOMERS *(Week 5: July 18-22)*

Learn about foraging for edible and medicinal plants, then create art from the harvested plants. Campers will pick mustang grapes for jelly, yaupon for tea and flowers for a healing salve. We will use three different techniques to create nature-inspired pottery. Campers will practice their brush strokes while painting in the wild, design land art to bring joy to others and try their hand at fort building. We will set up a primitive forest camp and create a marketplace to trade goods. The week will culminate in a celebration of art, crafts and food.

SURVIVAL SECRETS *(Week 6: July 25-29)*

Build on foundational survival skills and grow comfortable with self-reliance in wilderness situations. Campers will learn how to prepare and cook food without utensils, track animals, navigate backcountry, read the landscape to find water and make rope from natural fibers. We will practice useful knots for survival and eat cricket cookies. Turtle and Buffalo campers take part in an adventure race for survival resources. Eagle campers participate in a capture-the-flag scavenger hunt, while “zombies” attempt to steal resources.

CALL OF THE WILD *(Week 7: Aug. 1-5)*

Learn the secret language of life in the great outdoors. Campers will train their senses to hear birds communicate and recognize common species by ear. We will play games that fine-tune our sense of touch and spatial perception, identify mammals by their scent signals, and explore how plants use colors for defense and attraction. Campers will examine the forest’s underground communication network and gain a better understanding of local animals with live reptile and bat presentations.

BIODIVERSITY BLAST *(Week 8: Aug. 8-12)*

Examine the world’s biomes and key factors for supporting life. Campers will explore the park’s riparian zone (area along the river), pine forest and Post Oak Savannah ecosystem on guided hikes. We will discover the plants, trees and creatures that call the park home and hone our awareness skills while conducting a field bioblitz. Campers will use personal observations and field guides to identify wildlife and record their scientific data. Eagle campers will explore the park on UTVs (driven by camp staff) and contribute their observations online as citizen scientists through the iNaturalist app.