



Martin Park Nature Center

PREPARING FOR YOUR NATURE HIKE

A RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS AND GROUP LEADERS

5000 West Memorial Road, Oklahoma City, OK 405-297-1429

PARK HOURS:

Park Grounds Open Daily 5 a.m. - 9 p.m. April 1 - September 30; 5 a.m. - 6 p.m. October 1 - March 31

Visitors' Center: Closed MONDAYS

April 1 - September 30: Sun, Tues-Thurs 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Friday - Saturday, 8 a.m. - 9 p.m.

October 1 - March 31: Tuesday – Sunday, 7:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.

GUIDED HIKES

Guided hikes are available Tuesday - Sunday, except on days when the park is hosting large events or programs. The earliest hike start time is 9:30 a.m. (10:30 a.m. during summer hours) and all tours must be scheduled so tour is over at 5:30 p.m. **Advanced reservations are required**, and hikes cost \$2 per person with a 5-person (\$10) minimum. Fees apply to all who attend the hike— students, teachers, parents or other group leaders. To make a reservation, call 405-297-1429. Be prepared to provide the following: Arrival/departure times, number of students attending, grade (age) of students, number of chaperones (we suggest a 1:10 adult-to-student ratio), topics you are studying.

SCHEDULING: Tours are available between 9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. (10:30 a.m. start during summer hours). Please book your field trip **at least one month in advance** so staff are available to guide you. Some months are busier than others, so the earlier you book, the better chance you can get a desirable time. Fall and Spring are our busiest seasons, but there is much to see any time of year.

PAYMENT: Payment may be collected on site in the form of cash or checks. If you need to arrange for a different payment method, please contact us at least one week in advance so we can facilitate payment through the Parks & Recreation Department's Central Business Office. You may also call directly for payment at 405-297-3882.

ARRIVAL: Please arrive at the Visitors' Center fifteen minutes before your start time. This ensures everyone will have a chance to use the restroom facilities and regroup before the hike starts. We commonly have several tours scheduled daily, so need to keep to our schedule. If your group is more than 30 minutes late, we may not be able to provide a tour.

PARKING: Bus parking for school or tour-sized buses is available on the northwest side of our main parking lot. In the event we have several buses arriving at one time, we may work with you on alternative bus parking.

INCLEMENT WEATHER and CANCELLATIONS: If it is raining on the day your tour is scheduled, please call. Oklahoma City is large enough that it might not be raining at the park. If you need to cancel, please call us in advance so we know whether or not to expect you.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS: Portions of the park are ADA accessible. If anyone in your group requires special accommodations, please let us know when making your reservations. We want to make sure everyone gets to participate as much as possible.

STROLLERS: The trails are not paved. Children's strollers with small wheels may not operate well on all of the paths.

SMOKING: There is no smoking in Martin Park Nature Center.

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LARGE GROUPS: If you are bringing a large group or several classes at one time, we will most likely rotate classes between stations. Some of these stations may be teacher-led. This allows us to keep group sizes smaller.

PROGRAMS ARE OUTDOORS

DRESS: Please dress for the outdoors and be mindful of the time of year and the weather.

- Things to consider bringing: rain jacket, sunscreen, bug spray, hat, sunglasses and water. We also recommend sturdy shoes such as tennis or hiking shoes. Flip flops, sandals or shoes with heels are not recommended. The trails are largely natural and can be uneven in places.
- As children like to explore the park, we recommend play clothes or clothes that can get dirty.
- Multiple species of insects may be found at Martin Nature Park, including mosquitoes, chiggers and ticks. Please be mindful and take necessary precautions.

PICNICS: A covered picnic pavilion that seats up to 30 people is available for rent near the main park entrance. Reservations are required, and must be made by calling the Parks & Recreation Department at 405-297-2756. **Cost:** \$45 for first two hours, plus \$20 for each additional hour. An off-season cleaning deposit for rentals between October 31 and April 15 may be incurred. Fires of any kind, including charcoal grills, are not allowed in the park per the City's Fire Marshall.



VENDING: Martin Park has a water fountain and soft drink vending machine. Liter bottles sell for \$1.50. The park does not have food concessions.

FEEDING THE ANIMALS: Martin Park Nature Center is a wildlife area and we must respect natural feeding habits. As such, we do not allow feeding of the animals IN the park. Groups that want to bring catfish food to feed the turtles and fish in the pond may do so. Catfish food is available at farm and feed stores. Please DO NOT bring bread, crackers, cereals or other such foods as they may interfere with the animals' natural digestion.

- For large groups, we recommend pre-dividing the fish food into small containers prior to arriving at the park. You can then distribute the food to the students at the appropriate time (per the guide).

SNAKES: From time to time, hikers may come upon a snake in the park. Please exercise extreme caution if you encounter one. Do not try to touch it or pick it up.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING: Martin Park staff is happy to provide educational programming to groups, but we expect teachers and leaders to maintain discipline at all times. Teachers and leaders are responsible for the whereabouts and behavior of their students. We ask that adult chaperones remain respectful of the program and limit their conversations and cell phone use so speakers may be heard. In addition, please let all adults know that there is no smoking anywhere on park grounds, including the parking lot.

NOISE: Groups will have a better chance of seeing animals in their natural setting if they remain quiet and calm. Animals are quickly frightened away if there is too much noise. If you have a "quiet" sign for your group, please let the hike leader know at the beginning of the hike.

"Take only memories, leave only footprints." ~ Chief Seattle

Please respect the park as you would someone's home. Our animals thank you.