



## **River Buddies Program Overview**

The River Parkway Trust's River Buddies Program is designed to give pre-school aged children a fantastic nature experience in a safe setting at the Coke Hallowell Center for River Studies (the River Center). River Buddies search for clues of wildlife, hear stories about the animals that call the river home, engage in dramatic play and experience larger-than-life sized animal homes on the Hidden Homes Trail. Each trip includes a variety of activities focused on a theme (see below). An education program docent will lead your trip. Programs typically last about 2 hours, and are \$15 per child with a \$150 minimum. We encourage you to bring a picnic lunch and enjoy our grounds when your trip has finished.

### **Bird Buddies**

This program introduces children to our feathered friends.

- Eagle's Nest - Visit the Hidden Homes Trail's larger than life Eagle Nest and Owl Hollow Home and learn about the habitats these birds live in while viewing the many live birds that call the pond home.
- Bird Investigators- To find out 'what is a bird?' venture into our 1880's historical ranch house up to the bird room to sit on life size nest quilts, read stories, sing a song, touch real nests and learn more about birds from our bird puppet pals.
- Bird Beak Buffet – Learn how different birds catch and eat their food with a hands on activity utilizing utensils and mock food items that mimic the adaptation of different bird beaks.
- Home Tweet Home- Craft station where students learn about different bird nests and construct a nest of their own.

### **Bug Buddies**

This program provides awareness of our creepy crawly neighbors.

- Bug Bodies- Find out 'what is an insect?' with a story and song, and interactive play with felt board insects.
- Insect Safari – Grab an insect container and head out to catch some insects! Students observe, identify, share their findings, and release.
- Boogie Like A Bug- Dive into our dress up box of wings, bug eye sunglass and silly antennae to become an insect.
- Hidden Homes Trail – Head out on the trail to our larger than life Mouse's Burrow to learn how insects share space and habitat with other animals.
- Build a Bug –Craft station where students make a beautiful butterfly or create their own insect.

### **Pond Pals**

This program focuses on the different creatures that make their home in and around ponds.

- Friendly Frogs- Observe frogs and tadpoles in their native habitat in the small pond in front of the ranch house.
- Lifecycle Learning – Through story time and interactive/sensory play with life cycle models, students will learn about the transformative life of a frog.
- Hidden Homes Trail – Head out on the trail to see wildlife in their natural surroundings and explore the habitats of different animals that rely on the pond for survival.
- Frog Faces – Craft station where students create their own frog mask, sing songs and play games while learning about the anatomy and diet of a frog.

### **Nature Neighbors**

This program features different animals, and explores what makes them similar or different from one another.

- Fur Feathers and Scales – Learn the difference between fur, feathers, and scales and practice categorizing different animal coverings.
- Trackscavanza! – Use rubber track molds to make different animal tracks in damp sand.
- Bird Matching Game – Use the colors, shapes, and sizes of different birds to match two like photos hidden around the activity area.
- Snakeskin Bandanas – Craft station where students choose two different colors to make a unique snakeskin print bandana of their own.