



The following are suggestions for Nature PlayScape birthday party themes. We encourage your family to use their imaginations—feel free to combine ideas or make up your own! While the themes and activities vary, most children will get wet or dirty during their adventure. It can be helpful to tell your guests to wear old clothes, solid play shoes and to bring a change of clothes for the ride home.

### The Great Nature Search (all ages)

**CHALLENGE:** Find natural objects throughout the Nature PlayScape.

**MATERIALS:** Jars (optional)

Take your group on a hike to look for hidden nature treasures. As you slowly hike along, call out something that will be easy to find and then look for it along the trail. For younger children, consider shapes, colors, textures, seasonally appropriate things, etc. Use a jar for each child if you want to have an easy size limit.

### Conservation Sensation (ages 5-11)

**CHALLENGE:** Challenge your nature-loving group to take conservation action.

**MATERIALS:** Bird houses/bird feeders (optional), trash bags and plastic gloves

Go on a clean-up hike through the Nature PlayScape. Allow children to tidy up the trails and pick up small waste. Explain that the Nature PlayScape is special because we can play all over, even off the trails, unlike when we are hiking in the woods. Visit the bird blind area of the Nature PlayScape and observe the birds and feeders provided by the Nature Center. After the observation and clean up, allow the children to make birdfeeders/birdhouses in the Krehbiel Pavilion to take home and add to their yards.

### Forts and Castles (all ages)

**CHALLENGE:** Lead your group to the fort building area in the Nature PlayScape and let imaginations run wild.

**MATERIALS:** Sticks, logs, leaves, etc. found in the Nature PlayScape

Take your group on a fort building adventure! Children and adults can work on the big forts or work together to build small little shelters out of sticks. Allow the children to play in their designs when they are complete!

### Fairies and Elves (ages 6-11)

**CHALLENGE:** We'd heard fairies and elves come out in the Nature PlayScape at night! Build tiny homes out of natural materials for them.

**MATERIALS:** Natural materials found in the Nature PlayScape

Children can work together (or on their own) to make an enchanted land full of fairy houses. Brainstorm with the children: what might you need, what might you use? You may consider leading your group on a collection hike through the Nature PlayScape to gather material for their designs.

### Creature Craze (ages 6-11)

**CHALLENGE:** Build creatures out of natural materials and leave them for others to find!

**MATERIALS:** Natural materials found in the Nature PlayScape

For nature creatures, children can work on their own or in teams. Have them collect materials around the Nature PlayScape and choose a special spot that will be the habitat for their nature creature. Give them a time limit and have them come up with a name, what it eats, etc. to share with the rest of the group. Provide time for each group/person to share.

### Mud Café (all ages) seasonal

**CHALLENGE:** Open a mud café in our MudZone. Make mud pies, cakes and other delightful treats.

**MATERIALS:** Supplies found in MudZone (cake pans, water, mud, plates, etc.)

Allow your group to become muddy chefs as they play and explore the MudZone. Adults attending the party can be the children's restaurant visitors. Wash-off stations are located on the Nature PlayScape restrooms. Please do not allow children to wash off in the stream.

### Free exploration of the Nature PlayScape (all ages)

**CHALLENGE:** Recommended for every party, give children time to play together and explore!

**MATERIALS:** N/A

Free exploration is the prime activity for most children. Adults should encourage the kids to get excited to explore and front-load any rules. (Talk to the caretakers when they arrive or during earlier activities to determine rules and expectations. Standard rules include boundaries, stream etiquette, must be able to see an adult, etc.)

