

Texas *Envirothon*

A Model for
Collaborative
Learning &
Community
Engagement

UHCL University of Houston
Clear Lake



Take the Natural Challenge

What is the *Texas Envirothon*?

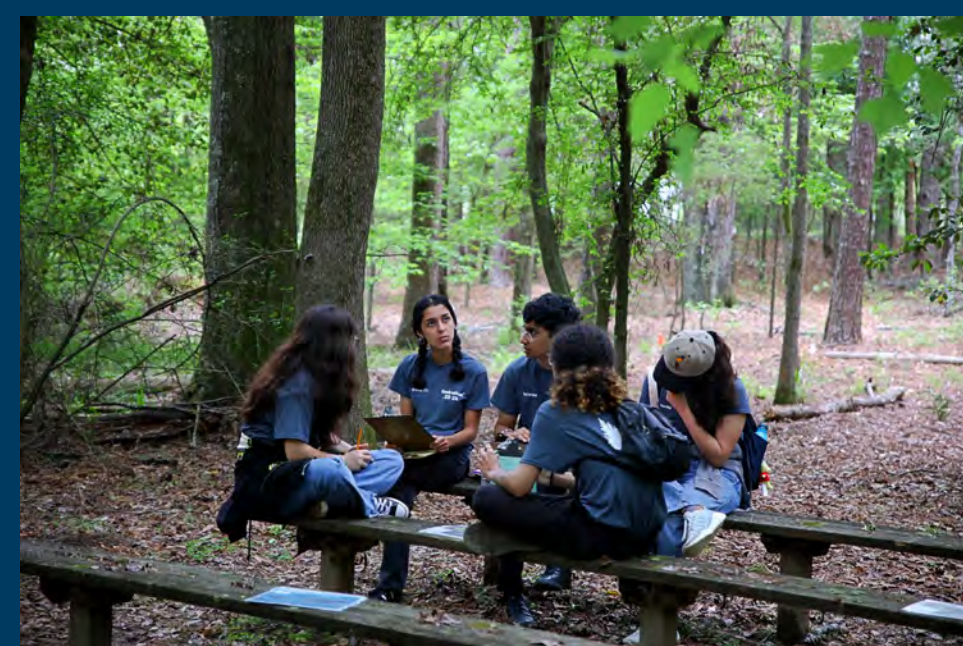
An environmental education program designed to enhance a student's problem solving and critical thinking skills.

Our *Mission*

To develop knowledgeable, skilled and dedicated citizens who are willing to work toward achieving and maintaining a natural balance between the quality of life and the quality of the environment.

Students connect as a Team through shared environmental topics

- Builds team problem solving skills
- Encourages collaborative research
- Teams research evidence-based decision making
- Prompts teams to study natural resources in their own communities.



Areas of Study

- Aquatic Ecology
- Forestry
- Soil and Land Use
- Wild life
- Current Issue
- Oral Presentation



Community expertise as a core part of the Envirothon learning model.

Local and state natural resource professionals serve as presenters, test writers and graders, as well as judges for the oral presentations.

State parks, universities, local companies and environmental organizations often provide site access, letting student explore authentic ecological systems

Volunteers from university, state agencies, and nonprofits contribute specialized knowledge helping student see the connection of science, policy and community planning.



Training

- Workshops
 - Fall and winter in Houston area
 - Stipends for teachers
- Student seminars during competition
- Online study guide



Envirothon Advisors Community

- Envirothon creates a network of statewide educators who share experiences and lesson strategies.
- Advisors participate in the field test and Envirothon teacher workshops.

Creates a network of educators who share curricula, field activities, and instructional strategies.

Cost



- Registration is \$200/team
- Registration includes on-line study materials, t-shirt, and awards luncheon
- Schools pay their own team registration, travel and hotel costs
- New this year! Thanks to TCEQ/GBEP grant we will offer Teacher stipends to attend both the in-person and on-line Envirothon workshops.
- The in-person workshop will be on December 6, 2025 in Houston area, and January/February TBD will be on-line.
- Study Materials are also available through this grant.

25th Anniversary Competition

Stephen F Austin
Nacogdoches
March 28-30, 2026

www.uhcl.edu/texas-envirothon

Texas *Envirothon*

Nacogdoches
March 28–30, 2026

Take the *Natural Challenge*

Texas Envirothon challenges high school students to solve real-world environmental issues through hands-on problem-solving. Teams compete in forestry, wildlife, soils and land use, aquatic ecology, and a current environmental issue, building skills in critical thinking, collaboration, and stewardship.

The event is held annually over three days in the spring. The winning team at the state level advances to the NCF-Envirothon competition, which is held in a different state or Canadian province each summer. The Texas Envirothon program welcomes teams from public and private schools, homeschool groups, and youth organizations.



TEXAS ENVIROTHON



Environmental Institute of Houston

Scan for more



WHAT TO EXPECT

- **Hands-on.** Learn from natural resources professionals in the field.
- **Real-world.** Develop real-world solutions to current environmental issues.
- **Outdoors.** Compete in a field test in the areas of
 - aquatic ecology
 - forestry
 - soils and land use
 - wildlife
 - current environmental issue

Sponsors and Partners



TEXAS ENVIROTHON

CenterPoint Energy

Clear Lake Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas

Montgomery County Soil and Water Conservation District

Texas Association of Environmental Professionals

Coastal Plains Soil and Water Conservation District

Harris County Soil and Water Conservation District

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board

Eastman

Long Acres Ranch

National Association of
Conservation Districts

Natural Resources
Conservation Service

Stephen F. Austin State
University

Texas A&M Forest Service

Texas Association for
Environmental Education

Texas Master Naturalist

Texas Parks and Wildlife
Department

The James B Harrison
Foundation

University of Houston- Clear
Lake

Galveston Bay Estuary Program (2026)

Thank *You.*

UHCL. EDU/ TEXAS- ENVI ROTHON

For more information, reach out to:
Wendy Reistle, EE Program Coordinator
Reistle@uhcl.edu
281-283-3045

Wings of Discovery

Teaching STEAM through Birds and Nature Journaling

- Wendy Reistle & Rowena McDermid
- University of Houston-Clear Lake
- Environmental Institute of Houston
- reistle@uhcl.edu
- mcdermid@uhcl.edu





Program Summary



Middle School Teachers



3 Days | Summer 2027



Workshop including birds, birdwatching, nature journaling, and tree planting



GBF facility in Kemah, Exploration Green, Brazos Bend State Park...



Community involvement in the environment

Priorities and Outcomes

- Community engagement and involvement with schools, students, teachers, volunteers, and parents
- Environmental stewardship
- Environmental education
- Create a sustainable future





Youth Birding

- Every third Saturday of the month
- Children aged 7-13
- Visit local birding hot spots
- Great for beginners interested in birds and birding
- TPWD
- Great Birding Classic

The Great Texas Birding Classic

- Mission Statement
 - To increase appreciation, understanding, and conservation of birds through education, recreation, nature tourism, and conservation fundraising.
- Many tournament categories
- Another way for community to be involved



Junior Hawks 2024



Hawkwards 2024



TPWD: Birding
Classic Video



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nT7Odf7VosA>



Conclusion

- “If they care about birds, then they will care about the habitat and they will care about the environment. And I’m hoping that will make them environmentalists for life.”
- Educate and involve the next generation for their future

Media Partnerships to *Facilitate Collaboration and Public Engagement*

Debbie Bush
Environmental Institute of Houston
University of Houston–Clear Lake

State of the Bay Symposium, Galveston
February 25, 2026

AGENDA

- About the Project
- Media Campaign
- 7 Initiatives



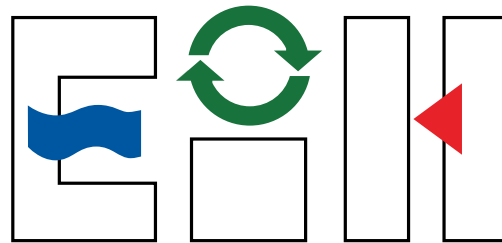
KPRC

Community Outreach

- bring awareness of Galveston Bay area-based conservation programs to communities through TV and digital media



A PROGRAM OF TCEQ



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SEVEN *Initiatives*

- White Oak Bayou Riparian Restoration
- Trash Bash
- Oyster Shell Recycling
- Coastal Heritage Preserve
- Give Water A Break
- Stopping Plastics and Litter Along Shorelines
- Targeted Microplastics Monitoring



Media Campaign

Digital Assets

Digital Banners

- educate and engage Houston and surrounding areas on the importance of protecting and sustaining living resources

WHITE OAK BAYOU RIPARIAN RESTORATION
Houston Parks and Rec Department (HPARD) is working to restore forested habitat along bayou corridors.

Galveston Bay Estuary Program
A PROGRAM OF TCEQ

University of Houston Clear Lake
HPARD
HOUSTON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
A UHCL Academic Agency

Everyone Can Be A Conservationist.
Visit Artist Boat Coastal Heritage Preserve today

[LEARN MORE](#)

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Artist BOAT

GALVESTON BAY FOUNDATION OYSTER SHELL RECYCLING PROGRAM
A healthy oyster ecosystem is crucial to protecting ALL marine life in Galveston Bay

[Learn More](#)

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Galveston Bay Foundation

TRASH BASH® 2025
SAVE the DATE!
SATURDAY, MARCH 29
"Clean It Like You Mean It!"
[Learn More](#)

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WYDE LARSEN
LIFE IN BAYOU TRASH BASH

DON'T FORGET YOUR ROOTS.
Give Water a Break.

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HOUSTON PUBLIC WORKS

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY and GALVESTON BAY ESTUARY PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP
Learn about how USGS research is used to protect our coastal ecosystems from microplastics pollution

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Take the ONE LESS PLASTIC PLEDGE
for the month of July!

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SPLASH
Preventing PLASTICS AND LITTER from our waterways