



FAMILY SCAVENGER HUNT

Estimated completion time: 1-1.5 hours

Estimated distance: 0.75 miles

This scavenger hunt will immerse you in the diversity of habitats found at our unique wildlife refuge. You will find yourselves in brushlands, woodlands, wetlands, and grasslands. You will be challenged to explain how, why, and what if?

We invite you to discuss the questions presented in this activity. What is your collective thought? As a family, is there something you all agree on or are there differing ideas and opinions? Did one family member convince the others to come up with a consensus? We welcome your feedback in how you came up with your answers; and to share the various dynamics that may have occurred throughout this challenge. Email your feedback to mlac@audubon.org

1. Check in and sign in at the Visitor's Center Desk. Pick up an Explorer Backpack. You can choose to use any of the following items:

- Hand lenses
- Bird field guide
- Plant field guide
- pencils
- Binoculars
- Mammal track and scat guide
- Pond life field guide

2. Walk the Upland Trail that starts behind the Visitor's Center, loops to Bird Pond, and then to the main paved road. Stop at the first bench which is at the second major bend in the trail (you will find an orange flag on the bench). There is a large huisache tree behind the bench. Inspect the leaves of this tree and make a sketch of the leaves/leaflet in the space below. Feel free to use a hand lens so you can see more detail.

In what type of climate do we live in here in South Central Texas? _____

Adaptations are characteristics that allow an organism to survive or reproduce in their environment. The size and structure of these leaves is an adaptation to our climate. How do you think the size of the leaves help this plant survive in this climate? _____

3. Continue along the trail towards Bird Pond. As you know, all animals need food, shelter, space, and water to survive. Look for animal shelters along the way. Find and describe at least 2 different animal shelters along the Upland Trail. This could be in the form of a bird nest, mammal den, etc.

Shelter 1:

What type of animal do you think is using this shelter? _____

What evidence are you using to draw this conclusion? _____

Why do you think this animal uses this form of shelter (what benefit does this have as opposed to a different type of shelter)? _____

Shelter 2:

What type of animal do you think is using this shelter? _____

How does this shelter differ from the first one you found? _____

Why do you think this animal chose this location for its shelter? _____

4. Find your way to Bird Pond. Use your binoculars and field guide to identify 2 different individual birds of 2 different species. Closely watch 1 individual for 5 minutes. If the bird moves, follow its movements STAYING ON THE TRAIL. Record the different behaviors you witness including preening, feeding, resting, vocalizing, and flying. Do this for two different birds of two different species.

Species 1:

What is the name of this bird? _____

What physical characteristics (field marks) helped you identify it? _____

What different behaviors did you observe? _____

What behavior did you see this bird doing most of the time? _____

Why do you think the bird spent so much time doing this? _____

Species 2:

What is the name of this bird? _____

What field marks did you use to identify it? _____

What different behaviors did you observe? _____

What behavior did you see this bird doing most of the time? _____

Why do you think the bird spent so much time doing this? _____

5. Return to the Visitor Center Desk with your completed Scavenger Hunt. The attendant there will review your responses and will award you your accomplishment with a FREE Family pass to come back. This is our way of saying, "Thanks & Congratulations!" on behalf of Audubon and all of Texas' wild places and wild things.