

# GREEN HOUSTON

Our environment is changing every day  
and so will the content on [www.VisitHoustonTexas.com](http://www.VisitHoustonTexas.com).  
We hope you'll check back often to read more about Houston's Green side.

## Green Houston

Houston, a city known as the Energy Capital of the World, is also a progressive city where environmental initiatives abound. It's entirely possible for visitors to take a completely green trip to Houston—even down to the visitors guide.

### Green Space Statistics



### Parks and Outdoors



### Hotels and B&Bs



### Attractions



### Facilities



### Houston Organizations



### Transportation



### Alternative Energy



## Hotels and B&Bs

### Magnolia Hotel

- Water conservation - change bed sheets every other day for guests staying more than one night
- Water conservation - launder towels on request only; program listed by signage in the rooms
- Recycled drinking cups in all fitness centers
- Company provides an eco-pass (bus pass) for all employees
- Newspaper recycling program at each hotel
- Installed compact fluorescents and looking at L.E.D options as they become available in 2007 and 2008
- Participating/usage of the chilled water plant in Houston with Entergy District Cooling. System is highly energy efficient and eliminated the need for a building plant within the hotel
- 2007 - installing energy efficient automated guest room temperature control system
- Use all eco and environmentally friendly cleaning chemicals, laundry detergents and building systems treatment chemicals throughout all properties
- Upgrading building systems at other properties with highly efficient systems as replacement is warranted
- Auto shut-off lights in public restrooms. Dimming system throughout property to dim lights for both aesthetic decor and to minimize consumption of electricity when natural light is present during the daylight hours
- Bathroom fixtures are energy efficient high pressure, low volume to minimize water consumption throughout

### Hilton Americas-Houston

- Installed energy saving light bulbs in all of the guestrooms that will last 3-5 years; these light bulbs have low wattage and high intensity. They save on heat because they don't get hot and also save on electricity
- In the process of replacing light bulbs in all public places with bulbs that will last 3-5 years
- Have placed dimmer switches in the meeting rooms which can be controlled from the energy management computer in the engineering office. This saves on wattage and electricity
- Energy-saving thermostats have been placed in all guest rooms. They automatically turn off as soon as a guest checks out of their room and do not turn on again until another guest checks in

### Doubletree Guest Suites-Houston by The Galleria

- Nationally, Doubletree Hotels partner with National Arbor Day Foundation. Doubletree has created a message to THINK TREES by providing lesson plans and supplies to local schools. The students discuss human effects on the environment and play games that help them understand the 6 key elements for a tree's survival.
- The hotel also conserves water on an ongoing basis by changing bed sheets every other day for guests staying for more than one night. The hotel launders towels on request only.
- Hotel staff uses recycled paper.

### Modern B&B

- Uses sun shading and a solar thermal chimney, which moves hot air between the western sun screen and the building, pushing the hot air away from the building.
- Landscaping is a vegetable and herb garden, and these ingredients are used in the food prepared at the B&B
- Empty shopping bags used by guests are donated to the women's shelter resale shop
- Serves organic food whenever possible
- Line dry sheets to reduce electricity consumption
- Recycles newspapers, paper, cardboard, aluminum cans, glass and plastic

### Robin's Nest B&B

- All sheets and towels are dried on a clothes line, which cuts down on electricity

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- Appropriate food scraps are recycled for the organic garden
- Lights are no longer left on 24 hours a day

### Candlewood Suites

All four Candlewood Suites in Houston do housekeeping weekly rather than daily. This drastically reduces water usage as well as emissions and fumes from cleaning products. Of course, the properties were designed primarily as extended stay hotels so this fits into the model.

### Hilton Garden Inn

The Hilton Garden Inn has partnered with the National Gardening Association and is working to implement a program to bring gardens to local school children or nursing homes.

<http://hiltongardeninn.hilton.com/en/gi/promotions/gardens/program.jhtml>

### South Shore Harbour Resort and Conference Center

- Recycles paper goods, and the limited proceeds are donated to Interfaith Caring Ministries.
- In the process of converting much of their lighting to fluorescent bulbs which is a great energy savings.

### Moody Gardens Hotel

- Provides the facility for Galveston Island recycling
- Utilizes natural pest control
- Conserves energy with the use of a fuel cell
- Uses auxiliary power at night

## Outdoors

Houston rates first among the nation's 10 most populous cities in total acreage of parkland and second behind only San Diego in park acreage per capita, according to a 2007 study by The Trust for Public Land. Houston has 56,405 acres of total park space, with 27.2 acres per 1,000 residents. The national average is 18.8 acres per 1,000 residents.

The City of Houston maintains more than 100 miles of hike and bike trails.

The 155-acre [Houston Arboretum and Nature Center](#) is located in central Houston between downtown and the Galleria area. Visitors can enjoy more than 5 miles of nature trails, including forest, pond, wetland and meadow habitats.

In the past seven years, the Buffalo Bayou Partnership has raised and leveraged more than \$45 million for improvements along a 10-mile stretch of [Buffalo Bayou](#) (which runs 52 miles through the city) from Shepherd Dr. to the Turning Basin. These improvements have included a 20-year master plan, three miles of hike and bike trails east of downtown, Sesquicentennial Park, the North Side Trail and the purchase of more than 35 acres of land in the East End for park lands.

The Millie Bush Dog Park was voted No. 1 in the nation by *Dog Fancy* magazine in June 2005.

More than 165 public and private [golf courses](#) are located in the Greater Houston area.

In *Golf Digest's* 2006 listing of America's Greatest Golf Hometowns, Spring-Conroe ranked second, and Houston ranked third. *Golf Digest* used golf and non-golf criteria for the rankings, such as number and quality of golf courses, golf days per year, golf course congestion, crime rates, airport access and cost of living.

[Blackhorse Golf Club](#) was rated in the top 10 of America's 100 best courses for \$100 or less by *Travel and Leisure Golf* magazine.

The Tournament Course at [Redstone Golf Club](#) is the new home to the Shell Houston Open, the PGA's 10<sup>th</sup> oldest tournament.

Located 50 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, Houston is a destination for avid fishermen. An estimated 3 million Texas fisherman spend more than 9 million days fishing each year on the 1.5 million acres of lakes and 80,000 miles of rivers, streams and bayous of Texas. They fish for sport and for food, avidly seeking such long-time favorites as large-mouth bass, crappie, sunfish, white bass and various species of catfish. Sport fishing offshore in the Gulf of Mexico and in the inshore waters of the Texas coast has long been a favorite recreational pursuit of both Texans and visitors. Catches include tarpon, kingfish, red snapper, wahoo, ling, bonito and yellow-finned tuna. Eighty miles offshore from Galveston is some of the country's best bill fishing, with catches of blue and white marlin and sailfish.

The array of wildlife found in Texas allows hunters to take deer, turkey, javelina, antelope, aoudad sheep and all small game and migratory game birds. Duck, goose and dove hunting are extremely popular. Other small game include quail, squirrel, pheasant and waterfowl.

Houston is located 30 minutes from Clear Lake, a 2,000-acre destination for boating enthusiasts. Considered to be the nation's "third coast," Clear Lake has one of the greatest concentrations of sailboats, yachts and pleasure craft in the U.S.

Sources: Houston Parks Department; Trust for Public Land; Buffalo Bayou Partnership; Greater Houston Partnership

## Attractions

### Houston Zoo

- Resource recycling endeavors include paper, printer cartridges, batteries (AAA, AA, A, C & D sizes), glass, plastic, cardboard and computer equipment. Collection bins for empty printer, fax and copier cartridges are located in office areas.
- More than four years ago, the Zoo went from paper to electronic filing of daily reports from the animal care staff. This change alone allows the Zoo to save 25,000 sheets of legal-size paper annually, the equivalent of four trees each year.
- Items like cardboard boxes, telephone books, shredded paper, 2 liter plastic bottles, paper feed bags, newspaper, and even used clothing are used for animal enrichment and husbandry purposes rather than being discarded and sent to landfills. Eligible, unusable items are now being taken to recycling centers every other week with mixed paper and glass by members of the Zoo's Green Practices Committee.
- The Greater Houston Chapter of the American Association of Zoo Keepers (GHCAAZK) earns money to support world-wide conservation programs by recycling aluminum cans and printer cartridges collected by Zoo employees and volunteers.
- The Houston Zoo has a recycling bin in their Natural Selections Gift Shop for collection of unwanted cell phones, batteries and chargers. Our cell phone recycling program was launched in the fall of 2003. As of July 2006 they have received over 1,500 phones from 30 states by mail alone. The Houston Zoo donates 100% of the funds raised to Bat Conservation International, a non-profit organization devoted to conservation, education and research initiatives.
- Increased use of electronic internal communications and double-sided copies has reduced paper consumption.
- In December 2003, the first annual "paper conservation" tree was planted on Zoo grounds in recognition of a significant reduction in their annual paper consumption by converting to electronic versions of routine reports and communications that saves about 35,000 sheets of paper, equivalent to saving four to five mature trees!
- The Concessionaire has reduced consumption of paper and plastic products significantly by virtually eliminating distribution of straws and cup lids. They no longer use Styrofoam products.
- The Horticulture Department is experimenting with rain barrels in staff areas to collect rain water for irrigation purposes. They are also testing organic fertilizers that are kinder to the environment.
- Increased efforts are now being made during construction and renovation projects to use resource-conserving materials and equipment whenever possible. For example, sleeping platforms in the new Spectacled Bear exhibit are made from plastic lumber, a wood alternative made from 100% recycled plastic and wood products.
- Information is distributed to Zoo employees and volunteers regularly about green practices they can adopt at home.

### Houston Astros

- The Astros were the first sports team in Houston to launch a recycling campaign, with 125 recycling bins around the park. The Astros recycle an average of three tons of cardboard, plastic and aluminum per game.
- Only "green" fluorescent light bulbs are used, and all light bulbs used in the ballpark are recycled.
- Astros groundskeepers use only eco-safe chemicals on the field, including seaweed-based fertilizer.
- The club composts ballpark infield and outfield grass cuttings to use as fertilizer.
- Sales collateral and other paper products such as season-ticket brochures, napkins, paper towels and pocket schedules are printed on partial post-consumer recycled materials.
- Organic vegetables and ingredients are sold at salad concept stands.
- Automatic paper towel dispensers have replaced manual paper towel dispensers in restrooms to save paper.

### Aurora Picture Show

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- Aurora's electricity provider generates power from wind, water, geothermal, sun and natural gas, and electrical usage is monitored and reduced when the theater is not in use.
- Aurora uses low consumption toilets and compact florescent lights in the restrooms.
- Aurora recycles all paper, glass, plastic and aluminum concessions waste.

### Bayou Bend

- Bayou Bend, with 14 acres of landscaped gardens and natural woodlands, is Texas' largest all organic public garden.
- No pesticides are used in the gardens. A garlic spray is used for mosquitoes, and all of the soil preparation and treatment is organic.
- The formal gardens are noted for rare Duchess De Caze Pink Camellias that are no longer available in nurseries, along with varieties of azaleas, gardenias, antique roses, and seasonal plantings that keep the gardens blooming all year.
- The gardens are at their peak during March and April and are one of the highlights of the city, which has been designated an Azalea City by the Azalea Society of America.

### Beer Can House

- Consisting of more than 50,000 beer cans, the Beer Can House is the ultimate recycling project.
- John Milkovisch, a retired upholsterer for the Southern Pacific Railroad, started his project now known as the Beer Can House in 1968 when he began inlaying thousands of marbles, rocks, brass figures and metal pieces into concrete and redwood to form unique landscaping features. He then turned to the house itself and began adding aluminum siding—aluminum beer can siding, that is. Over the next 18 years the house disappeared under a cover of flattened beer cans for both practical and decorative reasons. Garlands made of cut beer cans hanging from the roof edges not only made the house sing in the wind, but also lowered the family's energy bills. *Ripley's Believe It or Not* estimated that over 50,000 cans adorn this monument to recycling.

### The Menil Collection

- Major recycling initiative throughout Menil campus (the museum and separate bungalow offices): paper, plastic, metal, the works
- Have switched where ever possible to fluorescent and other low-energy lighting, including exterior bungalow lighting
- Printing all materials — brochures, gallery guides, Membership bulletin, catalogues on recycled paper, and using soy-based dyes that are very environmentally friendly
- Aiming to eliminate leaf blowers and other gas-powered landscape equipment
- Encourage bicycling and car pooling for employees

### The Heritage Society

- Nine historic structures have been rescued from potential demolition. The historic structures are restored in accordance to standards using reclaimed materials when obtainable.
- The collections represent a variety of historical items that would have otherwise been discarded.
- Several of the structures rely on natural light only.
- The grounds consisting of 13 acres in Sam Houston Park are maintained by the Houston Parks & Recreation Department and organic products are used for fertilizing and pest control.
- The grounds are watered in the early morning to minimize evaporation and several native planting beds have been introduced to the park to conserve water.
- Support objects that are no longer in use are recycled to other organizations.
- Future lectures will include teaching methods of preserving cultural resources.

## Facilities

### George R. Brown Convention Center

- Participated in the "Green Lights Program" which upgraded fluorescent lights to electronic ballasts and high efficiency bulbs
- Replaced roof and added insulation and a white surface to reflect sunlight and heat
- Upgraded lighting controls using the "Watt Stopper" software to reduce and manage lighting systems
- Installed motion sensors in some areas to reduce lighting when not required
- Installed capacitors on electrical switch gear to reduce energy consumption for heavy voltage loads
- Replaced original boilers with new energy efficient boilers which decrease NOX exhaust to the atmosphere
- Replaced original cooling towers with new high efficiency towers that will reduce energy and water usage
- Added motion sensor sinks and flush valves in the restrooms to save water
- Recycle paper, cardboard, plastic and aluminum cans

### Reliant Park

- **Motion sensor sinks and flush valves in the restrooms to save water**
- **Installed motion sensors in restrooms to reduce lighting when not required**
- **With the assistance of Waste Management, over 250 collection bins were purchased and distributed at strategic locations throughout Reliant Stadium and the recycling program is focused on the collection of cardboard, glass, and plastic**
- **Reliant Park has created 30 acres of green space that included 2,200 trees and two permanent water features**
- **Reliant Park has an established Building Automation System (BAS) used to maximize energy use throughout Reliant Park by controlling start and stops at optimal times**
- **Installation of thermal controlled fan switches on all 16 Reliant Stadium matrix boards**
- **Master control of all televisions in public areas of the stadium to limit power usage**
- **Window shades in the Stadium Press Box. Automatically or manually drop down during the hottest times of the day to shield this area from direct sunlight, reducing ambient heat buildup and the resulting load on the AC system**

### Houston Astros AT&T Conference Center at Minute Maid Park

- The center provides each event and meeting with menu options that source meats and produce from local Texas farms and ranches.
- Clients use post-consumer recyclable or reusable serviceware in all meal services.
- The popular "lunch box items" that clients receive will be served in reusable totes.

## » George Ranch Historical Park

**Address:** 10215 FM 762  
P.O. Box 1248  
Richmond, TX 77406  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 281-343-0218

**Fax:** 281-343-9316

**Link:** <http://www.georgeranch.org>



This 480-acre living history site, with more than 100 years of Texas history, offers hands-on experiences and costumed historical interpreters.

The George Ranch's history follows family lines. It all began in 1824 when this was still Mexico and the first American pioneers settled near the Brazos River. In the years since, the ranch has passed through four generations and grown into one of Fort Bend County's landmarks.

Today, the George Ranch is a 23,000-acre working ranch. The family's original "home place" is at the core of the George Ranch Historical Park where, every day, the legends and legacies of those who shaped this place

come to life. Authentic locations, historic homes, costumed presenters and a remarkable story of determination and courage set the stage for trekking through Texas history.

### **The 1830s Jones Stockfarm**

Meet the Joneses, the early pioneer family who settled the ranch when this was still part of Mexico. Visit pioneers tending to daily life as they work to create a successful ranch on the Texas Gulf Plain. See a replica pioneer dog-trot-style log cabin with a natural air conditioning system; farm buildings including a barn, smokehouse and chicken coop; Thomas and Jeremiah, the oxen team that works the fields; seasonal crops you can help harvest; livestock (chickens, pigs, horses, etc); Weaving, grinding corn, and other hands-on activities and daily demonstrations.

### **The 1890s Davis House Complex**

Representing the second and third generations, the Davis Mansion (a museum) presents Victorian Texas in all its splendor and the business ventures that sustained that grandeur: The cattle industry is reflected in longhorn pens and an exhibit that guides guests through the process of moving cattle to market and a working chuckwagon; The farming business (after the War Between the States) is reflected in the sharecropper's farm. Drop into the blacksmiths shop and see what the smithy is hammering.

### **The 1930s George Ranch Complex**

The fourth generation, Albert and Mamie George, built their home on the foundation of her ancestors' original home place. In spite of their great wealth, the Georges' home reflects their humble values and strong work ethic. Working cattle was the family's main business and their lives were built around the ranching operations. Visit the barn and tack room and be sure to stop by and see what the cowboys are working on.

### **Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau - Member**

## » Galveston Island State Park

**Address:** 14901 FM 3005  
Galveston, TX 77554  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 409-737-1222

**Link:** <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/galveston...>



Galveston Island State Park features two thousand acres of surf, beach, dunes, coastal prairie, fresh-water ponds, wetlands and bay shoreline just down Galveston Island from the city of Galveston, inviting quiet contemplation and recreation. The park is a richly diverse preserve and hundreds of species of wildlife thrive here - spoonbills resting in an oak mott, tree frogs croaking out a mating call, skimmers nesting in the newly terraced wetlands, egrets fishing the ponds, coyotes prowling the nighttime grassland, sandpipers skittering in the surf, pelicans surveying from high above.

### **Flora/Fauna:**

Wading and shore birds, mottled and mallard ducks, raccoons, armadillos, and marsh rabbits can be found

in the park for observation and photography. Beach or surf fishing for spotted seatrout, sandtrout, redfish, black drum, croaker, and flounder are also available.

### **Facilities:**

Facilities include screened shelters; campsites with water and electricity (premium sites are available); campsites with water and electricity in a group trailer area with a pavilion; restrooms with showers; outdoor showers; picnic sites; a fish-cleaning shelter; an interpretive center; a self-guiding nature/interpretive trail; a Texas State Park Store.; 4 miles of multi-use trails for hiking and mountain bike riding; a .25-mile nature/interpretive trail; and a two-lane, concrete boat ramp located at Pirates Cove adjacent to the park.

### **Activities:**

- \* Birdwatching
- \* Camping
- \* Canoeing/Kayaking
- \* Fishing
- \* Hiking (4 miles)
- \* Guided nature walks by appointment
- \* Interpretive center
- \* Mountain biking
- \* Unsupervised beach swimming.

### **Hours of Operation :**

Open 7 days a week year-round, except for hurricane watch/warnings.  
Busy season is March through October, especially weekends.

**Size:**2,013.1-acres

## » Discovery Green



**Address:** 1500 McKinney  
Houston, TX 77010  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 713-333-1161

**Fax:** 713-333-1162

**Link:** <http://www.discoverygreen.com>



Imagine an urban green space with vibrancy and tranquility intertwined: century old oaks mix with 21st century art, an outdoor jazz session serenades with families and friends gathered on the Great Lawn. Prepare to “See. Touch. Hear. Taste. Explore” the new Discovery Green, Houston’s new 11.78-acre downtown park.

### **Park Features :**

Visitors to Discovery Green can see the remarkable skyline of the buildings of downtown Houston, but be transported into a natural setting filled with greenery and trees. There are wetland and upland gardens extending the length of the park. Tree-shaded walks lead to a tranquil pond while sculpted knolls and grassy slopes offer post card views of downtown.

Acres of grassy lawn are just waiting to tickle your feet.

And when you are ready to play, recreation abounds. Try out the new jogging trail that surrounds the park or if you yearn for the sea, The Model Boat Pond will answer your call. Man’s best friend can play at Discovery Green, too. Special dog fountains and runs are appropriately sized for large and small canines.

Want to try bocce ball or challenge your best friend to a game of horseshoes? Maybe recapture your title as king of croquet? Discovery Green is your field of play. It starts with a rentable four-wheel golf cart embellished by the talents of local Art Car artists. The art cart is stocked with just the right equipment for an hour or two of friendly competition.

Children will be amazed at the towering Mist Tree and delight in the one-of-a-kind play area designed to reflect the path of migrating birds. And don’t forget to make time to laugh and splash the Gateway Fountain, an interactive waterscape.

The arts are also an integral component of Discovery Green’s palette. Art installations add to the landscape while touring musicians and performing arts groups take the stage for noontime and weekend performances at the park’s Amphitheater.

### **Dining:**

Visitors have a variety of dining experiences to choose from within the park. The informal elegance of **The Grove** restaurant, located on the south side of the park, and the fast-casual fare of The Lake House situated on the north side. The Schiller Del Grande Restaurant Group operates both establishments, with award-winning Chef Robert Del Grande’s creations comprising the menus.

The Grove’s all-glass exterior overlooks a gathering of live oaks, offering visitors a peaceful, upscale ambience in the heart of the nation’s fourth largest city. Executive Chef Ryan Pera and Chef Robert Del Grande will serve up American Rustic cuisine with a focus on rotisserie specialties, steaks and seafood, while the bar on the upstairs deck – called the **Treehouse** – will be the go-to downtown spot for drinks and appetizers to the shorts-and-sandals set, who relish the open-air atmosphere.

The Lake House reels in visitors with its self-serve lakeside concept. The restaurant is a family-friendly fast-casual concept featuring hamburgers, hotdogs, salads, shakes, sodas, wine, and beer. Convenient counter service satisfies hunger pains quickly to get you back onto the almost 12 acres of park or tempts you to linger at will as you enjoy the Great Lawn.

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### Thinking Green :

Both restaurants are in keeping with Discovery Green's eco-friendly consciousness, incorporating composting, recycling, green housekeeping products and biodegradable packaging. Throughout construction, the park has committed to "green building practices", utilizing solar panels and sustainably-grown wood. BP America's \$1 million donation in September 2007 endorsed the park's commitment to environmentally responsible building and operating practices.

Convenient parking is located underground and street side surrounding the park. Discovery Green is across from the George R. Brown Convention Center. Toyota Center, The Shops at Houston Center and Minute Maid Park are located within blocks of the park.

Discovery Green is a shining example of how public and private sectors can work together. Of the total park project cost of \$122 million, more than \$54 million was raised by private funds to supplement the city's contributions. The City of Houston donated a large portion of the property and will contribute to the park's annual maintenance. Discovery Green Conservancy is a private non-profit, created to oversee the design, development and operation of the park upon completion.

### Activities:

- \*Dining at [The Grove](#) and The Lake House
- \*Picnic Areas
- \*Reading Rooms
- \*Theatrical Space
- \*Jogging Trail
- \*Dog Runs
- \*Playground

**Size:** 11.78 acres

**Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau - Member**

## » Glenwood Cemetery

**Address:** 2525 Washington Avenue  
Houston, TX 77007  
([Map It](#))



Home to the resting places of Howard Hughes, William P. Hobby and other Texas VIPs, Glenwood Cemetery opened in 1871.

Glenwood Cemetery was the first in the city to be professionally designed. Landscape artist Alfred Whitaker was brought in from England for the job. He molded the cemetery around the undulating hills thrown up by Buffalo Bayou floods. Today, Glenwood is a peaceful place for families, the bereaved, and the merely curious to reflect on the monuments and the fact that the best views of Houston's skyline are reserved for the dead. It is worth a few hours to wander through the twisting lanes to see the sculptures, the soaring obelisks, and the historic markers.

The cemetery's most famous resident is Hollywood big-wig, aviator, and legendary eccentric Howard Hughes. His grave lies in a fenced-off family plot. It is hard to spot because the marker is flush with the ground.

This historic cemetery is also the final resting place of a number of individuals who were citizens of the shortlived Republic of Texas. The grave sites of those individuals have been designated with a metal marker and are frequently decorated with the flag of the Republic and State of Texas.

Notable burials in Glenwood Cemetery include:

- \*Joseph S. Cullinan, Founder of Texaco
- \*William Stamps Farish II, Co-founder, Humble Oil Company
- \*Albert Bel Fay, U.S. Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago
- \*Maria "Ria" Franklin Prentiss Lucas Langham Gable, Texas socialite, married to Clark Gable 1931-1939
- \*James Wilson Henderson, Governor of Texas 1853
- \*Oveta Culp Hobby, U.S. Secretary, Department of Health, Education and Welfare 1953-1955
- \*William P. Hobby, Governor of Texas 1917-1921
- \*Roy Hofheinz, Father of the Astrodome
- \*Howard R. Hughes, Jr, Aviator, Industrialist
- \*Howard R. Hughes, Sr., Co-founder, Sharp-Hughes Tool Company, later renamed Hughes Tool Company
- \*Anson Jones, President, Republic of Texas 1844-1845
- \*Edgar Odell Lovett, President (1st), Rice University 1912-1946
- \*Glenn McCarthy, "King of the Wildcatters"
- \*Hiram Runnels, Governor of Mississippi 1833-1835
- \*Walter Benona Sharp, Co-founder, Sharp-Hughes Tool Company, later renamed Hughes Tool Company
- \*Ross S. Sterling, Governor of Texas 1931-1933; Co-founder, Humble Oil Company
- \*Gene Tierney, Hollywood Actress
- \*Margaret Kinkaid, founder of The Kinkaid School in Houston's Piney Point area

## » Memorial Park

**Address:** 6501 Memorial Drive  
Houston, TX 77001  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 713-863-8403



Dubbed “the largest urban park in Texas,” Houston's Memorial Park, just inside Loop 610 at Woodway, includes Texas' top-rated municipal 18-hole golf course, as well as facilities for tennis, softball, swimming, track, croquet, volleyball, in-line skating, cycling and a popular three-mile running course. In addition to the many trails the park is host to several softball/baseball fields, as well as a soccer/football field. The park is also host to Houston's annual Bayou City Art Festival.

Memorial Park is bordered to the north by the I-10 Interstate, to the west by the I-610 Loop, and to the south by Buffalo Bayou. All the wooded areas in Memorial Park are criss-crossed by trails. The section of trails located at the park's southern border along Buffalo Bayou - collectively known around Houston as the Ho Chi Minh Trail - is heavily traversed by

mountain bikers, as well as runners and hikers. The woods and trails in the parks SW and NW quadrants are less biked.

All the trails vary in size from narrow footpaths to wide, unused fire roads and the terrain varies from extremely undulating (with "camel hump" sequences rising and falling sharply anywhere from 5 to 40 feet) to perfectly flat. Besides the Bayou itself, there are creeks, ponds, a few open fields, a railroad, and a couple of swamps to run through, beside, or around. The woods are dense, and populated particularly with tall pines.

The trails take you adjacent to an equestrian center, as well as the Houston Nature Center and Arboretum. There are also tunnels underneath the two major thoroughfares traversing the park (Memorial and Woodway). These tunnels connect the various trails and allow runners to avoid negotiating directly across traffic, which can be both thick and speedy at times.

### **Facilities/Bike Trails :**

Bikers have a great selection of riding at Memorial Park, from flat paved trails to more difficult, twisting mountain-bike runs. Trails are marked with a color code according to skill level, so riders can easily find the path that will suit them best. Hiking and runners are welcome to use the biker trails. There are nearly 6 miles of bike and running trails in the park as well, but it should be noted that there is heavy car traffic through the park.

### **Flora/Fauna:**

The foliage is lush and plentiful, with some sections leading through densely vegetated areas offering many peaceful views. Memorial Park features mixed pine/oak woodlands, fenced in by urban sprawl from all directions, that still support a diverse population of eastern woodland birds. Pine, Swainson's, Kentucky, and Hooded warblers breed within this park. In late winter, American Woodcocks (a rare breeder on the upper coast) have displayed here. Watch for Mississippi Kites feeding on dragonflies as they skim the treetops along Buffalo Bayou in late August and early September.

**Size:**1466 acres

### **Additional Memorial Park Contact Information :**

Memorial Park Golf Course 713-862-4033  
Memorial Park Tennis Center 713-867-0440  
Memorial Park Swimming and Fitness Center 713-802-1662  
Houston Arboretum and Nature Center 713-681-8433



## » Sesquicentennial Park

**Address:** 400 Texas Avenue  
Houston, TX 77002  
([Map It](#))

**Link:** <http://www.sesquicentennialpark.org>



Sesquicentennial Park was developed along the banks of Buffalo Bayou as a commemoration of Houston's and Texas' 150th birthday. The 10.4-acre site flanks the bayou as it meanders past Wortham Theater Center. The 2.2-acre grand entrance multi-level park, completed August 1989, was built in two phases. This area includes a fountain and a stairway to the park's promenade, which runs along the western edge of the Wortham property on the bayou's east bank.

The 8.2-acre second phase was completed in May 1998, culminating a \$19 million public-private project requiring 14 years. The high point of the project -

literally - is the collection of seven 70-foot stainless steel pillars that line the eastern bank. Another prominent feature of the park is The Common, a gently sloping, 1.25-acre semi-circular lawn that serves as a staging area for outdoor events.

Sesquicentennial Park is a unique venue for outdoor activities of all kinds. Water-based events, such as the Buffalo Bayou Regatta, and anything suited to a gathering of persons wearing T-shirts and comfortable shoes is ideal. Tented events on Commons also work well along the bayou, as do concerts.

The 8.2-acre Phase II section of the park, which opened in the 1998, features the following elements:

**The Common** - A gently sloping 1.25-acre lawn flanked by a walkway and stately trees.

**Allen H. Carruth Promenade** - Shaded by large cypress trees and enclosed by an historic balustrade overlook wall, the 24-foot walkway features five of the massive park pillars, created by architects TeamHou and artist Mel Chin.

**Preston Avenue Bridge** - A pedestrian link to the bayou's east and west banks, the Preston Avenue Bridge is lined with wide sidewalks, and replicas of the historic lighting that once adorned this early bayou crossing.

**The Garden Club of Houston Garden** - Located on the western bank of Sesquicentennial Park, this natural sweeping grassy slope contains extensive native plantings, unique stonework, and natural water pools.

**George Bush Monument** - A tribute to the 41st American president, the Bush Monument was unveiled to the public in December 2004. A free public green space, the park is open to the public 365 days a year, and features an eight-foot, 650-pound bronze sculpture of the former president and a semicircular wall consisting of four bas-reliefs that depict President Bush in various stages of his life.

**The Josephine B. and Anthony Charles Muller Overlook** - Situated on a bayou curve near the Prairie and Bagby Street Bridge, this overlook site is the perfect spot to take in the spectacular view of Houston's downtown buildings.

**Seven Wonders** - Rising dramatically above Buffalo Bayou's Sesquicentennial Park are the seven 70-ft-tall pillars "Seven Wonders." Flanking the park's Promenade and Preston Avenue Bridge, the columns highlight Houston's history through the themes of agriculture, energy, manufacturing, medicine, philanthropy, technology and transportation. Each column is constructed of 150 individual children's drawings, etched in stainless steel plate.

**Size:** 22.5 acres

## » Allen's Landing



**Address:** 1001 Commerce Street  
Houston, TX 77002  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 713-752-0314

**Fax:** 713-223-3500

**Link:** <http://www.buffalobayou.org/parks.html>



Often described as “Houston’s heart” and Houston’s “Plymouth Rock,” Allen’s Landing is an area that truly defines Houston. It was here in 1836 that August C. and John K. Allen stepped ashore and claimed Houston as their own. The confluence of Buffalo and White Oak bayous also became Houston’s first port and a thriving commercial hub.

After years of deterioration and numerous planning efforts, Allen’s Landing is undergoing major revitalization and rejuvenation. Already completed is a concrete paved wharf designed to replicate the original Port, a promenade, terrace overlooking the bayou, trail/walkway, entry plaza at intersection of Commerce and Main, terraced grass lawn and text-based Public Artwork.

Improvements are being made west and east of the existing park including the downtown streetscape enhancement project which will feature pedestrian connections from Commerce Street to the bayou. Four major entryways will also include stairs, ramps, landscaping, signage and public art.

### **Amenities:**

- \* Benches
- \* Trash Receptacles
- \* Drinking Fountain
- \* Bike Rack
- \* Decorative Lighting

**Size:** 1.76 acres

## » Hermann Park



**Address:** 6201 A Golf Course Drive  
Houston, TX 77030  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 713-524-5876

**Fax:** 713-524-5887

**Link:** <http://www.hermannpark.org/>



Hermann Park, presented to the City of Houston by George Hermann in 1914, is Houston's most historically significant public green space. Over the years, the Houston Zoo, Miller Outdoor Theatre, the Houston Museum of Natural Science, Japanese Garden, Rose Garden and one of the first desegregated public golf courses in the United States all have added to the Park's importance as a recreational destination.

Hermann Park, located minutes from downtown Houston, is a cultural and recreational hub surrounded by the Texas Medical Center, Rice University, the Museum District and various residential neighborhoods. The entrance to the park is at the intersection of Main St. and Montrose Blvd. Upon arriving at Hermann Park the visitor is greeted

by a statue of one of Houston's founders, General Sam Houston. He points in, towards the park, leading the park visitor in the direction of it's many amenities. There is plenty to see and do in Hermann Park.

### **Houston Garden Center:**

Erected in 1941, the Center was managed by the Houston Federation of Garden Clubs. In 1961, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department took over the management of the center. Surrounding the center is over 2,500 rose bushes in a variety of colors.

### **Japanese Garden :**

An island of serenity nestled in a pine grove near the Sam Houston Monument, the garden was designed by world-renowned Japanese landscape architect, Ken Nakajima and built to symbolize the friendship between the U.S. and Japan. Recognizing Houston's thriving Japanese community, the garden is built on 5 acres and combines a traditional Japanese Garden design with a touch of Texas.

### **Miller Outdoor Theatre :**

A free, open-air theatre, host to a variety of multi-cultural events, allows visitors to catch a concert or play while picnicking in one of Houston's most popular parks. Rain or shine, a wide variety of family-friendly performances include Cinco de Mayo, Fourth of July festivities, Shakespeare in the Park, the Houston Ballet and the Houston Grand Opera performances.

### **Houston Zoo:**

Founded in 1922, this recreational destination serves 1.4 million guests annually and is set in a lush 55-acre landscape right in the middle of Hermann Park. The Houston Zoo is home to more than 3,100 exotic animals representing more than 500 species. It is one of the largest collections in the nation and is considered one of the best-maintained zoos in the country.

### **Hermann Park Golf Course :**

In 1922, the lush and scenic 18-hole Hermann Park Golf Course was built, starting a rich tradition of golfing excellence that has prospered for more than 70 years. The Golf Course was the first public golf course in America to welcome all races. Play golf under the majestic emerald canopy of stately oak trees and its manicured, plush Bermuda greens. Unwind on the airy veranda of the historic clubhouse, and satisfy your appetite with delicious food, combined with impeccable service.

### **McGovern Lake :**

## GREEN HOUSTON

This 8-acre masterpiece is newly restored and expanded, creating two new islands for migratory birds, and a third island that the Miniature Train travels. Pedal boats are available to rent at the boathouse and catch-and-release fishing available for children under 12 and senior citizens over 65 at Bob's Fishing Pier.

### **Activities:**

- \* Fishing
- \* Boating (Pedal Boat rentals available)
- \* Miniature Train
- \* Golf
- \* Japanese Garden
- \* Hike and Bike trails
- \* Miller Outdoor Theatre
- \* Houston Zoo

**Size:** 445-acres

## » Buffalo Bayou



**Address:** 1113 Vine Street, Suite 200  
Buffalo Bayou Partnership  
Vine Street Studios  
Houston, TX 77002  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 713-752-0314

**Fax:** 713-223-3500

**Link:** <http://www.buffalobayou.org>



Buffalo Bayou, the 52-mile slow-moving waterway that was the site of Houston's founding in 1836, has become a destination for outdoor recreation near downtown Houston. It is one of the few bayous left in central Houston which was not reconstructed with concrete in the 1960s and 1970s. It contains an incredibly diverse urban ecosystem supporting dozens of native species of flora and fauna.

An innovative lighting program, designed for the entire Buffalo Bayou greenway, was unveiled with the Sabine-to-Bagby Promenade in June 2006. Diverse lighting treatments identify Buffalo Bayou as the spine of the city and a major destination for night-time activity. The lights, designed by artist Stephen Kornis and international lighting firm L'Observatoire, brighten

the bridges, trails and water of the park with a blue-to-white color scheme changing in tandem with the phases of the moon.

### Canoe and Kayak Trails :

See downtown from a new perspective. Buffalo Bayou is perfect for canoeing and kayaking. Whether your destination is Sesquicentennial Park or Allen's Landing, the bayou wharfs make take out very easy. [Click here](#) for a map of canoe and kayak launches along Buffalo Bayou.

### Hike and Bike Trails :

From Sabine to Bagby Street, 2 miles of trails now connect the Allen Parkway and Memorial Drive trails to Sesquicentennial Park and the Theater District in downtown. [Click here](#) for a map of hike and bike trails along Buffalo Bayou.

[Click here](#) for information on Buffalo Bayou boat tours.

### Parks:

Many parks line the banks of Buffalo Bayou.

- \* [Allen's Landing](#)
- \* [Buffalo Bayou ArtPark](#)
- \* [Buffalo Bayou Park](#)
- \* [Guadalupe Park](#)
- \* [Hidalgo Park](#)
- \* [Memorial Park](#)
- \* [Sam Houston Park](#)
- \* [Sesquicentennial Park](#)
- \* [Spotts Park](#)
- \* [Tony Marron Park](#)

The Buffalo Bayou Partnership is a non-profit organization that oversees Buffalo Bayou improvements from Shepherd Drive east to the Turning Basin. The Partnership coordinates the integration of major amenities and restoration projects into the Bayou greenbelt and seeks ways to increase community involvement through pedestrian, boating and biking amenities; educational, volunteer and recreational activities and tours; permanent and temporary art installations and other natural and built attractions.



## » Buffalo Bayou Park

**Address:** 18-3600 Allen Parkway and Memorial Drive  
Houston, TX 77002

**Phone:** 713-752-0314

**Fax:** 713-223-3500

**Link:** <http://www.buffalobayou.org/parks.html>



With downtown's skyline as its back drop, Houston's premier greenbelt winds from Shepherd Drive on the west to Bagby Street on the East End. Eleanor Tinsley Park, located within this greenway (Taft-Sabine), is the site of major Houston festivals and events, including the city's Fourth of July Fireworks.

### **Special Features :**

Buffalo Bayou Park includes hike and bike trails, exercise stations, the Jim Mozola Memorial Disc Golf Course (north bank immediately west of Sabine Street), a "Dog Park" (site where dog lovers informally meet ) (2700 block of Allen Parkway at Studewood), boat Launch (Eleanor Tinsley Park), Children's Playground (Eleanor Tinsley Park), the Buffalo Bayou

Artpark (temporary public art work is displayed) (north bank immediately west and east of Sabine Street), Henry Moore Sculpture (south bank east of Taft Street), Police Memorial (north bank off Memorial Drive between Fonde Recreation Center (110 Sabine Street).

### **Cemeteries:**

Beth Yeshurun (3600 Allen Parkway) and Glenwood Cemetery (2525 Washington Avenue)

### **Amenities:**

- \* Benches
- \* Trash Receptacles
- \* Drinking Fountains

**Size:** 124.05 acres

## » Houston Arboretum & Nature Center



**Address:** 4501 Woodway Drive  
Houston, TX 77024  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 713-681-8433

**Link:** <http://www.houstonarboretum.org>



Located on the western edge of Memorial Park (4 miles from Downtown Houston), the Houston Arboretum & Nature Center offers an escape from the hustle and bustle of city life and the opportunity to experience the natural world.

This 155-acre non-profit urban nature sanctuary provides education about the natural environment to Houstonians and visitors of all ages. It plays a vital role in protecting native plants and animals in the heart of the city where development threatens their survival.

Visitors can walk the five miles of trails free of charge. The Nature Center building includes the Discovery

Room with interactive exhibits and activities and the Nature Shop filled with items for nature lovers of all ages. A Wildlife Garden, which demonstrates plantings appropriate to attract hummingbirds, butterflies and other wildlife to an urban backyard, and the Carol Tatkon Sensory Garden featuring native plants attractive to the senses are the latest additions to the Houston Arboretum & Nature Center's ever-changing landscape.

### Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau - Member

#### From the Houston Blog

#### Houston Arboretum & Nature Center was recommended by Lydia in Houston

Halloween Family fun right in the heart of Memorial Park. On Saturday, Oct. 27 they present ArBOOreum from 3-8 p.m., a great way for the whole family to enjoy Halloween festivities in a natural environment.

Children are encouraged to wear costumes and bring flashlights. Wear comfortable walking shoes to enjoy a forest trail with scattered trick-or-treat locations. Stops along the trail will include activities for kids to learn about raccoons, spiders, flying squirrels and other forest animals. planetarium.

Then, stroll back outside to enjoy more Halloween carnival festivities at the petting zoo, face painting stations and pony rides.

Admission, which includes the trick-or-treat trail, is \$10 for ages 3 and up. Carnival tickets sold separately.

Event parking will be in a satellite lot located east of the Arboretum. Just follow the signs.

For directions, or more information on ArBOOreum call 713-681-8433 or visit [www.HoustonArboretum.org](http://www.HoustonArboretum.org)

[ [ADD COMMENTS](#) ]

**Lydia from Houston also recommends Houston Arboretum & Nature Center**

Be sure to go to the Houston Arboretum & Nature Center's Owl Prowl on Friday, Feb. 8 from 7 to 9 p.m. I went to my first Owl Prowl there in January and didn't know what to expect. You take a guided tour along the forest trails at night and hear a naturalist imitate an owl call and you listen to hear whether an owl calls back. One particular owl flew a foot over our heads on the trail. It is a nighttime adventure at the Arboretum. Lots of fun and a whole different experience at the Arboretum at night.

**From the Houston Blog**

**Houston Arboretum & Nature Center was recommended by Carol Taylor in Houston**

ARBOR DAY on Saturday, Jan 19th from 10 am to 4 pm.  
Family fun with your picture taken with Johnny Appleseed or Smokey the Bear. Plus see how paper is made. Make a hat. Plant a seed. Get a free pine seedling. Watch wood carvers. And buy a tree.

[ [ADD COMMENTS](#) ]

## » North Lake Conroe Paddling Co.

**Address:** 13988 Calvary Road  
Willis, TX 77318  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 936-203-2697

**Fax:** 936-321-4801

**Link:** <http://www.northlakeconroepaddlingco.com>



The North Lake Conroe Paddling Company is a unique kayak outfitter with lakefront property offering year-round rentals of solo, sit-on-top kayaks for recreation, touring, birding, and fishing. The location of this company is ideal with protected Class I water for newcomers and families as well as access to touring the vast natural shorelines of national forest.

## » Brazos Bend State Park

**Address:** 21901 FM 762  
Needville, TX 77461  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 979-553-5105

**Link:** <http://www.brazosbend.org>



Brazos Bend State Park offers a scenic haven for birdwatchers and wildlife observers. More than 270 species of birds have been sighted here, and the prehistoric-looking American alligator is the park's most noteworthy resident. Hiking and biking trails meander through the park's varied terrains, and several lakes offer excellent fishing. For stargazers, the George Observatory is located within the park. Most of the park is in the Brazos River floodplains, but there are also areas of flat upland coastal prairies. Numerous swales and depressions become freshwater marshes during periods of heavy rain. In addition to the Brazos River, Big Creek meanders diagonally across the park and is associated with sloughs and oxbow lakes. Other lakes have been created by levees.

### **Flora/Fauna:**

Brazos Bend State Park features sycamore, cottonwood, black willow, oaks, more than 270 species of birds sighted; 21 species of reptiles and amphibians, including American alligator and 23 species of mammals including bobcat, white-tailed deer, raccoon, gray fox, and feral hog.

### **The George Observatory :**

The Observatory houses a Challenger Learning Center for Space Science Education, which takes participants on simulated space missions, complete with a mission control center and a spacecraft simulator. There are also three domed telescopes at the George Observatory: the largest is the 36-inch Gueymard Research Telescope, one of the largest telescopes in the nation open to the public on a regular basis. The George Observatory is open for public viewing on Saturday evenings, and is available by reservation on Friday nights for groups of 30 or more.

### **Activities/Amenities :**

- \* 21 miles of biking trails
- \* 6 different lakes for fishing
- \* Free guides on interpretive hikes
- \* Nature center
- \* Alligator observation
- \* George Observatory

### **Facilities:**

The park offers facilities for day visitors and campers. Restrooms with showers, campsites with water and electricity, screened shelters, trailer dump station, dining hall (capacity 150) with kitchen, ceiling fans, BBQ pits, restrooms, nature trails, and two picnic areas with pavilions are available.

### **Size:**

5000 acres

## » Tranquility Park

**Address:** 400 Rusk St.  
Houston, TX 77002  
([Map It](#))



Tranquility Park, named for the Sea of Tranquility, is filled with grassy embankments and serene pools while situated right next to City Hall in downtown Houston. The cool oasis of fountains and walkways were built to commemorate the first landing on the moon by the Apollo 11 mission.

Opening to visitors in 1979, the park was dedicated on the tenth anniversary for the first lunar landing. Neil Armstrong's words from the moon, "Houston, Tranquility base here. The Eagle has Landed." are written in many languages on plaques placed at the entrance of the park. The mounds and depressions on the parks surface represent the cratered lunar surface.

Each year, Tranquility Park becomes home to annual events such as the Children's Festival, Houston International Festival and many more. This popular spot is great for individuals seeking shade or a place to have lunch during one of Houston's hot summer days. Tranquility Park is located between Walker and Rusk Streets, east of Smith St. in Downtown Houston.

## » Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge

**Address:** Anahuac NWR  
PO Box 278  
Refuge 1985  
Anahuac, TX 77514

**Phone:** 409-267-3337

**Link:** <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/texas/anahuac/index.htm...>



In Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, the chorus of thousands of waterfowl, wind moving through the coastal prairie, the splash of an alligator going for a swim and a high-pitched call of a fulvous whistling duck are heard when visiting the Refuge. The meandering bayous of Anahuac NWR cut through ancient flood plains, creating expanses of coastal marsh and prairie bordering Galveston Bay in southeast Texas. These coastal marshes and prairies are host or home to an abundance of wildlife, from migratory birds to alligators to bobcats and more.

### **Flora/Fauna:**

The park features a coastal prairie and marsh, is home to many migratory birds and alligators such as muskrat, nutria, opossum, skunk, raccoon, and coyotes with characteristics of red wolves. Between October and March, there are as many as 27 species

of duck present in refuge - including green-winged teal, gadwall, shoveler, ruddy duck, and northern pintail. Huge groups of snow geese, sometimes in excess of 80,000 feed on rice fields near Shoveler Pond; secretive yellow rails usually live in refuge, also roseate spoonbill, ibis, egrets.

### **Activities:**

- \* Boardwalk
- \* Outdoor educational programming (free, K-5th)
- \* Photography
- \* Birding
- \* Canoeing
- \* Wildlife observation

### **Size:**

34,000-acres

## » Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge

**Address:** Brazoria NWR  
County Road 227  
Freeport, TX 77541

**Link:** <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/texas/texasmidcoast/bra...>



Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge, a freshwater slough winding through salt marshes, offers rare, native bluestem prairie that graces the uplands. Brazoria NWR is on a key location on the Texas Gulf which helps Freeport draw one of the highest Audubon Christmas bird counts in the nation - more than 200 species. In winter, more than 100,000 snow geese, Canada geese, pintail, northern shoveler, teal, gadwall, American wigeon and mottled ducks fill the plentiful ponds and sloughs to capacity. Sandhill cranes join in too. In summer, birds that nest on the refuge include ten species of herons and egrets, white ibis, roseate spoonbill, mottled duck,

white-tailed kite, clapper rail, horned lark, seaside sparrow, black skimmer, and scissor-tailed flycatcher. Look for alligators year-round on Big Slough and in refuge ponds. In dry seasons, their trails thorough the mud and excavated gator holes are easy to spot. Roseate spoonbills capture the pink glow of sunrise in their wings in flight. Those same rosy feathers proved a near death sentence when demand for feather hats decimated spoonbills, great egrets and other fine-feathered fowl until plume hunting ended before World War I.

### **Flora/Fauna:**

More than 300 bird species, central flyaway migratory waterfowl in winter and neotropical migratory songbirds, create one of the highest audubon bird counts in the nation in freshwater marshes, sloughs and ponds. There are four thousand acres of native coastal bluestem prairie, designated an internationally significant shorebird site by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, with birds including roseate spoonbills, herons, yellow rails, ibis and other wading and shorebirds. There are also alligators, upland birds, coyotes and armadillos.

### **Activities:**

Waterfowl hunting is permitted on Christmas Point and Middle Bayou, fishing is available year round and bank fishing for redfish, spotted sea trout, black drum, and flounder is found at Clay Banks and salt lake area. During the winter, wildlife observation is popular for Audubon/Freeport bird count of Teal Pond, Rogers Pond, Middle Bayou, Big Slough and Mottled Duck Marsh.

- \* Photography
- \* Visitor Center/Environmental Education Center
- \* Birding
- \* 2 Boat ramps
- \* Fishing
- \* Hiking
- \* Visitor Center/Environmental Education Center
- \* Wildlife observation
- \* TEKS-aligned lessons.

### **Size:**

43,388-acres

## » Buffalo Bayou ArtPark

**Address:** 100 Sabine St.  
Houston, TX 77007  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 713-502-9454

**Link:** <http://www.bbap-houston.org>



Carter Ernst and Tim Glover.

The Buffalo Bayou ArtPark features a constantly rotating collection of public art at the Sabine Street bridge between Allen Parkway and Memorial Drive. Between 20 and 25 works of art are displayed at the park at any one time. The park itself slopes down the banks of Buffalo Bayou and offers a variety of settings for sculpture as well as other forms of art.

BBAP traces its origins back to the Watermelon Flats Sculpture Show of 1987. Due to financial hardship, the city of Houston discontinued its support for an annual sculpture show on Buffalo Bayou. Local sculptors then held their own exhibit on the site of an old farmer's market downtown. They didn't ask permission, they didn't seek approval--they just did it. The artists involved in that show would help spearhead Houston's rise in the art world. They included the Art Guys, Jackie Harris, Paul Kittelson,

This spontaneous exhibit inaugurated a trend. The 1987 show was followed by exhibits in subsequent years. Soon what had been a spontaneous movement grew up and settled down. BBAP became a non-profit organization and entered into an agreement with the City of Houston Parks Department where a part of the parks system adjoining Allen Parkway, on the banks of Buffalo Bayou near downtown Houston, is devoted to the display of temporary public art work.

Since then, BBAP has spread its wings and has developed a variety of other projects intended to further the ability to take public art out into the 600 square mile area that is the Houston community. These include an Artist in Residency program which teams a nationally recognized artist with the sculpture students at the University of Houston, an annual display of Christmas Trees created by local artists and students and a neighborhood artists program which allows local artists to develop projects suited to Houston's many neighborhoods.

## » Sam Houston Park

**Address:** 1000 Bagby  
Houston, TX

**Phone:** (713) 655-1912

**Link:** <http://www.heritagesociety.org/park.html>



Mayor Sam Brashear appointed Houston's first park committee to oversee the establishment of a city park in 1899. The 20 acres chosen came to be called Sam Houston Park. It was landscaped into a Victorian wonderland, with footpaths laid out to pass by an old mill and cross a rustic bridge over a pleasant stream. Sam Houston Park is a proud oasis of living history and wide-open greenness amid modern monuments to corporate and civic institutions. The park is surrounded by the skyscrapers and freeways that typify Twenty-first Century urban life and is only a short walk from downtown Houston's City Hall. By the 1950's, Houston was a much different city, and boom times meant that many fine old buildings from more genteel eras were being demolished to make way for a new modernity and burgeoning commercial affluence. The threat to demolish a century old house in Sam Houston Park brought together a group of Houstonians dedicated to saving tangible connections to the vanishing past - resulting in founding of the

Heritage Society in 1954. Their efforts to save the Kellum-Noble House were successful, and the Society turned to other historical preservation projects.

**Special Features :** Sam Houston Parks includes a small pond with fountain, wetland garden, gazebo, trail/walkways, neuhaus garden, Houston Armillary Sphere Sculpture and USS Houston Memorial Sculpture.

### **Heritage Society Homes :**

The park and the museum are open to the public, but tours of the historic buildings must be arranged through the Heritage Society. Some of the historic homes include The Old Place (1823), Pilot House (1868), San Felipe Cottage (1868), Staiti House (1905), Yates House (1870), Kellum Noble House (1847), St. John Church (1891), Nichols-Rice-Cherry House (1850). For information on hours and fees, call 713-655-1912 or e-mail [emartin@heritagesociety.org](mailto:emartin@heritagesociety.org).

### **Amenities:**

- \* Benches
- \* Trash Receptacles
- \* Drinking Fountains

### **Size:**

19.70 acres

## » Hidalgo Park

**Address:** 7000 Avenue Q  
Houston, TX

**Phone:** 713.752.0314

**Fax:** 713.223.3500

**Link:** <http://www.buffalobayou.org/parks.html>



Since its founding at the Turning Basin, Hidalgo Park has been at the center of the East End's cultural and civic life. Neighborhood residents raised money to purchase the park's original land and sponsored the creation of its unique quiosco (gazebo). Hidalgo Park was acquired by the City of Houston Parks & Recreation Department in 1927.

**Special Features :**

Hidalgo Park includes a Quiosco (Gazebo with concrete columns and railings to look like tree trunks), a creative wooden playground designed and partially funded by neighborhood children and a baseball field. The park is also one of five Houston parks selected for water playgrounds, donated by H-E-B.

**Amenities:**

\* Benches

- \* Trash Receptacles
- \* Decorative Lighting
- \* Water play area

**Size:**  
11.60 acres

## » Huntsville State Park

**Address:** Huntsville State Park  
Park Road 39  
P.O. Box 508  
Huntsville, TX 77342  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 936-295-5644

**Link:** <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/huntsvil/huntsvil.htm>



Huntsville State Park lies in the piney woods of the Sam Houston National Forest, near the western edge of the Southern Pine Belt. The heavily-wooded park, dominated by loblolly and shortleaf pines typical of the East Texas Pine Belt, providing attractive camping and picnic areas and encloses the 210-acre Lake Raven. Lake Raven, fed by three major creeks, offers fishing for crappie, perch, catfish, and bass. Hiking trails have been constructed so that wildlife and birds can be observed in a natural setting.

**Flora/Fauna:**

Lake Raven, fed by three major creeks, offers fishing for crappie, perch, catfish, and bass. Hiking trails have been constructed so that wildlife and birds can be observed in a natural setting. White-tailed deer, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, migratory waterfowl,

and fox squirrel are just a few of the creatures that may be discovered in their natural environment. Occasionally, alligators may be observed in the lake.

**Activities:**

The park features screened shelters, a screened group picnic pavilion and recreation hall, trailer dump station, restrooms with and without showers, Texas State Park Store, fishing piers, boat rental, boat launching, ramps, hiking and mountain bike trails.

- \* Hiking Trails (15.5 miles)
- \* Boating and Hydrobike rentals
- \* Nature trail (1.3 miles)
- \* Biking (mountain and road)
- \* Camping
- \* Fishing
- \* Horseback riding
- \* Swimming
- \* Miniature Golf
- \* TEKS-aligned lessons

**Size:**

2083.2 acres

## » Jesse H. Jones Park and Nature Center

**Address:** Jesse H. Jones Park  
20634 Kenswick Drive  
Humble, TX 77338  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 281-446-8588

**Link:** <http://www.hcp4.net/jones/>



Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature Center preserves the Native American and pioneer lifestyles commonly found along the banks of Cypress and Spring creeks during the late 1700s and early 1800s. Natural beauty and history are combined in this unique setting located along the banks of Spring Creek. Jones Park is a window into a fast floodplain forest habitat. Explore diverse ecosystems including ancient cypress bogs, natural white sand beaches and wildflower meadows. A variety of guided tours and free programming are offered ranging from the lifestyles and customs of local Indian tribes and pioneer settlers to the environmental benefits of this ecosystem.

The playground at Jones Park resembles a frontier fort nestled among towering native trees. Slides, tunnels, swings, and play decks provide exciting and challenging opportunities for children to develop their imagination and physical well-being. Surrounded by 26 picnic tables and an 80-seat pavilion, this playground complex is a family favorite for children of all ages and abilities.

**Activities/Amenities :**

- \* Akokisa Indian Village
- \* Biking on Sundays
- \* Guided canoe trips and tours
- \* Hiking trails
- \* Live snakes exhibit
- \* Observation beehive
- \* Mounted specimens
- \* State-of-the-art audiovisual system
- \* Redbud Hill Homestead

**Size:**

275-acres

## » Lake Livingston State Park

**Address:** Lake Livingston State Park  
300 Park Road 65  
Livingston, TX 77351  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 936-365-2201

**Link:** <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/lakelivi/lakelivi.htm>



Lake Livingston State Park contains 635.5 acres along Lake Livingston a 84,800-acre reservoir. It's located near the ghost town of Swartwout, a steamboat landing on the Trinity River in the 1830s and 1850s, and the meeting place of Polk County's first commissioners court before voters selected Livingston as county seat.

Native emergent plants are limited to the upper areas of the reservoir and in the backs of coves and embayments. The floating exotic water hyacinth is found throughout the reservoir. Lake Livingston is a notable white bass fishery. White bass are plentiful and grow to large sizes. The catfish fishery is dominated by blue catfish. Largemouth bass, striped bass, and crappie are less abundant but good

catches are possible in areas of the reservoir where habitat is available.

### **Flora/Fauna:**

Park vegetation includes pine-oak woodlands, dominated by loblolly pine and water oak. Typical wildlife of the pineywoods includes an occasional white-tailed deer, mallard duck, raccoon, armadillo, swamp rabbit, or squirrel. Popular fish include crappie, perch, catfish, and bass.

### **Activities:**

- \* Camping
- \* Picnicking
- \* Swimming pool (Memorial Day to Labor Day)
- \* Mountain biking
- \* Nature study
- \* Fishing
- \* Boating
- \* Day use equestrian is now available: Visitors use the horses provided by Lake Livingston stables and are not allowed to bring their own horses.

## » Galveston Bay Cruising Association

**Address:** 1900 Shipyard Drive  
Seabrook, TX 77586  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 713-820-7245

**Link:** <http://www.gbca.org>

Galveston Bay Cruising Association is a non-profit organization that strives to put on quality yacht racing events at a minimum cost.

GCBA traces its origin back to 1947 when a small group of sailboat racing enthusiasts informally organized the Club. From that modest beginning, GBCA has grown to a current membership of about 175 sailors.

Annual dues are enough to cover the Club's overhead, newsletter and mailing expenses. Nominal race entry fees are charged to cover the cost of trophies and event socials. In order to keep costs low, GBCA relies a great deal on volunteer efforts by the membership. Volunteer requirements include legal and technical advice, race and protest committee members, event chairpersons, newsletter articles, and help with social events.

For more information, call 713-820-7245 or visit [www.gbca.org](http://www.gbca.org)

## » Sheldon Lake State Park & Environmental Learning Center

**Address:** 15315 Beaumont Highway  
Houston, TX 77049  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 281-456-2800

**Link:** <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/sheldon>



Sheldon Lake State Park & Environmental Learning Center is a 2,800 acre outdoor education and recreation facility located in northeast Harris County. The park is split into two units: Sheldon Lake is accessible from Garrett and Pineland/Fauna roads and the Environmental Learning Center is accessible from Beaumont Highway.

The Sheldon Lake Unit encompasses 1,200 acres, 800 are permanently inundated and 400 acres are marsh and swampland. Fishing, small boats and canoes, and birdwatching are the main activities. The Environmental Learning Center Unit provides TEKS-aligned educational programming on pond ecology, nature walks focusing on habitats and animal adaptations, catch-and-release fishing (fishing poles provided), renewable energy, native plant

gardening, composting, recycling and hunter education.

### **Flora/Fauna:**

The Lake Unit is home to oak, pine, cypress, sycamore, several types of water lilies, deer, raccoon, opossum, rabbit, alligator and twenty species of waterfowl. Bald eagles, osprey in winter and Heron and egret rookeries are found in March - June.

### **Activities/Amenities :**

- \* canoeing
- \* catch and release fishing
- \* educational programming
- \* nature walks
- \* wildlife observation
- \* TEKS-aligned lessons

## » Stephen F. Austin Park

**Address:** Stephen F. Austin State Park  
PO Box 125  
San Felipe, TX 77473

**Phone:** 979-885-3613

**Link:** [http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/stephen\\_f...](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/stephen_f...)



Twelve acres of Stephen F. Austin Park are set aside in honor of the area's past. Located on the Brazos River, adjoining the old ferry site and a part of the Comercio Plaza de San Felipe, this is the site of the township of San Felipe, the seat of government of the Anglo-American colonies in Texas. It was here Stephen F. Austin, the "Father of Texas," brought the first 297 families to colonize Texas under a contract with the Mexican Government. From 1824 to 1836, San Felipe de Austin was the social, economic, and political center, as well as the capital of the American colonies in Texas. Due to the many historic events that occurred here, the community acquired the reputation "Cradle of the Texas Liberty."

Also, the conventions of 1832 and 1833 and the

consultation of 1835 were held here. These meetings eventually led to the Texas Declaration of Independence. San Felipe was the home of Austin and other famous early Texans; the home of Texas' first Anglo newspaper (The Texas Gazette, founded in 1829); the home of the postal system of Texas origination and the setting for the beginning of the Texas Rangers.

The park is divided into two sections, a small historic section and the larger recreational area. The small historical section of the park is located on FM 1458, one hundred yards or so past the recreational park entrance. There are several monuments, more than one historic grave and a bronze Stephen F. Austin statue, by John Angel (1935). There is a replica of Stephen F. Austin's original cabin and a general store replicating a similar one that served San Felipe, it was originally built in 1847. Guided tours are available, and the small state ran historic general store is open on weekends.

### **Flora/Fauna:**

This forested park is bordered to the north and east by the Brazos River. It provides a natural habitat for deer, squirrels, raccoons, foxes, and opossums. A variety of birds is present year-round. The undeveloped areas of the park permit hiking and river fishing.

### **Activities/Amenities :**

- \* Picnicking
- \* Camping
- \* Fishing
- \* Hiking
- \* 18-hole golf course
- \* Nature and historical tours

## » Sea Center Texas

**Address:** Sea Center Texas  
300 Medical Drive  
Lake Jackson, TX 77566

**Phone:** 979-292-0100

**Link:** <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/visitorcenters/seacenter/>



This Texas Parks and Wildlife Department facility, Sea Center Texas, includes a marine aquarium, fish hatchery and wetland exhibit. A 50,000-gallon aquarium allows visitors to view large Gulf of Mexico marine animals. The site's visitor center educates through interpretive displays, a 20-foot "touch tank" and aquariums depicting native Texas habitats including a salt marsh, jetty, reef and open Gulf exhibits. The "touch tank" allows visitors to handle blue crabs, hermit crabs, anemones and more. A 5-acre wetland exhibit is accessible by an elevated boardwalk.

The facility operates one of the three TPWD marine hatcheries located on the Texas coast that produce juvenile red drum and spotted speckled trout to stock in Texas bays. The hatchery has the capability to

produce up to 15 million juvenile fish each year. Fish hatchery tours and educational programs are available by reservation. Admission is free to Sea Center Texas.

### **Flora/Fauna:**

The Center features shark, red drum, spotted seatrout, sting rays, gray snapper, jack crevalle, a 300+ -pound Queensland grouper named Gordon, oysters, clams, pompano, barnacles, periwinkle, moray eels, angelfish, corals, seahorses, tripletail, jacks and red snapper. Their wetland area features butterflies, hummingbirds, dragonflies, bulrushes, black mangroves, smooth cordgrass, wading birds, turtles, snakes and wildflowers. A small outdoor pavilion provides a quiet resting or lunch spot adjacent to the butterfly and hummingbird gardens.

### **Activities:**

- \* Aquariums
- \* Fishing ponds
- \* Marine fish hatchery
- \* Touch pools
- \* Wetland walkway
- \* TEKS-aligned lessons

## » Spotts Park

**Address:** 401 South Heights Boulevard  
Houston, TX 77007  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 713-845-1000

**Fax:** 713.223.3500

**Link:** <http://www.buffalobayou.org/parks.html>



Spotts Park, which lies in a natural bowl just northeast of Waugh and Memorial west of downtown, was acquired by the City of Houston Parks & Recreation Department in 1980.

**Special Features :**

Spotts Park includes a trail/walkway, basketball court, volleyball court, children's playground and picnic area.

**Amenities:**

- \* Benches
- \* Trash Receptacles
- \* Drinking Fountains

**Size:**

16.24 acres

## » Trinity National Wildlife Refuge

**Address:** Trinity River NWR  
1351 N Main St  
P.O. Box 10015  
Liberty, TX 77575

**Phone:** 936-336-9786

**Fax:** 936-336-9847

**Link:** <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/texas/trinityriver/inde...>



Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge was established to protect a remnant of the bottomland hardwood forest ecosystem along the Trinity River. The refuge is currently at 18,500 acres and continues to grow. This Refuge is located within the Lower Mississippi Joint Venture Project Area of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and, as such, is highly valuable habitat for a diversity of waterfowl species. A highly valuable habitat, it is used during migration or nesting by nearly 50 percent of the neotropical migratory bird species listed by the Fish and Wildlife Service. Although not fully surveyed, the refuge contains more than 620 plant species and 400 vertebrate species.

Champion Lake (public use area) includes a bottomland hardwood forest ecosystem (one of 14 priority-one bottomland sites identified for protection in the Texas Bottomland Protection Plan), bottomland

hardwood forested swamps, open water, and wet pastures, upland cultivated pastures, natural pine forests, and mixed pine-hardwood forests, diversity of waterfowl species.

**Flora/Fauna:**

The refuge is home to white-tailed deer, squirrels, numerous other furbearers, freshwater turtles, alligators, snakes, river otters and bald eagles.

**Activities:**

Only small groups may use this site as restroom facilities are extremely limited. Guided tours are not available.

- \* Birding
- \* Hunting
- \* Fishing
- \* Photography
- \* Wildlife viewing

## » Upper Texas Coast Waterborne Education Center

**Address:** UTCWEC  
810 Miller St.  
P.O. Box 9  
Anahuac, TX 77514

**Phone:** 409-267-3547

**Link:** <http://www.houstonwilderness.org>



The Waterborne Education Center's (WEC) homeport is Anahuac Harbor, located at the mouth of the Trinity where the river meets the bay. Field labs also take place regularly on the Houston Ship Channel and occasionally on the Sabine and Neches rivers. The Waterborne Education Center (WEC) provides hands-on learning opportunities in science, ecology and other topics. Field labs are conducted aboard two renovated Coast Guard buoy tenders. The vessels have classroom space below deck, where microscopes and viewing monitors can be set up to enhance learning experiences. Passengers are encouraged to disembark in the marsh to engage all

of their senses in the exciting environment.

**Activities:** \* Field labs \* History Trips \* Seining \* Wildlife viewing \* TEKS-aligned lessons

## » Eleanor Tinsley Park

**Address:** 500 Allen Parkway  
Houston, TX 77002  
([Map It](#))



With its sloping hills and lush trees, this park is a great place to relax. Picnic tables are sunken into some of the hills to make for a unique setting. Some are also covered, which is handy in case of a sudden downpour. The layout of this park makes for some interesting strolls. It's set along Buffalo Bayou and is adjacent to the Bayou's scenic ArtPark (featuring a host of sculptures and other art pieces).

## » Texas City Prairie Preserve

**Address:** Texas City Preserve  
4702 Highway 146 North  
Texas City, TX 77590

**Phone:** 409-941-9114

**Link:** <http://www.houstonwilderness.org>



The Texas City Preserve, with 40 acres open to the public and 2000 acres on tours, features rare coastal prairie habitat and supports wild Attwater's Prairie Chickens. Restoration is a primary stewardship activity on the preserve. Since the late 1800s, cattle grazing has provided a substitute for the wandering herds of bison that are no longer present. Through the use of prescribed burning, the Conservancy staff is returning natural fire to the preserve.

At the turn of the century, there were approximately 1 million Attwater's prairie chickens along the Texas coast. However, loss of coastal prairie habitat over the years devastated the population, and less than 50 remain in the wild today, making the bird one of the most endangered in North America. Texas City Prairie Preserve includes the introduction of

captive-bred juvenile birds into the wild at the preserve each summer.

### **Flora/Fauna:**

At the Preserve, visitors will find big and little bluestem, the occasional are coastal gayfeather, nesting colonies of least terns and black skimmers, brown pelicans, white-faced ibis, black rail, American peregrine falcon, white-tailed hawk, reddish egrets, Forster's terns and American oystercatchers.

### **Amenities/Activites**

- \* Birdwatching
- \* Boardwalks
- \* Group camping
- \* Prairie studies
- \* Seining
- \* Identify wildlife
- \* TEKS-aligned lessons

## » Tony Marron Park

**Address:** 808 North York  
Houston, TX

**Phone:** 713-752-0314

**Fax:** 713-223-3500

**Link:** <http://www.buffalobayou.org/parks.html>



The Park People, a non-profit citizen's organization that promotes parks and open space, has initiated a development effort of this underutilized green space in Houston's East End Second Ward neighborhood. Construction began in the summer of 2004 and all elements of the park except the restroom facility were completed in time for a November 13, 2005 grand opening. The restroom facility should be complete by Fall 2006.

**Special Features Planned for Tony Marron Park :**  
A trail/walkway that will tie into they City's Hike and Bike trail, five playing fields for soccer and baseball, a large pavilion, a children's playground, landscaping and reforestation.

**Amenities:**  
\* Benches

- \* Picnic Tables
- \* Trash Receptacles
- \* Drinking Fountains

**Size:**  
19.07 acres

## » Guadalupe Park

**Address:** 2311 Runnels  
Houston, TX 77002  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 713.752.0314

**Fax:** 713.223.3500

**Link:** <http://www.buffalobayou.org/parks.html>



Mariachi and salsa music, ballet folklórico, and seasonal festival are among the sites and sounds that fill Hispanic-styled Guadalupe Plaza Park in the East End's Second Ward neighborhood. Guadalupe Parks was acquired by the City of Houston Parks & Recreation Dept. in 1986

**Special Features** : Guadalupe Park presents a performing arts area centered around a Colonial Zocalo, a trail/walkway, fountain and boat landing.

**Size:**  
6.46 acres

## » Katy Prairie Conservancy Wildlife Viewing Platform

**Address:** Katy Prairie Conservancy  
28411 Sharp Road  
Katy, TX 77493

**Phone:** 713-523-6145

**Link:** <http://www.katyprairie.org>



A broad sweep of land that stretches from just beyond the Houston city limits, west toward Brookshire, and northwest toward Hempstead, the Katy Prairie has a decidedly unique heritage. Ranging from the flat coastal plains that girdle Interstate 10 to gently rolling pastures in the northern reaches of the prairie soils that mark the area, the terrain is typical of what is found along much of the upper Texas Gulf Coast. However, in autumn, just after the crops are in and the land lies fallow, this unassuming Prairie becomes the site of one of the most incredible natural spectacles in North America, as thousands, then millions, of migratory birds arrive, especially waterfowl. For most, the Katy Prairie is a winter home until March, when they return to nesting areas in the upper Midwest and Canada. Others use the Prairie as

a staging area on their way to southerly climates, or may even remain the entire year.

### **Flora/Fauna:**

The Katy Prairie is comprised of a variety of habitats, including agricultural wetlands, depressional wetlands, creek corridors, and coastal grasslands.

### **Activities/Amenities :**

Katy Prairie Conservancy features beaver, alligator, deer, coyote, bobcat and squirrels are supported on the Katy Prairie, providing enjoyment for naturalist and hunter alike. There is no visitors center, so please visit web site or call for information.

- \* Weekend tours
- \* Kid's group
- \* Wildlife observation
- \* Field trips by special arrangement

## » Armand Bayou Nature Center

**Address:** 8500 Bay Area Blvd.  
P.O. Box 58828 (mailing address)  
Houston, TX 77258  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 281-474-2551

**Fax:** 281-474-2552

**Link:** <http://www.abnc.org>



Visit this astonishingly beautiful part of the Texas Gulf Coast and "reconnect with nature." Visitors can learn about our plant and animal inhabitants, bird-watch, hike on the Nature Center's trails or view our live animal displays of snakes, spiders, hawks and bison. Armand Bayou Nature Center (ABNC) is working to preserve the wetlands prairie, forest and marsh habitats surrounding Armand Bayou.

ABNC is the largest urban wilderness preserve in the U.S. and contains 2,500 acres of the natural wetlands forest, prairie and marsh habitats once abundant in the Houston/Galveston area. ABNC is home to over 370 species of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

**Amenities/Activites :**

- \* Hiking trails
  - \* Exhibits
  - \* Field trips
  - \* Scout programs
  - \* Birding
  - \* Canoe tours
  - \* A historic farm and fun for all
- Size:** 2500-acres

## » Montgomery County Nature Preserve

**Address:** Montgomery County NP  
1122 Pruitt Rd  
Spring, TX 77380

**Phone:** 713-524-2100

**Link:** <http://www.co.montgomery.tx.us/parks/preserve.shtml>



71-acre

The Montgomery County Preserve provides a wonderful area for birdwatching, native plant observation and hiking. It's permanently protected with a conservation easement held by the Legacy Land Trust (the first of its kind in the nation), a nonprofit organization directly involved in protecting land for its natural, recreational, scenic, and historical value.

The green way is free to visit and open to the public daily, brings many ecotourists to southern Montgomery County. Local Master Naturalists as well as Butterfly Enthusiasts of Southeast Texas (B.E.S.T.) hosts official national butterfly counts, monitor water quality, and provide educational programs for area citizens.

**Size:**

## » Dog Parks

**Address:** P. O. BOX 7649  
Houston, TX 77270  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 713-523-5235

**Link:** <http://www.houstondogpark.org>



Houston welcomes you and your dog to enjoy the vast amount of park space in the Bayou City. However, you are required to have your dog on a leash at all times. Our leash law is one of the tools that permit dogs and dog owners to visit a park without creating safety concerns, disturbing natural resources, or diminishing a park visit for those who are less comfortable around dogs.

Houston knows that most dogs love to run free and most dog owners would like to provide their pets with the opportunity to do so. The city maintains many dog parks for you and your four-legged friend(s) to enjoy.

### **Ervan Chew:**

\* 4502 Dunlavy (Key Map 492Z)

Since 1994, Ervan Chew has been the first neighborhood park in Houston to allow dogs to legally run free, off-leash in a designated dog zone. The dog zone is located adjacent to the picnic area and swimming pool. It is a fenced-in space, approximately 9,000 square feet in size and is designed to allow dogs to exercise freely. The Ervan Chew Park dog zone was the first step in providing an area for off-leash dogs.

Amenities include a large dog park with a human park next door, triple gated & fenced, pick up bags, large and small dog areas, water fountains, doggie cool off shower, large shade trees, benches, information kiosk, porta potty, small parking lot. Open Dawn to Dusk and no children under 12 allowed.

### **Maxey Bark Park :**

\* 601 Maxey Road (Key Map 496C)

Maxey Park community park, with 12 to 13 acres of parkland as a place for dogs, features a fenced-in space for the dogs to exercise off leash. Amenities include doggie drinking fountains, separate areas for large and small dogs, a doggie shower, a waste disposal station and benches throughout the space.

Amenities include a large dog park with a human park next door, triple gated & fenced, pick up bags, large and small dog areas, water fountains, doggie cool off shower, large shade trees, benches, information kiosk, porta potty, small parking lot. Open Dawn to Dusk.

### **Millie Bush Bark Park:**

\* 16756 Westheimer Parkway (West Houston near Hwy 6 and Westheimer)

Located in George Bush Park, and named after former President Bush's dog, Millie Bush Bark park is thirteen acres. It is double gated & fenced and features pick up bags, large and small dog areas (with large and small fire hydrants in them!) - doggie swimming ponds, water fountains, doggie showers, shade areas, benches, scattered trees, walking path, parking lot. Picnic benches outside park. Restrooms close by but not in the dog park. Open 7 days a week dawn to dusk.

### **The Officer Lucy Dog Park :**

\* 4337 Lafayette Park near Beechnut and NewCastle

Officer Lucy Dog Park is double gated & fenced with amenities including pick up bags, large dog and small dog areas, some shade in large dog area, water available. No children under 12 allowed.

Lucy Dog Park is a small neighborhood park intended for residents of the area. It is not easily visible from the street, has no signs, and the parking lot and entrance is actually off Edith Street, one block south of Lafayette.

### **Danny Jackson Dog Park :**

\* Just inside the loop and just South of 59 - under the power lines, on Westpark Drive between Loop 610 and Loop

## GREEN HOUSTON

### Central

The Danny Jackson Dog Park, features swimming ponds, separate large and small dog area, shaded benches, double gated entrance, poop pick up bag stations, walking path, fire hydrants, water drinking fountains and trash cans. No children under 12 allowed.

## » Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Center

**Address:** Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Center  
1724 Market Street  
Baytown, TX 77520

**Phone:** 281-420-7128

**Link:** <http://tourismprod.baytown.org/Wetlands+Center/>



Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Center's innovative facility, located on the banks of Goose Creek in Baytown, is host to thousands of visitors and school children each year at the six acre property. An official site on the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail, the Wetlands Center boasts a 9,000 square-foot exhibit area, which includes a variety of exhibits, a 14,000-square-foot building including staff offices, meeting rooms, a science lab and computer lab. Gator World, with its juvenile alligators and large wetlands mural, is always a favorite with visitors young and old.

Through education and recreation, the Wetlands Center aims to increase awareness, appreciation and understanding of wetlands, the environment and cultural history.

**Activities/Amenities :**

Visitors can enjoy Gator World and Butterfly Encounter, housing live butterflies and an observational beehive. Wetlands Center staff provide tours as time permits, and visitors can always take a self-guided tour.

- \* Educational programs
- \* Hands-on experiments
- \* Taxidermy exhibits
- \* Wetlands exhibits
- \* TEKS-aligned lessons

## » Elizabeth Baldwin Park

Link:

<http://www.houstontx.gov/parks/baldwinpark.html>



The City of Houston acquired Elizabeth Baldwin Park in 1905. It consists of 4.88 acres on Elgin Street, between Crawford and Chenevert Streets, in a proud old neighborhood facing revitalization in the Twenty-first Century in the form of renovated houses and newly built townhouses and businesses.

The Park is named after Elizabeth Baldwin, whose father was the brother-in-law to Houston's co-founder, Augustus C. Allen. When Elizabeth died, she reserved a portion of her estate to purchase and preserve parkland in the Houston area.

Little more than a lawn for picnics in its early days, Baldwin Park was fitted out in 1912 with a stone fountain dedicated to the wife of Houston's founder,

Charlotte Allen. The park was upgraded through a bond initiative in 1930 and 1931, and was a popular tennis center for years. The most recent improvements have resulted from the 2003 bond sale by the Midtown Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone and the plans of the Midtown Management District.

New trees have been planted to supplement the hundred-year-old specimens dating from the park's birth, and an irrigation system has been put into place. A crushed granite jogging trail has been installed, as have new picnic tables, chess tables, and sidewalks. The Vietnamese Heritage Plaza greets visitors in a variety of languages and honors the Vietnamese community that flourishes in Midtown. The old park has been reborn as a monument to civic pride and the efforts of the area's Twenty-first Century citizens.

The Elizabeth Baldwin Park is located in Midtown, just South of Downtown on Elgin at Crawford.

## » Lake Houston Park

**Address:** Lake Houston State Park  
22031 Baptist Encampment Rd  
New Caney, TX 77357  
([Map It](#))

**Phone:** 281-354-6881

**Link:** <http://www.houstontx.gov/parks/lakehoustonpark.html>



Lake Houston Park is a beautiful, lushly forested expanse 30 miles north of Houston. It is located where Caney Creek and the East Fork of the San Jacinto River meet near the town of New Caney. Park facilities include walk-in campsites with a lantern post, picnic table, fire ring, and grill; water is centrally located. Camp Oakwood and Camp Ironwood each have 8 campsites and share a picnic pavilion, and Camp Magnolia, also with 8 sites, is a short hike away. A shower building with restrooms is available. Alongside Peach Creek is an area of six walk-in campsites, with a fire ring, tent pad, picnic table, and lantern hook. A restroom/shower area is in the vicinity. Campers can access 12 miles of hike and bike trails and 8 miles of equestrian trails, with a maximum of 20 riders per day. As development of the

park continues, more trails will be opened.

**Activities:**

Guest are encouraged to bring their own bikes, watercraft, and horses. Most of the park is heavily forested and features beautiful trails. It's a perfect spot for photography, nature study, and bird watching; and the birds may watch you back.

- \* Camping
- \* Hiking
- \* Biking
- \* Mountain biking
- \* Canoeing
- \* Kayaking
- \* Horseback riding

Hikers will be happy they made the effort to reach the park's ponds, well off the beaten path. These lovely spots are surrounded by pines and cypresses and peace. Deer populate the woods, birds abound, and other than an occasional passing jet from Intercontinental Airport, there is nothing there to remind you that civilization is close by.

**Size:**

Nearly 5000 acres

## Houston Organizations

### Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau

As of Jan. 1, 2007, all GHCVB publications—the Houston Official Visitors Guide, Houston Meeting Planners Guide, Houston Fact Finder and Houston Membership Directory—will be printed on recycled paper. All GHCVB business cards and postcards are also printed on recycled paper. The GHCVB is one of the first convention and visitors bureaus in the country to print on environmentally-friendly paper.

It takes 15-17 mature (30-year growth) trees to make one ton of paper. Using 10 percent "post consumer" waste, which is the requirement for publications to be considered recycled, two trees per ton will be saved. In addition to the GHCVB's major publications (listed below), all promotional postcards, business cards and day-to-day paper used is recycled.

Publication details:

- **Houston Official Visitors Guide**  
Published quarterly  
36 tons of paper per quarter  
Saves **144** trees per year
- **Houston Meeting Planners Guide**  
Published annually  
10 tons of paper per year  
Saves **20** trees per year
- **Houston Fact Finder**  
Published annually  
3.45 tons of paper per year  
Saves **6.9** trees per year
- **Houston Membership Directory**  
Published twice a year  
½ ton of paper per issue  
Saves **2** trees per year

### Houston Downtown Management District

- Urban Design & Planning projects to maximize use of public transit
- Extensive streetscape improvements to facilitate pedestrian use of the city, helping to minimize automobile trips and reduce congestion
- A downtown circulator system currently in development will employ vehicles running on sustainable alternative fuel
- The District's Green Walls initiative will create numerous wall cover plantings to screen blank walls and parking garages in downtown, improving aesthetic value, air quality and reducing heat island effect.

### City of Houston Public Works and Engineering

As an incentive to encourage Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™ certification, the Planning & Development Services Code Enforcement Plan Review Section will begin offering Quick Start service to any project which has registered for LEED certification regardless of construction cost.

Currently, the Quick Start plan review option is available only to projects that have submitted complete plans and have an estimated construction cost of \$1M or more. By opting to pay an additional fee of 65% of the permit cost, the final plan review is completed in a face to face conference-like meeting with the reviewers, designers and owners present. The Quick Start program has been a popular option as it generally eliminates at least one plan resubmittal.

For the review participants will need to submit:

- A Quick Start Application
- The project registration receipt from the US Green Building Council (USGBC)
- The checklist of points the building is designed to achieve
- The required Quick Start fee (65% of building permit)

**Houston Center for the Arts**

- Retro-fit lighting installed to be more energy efficient
- All new HVAC system, also to be more energy efficient

## Transportation

### Continental Airlines

#### Fleet

Today, Continental is nearly 35 percent more fuel efficient for every mile a passenger flies than in 1997. In order to further reduce emissions and increase fuel efficiency, Continental will continue to invest in efficient and advanced aircraft technology. It will also continue to apply responsible operating procedures to further reduce the impact of its fleet on the environment. Furthermore, Continental will work with national and international governments to improve air traffic control systems so that aircraft routings will result in fewer emissions.

#### Ground Equipment

Continental is committed to using electric rather than fossil-fuel-powered ground equipment wherever feasible. At the Houston hub, Continental has been using electric ground equipment since 2002 and it will have reduced emissions from ground equipment approximately 75 percent by the end of 2007. Continental has begun a cold-weather test of this electric ground equipment at the New York/Newark hub. It is also testing the use of alternative fuel and fuel additives for ground service equipment.

#### Facilities

Continental is committed to constructing its airport facilities according to the U.S. Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and Environmental Protection Agency Energy Star standards when feasible. As part of LEED, Continental will integrate high-efficiency components into facilities and implement programs to conserve energy, save natural resources, reduce emissions and minimize the impact on the environment.

#### Cultural Awareness

Continental recognizes that the preservation of the environment is an essential part of its business practices. It is committed to promoting a culture that is focused on being environmentally sensitive as Continental works with its employees, customers, suppliers, industry organizations and the communities it serves in safeguarding the environment for future generations.

In 2007, *FORTUNE* magazine named Continental one of the top ten global companies across all industries in the Community/Environment category on its list of Global Most Admired Companies.

### Metropolitan Transit Authority (METRO)

#### METRO's Green Drive

The wheels for a cleaner tomorrow are in motion today at METRO! The Authority is expanding its ongoing efforts to help make Houston air easier to breathe by rolling out 40 new diesel-hybrid buses. This marks yet another milestone for METRO, which first implemented the state of the art technology in 2003 with four buses that were converted to the hybrid system. This earth-friendly buy places 30 aging buses into retirement.

#### Under The Hood

Though the evolution of hybrid bus technology is still maturing, its adoption is widespread. Taking on this modern system symbolizes our pledge to clean up the environment. Its architecture combines a diesel fuel engine with an electric motor powered by batteries. The system optimizes the performance of the electric motor at low speeds as well as the engine at highway speeds in a controlled and calculated

manner. The end result – lower fuel consumption, fewer harmful chemicals being released into the air and it still gets you where you need to go!

### **Going the Extra Mile**

Going hybrid is just one small step toward helping create a healthier community. METRO also makes sure that all of its buses are in tip-top shape with regular maintenance checks. Half of METRO's bus fleet is also designed to automatically shutdown after sitting idle, reducing the amount of exhaust rising into the atmosphere. The goal is to install this program on the entire fleet. METRO buses are also equipped with the Integrated Vehicle Operations Management System (IVOMS), which among its many features integrates Traffic Signal Priority (TSP) technology. The two systems work hand-in-hand to give buses preferential treatment at fixed route intersections by extending the green light. This not only improves the flow of traffic, but reduces pollution caused by idling.

### **Let's Park It**

Creating a transit-friendly community is vital to improving the region's air quality. That's why METRO encourages commuters to park their cars. It's estimated that every weekday approximately 124,000 cars are off the road with the help of METRO buses, vanpools, carpools, light rail and the use of more than 100 miles of HOV lanes. That means less vehicles are contaminating the air with harmful, toxic materials.

### **Shifting Gears with Bikes on Buses**

Getting around Houston just got easier with METRO's new Bikes on Buses program. Discover how you can combine your bike and bus trip to local trails, work, school or other destinations. Our local fleet is expected to be equipped with front mounted bike racks that can hold two bicycles on a first-come, first-serve basis. Park & Ride buses, however, will not have racks but cyclists may store their bikes in marked luggage compartments. Not only are you building fitness by riding your bicycle to the nearest bus stop, but you're pedaling toward a greener Houston by including METRO in your trip.

### **A Lighter Shade of Green**

METRO offers yet another mode to help protect the air – light rail. The city's 7.5-mile electrically powered transportation network not only promotes activity along the popular Main Street corridor, but decreases the amount of pollution; both air and noise. Each rail car has a seating and standing capacity of 200 people. METRORail moves riders quickly and efficiently while allowing the community to take a collective breath of fresh air.

### **On the Hot Track with METRO Solutions**

METRO Solutions is on the move to clear up congestion and the air quality in the region. The ambitious transit plan focuses on five of the most congested corridors and the expansion of light rail. Our multi-modal transit project aims to improve the flow of traffic around the city, while circulating fresher air by offering the community additional, perhaps more fitting, alternatives to increase mobility.

Major Components of the METRO Solutions plan include:

- Nearly 9 miles of light rail serving the Uptown/Galleria area to the University of Houston and Texas Southern University
- 21 miles of fixed-guideway transit designed for future light rail conversion
- Advance planning for 28 miles of Commuter Rail
- 40 miles of Signature Bus Service/Suburban Bus Rapid Transit
- Conversion of HOV to HOT Lanes
- 9 new Park & Ride lots (250 miles of two-way service)
- 9 new Transit Centers

**Recycling**

There are other ways METRO contributes to creating a stronger environment – recycling. As part of its conservation program, METRO recycles the water it uses to wash its fleet of 1,221 buses. The Authority has reduced the number of gallons used per bus to 41 from 47; roughly a 14 percent reduction in usage. In addition to monitoring water consumption, METRO also recycles scrap metal, tires, batteries, wood palettes and oil. Older, smog trailing buses are also being scrapped as opposed to reselling, in an effort to reduce emissions by as much as 50 percent. Throughout METRO facilities, you'll notice the use of green-tipped fluorescent lamps which contain lower levels of mercury. From the buses on city streets to the buildings we operate, METRO is making a concerted effort to efficiently use materials and minimize our impact on the environment.

## Alternative Energy in the Houston Region

Houston has the tools and infrastructure in place to capitalize on this emerging sector of the energy industry.

### Industry Facts

- Texas is one of the top three states in the country in wind power potential.
- In 2003, Texas installed more wind power than the entire United States had in any other year

### Wind

- Texas is the top producer of wind energy according to the American Wind Energy Association's Second-Quarter Market Report.
- Texas' cumulative wind power capacity total now stands at 2,370 megawatts – enough to power more than 600,000 average American homes.
- Texas has leased to Galveston Offshore Wind an 11,000-acre region of the Gulf of Mexico, seven miles off Galveston Island, for gigantic wind turbines that could eventually power 40,000 homes and generate millions of dollars for state schools. The project marks a new era of pollution-free energy production for the Gulf.

### Biodiesel

- Houston Biodiesel educates about and promotes the use of clean, renewable, domestically produced biodiesel in all diesel engines. The company also sells high quality biodiesel that conforms to ASTM specifications and invites consumers to make their own biodiesel in their "BIG" batch reactor.
- TexCom, Inc. is building and will operate a new 30-million-gallon-per-year biodiesel plant at the LBC Houston LP bulk liquids terminal in Seabrook, Texas. TexCom plans to construct the multi-million dollar plant that will convert virgin soybean oil into biodiesel and utilize existing on-site storage capacity and other terminal facilities under a long-term lease from LBC.

### Hybrid Technology

- Mayor Bill White announced in April 2005 plans to convert a substantial portion of the City's fleet of cars, pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles to hybrids by the year 2010.
- The City fleet comprises more than 11,000 vehicles of which 3,554 are the civilian, light-duty, "non-specialty" fleet.

### Ethanol

- Houston's first ethanol (E85) fuel dispensing facility opened in October 2004 at NASA's Johnson Space Center. JSC is now the fifth NASA center to add ethanol fueling capability. JSC employees are now mandated to use E85 in the 25 Flexible Fuel Vehicles in the GSA fleet assigned for employee use, if their official business takes them within a 50-mile radius of JSC.

### Hydrogen Fuel Cells

- The Woodlands-based Center for Fuel Cell Research and Applications is a multisponsor research consortium working to advance hydrogen and fuel cell technologies from lab to market. The Center offers two programs - one providing surveillance of early-stage technologies and the other providing operational verification of products emerging from late-stage developers and manufacturers.