



## Nature Nuts . . . Nature Tots Refuge Preschool Program



- The Nature Tots Program is for families with children ages 2 - 6. Parent or guardian must attend with their child(ren).
- We introduce children to nature through stories, puppets, and song. We explore nature by walking the Refuge's trails, playing games, and making crafts.
- We meet at 10:30 a.m. on the first Saturday of each month; except we don't meet in January or July. Program length of about one hour.
- We will go outside, rain, mud or shine so dress appropriately and/or bring a change of clothes.
- Call 318-742-1219 for more information. Day Care Groups must register for a separate program by completing the preschool registration form at [http://www.fws.gov/refuge/red\\_river](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/red_river)

### Children Need Nature Time!

- Research has shown that contact with nature at an early age has many health benefits for the developing mind and body.
- Children need time to play outside where they can explore, climb trees, dig holes, gather acorns, float stick boats or build forts.
- When children play outside in nature, they improve coordination, use both fine and gross motor muscles, develop better observation skills, gain self-confidence, and make new discoveries about the natural world around them.
- If children haven't had contact with nature, they never develop a relationship with the natural environment – they may become afraid of nature or misinterpret basic ecological principles.
- Studies show that people are healthier and better adjusted if they get outside and spend time in their yards and gardens or visit wildlife refuges, forests and parks.
- Studies show that people deprived of contact with nature are at greater risk of depression and anxiety -- stress levels fall within minutes of seeing trees and flowers or being in green places like parks and forests.
- Visiting a wildlife refuge, nature center or park to walk on trails is healthy exercise for the body, mind and spirit.

