

Welcome to Discovery Lake

Discovery Lake, with its 1.6-mile nature trail, allows NIEHS and Environmental Protection Agency employees to enjoy the outdoors through various activities, such as fishing, running, walking, birdwatching, and boating. The lake features benches, bridges, two rock outcroppings, and a boat launch on the north side. It also serves as a rainwater catch basin, decreasing potential flooding and erosion along the flood plain of Burdens Creek, which flows into Jordan Lake.



Great blue heron
(*Ardea herodias*)

Plants and Animals

The banks of Discovery Lake contain shrubs, bushes, sedges, cattails, and other wetland species. Nearby trees include sweetgum, ash, pine, hickory, blackjack oak, dogwoods, willow, and red oak.

The lake is also home to reptiles, amphibians, fish, mammals, and over one hundred bird species. It provides a habitat for native and migratory ducks and geese. Along the south side, employees have installed bird and bee boxes for bluebirds, nuthatches, purple martins, and mason bees. You may also find beaver lodges. The lake is stocked with bluegill, sunfish, largemouth bass, and catfish.

Learn More About Discovery Lake

Visit the Discovery Lake webpage to learn more about the trail. For example, you will find a video about how the lake was named, a digital trail map, and animal and insect identification guides.



Emergency Assistance
NIEHS: 919-541-2800
Information Contact
NIEHS/EPA Site Ecology Team:
984-287-3396

Lake Area
27 acres
Campus Area
NIEHS – 375 acres
EPA – 133 acres

Eastern box turtle
(*Terrapene carolina*)

Trail Length		Slope		Cross Slope		Tread Width		Surface
Total	Accessible	Typical	Maximum	Typical	Maximum	Typical	Minimum	Type
1.6 miles	0.5 miles	0% to 5%	24%	0% to 2%	14%	6 feet	3 feet	Asphalt, Concrete, and Wood