

## Orlando's Wonderful World of Nature

Richard Louv is the author of the book *The Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*. He coined the term Nature Deficit Disorder to describe what research shows is a lack of appreciation of nature in children today. Mr. Louv feels that most of our children are overly 'plugged in.' They spend entirely too much time in front of the television, computer, or video games, which allows too little time for them to be outside appreciating nature. Some of children are urban bound and do not have access to state parks or other nature centers. He feels that children need to be outside playing, camping, fishing, biking, hiking, or taking part in other outdoor activities that foster an appreciation for nature.

Richard is co-founder of Children and Nature Network. Please visit the site at [www.childrenandnature.org](http://www.childrenandnature.org).

I would like to take this opportunity to point out some vacation destinations in Florida that you and your family can enjoy together which will help foster an appreciation of nature in your children.

The Florida Everglades are rich in wildlife. The Airboat Rides at Boggy Creek show animals in their natural habitat. Your children will see turtles, birds and many other animals. You can visit their website at [www.bcairboats.com](http://www.bcairboats.com) to learn more.

Eco Safaris are available at Forever Florida. Your family will have an opportunity to see how a real ranch is run. You can take a safari in a coach or on horseback. You may see panthers, bears, bobcats, coyote or other animals in their natural habitats. Please visit [www.floridaecosafaris.com](http://www.floridaecosafaris.com) for the many options available.

Gatorland has educational wildlife programs, reptile shows and more. It is a themepark and wildlife preserve. Please visit [www.gatorland](http://www.gatorland) for more information.

Green Meadows Petting Farm provides a 2-hour guided tour in a pristine country setting with more than 300 animals. Your children will enjoy petting animals like cows, pigs, donkeys, and more. Visit [www.greenmeadowsfarm.com](http://www.greenmeadowsfarm.com) for more information.

Silver Springs Nature Park Ocala, FL. Ride in glass bottom boats to view underwater springs, fish, shellfish, turtles, and alligators. Visit the petting zoo and see habitats of endangered species. Visit their website at [www.silverprings.com](http://www.silverprings.com).

## About the Author

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