



J.C. Garza on the Cardinals team, slides to third base during a Sugar Land Little League game



Chloe Staub has fun at a Fort Bend playground

Exploring the Great Outdoors

A Fort Bend Guide to Outdoor Entertainment

By Lesley Clinton & Select Photography by Jen Petty

The first soft breeze of spring comes floating in on wisps of cotton clouds stretching across the big, blue Texas sky. Spring weather in Sugar Land is ideal, and locals like the Hahn family know how to take full advantage of the area's abundant green space.

The Hahns are serious about the outdoors. In addition to butterfly and vegetable gardens in the yard, they have a rock wall in the garage of their Sugar Land home. Heather and Todd Hahn, and their 3-year-old son, Alex, love to revel in the natural beauty of Fort Bend County. "There are so many parks, and all have something unique," says Heather. "Some have lakes, some are near canals, some have marshes, and they all offer something fun for the kids."



Luis Tardio, Rahul Nowlakha, Amod Desai, Katia Bassi, and Sid Mullick enjoy an afternoon of football and Frisbee at Oyster Creek Park



Oyster Creek Park is a great place to enjoy Fort Bend's natural beauty



Christal Adams teaches her daughter, Kalei, to ride a bike at Oyster Creek Park



Enjoy an afternoon of canoeing at Sugar Land Memorial Park

Taking It All In

Hahn appreciates living near Oyster Creek and American Canal because it gives Alex a chance to see turtles nesting in the yard and hawks and vultures circling above. “For an urban/suburban area, there is a lot of wildlife to point out to Alex,” she notes. “It truly is a wonderful experience to see his excitement.”

This area’s tremendous butterfly variety is one of Hahn’s favorite features. To learn about which flowers attract specific butterflies and hummingbirds, she suggests picnicking at Enchanted Forest or Enchanted Gardens. She names Brazos Bend State Park as a great destination for learning about the area’s reptiles. And if you capture a bug, she adds, a park naturalist there can help you identify it. “[The] best part is all the outdoor activities are free and fun for the whole family,” she says.

Favorite Outdoor Destinations

Other local outdoor enthusiasts have their own favorite outdoor places. Kamila Andrzejak frequents the First Colony Spray Park and playground. “It’s a great place to go, because it has a play area for the older kids and one for the younger ones under 2.”

Mike Shaddock, president of the SouthWest Cycling Club, enjoys regular rides from Sugar Land to Fulshear. “Everyone [who cycles] on the west side of Houston converges on Fulshear,” he says. In his experience, the drivers there are typically courteous and the roads good, with few lights or stop signs. Marathon runner Wendi Lojo loves to run at Oyster Creek Park. “I consider it my home away from home. It is

a versatile place with a lot to offer,” she says, adding, “When I need peace, it is a place to get away, but if I am looking for activity, it is a place for adventure.” Lojo’s advice for enjoying the outdoors is to keep things simple. “No need to pack a big meal or a lot of gear,” she explains. “Just get your family together and go take everything in, even if it is just for a little while.”

Answering the Call of the Wild

The beautiful spring weather in Sugar Land can awaken the naturalist within even the most steadfast indoor type. “Spring offers daily opportunities for families to [create] memories in our beautiful park system,” says Jim Browne, director of Sugar Land parks and recreation.

Browne says that many families enjoy the programs sponsored by various sports organizations. Others have fun canoeing or geocaching. Also very popular, he notes, are the city’s outdoor festivals and special events. Whether families take a leisurely stroll to enjoy the tranquility of nature or an exhilarating mountain bike run, outdoor activities in Sugar Land abound. “There is a leisure opportunity for every member of the family in Sugar Land’s park system,” says Browne. So venture off the couch this spring and explore Sugar Land’s best fresh air adventures, with Sugar Land Magazine’s Outdoor Fun Guide to Fort Bend County. **SLM**

LESLEY CLINTON grew up in Sugar Land. She is a wife, mother, and educator with a Masters of Art in teaching.



Cyclists take advantage of the sunny weather and bike trails in New Territory



Sliding is one of Kyla McBride’s favorite playground activities

Bird Watching

Brazos Bend State Park
21901 FM 762
Needville
979-553-5102

Buffalo Run Park
1122 Buffalo Run Blvd.
Missouri City
281-403-8500

Cullinan Park
12888-B Hwy. 6 S.
Sugar Land

Camping
Brazos Bend State Park
21901 FM 762
Needville
979-553-5102

Canoeing
Bates M. Allen Park
630 Charlie Roberts Ln.
Kendleton
281-835-9419

Buffalo Run Park
1122 Buffalo Run Blvd.
Missouri City
281-403-8500

Sugar Land Memorial Park
15300 University Blvd.
Sugar Land
281-275-2885

Cycling
BMX Track at Lost Creek Park
3703 Lost Creek Blvd.
Sugar Land
281-275-2885

Justin P. Brindley Mountain Bike Trail
Sugar Land Memorial Park
15300 University Blvd.
Sugar Land
281-275-2885

Disc Golf
Community Park
1700 Glenn Lakes Ln.
Missouri City
281-403-8500

Imperial Park
230 Matlage Way
Sugar Land
281-275-2885

Dog Park
Pawn Springs Dog Park
Sugar Land Memorial Park
15300 University Blvd.
Sugar Land
281-275-2885

Educational Outings
George Observatory
Brazos Bend State Park
21901 FM 762, Needville
281-242-3055

George Ranch Historical Park
10215 FM 762 Rd.
Richmond
281-343-0218

Fishing
American Legion Park
4015 Lexington Blvd.
Missouri City

Bates M. Allen Park
630 Charlie Roberts Ln.
Kendleton
281-835-9419

Brazos Bend State Park
21901 FM 762
Needville
979-553-5102

Buffalo Run Park
1122 Buffalo Run Blvd.
Missouri City
281-403-8500

Community Park
1700 Glenn Lakes Ln.
Missouri City
281-403-8500

Eldridge Park
2511 Eldridge Rd.
Sugar Land
281-275-2885

Kitty Hollow Park
9555 Hwy. 6 S.
Missouri City
281-835-9419

Seabourne Creek Park
3827 Hwy. 36 S.
Rosenberg
832-595-3960

Gardens
Enchanted Forest
10611 FM 2759
Richmond
281-937-9449

Enchanted Gardens
6420 FM 359
Richmond
281-341-1206

Golf
El Dorado at Quail Valley Golf Course
2880 La Quinta Dr.
Missouri City
281-437-8277

Field's Fairway Golf Course
7610 Brinkmeyer Rd.
Needville
979-793-6150

Greatwood Golf Course
6767 Greatwood Pkwy.
Sugar Land
888-343-4001

Old Orchard Golf Course
13134 FM 1464
Richmond
281-277-3300

River Pointe Golf Course
11207 FM 2759 Rd.
Richmond
281-343-9995

Sienna Plantation Golf Club
1 Waters Lake Blvd.
Missouri City
281-778-4653

Lacrosse
Macco Park
101 Gillingham
Sugar Land
281-275-2885

Parks & Playgrounds
Four Corners Recreation Center
15700 Old Richmond Rd.
Sugar Land

Lost Creek Park
3703 Lost Creek Blvd.
Sugar Land
281-275-2885

Stafford City Park
3108 Fifth St.
Stafford
281-499-7576

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Sugar Land Memorial Park
15300 University Blvd.
Sugar Land
281-275-2885

Rowing
Greater Houston Rowing Club Boathouse
15910 Creekbend Dr.
Sugar Land

Sand Volleyball
Bates M. Allen Park
630 Charlie Roberts Ln.
Kendleton
281-835-9419

Buffalo Run Park
1122 Buffalo Run Blvd.
Missouri City
281-403-8500

Community Park
1700 Glenn Lakes Ln.
Missouri City
281-403-8500

Eldridge Park
2511 Eldridge Rd.
Sugar Land
281-275-2885

Skate Park
Sugar Land Skate Park
225 Seventh St.
Sugar Land

Spray Parks & Pools
First Colony Spray Park
4350 Austin Pkwy.
Sugar Land
281-634-9555

Hunters Glen Park
1340 Independence
Missouri City
281-403-8500

Stafford City Pool
1355 Constitution Ave.
Stafford
281-499-8783

Sugar Land Municipal Pool
225 Seventh St.
Sugar Land
281-275-2897

Trails for Hiking & Jogging
Brazos Bend State Park
21901 FM 762
Needville
979-553-5102

Buffalo Run Park
1122 Buffalo Run Blvd.
Missouri City
281-403-8500

Oyster Creek Park and Trail
4033 Hwy. 6 S.
Sugar Land
281-275-2885

Kitty Hollow Park
9555 Hwy. 6 S.
Missouri City
281-835-9419

Seabourne Creek Park
3827 Hwy. 36 S.
Rosenberg
832-595-3960

Popular Outdoor Sugar Land Festivals & Special Events

| February | March or April | April & May | May | May | July |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| Cultural Kite Festival at Sugar Land Memorial Park | EGGStravaganza Egg Hunt at Eldridge Park | Spring Concerts in the Park series at Oyster Creek Park | Annual Gulf Coast International Dragon Boat Regatta at Brooks Lake | Annual Memorial Day Ceremonies at Sugar Land Memorial Park | Annual Red, White, and Blue Fest at Oyster Creek Park |



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