



January 2019

## **CBBEP Hosts First Star Party at the Nueces Delta Preserve**

*by Kathryn Tunnell*



Stargazers flocked to the Nueces Delta Preserve earlier this month for Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program's (CBBEP) first Family Star Party! CBBEP's environmental education program, Delta Discovery, partnered with the Corpus Christi Astronomical Society to host the event, which featured a lecture, night hikes, arts and crafts, s'mores, and 7 telescopes set up for families to view the constellations. The goal of the program was to introduce families to the wonders of the universe and inspire the next generation of astronomy enthusiasts, and it was a huge success!

Almost 140 people attended, and marveled at learning about the constellations in our winter night sky and how to navigate using them. "For our first event, we couldn't have asked for better conditions," said Leigh Perry, Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator for Delta Discovery, "The winter skies were so dry and clear that guests were able to see not only planets in our own solar system, but our nearest neighboring galaxy, M31 - Andromeda, which is approximately 2.2-2.5 MILLION light years away!"

Star parties are excellent opportunities for those new to astronomy because they give beginners a chance to use different kinds of equipment. "It is really cool to see the kids faces as they look through the big telescopes for the first time, it really does trigger a sense of wonder," said Leigh "But I also wanted families to know that you don't need special equipment to enjoy viewing the stars in the sky." So in addition to stargazing with telescopes, there were also binoculars and birding scopes set up so families could see the moon, stars, and planets with everyday equipment they may have at their house.





Delta Discovery is most certainly planning for another star party next January, but you don't have to wait that long to visit the Nueces Delta Preserve. Family Star Party is just one of many opportunities for the public to visit the Preserve including Family Picnic Days, Homeschool Days, and Nature Story Time. Visit <http://www.nuecesdeltapreserve.org/events/> for more information on those programs.

The Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and restoring bays and estuaries in the 12-county region of the Texas Coastal Bend. For more information about the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, contact Kathryn Tunnell at (361)336-0311 or [ktunnell@cbbep.org](mailto:ktunnell@cbbep.org). This report published in October 2018.

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