Week 7 Activity: Exploring the nature-wellbeing connection

Part 1

Listen to this podcast episode on Hidden Brain about the health effects of spending time in nature, and answer the following questions:

1. The premise of this episode is that spending time in nature can boost human wellbeing in various ways. From the podcast, what piece(s) of evidence for this idea do you find most convincing? If you are generally skeptical of these claims, what do you think are the sources of misinterpretation?

2. What part of the conversation did you find most surprising and/or engaging?

Part 2

Given the substantial evidence that spending time in nature benefits human wellness, please spend ~45 minutes-1 hour engaging with nature in any context you see fit. You have wide latitude in what it means to "engage with nature", as long as you are intentional about it. Here are some potential examples of ways that you might choose to engage with nature:

- spend an hour walking around in a designated "natural" space like,
- take an extended walk through campus, with the specific goal of noticing the birds and plants you encounter
- watch a nature documentary
- go birdwatching at the LSU lakes (find a hotspot near you on eBird).

After you spend time doing this, please answer the following questions:

1. What did you do to spend time in/with nature?

2. What are some things you noticed, that you had never noticed before?

3. On a personal level, do you feel/believe that spending time in nature is good for you? What makes you feel this way?

4. Given the substantial evidence for a nature-human wellness connection, why do you think we (as a society) don't do more to encourage spending time in nature? What are some things that get in the way of your (or your community's) being able to spend time with nature? What are some things you can do in your own life to increase your own (or your community's) engagement with nature? *Note*: If you don't believe that you benefit from spending time in nature, you are welcome to skip this question.