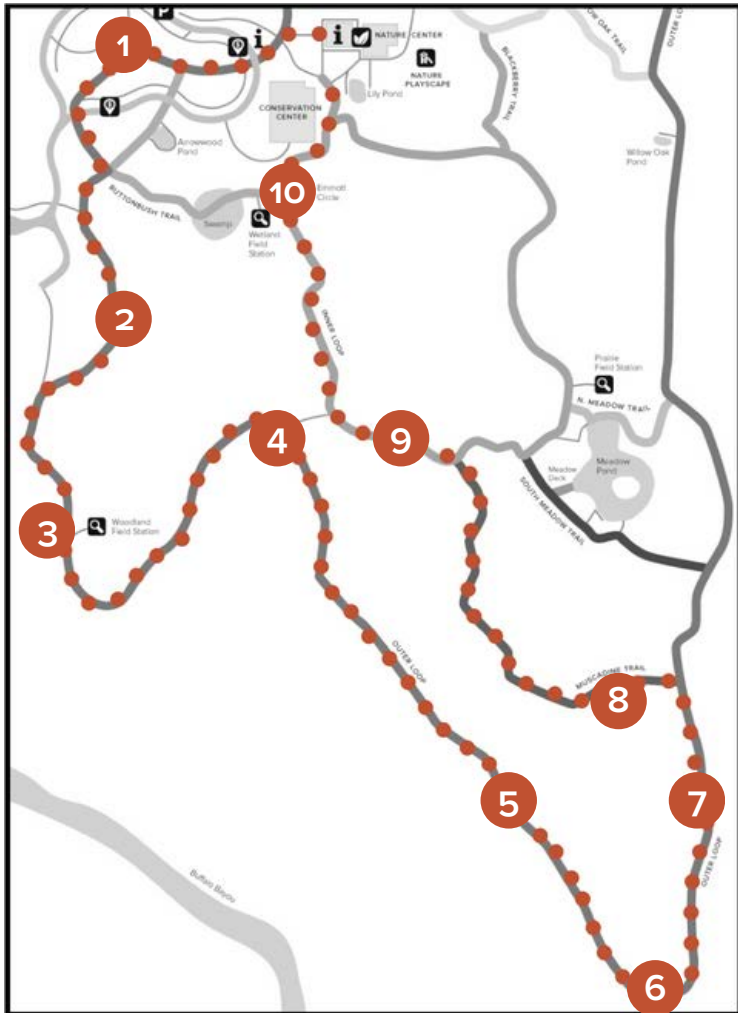


# HABITAT HIKE: WOODLAND

## *About the hike*

This self-guided hike should take about 45 minutes to an hour. The path is a mixture of mulch, boardwalk, and gravel. Distance: 1.7 miles.

The woodland stretches all the way down to Buffalo Bayou at the edge of the Arboretum. Along the way you will see areas of pine forest like you would find in east Texas, as well as more open hardwood forest which would be found from here towards central Texas. Houston's diverse woodlands are where these two ecoregions meet.



### 1 *Hollow Log*

Woodlands are not always dense with trees. The woodland habitat contained in this parking loop is more open. Notice the hollow log on your left, which can provide shelter for woodland creatures.



### 2 *Tree Arch*

This arched post oak tree was bent over when a larger tree fell on it. The bent oak managed to survive, and you can even see new shoots emerging from its crooked trunk. The larger tree that fell on it has since decomposed.



### 3 *Woodland Field Station*

We built the Woodland Field Station deep in a mixed area of pines and oaks. You can clearly see the layers of a mature woodland here. Take a break and see if you can spot any of the microhabitats described in the signs.

### 4 *Shortcut Trail & Woodland Clearing*

Here you can see a small clearing. These open spots make great hunting and foraging areas for wildlife. The dead trees (snags) provide lookout spots for predatory birds, and fallen logs hide insects that are eaten by armadillos. Take the shortcut trail to the left if you want to bypass the rest of the loop.

## BEING IN NATURE

Being part of the natural world means 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 *Check Dam*

Erosion shapes the land around Buffalo Bayou. Here an Eagle Scout built a check dam to stop the spread of a sink hole. Logs divert rainwater away and slow it down, keeping it from carving away more soil.

### 6 *Couch Birding Trail*

The trailhead for the Couch Birding Trail (a tenth of a mile roundtrip) leads to the sloped riparian habitat on the banks of Buffalo Bayou. Here sweetgum and sycamore trees grow tall in the wet, sandy soil. You can see Buffalo Bayou from the platform at the trail's end.



### 7 *Cherry Laurel*

To your right is a stand of cherry laurel, an aggressive native plant. When large trees fall, they leave an open spot in the canopy. Fast-growing plants like cherry laurel quickly take advantage of the sunlight and may crowd out slower-growing species like oaks.



### 8 *Trumpet Creeper Vines*

Along this path, look for large woody vines winding up the pine trees. These trumpet creepers can live for decades and produce large orange flowers adored by hummingbirds. See if you can find horizontal rows of small holes in the vines made by Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers.



### 9 *Tree Gallery*

This stretch of the Inner Loop hosts a variety of oak trees. The willow oaks stand out with their slender, willow-like leaves. In contrast, the red oaks have wider, lobed leaves.

### 10 *Emmott Circle*

Emmott Circle is dedicated to Catharine Mary Emmott, one of the original philanthropists responsible for preserving this area. This land eventually became Memorial Park, and over the years naturalists like Robert A. Vines helped set aside part of the park as a nature sanctuary which became the Arboretum.



Enjoy these curated musical selections as you walk the Woodland Habitat Hike. Each piece of music was selected to complement the ecosystem and features of this hike.



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AND SIGN UP FOR EVENTS AT:**  
[www.houstonarboretum.org](http://www.houstonarboretum.org)

