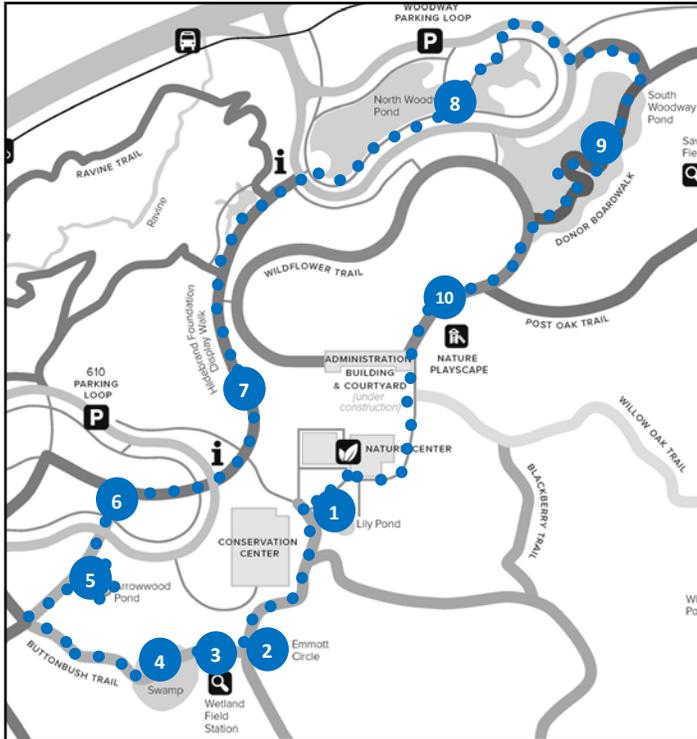


Habitat Hike: Wetland



About the Hike

This self-guided hike should take about 35-45 minutes. The path is a mixture of mulch, boardwalk, and gravel. Distance: 1 mile.

Wetlands are areas where water gathers, settles, and stays on or near the surface of the soil. Animals and plants need water, and so wetlands are some of the best places to see wildlife here at the Arboretum. Look for signs of food chains in action, like herons stalking for fish, or tadpoles munching on algae.



1 Lily Pond

A great introduction to wetland habitats, the Lily Pond showcases water plants and animals right behind our Nature Center. These include spatterdock and lizard tail as well as bullfrogs, water snakes, pond sliders, and herons.

2 Emmott Circle

The Arboretum owes Catharine Mary Emmott a debt of gratitude. Her efforts created Memorial Park, and therefore the Arboretum. A fantastic outdoor classroom, Emmott Circle offers shaded seating on hot Houston days.

3 Wetland Field Station

Built in 2018 using reclaimed wood, the field station is placed firmly within a large wetland area. This learning platform provides a field guide and viewing site of a thriving Arboretum habitat. Sit quietly for a few minutes and notice the variety of insects living in and near the water. Watch for damselflies hunting, water striders gliding, and diving beetles swimming.



4 Swamp Boardwalk

A swamp is a wetland dominated by trees. Wetlands have water and low oxygen conditions. Look for water-loving plants like buttonbush, bulrushes, water tupelo, and Gulf black willow. Herons and snakes hide in these plants while hunting for tadpoles, fish, and frogs.

Being in Nature

Being part of the natural world means being good stewards, taking responsibility for our environment, for ourselves, and for each other. Slow down for nature—no jogging or biking. Look and listen, but stay on the trails. Leave no trace—carry out what you carry in. Leash and clean up after pets. Be kind and stay safe!

5 Arrowwood Pond

Arrowwood pond features tall loblolly pine trees. Deep shade prevents the growth of water plants and tannins from pine needles give this pond its tea coloring. Peek in the old armadillo hole near the bench and watch for huge snapping turtles resting in sunny spots.



6 Swales

Look for shallow trenches throughout the 610 parking loop and along the Display Walk. These vegetation-lined channels help slow, store, and channel rainwater on its path to the ravine.



7 Display Walk

Enjoy a leisurely stroll down this wide path. The Arboretum conservation team chose to illustrate diverse native plants that provide a lovely display all year. Take note of the red, purple, and yellow flowers found in each season.



8 North Woodway Bridge

As part of runoff reclamation, both parking loop ponds on the Woodway side clean and store water. During hot or dry spells, this water becomes an irrigation source. Pause on the bridge to watch the dragonflies and honeybees hard at work. Try to find a tree frog hiding on the leaves!

9 South Woodway Pond & Donor Boardwalk

Thanks to the support of wonderful friends and family of the Arboretum, many educational programs and events can continue to inspire. The planks on the S-shaped boardwalk honor their dedication to our mission.



10 Wildflower Trail

Many low-lying, temporary wetlands line this beautiful path to the Nature Center. During wet months, this area lies underwater and drains to the South Woodway Pond. Willow oaks use their buttressed roots to stay standing tall in those saturated soils. During warm months, wildflowers bloom and provide food for many butterflies, bees, and crickets.

Get Involved with The Houston Arboretum

Join: Become a member to support our mission and enjoy benefits like free parking and discounts on programs

Volunteer: Get outside and get back into nature through active and support activities

Check us out at www.houstonarboretum.org

